

**San Juan County Commission
Regular Meeting
October 17, 2023**

Chairman Lanier called the San Juan County Commission meeting to order on October 17, 2023, at 4:04 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 Tanya Shelby led the Pledge of Allegiance. Those present were:

CHAIRMAN	Steve Lanier
CHAIRMAN PRO-TEM	John T. Beckstead- ABSENT
MEMBER	Terri D. Fortner
MEMBER	GloJean Todacheene
MEMBER	Gary McDaniel
CLERK	Tanya Shelby
COUNTY MANAGER	Mike Stark
DEPUTY COUNTY MANAGER	Steven Saavedra
ATTORNEY	Joe Sawyer
DEPUTY ATTORNEY	Ellen Wayne
EMERGENCY MANAGER	Mike Mestas
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	Kim Martin
PUBLIC WORKS ADMINISTRATOR	Nick Porell
CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER	Roberta Padilla
DEPUTY HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER	Melissa Wood
ADULT DETENTION CENTER DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR	Thomas Paul
FIRE CHIEF	David Vega
DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF	John Gilbert
COMMUNITY HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECTOR	Liza Gomez
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR	Michele Truby-Tillen
PUBLIC RELATIONS & FILM MANAGER	Devin Neeley
PROJECT MANAGER	Porter Smith
PRESS:	Tri-City Record
VISITORS:	12

Regular Meeting

Approval of Agenda

Mike Stark, County Manager, stated that there were no changes to the agenda. A motion was made by Commissioner Fortner, seconded by Commissioner Todacheene to approve the agenda as presented. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes from September 19, 2023
2. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes from October 3, 2023
3. Approval of Treasurers Check Register from September 2023
4. Approval of Finance Check Registers from September 2023
5. Approval of FY24 Budget Adjustment #3-Resolution No. 23-24-22
6. Award of Request for Proposals 23-24-04, Volunteer Firefighters Insurance
7. Approval of Resolution No. 23-24-20, Participation for County Road 350 NMDOT Transportation Project Fund (TPF) Grant Agreement

A motion was made by Commissioner Todacheene, seconded by Commissioner Fortner to approve the Consent Agenda. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

New Business

1. Consideration of Resolution No. 23-24-19, Supporting Operation Green Light for Veterans

Commissioner Terri Fortner announced that Operation Green Light for Veterans is an initiative promoted by the National Association of Counties and endorsed by New Mexico Counties. This program hopes to spread awareness of the plight of veterans in counties across the country who are having difficulty connecting with benefits after serving their country. During this time before Veterans Day, supporters of the military can show their support for veterans by displaying a green light in a window of their place of business or residence. Commissioner Fortner read the resolution aloud:

**SAN JUAN COUNTY
RESOLUTION NO. 23-24-19**

SUPPORTING OPERATION GREEN LIGHT FOR VETERANS

WHEREAS, the residents of San Juan County have great respect, admiration, and the utmost gratitude for all of the men and women who have selflessly served our country and this community in the Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, the contributions and sacrifices of the men and women who served in the Armed Forces have been vital in maintaining the freedoms and way of life enjoyed by our citizens; and

WHEREAS, San Juan County seeks to honor these individuals who have paid the high price for freedom by placing themselves in harm's way for the good of all; and

WHEREAS, veterans continue to serve our community in the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, religious groups, civil service, and by functioning as County Veteran Service Officers in 29 states to help fellow former service members access more than \$52 billion in federal health, disability and compensation benefits each year; and

WHEREAS, Approximately 200,000 service members transition to civilian communities annually; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 20 percent increase of service members will transition to civilian life in the near future; and

WHEREAS, studies indicate that 44-72 percent of service members experience high levels of stress during transition from military to civilian life; and

WHEREAS, active military service members transitioning from military service are at a high risk for suicide during their first year after military service; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties encourages all counties, parishes and boroughs to recognize Operation Green Light for Veterans; and

WHEREAS, San Juan County appreciates the sacrifices of our United States Military Personnel and believes specific recognition should be granted.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of San Juan County, New Mexico, that San Juan County is hereby designated as a Green Light for Veterans County and declares October 18 through Veterans Day, November 11, 2023, a time to salute and honor the service and sacrifice of our men and women in uniform transitioning from Active Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in observance of Operation Green Light, San Juan County encourages its citizens in patriotic tradition to recognize the importance of honoring all those who made immeasurable sacrifices to preserve freedom by displaying a green light in a window of their place of business or residence.

A motion was made by Commissioner Fortner, seconded by Commissioner Todacheene to approve Resolution No. 23-24-19, Supporting Operation Green Light for Veterans. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

2. Presentation of San Juan County Partnership and Consideration of Request for Funding for the 2024 County-Wide Needs Assessment.

Anna Krutsky, San Juan County Partnership Executive Director, explained that a comprehensive county-wide needs assessment is conducted every four years and that the 2024 assessment is currently in the planning stages, with contract work slated to commence before the end of the calendar year. Traditionally, the County Commission has allocated funding from the HCAP/IHC funds for the county-wide needs assessments in 2004, 2008, 2012, 2016, and 2019. The findings from this assessment serve as a valuable tool for the County, various school districts, municipalities, and multiple agencies in strategic planning, grant writing, and fund prioritization. Ms. Krutsky introduced Patience Williams, Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities Coordinator, and highlighted the following:

- The Housing Assistance Program assists those who are homeless or in danger of becoming homeless.
- Build state and local partnerships to expand opportunities for healthy eating and activities to children and low-income adults.
- The mission of the Community Health Improvement Council for San Juan County is to promote the health and well-being of all people in San Juan County and neighboring areas through broad-based dialogue, partnership, advocacy, and unified action. The current priority areas are access to care and health equity. Monthly meetings are held the third Thursday of each month at 3:00 p.m.
- Prevention awareness addressed by facilitating activities to educate and support individuals and communities to prevent the use and misuse of drugs.
- Community projects include the Creating Cultural Harmony Conference and the Youth and Family Resource Directory.

- On January 20, 2024, at McGee Park, there will be a health expo that includes various vendors and informational presentations.

Ms. Krutsky indicated that the San Juan Regional Medical Center recently completed a small-scale needs assessment that focused on health status behaviors and needs of residents regarding access to health services, cancer and diabetes concerns. The San Juan County Partnership comprehensive county-wide needs assessment is larger-scale and will be conducted in person, through media, advertisements, as well as stakeholder focus groups. Ms. Krutsky indicated that she will be meeting with San Juan Regional Medical Center to discuss the survey recently conducted; Chairman Fortner requested that she is included in the meeting. Staff requested approval to allocate \$20,000 from the FY2024 budget toward the County-Wide Needs Assessment. The Commission asked various questions. A motion was made by Commissioner Fortner, seconded by Commissioner Todacheene to approve the Funding for the 2024 County-Wide Needs Assessment. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

3. Consideration of Approval of Variance for Centrado Ranches, Replat E

Michele Truby-Tillen, Community Development Director, indicated that on May 30, 2023, an exemption survey was submitted by Cecil and Eva Day to bring their parcel into compliance with subdivision regulations. Their parcel is 0.60 acres in size, which is under the 0.75 acre minimum required by San Juan County Subdivision Regulations, Section 8.11.1.B, for lots using individual liquid waste systems; a variance from this requirement was requested on April 7, 2023, and a subsequent public hearing was held on October 10, 2023, before Hearing Officer Joe Sawyer. No public comments were received prior to or at the time of the hearing. Staff received approval documentation from the New Mexico Environmental Department for use of the existing liquid waste system and listed no objections to the variance request. Hearing Officer Sawyer submitted written findings and conclusions and recommended the request for variance be granted. A motion was made by Commissioner Todacheene, seconded by Commissioner Fortner to approve the Variance for Centrado Ranches, Replat E. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

4. Consideration of Staffing Changes for San Juan County Fire and Rescue Department

David Vega, Fire Chief, stated that at the October 3rd Regular Commission meeting, he presented the current state of the San Juan County Fire and Rescue Department which included the staffing challenges due to the decline of volunteer firefighters. The Fire Department leadership reviewed current county call volume, volunteer/staff response, and minimum standards of coverage necessary to meet Insurance Services Office (ISO), incident, and citizen expectations for all fire/medical related calls. To meet current operational needs, the following staffing proposal was recommended to the Commission for consideration:

Addition of Three New Full Time FLSA Firefighter Positions

To address the growing demand for emergency services and ensure the safety of our residents and visitors, the addition of three new Federal Labor Standards Act (FLSA) firefighter positions was proposed. These positions located in Bloomfield will assist in bolstering response capabilities and reduce response times during emergencies.

Addition of Five New Part Time-Temporary Firefighter Positions

In an effort to add qualified, trained, professional firefighters without the provision of benefits, San Juan County would like to experiment with the hiring 5 new part-time temporary firefighters. These positions would work less than 20 hours per week, in accommodation with current full-time firefighter employment schedules.

Reclassification of Five Positions

In conjunction with adding new firefighter positions, the reclassification of five existing positions within our organization was proposed. This involves reassigning individuals from administrative or support roles to frontline firefighting positions, ensuring that we have a stronger presence in the field when needed. The proposal reclassifies 3 current division chief positions to 3 FLSA Battalion Chief positions. In addition, two current positions would be reclassified to Deputy Fire Marshal and Special Services Battalion Chief. The estimated annual recurring cost of these staffing changes would be approximately \$250,000 and would come from the general fund. Staff recommended these changes occur after January 1, 2024, following consolidation of the fire districts.

Chief Vega responded to Commissioner Todacheene's question from the previous Commission Meeting regarding the amount of enlisted female firefighters. Chief Vega stated that there are 56 females within the fire department- 6 administrative and 50 firefighters. The Commission asked various questions. A motion was made by Commissioner Fortner, seconded by Commissioner McDaniel to approve the Staffing Changes for San Juan County Fire and Rescue Department. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

5. Consideration of Notice of Intent to Amend and Restate San Juan County Ordinance No. 49, Fire and Emergency Services Administration

Joe Sawyer, County Attorney, briefed the Commission that at the last Commission Meeting, Chief Vega summarized that it is necessary to make some changes in the administration of San Juan County Fire & Rescue in response to the lack of volunteer firefighters and not being able to adequately staff all the districts. The amendments to Ordinance No. 49 will consolidate all the fire districts into a single department, combining all equipment, resources, and personnel. Also, the San Juan County Fire Chief's Association is dissolved, and the name change from Fire Department to Fire and Rescue is reflected in the amended Ordinance. The Notice of Intent to Amend and Restate will be scheduled by the Legal Department for publication in the Farmington Daily Times and the Ordinance will be placed on the November 14th Commission Meeting agenda to request adoption at that time. A motion was made by Commissioner Fortner, seconded by Commissioner Todacheene to approve the Notice of Intent to Amend and Restate San Juan County Ordinance No. 49, Fire and Emergency Services Administration. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

6. Consideration of Approval of Resolution No. 23-24-23, Declaring San Juan County as "Film Friendly"

Devin Neeley, Public Relations & Film Manager, indicated that since 2020, San Juan County has been working to build the infrastructure of the area to support the film industry. Through a grant from the New Mexico State Legislator, San Juan County purchased and remodeled the Totah Theater to serve as an industry hub and has recently completed construction on a backlot

to serve the industry. This endeavor has been in addition to the commitment of Tonya Stinson at the Farmington Film Office over the years. Resolution No. 23-24-23 reaffirms San Juan County's Commitment to being a "Film Friendly" county and invites productions to take advantage of the area's natural beauty and the State's tax rebates. Chairman Lanier recognized Senator William Sharer, Senator Steven Neville, Tonya Stinson, Mr. Neeley, and the previous County Commissioners for their efforts in promoting our County to the film industry. The Commission asked various questions. A motion was made by Commissioner Todacheene, seconded by Commissioner Fortner to approve Resolution No. 23-24-23, Declaring San Juan County as "Film Friendly." Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

7. **Consideration of Notice of Intent to Adopt San Juan County Ordinance No. 124, an Ordinance Repealing a County Local Option Gross Receipts Tax on any Person Engaging in Business within the Area of the County located within the Valley Water and Sanitation District**

Joe Sawyer, County Attorney, explained that Ordinance No. 124 repeals Ordinance No. 104, which purpose was to impose an excise tax of one-fourth of one percent (.25%) of the gross receipts of any person engaging in business within the area of San Juan County located within the Valley Water and Sanitation District (VWSD). VWSD was dissolved on September 27, 2023, pursuant to NMSA 1978, Section 4-53-6 at a meeting held for that purpose. The functions of the VWSD have been assumed by the Town of Kirtland, who on September 13, 2022, imposed a tax of .25% of the gross receipts of the Kirtland to help cover the expense. As a result of the Town of Kirtland's imposition of the .25% gross receipts tax, the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department stopped collecting the VWSD tax. Although the tax is no longer being collected, repeal of Ordinance No. 104 is necessary to prevent confusion or error. The Notice of Intent to Adopt will be scheduled by the Legal Department to be published in the Daily Times and the adoption of the Ordinance will be placed on the November 14, 2023 Commission Meeting agenda for consideration. A motion was made by Commissioner Todacheene, seconded by Commissioner Fortner to approve the Notice of Intent to Adopt San Juan County Ordinance No. 124, an Ordinance Repealing a County Local Option Gross Receipts Tax on any Person Engaging in Business within the Area of the County located within the Valley Water and Sanitation District. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

8. **Consideration of Administrative Office of the Courts Grant Application for District Court Projects**

Judge Curtis Gurley, Chief Judge of the 11th Judicial District Court, expressed his gratitude to the Commission and announced that at the recent Legislative Session, funding was allocated statewide to plan, design, construct, renovate, furnish, and/or equip district court facilities. The Court has the opportunity to apply for the funding that will be used to expand the building in Aztec. The application requires that the County matches 50%, an estimated \$675,000, of the total cost of the project. At the time of remodeling of the courthouse in 2014, there were 39 employees, now there are 53 with 6 additional approved positions (1 in FY2024 and 5 in FY2025) resulting in the need for additional space. Jodie Schwebel, District Court Executive Officer, indicated that the application must be submitted to the Administrative Office of the Court by October 27th; a commitment from Mike Stark, County Manager, to seek Commission approval must also be submitted with the application. Carlyn Rodahl, Rodahl & Hummell Architecture, stated that an additional 2,000 square feet will be constructed where the current

employee courtyard is. Mike Stark, County Manager confirmed that capital funds are sufficient to meet the required 50% match and a resolution to ratify the commitment will be presented to the Commission at a future Commission Meeting. The Commission asked various questions. A motion was made by Commissioner Fortner, seconded by Commissioner Todacheene to authorize the County Manager to participate in the application to the Administrative Office of the Courts for the District Court matching funds legislative appropriation and to enter into a resolution to accompany the application. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

Report from County Manager

Mike Stark announced the following:

- San Juan County was not a recipient of the four-state area of the Western Interstate Hydrogen Hub application to the Department of Energy. There were only two recipients of funding on the East coast; however, efforts will continue to pursue hydrogen hub projects at a State level.
- The next Commission meeting is November 14th and will be the only meeting in November

Reports From Elected Officials And Department Heads

Commissioner Fortner announced that San Juan County Rotary will have a Rotary clean-up event on November 4th at 8:00 a.m. beginning at Desert View Family Counseling.

Chairman Lanier encouraged the community to get out and vote.

Tanya Shelby, County Clerk, stated that on Saturday, October 21st the Early Voting Alternate Locations will open at the Farmington Museum at Gateway Park, Farmington Public Library, Bloomfield Cultural Center, CCSD Business Office, and Newcomb Fire Station.

Commissioner Todacheene announced that she will be attending the Council of Government meeting in Milan, on October 18th.

Devin Neeley, Public Relations & Film Manager, invited the Commission to the ribbon cutting event at the San Juan County Backlot Village on November 9th at 2:00 p.m.

Steven Saavedra, Deputy County Manager, stated that a committee has been formed to elicit an increased response and provide concise results in regard to the upcoming Employee Satisfaction Survey.

Aaron Chavez, Executive Director of the San Juan Water Commission, invited the Commission to attend the 2023 Colorado River Water Users Association Conference held in Las Vegas, NV on December 13-15, 2023.

Porter Smith, Project Manager, updated the Commission regarding the demolition of the PNM San Juan Generating Station.

Comments / Input From The General Public

None

Adjourn

Being no further business, Chairman Lanier adjourned the meeting at 5:45 p.m.

APPROVED THIS 14TH DAY OF NOVEMBER 2023

BY THE SAN JUAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:



Chairman Steve Lanier




Chairman Pro-Tem John T. Beckstead




GloJean Todacheene

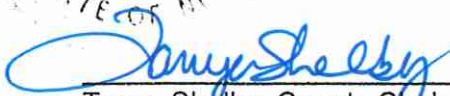


Terri D. Fortner



Gary McDaniel


SAN JUAN COUNTY
NEW MEXICO
COUNTY CLERK
ATTEST



Tanya Shelby, County Clerk