

**VILLAGE OF QUESTA  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2021  
VILLAGE OF QUESTA COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
6:00PM**

**NOTE** This tele-conference meeting will follow the Attorney General's guidelines and observe the Governor and Secretary of Health's public health orders. This format will allow the Village Council to conduct the meeting without all Council members being physically present and in accordance with the NM Open Meetings Act. There will be no live audience present. Members of the public wishing to participate can do so by call 1-866-899-4679 and entering access code **228-677-485** or from a computer, tablet, or smartphone at <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/228677485>. Those wishing to comment before or during the meeting may submit comments or questions to Interim Village Administrator Renee Martinez at [rmartinez@villageofquesta.org](mailto:rmartinez@villageofquesta.org)

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

Mayor Gallegos called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Village Clerk Renee Martinez called roll where a quorum was present.

Those virtually present were:

Mayor Mark Gallegos  
Councilwoman Louise Gallegos  
Councilman John Anthony Ortega  
Councilman Brent P. Jaramillo  
Councilman Charlie Gonzales  
Renee Martinez, CMC/ Interim Administrator  
Dina Coleman, Deputy Clerk / CPO  
Karen Shannon, VOQ Finance Director  
Lynn Skall, Questa Economic Development Fund  
Chris DeFillippo, Robles, Rael & Anaya  
Mark Richards, trustee of the Verga Trust  
Kelan Emery, Local Attorney of Verga Trust  
Deborah Torres, Project Manager for the Questa Lodging Project  
Alfredo Romero, Questa Fire Chief  
Raynelle Cordova, Assistant Questa Fire Chief

Those present by phone:

Lorin Cisneros, Questa Resident

**III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Councilor Charlie Gonzales led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion was made to approve the agenda as presented.

**Motion:** Councilwoman Louise Gallegos

**Second:** Councilman Charlie Gonzales

**Roll Call:**

Regular Council Meeting Minutes  
February 23, 2021

50 Councilman John Anthony Ortega YES  
 51 Councilman Brent P. Jaramillo YES  
 52 Councilman Charlie Gonzales YES  
 53 Councilwoman Louise Gallegos YES

54  
 55 A motion to approve the agenda as presented. All voted yes. Motion carried.

56  
 57 **V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 26, 2021**

58 A motion was made to approve the minutes as presented.

59  
 60 **Motion:** Councilwoman Louise Gallegos

61 **Second:** Councilman Charlie Gonzales

62  
 63 **Roll Call:**

64 Councilman John Anthony Ortega YES  
 65 Councilman Brent P. Jaramillo YES  
 66 Councilman Charlie Gonzales YES  
 67 Councilwoman Louise Gallegos YES

68  
 69 To approve the January 26, 2021, Regular Meeting minutes as presented. All voted yes. Motion carried.

70  
 71 **VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS** - *(It is the policy of the Governing Body to accept public comment. Because*  
 72 *your issue is not on the agenda the Governing Body cannot respond immediately but may direct staff to address*  
 73 *issues at a future Council Meeting. Public comments are limited to a maximum of three minutes.)*

74  
 75 Mr. Lorin Cisneros called in to report an incident. He stated that his dog “Cowboy” was hit by a Village  
 76 Employee while plowing snow and he would like the employee to be held accountable for his actions. He was  
 77 also appreciative of those employees that expressed compassion and assisted his family through this incident.

78  
 79 Ms. Renee Martinez stated that she did not receive any emails or prior requests for Public Comment  
 80 participation other than Mr. Cisneros.

81  
 82 **VII. PRESENTATION/UPDATE**

83 **A.)** Questa Economic Development Fund – Ms. Lynn Skall, Director

84 Ms. Skall gave an update to the following:

- 85 • The Light pole banners were put up with the assistance of Kit Carson Electric
- 86 • The Questa Mural Project is getting started and has seen a lot of interest in this
- 87 beautification project
- 88 • Passion to Profits Workshop Meeting will be held on Thursday March 4, 2021
- 89 • QBEN Meeting will be held on Wednesday March 10, 2021. Representative Kristina
- 90 Ortez will be giving a Legislative update.
- 91 • LOR Foundation, Nortenos Alliance meeting invitation

92 Councilor John A. Ortega voiced his concern to Ms. Skall about the lack of local coverage in the Questa Del  
 93 Rio Newspaper, he says that it is not highlighting things that are going on in Questa especially as it pertains  
 94 to the COVID vaccine availability. Ms. Skall addressed his concern and assured him that he is heard, and she  
 95 also suggested that individuals can email any of the newspaper staff to provide information.

96  
 97 **B.)** Presentation by Mark Richards, trustee of the Verga Trust, regarding easement request to the  
 98 Village

Mr. Emery and Mr. Richards are requesting a grant of easement as to make the title of the property profitable. The goal is to get access to the property through an agreed upon easement. There were several questions brought up by several Council members to the Verga representatives, and there was lengthy discussion regarding property that surrounds the Questa Municipal Airport and the 40-foot (20 foot on either side) easement request. Mayor Gallegos stated that further discussion with the Village Staff, the Village Attorney and FAA to look into the options of moving forward with providing the easement to the Verga property.

At this time Ms. Lynn Skall introduced Deborah Torres, Questa Lodging Project Manager to the Village Mayor and Council. Ms. Torres gave a brief update of what she is currently working on with the Lodging Project.

#### **VIII. PUBLIC HEARING opened at 6:50 pm**

##### **A.) A Public Hearing for public input to the proposed amendments to Village of Questa Ordinance #2015-141 -Village of Questa Water and Sewer Ordinance**

Mr. DeFillippo gave an update and a little bit of background on what the proposed amendments are to be made on Ordinance #2015-141 under sections 12, 13 and 8. The proposed changes are minor and as follows:

- Propose a charge for disconnect and reconnect fee.
- Allowing for a response time for PW Department when a customer request water to be turned on or off.
- Propose an increase to the current tampering fee.

There was no one from the public in attendance.

Public Hearing Closed at 7:02 pm

#### **IX. ACTION ITEMS**

##### **A.) Discussion, Consideration & Decision – Approval of amended Village of Questa Ordinance #2015-141 Village of Questa Water and Sewer Ordinance**

After much discussion, a motion was made by Councilwoman Gallegos to approve. Due to the lack of a second motion, Councilman Ortega then made a motion to table the Village of Questa Ordinance #2015-141, there was no second motion, therefore motion dies.

##### **B.) Discussion, Consideration & Decision – FY 2022 NMDOT Municipal Arterial Program (MAP) Project Designation**

Ms. Martinez is requesting approval for the project designation. Ms. Martinez explained that annually NMDOT puts out an application to receive grant monies for a road. The Village would need to decide on a road where funding is needed, Ms. Martinez recommended that the funding requested be for Cabresto Road as it has already been engineered and it is a “shovel ready” project.

**Motion:** Councilman John Anthony Ortega

**Second:** Councilman Charlie Gonzales

##### **Roll Call:**

Councilman John Anthony Ortega	YES
Councilman Brent P. Jaramillo	YES
Councilman Charlie Gonzales	YES
Councilwoman Louise Gallegos	YES

A motion to approve the FY 2022 NMDOT Municipal Arterial Program (MAP) Project Designation  
All voted yes. Motion carried.

**C.) Discussion, Consideration & Decision – Resolution No. 2021-03 – Approval of the removal & addition of authorized signers on all Village of Questa bank accounts**

Ms. Martinez notified the Mayor and Council of Councilman Gonzales' request to be removed as a signer to the Village of Questa bank accounts and add Councilwoman Gallegos who has agreed to be a signer.

**Motion:** Councilman John Anthony Ortega

**Second:** Councilman Brent Jaramillo

**Roll Call:**

Councilman John Anthony Ortega YES

Councilman Brent P. Jaramillo YES

Councilman Charlie Gonzales YES

Councilwoman Louise Gallegos YES

A motion to approve of the removal & addition of authorized signers on all Village of Questa bank accounts as presented. All voted yes. Motion carried.

**D.) Discussion, Consideration & Decision – Regarding Village of Questa Council Representative to the Questa Land & Water (QLW) Board**

Mayor Gallegos stated that Councilman Gonzales submitted a letter of resignation from the Questa Land & Water (QLW) Board. After further discussion about the board member options, Councilman Ortega offered interest in being on the board and a motion was made in support.

**Motion:** Councilman Brent Jaramillo

**Second:** Councilman John Anthony Ortega

**Roll Call:**

Councilman John Anthony Ortega YES

Councilman Brent P. Jaramillo YES

Councilman Charlie Gonzales YES

Councilwoman Louise Gallegos YES

A motion to approve the Appointment of Village of Questa Council Representative to the Questa Land & Water (QLW) Board as presented. All voted yes. Motion carried.

**X. DISCUSSION ITEM – Questa Fire /EMS Volunteers & Support Team**

Ms. Martinez informed the Mayor and Council that Councilman Gonzales had some ideas that he brought to her attention regarding a support team for the Questa Fire Department. Ms. Martinez asked Councilman Gonzales to share his ideas with everyone.

Councilman Gonzales expressed the need for community support of the fire department in areas where other surrounding departments have come to the rescue during emergency calls.

Fire Chief Romero and Assistant Fire Chief Raynelle Cordova explained what their need is and how support is needed to make it through these times of emergency. After much discussion and ideas on how this support would be provided, it was decided that Councilwoman Gallegos would work alongside the Questa Fire Department and take the lead in spearheading a support group. Many of those in attendance of the meeting were very supportive of the idea and offered ways to support this group as it grows.

Councilman John A. Ortega and Assistant Fire Chief Raynelle Cordova also shared information regarding the ISO rating, what it is and what it means as well as the importance of compliance to support a good rating. As it was explained by Ms. Cordova, if the ISO rating increases so does the insurance rates in our area, if the ISO rating decreases so will the insurance rates. There is an inspection scheduled soon and the inspection will provide the determination of the ISO Rating. Councilman Ortega also stated that the inspection will also look at the Village of Questa water systems and he stated that improving the water system is also beneficial to the ISO rating. He was also appreciative of those who have worked on receiving grant funding to replace the Fire gear needed to keep the Fire Department Volunteer safe and in compliance per NFPA 1971.

#### **XI. MATTERS FROM ATTORNEY** – Mr. Chris DeFillippo, Robles, Rael & Anaya

Mr. DeFillippo gave an update about the following:

- Red River Contract that is in the hands of NMED and ONRT for review and he is waiting on the final approval.
- There is an upcoming meeting with Chevron, NMED, EPA and NN to be scheduled for March 3 or 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021. This is quarterly update meeting.
- He is still working on the EMS request that was made by Councilman Ortega regarding the outstanding balances to be collected in the EMS billing dept.

Councilman Gonzales asked about the status of Dr. Miller and Mr. DeFillippo informed that Dr. Miller will be retiring and is currently looking for a replacement.

#### **XII. MATTERS FROM ADMINISTRATION-** Ms. Renee Martinez, CMC /Interim Administrator

Ms. Martinez went through the GRT report for review and ask Ms. Shannon to explain the report and bring Mayor and Council up to speed on the report status. Ms. Martinez provided updates to the following:

- Village Admin Office will be opening to the public
- Taos Behavioral Health has begun using the Youth Center to administer their services
- MVD will re-open to walk ins as of March 1, 2021
- Library is also re-opening by appointment with 1 patron at a time
- The library expansion is still moving along with a tentative closing date in May
- Bixby Electric will be in town within the next couple of weeks to replace the light poles that are down along Highway 522

#### **XIII. MATTERS FROM MAYOR & COUNCIL**

- Councilwoman Gallegos had a question regarding the NMDOT inspection of the bridge at the entrance into Questa prior to the starting of the Chevron Rock Pile project. Considering that there will be a lot of heavy equipment being used for the project. Mayor Gallegos will reach out to NMDOT and have that conversation and he will follow up on that.



**AGENDA**  
**VILLAGE OF QUESTA**  
**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**  
**TUESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2021**  
**VIRTUAL MEETING**  
**6:00 P.M**

**~ NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC ~**

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Mayor Mark L. Gallegos  
Mayor Pro-Tem John Anthony Ortega  
Councilmember Charlie I. Gonzales | Councilmember Brent P. Jaramillo | Councilmember Louise T. Gallegos

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- I. **CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR MARK L. GALLEGOS**
- II. **ROLL CALL**
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- IV. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- V. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – A) January 12, 2021 Regular Meeting
- VI. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** *(It is the policy of the Governing Body to accept public comment. Because your particular issue is not on the agenda the Governing Body cannot respond immediately but may direct staff to address issues at a future Council Meeting. Public comments are limited to a maximum of three minutes.)*
- VII. **PRESENTATION/UPDATE**
  - A) Questa Economic Development Fund – Ms. Lynn Skall, Director
  - B) Presentation by Deborah Miller regarding the upcoming Rock Pile Project
- VIII. **ACTION ITEMS**
  - A) Discussion, Consideration & Decision – Appointment of member and alternate member to Holy Cross Hospital Board of Trustees Nominating Committee for a 1-Year term
  - B) Discussion, Consideration & Decision – Appointment of voting member and voting alternate member to the Northern Pueblos Regional Transportation Planning Organization.(NPRTPO)
  - C) Discussion, Consideration & Decision – Resolution No. 2021-02 – Approval of 2021 Legislative Priorities for the Village of Questa
  - D) Discussion, Consideration & Decision – Donation of property to Village of Questa by Muriel Machovech
- IX. **MATTERS FROM ATTORNEY** – Mr. Chris DeFillippo, Robles, Rael & Anaya
- X. **MATTERS FROM ADMINISTRATION** - Renee Martinez, CMC / Interim Administrator
- XI. **MATTERS FROM MAYOR & COUNCIL**
- XII. **ADJOURNMENT**

If you are an individual with a disability who is in need of a reader, amplifier, qualified sign language interpreter, or any other form of auxiliary aid of service to attend or participate in the hearing or meeting, please contact the Village Clerk at least one week prior to the meeting or as soon as possible. Public documents, including the agenda and minutes, can be provided in various accessible formats. Please contact the Village Clerk at 575-586-0694 if a summary or other type of accessible format is needed.

- Councilman Ortega had a question about an inquiry made to QISD from the Village of Questa regarding a place to rent for a Sherriff's Department Deputy. Ms. Martinez was able to respond and clarify what that inquiry was about.

#### **XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:** Councilman John A. Ortega

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm

ATTEST:

  
Dina Coleman, Deputy Clerk

APPROVED:

  
Mark Gallegos, Mayor

