

**San Juan County Commission  
Regular Meeting  
August 15, 2023**

Chairman Lanier called the San Juan County Commission meeting to order on August 15, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers located in the County Administration Building, 100 S. Oliver Drive, Aztec, New Mexico. Commissioner Fortner gave the invocation and Commissioner Todacheene led the Pledge of Allegiance. Those present were:

CHAIRMAN	Steve Lanier
CHAIRMAN PRO-TEM	John T. Beckstead
MEMBER	Terri D. Fortner
MEMBER	GloJean Todacheene
MEMBER	Gary McDaniel
CHIEF DEPUTY ASSESSOR	John Kuhn
COUNTY MANAGER	Mike Stark
DEPUTY COUNTY MANAGER	Steven Saavedra
DEPUTY ATTORNEY	Ellen Wayne
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	Kim Martin
PUBLIC WORKS ADMINISTRATOR	Nick Porell
CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER	Roberta Padilla
DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF	Donovan Mack
COMMUNITY HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECTOR	Liza Gomez
HOUSING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Charlotte Stanley
PUBLIC RELATIONS & FILM MANAGER	Devin Neeley
PROJECT MANAGER	Porter Smith
VISITORS:	26

**Regular Meeting**

**Approval of Agenda**

Mike Stark, County Manager, stated that there is one change to the agenda. Ellen Wayne, Deputy Attorney will be presenting New Business Item #6, Consideration of Approval of Resolution No. 23-24-09, Report on Inspection of Detention Center. A motion was made by Commissioner Fortner, seconded by Commissioner Todacheene to approve the agenda as amended. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

**Consent Agenda**

1. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes from July 25, 2023
2. Approval of Special Meeting Minutes from August 7, 2023
3. Approval of Finance Check Registers for July 2023

4. Approval of Treasurer Check Register for July 2023
5. Approval of Projects for State Fire Marshall Grant Funding
6. Certification of Annual Inventory
7. Approval of SEMAP (Section Eight Management Assessment Program Certification)
8. Approval of Updated San Juan County Title VI Plan
9. Memorandum of Agreement with New Mexico Dept. of Agriculture for “Nonnative Phreatophyte Removal and Riparian Restoration”

A motion was made by Chairman Pro-Tem Beckstead, seconded by Commissioner Fortner to approve the Consent Agenda. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

### **New Business**

1. **Consideration of Proclamation Declaring August 17, 2023, as “Non-Profit Day” in San Juan County**

Mike Stark, County Manager, announced that August 17, 2023, is National Nonprofit Day to recognize the immense efforts and positive impacts that nonprofit organizations have on all communities across the nation. The proclamation recognizes the vital role of local nonprofits in the community and the adaptation of operations to provide their services in a safe/effective manner during the pandemic. Mr. Stark requested that the Commission proclaim August 17, 2023, as Nonprofit Day in San Juan County and read the proclamation aloud:

**SAN JUAN COUNTY, NEW MEXICO  
PROCLAIMING AUGUST 17, 2023, AS  
"NONPROFIT DAY"**

**WHEREAS** San Juan County is fortunate to have a number of nonprofit organizations which provide health care, assistance to impoverished, economic development, educational support, and youth programing, and

**WHEREAS** San Juan County recognizes that nonprofit organizations have positive impacts on our community and serve a vital role in facilitating charitable giving and social action, and

**WHEREAS** the nonprofit organizations in San Juan County provide direct care and support to our community by providing resources such as access to food and emergency service such as rent and utility assistance, and

**WHEREAS** San Juan County recognizes that nonprofit organizations have been and continue to be essential assisting citizens thru hard economic times ensuring citizens of San Juan County have access to necessary resources to remain safe and healthy, and

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the Board of County Commissioners of San Juan County, New Mexico, does hereby declare and proclaim August 17, 2023, as "Nonprofit Day" and urges the citizens of San Juan County to support the nonprofit organizations in our community by volunteering or providing in-kind or monetary donations.

Representatives from several non-profit organizations introduced themselves and the mission of their organization. The Commission expressed gratitude for the organizations and the services

that are provided to the community. A motion was made by Commissioner Fortner, seconded by Commissioner Todacheene to approve the Proclamation Declaring August 17, 2023, as “Non-Profit Day” in San Juan County. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

## **2. Consideration of Preferred 5-Mile Bridge Access Alternatives**

Nick Porell, Public Works Director, stated that at the San Juan County Commission Meeting held April 18, 2023, a report prepared by AECOM concerning Bridge 8118 (5-Mile Bridge) was presented to the Commission. The report addressed the current condition of the structure, critical drainage issues within Largo Canyon, and transportation alternatives within the Largo Wash area pending retirement of the existing structure. Each alternative presented included a recommendation for immediate closure of the bridge prior to further degradation of the structure; based on the information provided by the County's contracted professional engineer, the County's insurance carrier recommended closure of the structure. Resolution 22-23-61 was passed by the San Juan County Commission at the May 2, 2023, Regular Meeting to permanently close and decommission Bridge 8118 effective June 5, 2023. Staff and the representatives of AECOM conducted a public information meeting at the Sullivan Road Fire Station on June 29, 2023, to present information on alternatives and receive public comments. Fifty-eight (58) people signed-in at the meeting; comments were received in person and in writing following the meeting and summarized in Appendix G of the final Alternatives Analysis; the remainder of the report unchanged from what was presented to the Commission on April 18th. Citizens expressed concerns over an increase in traffic on Road 4990 due to the bridge closure. In anticipation of this response, Public Works completed a traffic volume study on Road 4990 two weeks prior to and after the closing of Bridge 8118 between May 22nd and June 19th. As measured during that period, the bridge closure was found to result in an increase of average daily traffic (ADT) of 95 vehicles; functional classification of the roadway remains unchanged because of the minor increase in traffic; the unpaved portion of Road 4990 still classified as a Very Low Volume Road. As presented in the Alternatives Analysis, Alternative C reroutes traffic to Road 4990 and represents the highest scoring alternative based on the metrics analyzed. Staff has identified three (3) priority projects to improve reliability of Road 4990 during all weather conditions: two of those projects would improve/replace existing low water crossings with arch culvert installations and the third would be a redesign of an existing multi-culvert wash crossing which incurred substantial damage during a sizable stormwater runoff event during Summer 2022. Estimated total costs for the engineering, surveying, and permitting costs for the three projects total \$450,000 (\$150K/each). Public sentiment received at the public meeting and in subsequent written comment does confirm the desire of area residents for a bridge replacement at the current or alternative location. The estimated \$1.5M to \$2M in design costs and estimated \$13.3M in construction costs for this alternative represent a significant barrier to its implementation particularly when considering the associated low traffic volumes. Staff will continue to identify applicable State and Federal grant opportunities for the design of a replacement structure and present those to the Commission for associated Resolutions of support as those opportunities become available. Staff requested \$450,000 in capital funding be included in a forthcoming budget adjustment for the design of drainage improvements on Road 4990 for initial implementation of Alternative C as described in the Largo Canyon Access Alternatives Evaluation. Chairman Pro-Tem Beckstead asked if the improvements to Sullivan Road would have been presented regardless of the closure of the bridge and encouraged seeking grants for the reconstruction of the bridge. Mr. Porell indicated that the improvements were planned for a later date, however, due to the closure of the bridge, the improvements to Road 4990 are necessary to ensure a safe and reliable route in the interim.

Chairman Lanier emphasized that the improvements to the road will not hinder the efforts to seek grants for funding of to implement reconstruction of the bridge. Mr. Porell stated that due to the costs, Federal funding would be required. The Commission asked various questions. A motion was made by Chairman Pro-Tem Beckstead, seconded by Commissioner Fortner to approve the Preferred 5-Mile Bridge Access Alternatives. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

**3. Consideration of a Letter to Energy Companies Seeking Funds for the Construction of a New Bridge Spanning the Largo Canyon**

Steven Saavedra, Deputy County Manager, explained that per Commissioner McDaniel's request during the County Commission meeting on July 26, 2023, Staff composed a letter addressed to the energy companies operating in the vicinity of Largo Canyon with the purpose of formally soliciting their financial collaboration towards the construction of the "5-mile bridge." Chairman Pro-Tem Beckstead asked how many energy companies will be contacted. Mr. Saavedra stated that there are 5 companies that have been identified that have a large value of assets within the canyon. Commissioner Todacheene requested that the Navajo Nation energy companies be included. Chairman Pro-Tem Beckstead requested that the letters be hand-delivered rather than mailed. Chairman Lanier emphasized that the Commission appreciates the contributions that the companies provide to the community, and they are not obligated. The Commission asked various questions. A motion was made by Commissioner McDaniel, seconded by Commissioner Todacheene to approve the Letter to Energy Companies Seeking Funds for the Construction of a New Bridge Spanning the Largo Canyon. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

**4. Consideration of Approval of Resolution No. 23-24.10, Grant Application to the NM Outdoor Recreation Division (ORD) for an Outdoor Recreation Master Plan**

Steven Saavedra, Deputy County Manager, indicated that the 2023 Outdoor Recreation Trails + Grant application cycle is now open for the State of New Mexico's Outdoor Recreation Division (ORD) earmarking a total of \$10M from the State's resources to bolster diverse outdoor recreation initiatives. San Juan County is pursuing a tier 1 local project focused on developing a comprehensive outdoor recreation master plan. In the event of a successful application, the tier 1 local project requires a 1:1 match in funds. Grant award amounts for this cycle range from \$25,000 to \$99,000; the estimated cost projection for the master plan is \$100,000 and would require a \$50,000 match from San Juan County. The essence of this master plan lies in formulating an encompassing blueprint that charts the course for the future of outdoor recreation and trail development in San Juan County. This strategic framework aims to seamlessly align with the region's distinctive assets and economic growth goals. The planning process will encapsulate the richness of the County's landscape and the wide spectrum of recreational prospects it offers ranging from hiking, boating, biking, off-roading, fishing, rafting, and horseback riding encompassing not only San Juan County, but also its contiguous natural spaces. The plan's purview extends to establishing vital policies and directives that foster collaborative endeavors among municipalities, the State, and the Bureau of Land Management. This collaborative approach is aimed at cultivating sustainable tourism and visitation while safeguarding existing recreational opportunities within San Juan County. The Commission made various comments. A motion was made by Chairman Pro-Tem Beckstead, seconded by Commissioner Fortner to approve Resolution No. 23-24.10, Grant Application to the NM

Outdoor Recreation Division (ORD) for an Outdoor Recreation Master Plan. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

**5. Consideration of Approval of Resolution No. 23-24-11, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application**

Steven Saavedra, Deputy County Manager, reported that Staff conducted two Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) public input meetings on June 26, 2023, at the Lower Valley Senior Center (Kirtland, NM) and on June 28, 2023, at the County Administrative Building. Attendees of the public meeting recommended that San Juan County prioritize enhancing safety and making improvements to its roads, sidewalks, and the overall accessibility to public facilities. The purpose of the Resolution is to secure CDBG funding, which will be utilized to fulfill ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) improvements across various County's facilities which are prioritized by the US Department of Justice ADA settlement agreement. Upon obtaining approval from the NM Community Development Bureau, the County's grant application will represent a total of \$750,000 and requires a 10% (\$75,000) matching contribution. To comply with the terms of the grant, the County commits to completing the stipulated improvements within a two-year timeframe following the grant award. A motion was made by Chairman Pro-Tem Beckstead, seconded by Commissioner Fortner to approve Resolution No. 23-24-11, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

**6. Consideration of Approval of Resolution No. 23-24-09, Report on Inspection of Detention Center**

Ellen Wayne, Deputy Attorney, explained that NMSA 1978, §33-3-4, Inspection of Jails and Detention Centers, provides that the governing body shall conduct an annual site visit to inspect the overall conditions at the detention facility and present an inspection report at a regular meeting of the governing body. The last report was submitted on August 16, 2022. Resolution No. 23-24-09 reports the findings of the inspection and the conditions at the Detention Center. Four Commissioners reported the conditions satisfactory. A motion was made by Chairman Pro-Tem Beckstead, seconded by Commissioner Todacheene to approve Resolution No. 23-24-09, Report on Inspection of Detention Center. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

**Report from County Manager**

Mike Stark reported the following:

- The County Fair was a success with 90,000 visitors. Mr. Stark recognized the Parks and Facilities Department and various departments for their efforts in making it a success. The livestock sale was the largest in the fair's history, benefiting the youth.
- National Public Lands Day is Saturday, September 23rd from 8 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
- Sherice Snell, GIS Manager, accepted a position with the San Juan Water Commission. Mr. Stark recognized Ms. Snell for her employment and contribution to the County for 15 years.

### **Reports From Elected Officials And Department Heads**

Liza Gomez, Community Health & Social Services Director, announced that the Mental Wellness Resource Center (MWRC) is now fully staffed. Ms. Gomez introduced the staff as follows:

Bianca Thompson- Behavioral Health Services Supervisor  
Wendy Gouse- Office Assistant 3  
Natasha Giroe- Peer Navigator 1  
Jesus Grijalva- Peer Navigator 2  
Cassandra Saiz- Lead Navigator

Ms. Gomez shared a client success story and the services that were provided to him.

Roberta Padilla, Chief Human Resources Officer, introduced Catherine Olson, Summer Enrichment Internship Program Adult Coordinator. Ms. Padilla stated that it is the 3rd year of the program which is grant funded through the New Mexico Public Education Department. Ms. Olson, Career and College Readiness Specialist for Aztec Schools, presented a PowerPoint highlighting the following:

- There were 62 student interns this summer
- During the six-week period, there are workshops every two weeks focusing on soft skills (human skills) needed
- Interns worked six weeks at 20 hours per week
- 44 local businesses were involved
- Efforts to expand the program

Nick Porell, Public Works Director, announced that County is the recipient of two grants:

- New Mexico Environmental Department Recycling and Illegal Dumping Program Youth Education Campaign- plan to create a youth activity workbook for students in kindergarten through 3rd grade to distribute within the 4 school districts.
- New Mexico Tourism Department Clean and Beautiful Grant- funding for two additional free dumpster days which will incorporate into free dumpster weekends at the County transfer stations

Chairman Lanier recognized the County Fair Board for their dedication in creating a great fair for San Juan County and the State.

### **Comments / Input From The General Public**

None

### **Adjourn**

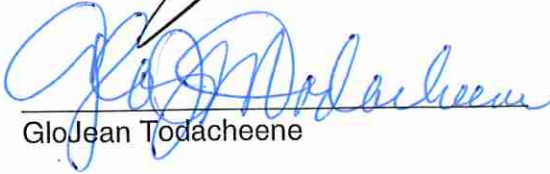
Being no further business Chairman Fortner adjourned the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

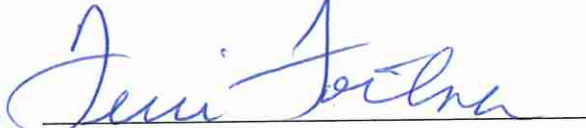
APPROVED THIS 5TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2023

BY THE SAN JUAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:

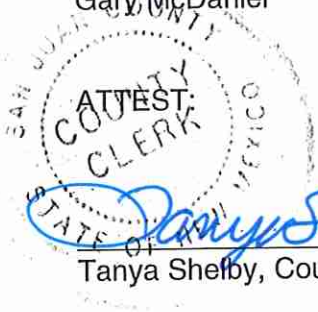
  
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Chairman Steve Lanier

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Chairman Pro-Tem John T. Beckstead

  
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GloJean Todacheene

  
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Terri D. Fortner

  
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Gary McDaniel



  
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Tanya Shelby, County Clerk