

**VILLAGE OF QUESTA  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
SATURDAY, JANUARY 28, 2017  
VILLAGE OF QUESTA COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
8:00AM**

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**I. CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR MARK L. GALLEGOS**

Mayor Gallegos called the meeting to order at 8:23am.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Mayor Gallegos asked Village Clerk Renee Martinez to take roll.

Present:

Councilor Lawrence Ortega

Councilor Brent Jaramillo

Councilor John Anthony Ortega

Not Present:

Councilor Julian Cisneros

Also Present:

Administrator Loretta Trujillo

Village Clerk Renee Martinez

Finance Director Karen Shannon

Attorney Marcus Rael

**III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Village Attorney Marcus Rael led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mayor Gallegos asked that Discussion Items A through E be switched with Items F through L since Mr. Danny Garcia is here to talk about the water system. He also requested to go into Executive Session after Mr. Garcia's presentation. Councilor John Anthony Ortega requested a 10 minute recess at 10:00am.

Motion: Councilor Lawrence Ortega

Second: Councilor Brent Jaramillo

In Favor: All

Opposed: None

To approve the agenda as amended. All voted yes. Motion carried.

**V. DISCUSSION ITEMS –**

**F.** Update on Water System Failure

**G.** Municipal Water System Operation (current and future)

**H.** SOP's & Implementation Plan

**I.** Volunteer PE/Tech. Assistance to Public Works Dept.

## J. Water System Improvements

Mr. Danny Garcia presented his water usage numbers to the Governing Body. He showed the 4-year well log usage. We reported 2,000 acre feet to the OSE for a 4 year period. The Village reported more usage than our wells can produce. There was a reporting problem in 2010, 2011 and 2012. Mr. Garcia stated that we need to definitely purchase water rights. Councilor Lawrence Ortega asked if this information was what the OSE used to record our usage. Mr. Garcia stated yes. The OSE sent the Village data that from 1976 to 1996 we have had a back log of 1,120 that we owed them. As of 2011 our back log was 3,501. We were losing 100 gallons per minute due to leaks.

Councilor John Anthony Ortega asked why the data was not reported correctly those three years. Councilor Brent Jaramillo stated that the Village received a letter from the OSE that we had not been reporting. In the past it was the PW Directors job to send in monthly the amount of gallons pumped from well 1 and 2 to the OSE. They stated that there were 3 years of data missing. Mayor Gallegos stated that we need to set up a meeting with the OSE to show them this new data.

Regarding the PRV's, Councilor Lawrence Ortega stated that when a project is complete, the engineer will give the manufacturer's technical data to the Village. He believes that the record keeping in the public works department needs to be looked at; they were never trained on how to adjust or set a PRV. The vendor provides the information on how it works.

Councilor Lawrence Ortega asked if we are getting credit for the return flow at the treatment plant. Ms. Trujillo stated yes, she got back 7 years of credit.

Councilor John Anthony Ortega stated that we need to make sure all Village properties are getting metered and billed.

Councilor Lawrence Ortega asked to meet with Mr. Garcia and the PW staff sometime soon and go over the water system in general so that we can make the best effort to help staff realize why things need to be done. Mayor Gallegos asked if the maps can also be reviewed.

Mr. Garcia recommended the following primary improvements:

1. Automated pump control system
2. PRV's – Training, replacement and maintenance
3. Valves and Hydrants

SOP's and implementation and ongoing training are also imperative. Councilor John Anthony Ortega stated that we need some help with the SOP's from other agencies.

Councilor John Anthony Ortega asked Mr. Garcia how confident he was that the all major leaks have been located. Mr. Garcia stated that we still have one medium leak and a few minor leaks. Billing should be included.

Councilor Lawrence Ortega stated that he thinks it is very important that the Council receives a report on the consumption vs the production so that we can have an idea of how we are doing. Councilor John Anthony Ortega asked for a report showing the amount we are billing vs the amount of money coming in. Councilor John Anthony Ortega stated that the meter at the school needs to be taken care of immediately. Ms. Trujillo stated that it will be done by the end of the month. The High School meter needs to be looked at. Ms. Trujillo stated that the usage for Commercial IV is higher and it doesn't look like they've gone over the minimum.

A discussion was held regarding the multiplier on the meters.

\*\*A motion was made by Councilor John Anthony Ortega to take a recess, seconded by Councilor Lawrence Ortega. The meeting was recessed at 9:36am.

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\*\*A motion was made by Councilor Lawrence Ortega to reconvene the meeting, seconded by Councilor Brent Jaramillo.

The meeting was called back to order at 9:45am.

VII. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** - (*The Governing Body may convene into Executive Session at this time pursuant to the NM Open Meetings Act NMSA 1978 10-15-1*)

A. Limited Personnel Matters (Section 10-15-1(H) (2)) –

(1) Public Works Staff

(2) Administrator Position

A motion to enter into Executive Session was made by Councilor John Anthony Ortega, seconded by Councilor Brent Jaramillo.

Roll Call:

Councilor John Anthony Ortega YES

Councilor Lawrence Ortega YES

Councilor Brent Jaramillo YES

Mayor Gallegos stated that the Governing Body will go into Executive Session to discuss only the items listed. The Governing Body entered into Executive Session at 9:48am.

A motion was made to reconvene from Executive Session at 12:18pm by Councilor John Anthony Ortega, seconded by Councilor Brent Jaramillo.

Roll Call:

Councilor Lawrence Ortega YES

Councilor Brent Jaramillo YES

Councilor John Anthony Ortega YES

Mayor Gallegos stated that only the items listed were discussed during closed session. No action was taken.

VI. Mr. John Sanchez, NM Lieutenant Governor – Municipal Water System

Mayor Gallegos welcomed Lieutenant Governor, Mr. John Sanchez.

Lieutenant Governor Sanchez stated that his office felt that during this session and working with Senator Carlos Cisneros, to try to address and be as helpful as possible with this water situation. Lieutenant Governor Sanchez stated that he serves on the Board of Finance as the Vice Chair. He stated that he was aware that Questa was awarded \$130,000.00 in emergency funding. Part of this agreement states that if rates were raised accordingly, this loan would be converted to a grant. He stated that he, the Board of Finance and the Governor are very supportive, in understanding the nature of the emergency; this is why action was taken. In spite of the budget challenges the state is currently facing, it was imperative that priorities were made for the most basic of needs; in which water is at the top.

Mayor Gallegos asked if there is an opportunity to apply for additional funds, as the expenses keep rising or is it a one-time request. Lieutenant Governor Sanchez stated that the emergency monies are limited.

Councilor Brent Jaramillo stated that Secretary Mitchell was a great help to us.

Mr. Danny Garcia gave Lieutenant Governor Sanchez a brief summary of the Village's current situation. Lieutenant Governor Sanchez stated that his office is going to scour through every state agency to see if there are any additional monies out there.

Mayor Gallegos opened it up to the public for questions.

- Ms. Judith Cuddihy expressed her concerns about the water risk in New Mexico. Is the state looking into issues such as affordable water and water infrastructure? Lieutenant Governor Sanchez stated that they are looking into issues such as these.
- Ms. Esther Garcia inquired about water rights and water sheds and how it is important that the state keep abreast about what the forest service is doing with the management plan and that the watersheds and head gates that are located in the forest service areas are not closed off. Also, this community has been hit very hard so when we raise utility rates it hits people hard and hopefully we can get the grant instead of raising the rates. We also need water for economic development to encourage businesses to come to our area.
- Mr. Max Ortega stated that there was no fire protection during our water emergency. Also with the budget crisis in Santa Fe, our Fire Fund is being threatened and he is very concerned about how our fire department is going to operate. Lieutenant Governor Sanchez stated that public safety is a top priority. He has heard the concerns and the reality is that it is a shared sacrifice.

Councilor John Anthony Ortega stated that he is concerned with HB 4 and SB 12.

Councilor Lawrence Ortega thanked Lieutenant Governor Sanchez for taking time out of his schedule to visit with Questa.

Councilor Brent Jaramillo thanked Lieutenant Governor Sanchez and informed him that Taos Mountain Energy Bars have opened their doors and are up and running thanks to Senator Cisneros and Secretary Barela who assisted in getting the LEDA funding to make this a reality.

Lieutenant Governor Sanchez thanked the Mayor and Council as well as the citizens of Questa for allowing him to be present today.

**K. Road Improvements**

**L. Fiscal Budget moving forward (in light of water crisis expenses)**

**A. Procedures for Councilmembers to place items on agenda**

**B. Travel Procedures and Budgets for the Governing Body**

**C. Communication between the Mayor and Council**

**D. Department Organization, Chain of Command and Protocol**

**E. Schedule to complete current Village Capital Improvement Projects**

A discussion was held regarding a date to continue with the items on this agenda. A motion to have the meeting on February 18<sup>th</sup> was made by Councilor John Anthony Ortega, Seconded by Councilor Lawrence Ortega.

In Favor: All

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

## VIII. ADJOURNMENT

207 Motion: Councilor John Anthony Ortega  
208 Second: Councilor Lawrence Ortega

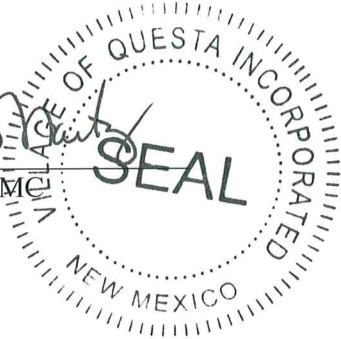
210  
211 In Favor: All  
212 Opposed: None

213  
214 There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 1:05pm.  
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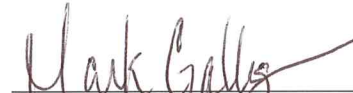
216  
217  
218 ATTEST:

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221  
222 Renee Martinez, CMC



APPROVED:



Mark Gallegos, Mayor