

New Mexico Land Grant Council (NMLGC)
August 22, 2022 – 10:00am
In Person and Virtual Meeting (Hybrid)
UNM Science and Technology Park
851 University Blvd SE, Suite 202
Albuquerque, NM 87106
Zoom ID: 960 8191 0445

**Final Meeting Minutes
Regular Council Meeting**

1. Call to Order - Roll Call

(Councilor Andrea Padilla retained the responsibilities of Chair as both Chairman Juan Sánchez and Vice- Chair Rebecca Correa Skartwed were absent at the beginning of the meeting. Chairwoman Andrea Padilla called the meeting to order at 10:13am MDT. Roll call of the Council members: Andrea Padilla, Leonard Martínez, and Steve Polaco were present. Councilor Correa Skartwed arrived late. Chairman Juan Sánchez was absent.

2. Introduction of Guests

Andrea Padilla (NMLGC); Steve Polaco (NMLGC); Leonard T. Martínez (NMLGC); Rebecca Correa Skartwed (NMLGC); Arturo Archuleta (NMLGC/LGSP); Jacobo Baca (NMLGC/LGSP); Anissa Baca (NMLGC/LGSP); Ricardo Dow y Anaya (NM Attorney General’s Office); Novela Salazar (NM Attorney General’s Office); Adam Livermore (USFS); Camila Romero (NM State Land Office); Lisa Morrison (BLM); Tim Hagaman (NM EDD); Jennifer Ruyle (USFS – BAER Team); Alex López (Santo Tomás Apóstol del Río de las Trampas Land Grant); Kris Graham Chávez (NRCS); Lew McCreery (Wood Innovations, USFS, Washington, DC); Marc Estrada (Wood innovations lead, USFS R-3); Aurora Valdez (Office of U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich); Michael Luján (Camino Real RD Ranger); Danna Levín Rojo (Professor, UAM, México); Fred Reade; Phillip Clark (San Antonio de las Huertas Land Grant); Sterling Few; Chris Chávez

3. Approval of Agenda

Councilor Leonard Martínez made a motion to approve the agenda; Councilor Steve Polaco seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

- Chair Padilla – aye
- Councilor Martínez - aye
- Councilor Polaco - aye

The motion was passed.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes from July 13, 2022 and July 22, 2022 Council meetings

Councilor Polaco made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of the July 13, 2022 Council meeting; Councilor Martínez seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

- Chair Padilla – aye
- Councilor Martínez - aye
- Councilor Polaco - aye

The motion was passed.

Councilor Polaco made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of the July 22, 2022 Special Council meeting; Councilor Martínez seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Chair Padilla – aye

Councilor Martínez - aye

Councilor Polaco - aye

The motion was passed.

5. Discussion and Possible Action on U.S. Forest Service – Including Wood Innovation Project Presentation

Lew McCreery (USFS, eastern region) presented on the wood innovations grants, which is a partnership between engineering firms and the USFS. Projects in the eastern region of the U.S. have been successful, with the goal of increase use of wood for energy programs. Work from the USFS is done at no cost and the fuel used is the lowest quality fuel possible. The projects use modern wood energy systems that use firewood pellets, wood chips, bark. Emissions from wood systems are preferable to other fuels, including coal. Wood energy systems are used in New England to replace expensive fossil fuels. 35% of Vermont K-12 students attend a school with a wood system. Some systems have automated loaders to run system at night that keep thermal storage tank hot. Financing can come from USDA loans, SBAs, and commercial banks and USDA Rural Development and the USFS offers grants through state programs. Local, state, and tribal governments and school districts are eligible for the USFS community Grant Program, which offers up to \$1 million and up to 35% of capital costs of project. The recently passed infrastructure law includes USFS funding for firewood banks.

Councilor Martínez commented that the Jemez Mountain Schools in Gallina installed one of these systems, but there was not enough biomass facilities to provide and not enough capacity or natural resource access. When inferior biomass was used, the system at Coronado Highschool was ruined and the school is converting back to a traditional (propane) heating system. He asked if in other parts of the nation, they extract fuel from public and private lands. Mr. McCreery responded that the capacity to produce is improving and that USFS is identifying sites in New Mexico, but they have not yet been able to get school districts on board. The USFS has worked with ski areas in California and Colorado, utilizing materials coming from their own fuel reduction efforts. Councilors and staff commented that the program is a great idea but believe there may be issues providing enough wood products and expressed concern that these systems could affect wood gathering that people use to heat their homes. They also asked about the range of costs and systems sizes and discussed potential affect to *leñero* economies and price of wood products for home use. Land grants could potentially be an entity that could provide a wood lot that would hire the *leñeros* and provide the product to multiple schools. Mr. McCreery added that the REFA (Rural Energy for America) Grant program funds wind and solar, but is not used for public facilities and clarified that firewood banks are community groups, typically non-profits that provide firewood at low to no cost to individuals that cannot afford to heat their homes.

Michael Luján (Camino Real RD) reported that the USFS continued to work on fire suppression repair for the Calf Canyon Hermits Peak fire, with the priority being private lands. The USFS is opening more of the Carson and Santa Fe National Forests as repair work is completed. Currently the 17th team is working on repair and one more team will work before they are disbanded in mid-

September. Repair will thereafter fall to Carson National Forest, which will continue work as season weather allows. The primary focus is health and safety, especially with flooding concerns. Some aerial seeding on the uplands has commenced and community fuelwood relief has come in from contingency lines, with fuelwood being provided to Peñasco, Mora, Truchas and Las Vegas. The Trampas and Santa Barbara land grants are getting some funding through state forestry to process, though the wood is uncured green wood. The USFS is working to get the forest open to allow for dead and down fuelwood harvesting and changing product plans to allow for more free use wood permits. Mr. Luján added that the NMLGC has expressed their concern on Sipapu Ski Area expansion plans and reassured that they are in planning stage and nothing has been approved.

Adam Livermore (USFS) introduced himself as the interim legislative affairs liaison for Region 3. Jennifer Ruyle (USFS-BAER) stated that the USFS is preparing requests for funding from the BARF (Burned Area Restoration Fund), where landowners can apply for monies for boundary fencing and interior fencing for allotments. The USFS is working with the New Mexico Acequia Association and the New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts to get this information. FEMA has a deadline of September 2 for funding to repair acequias. Alex López (president, Santo Tomás Apóstol del Río de Las Trampas) reported that the Santo Tomás Apóstol del Río de Las Trampas is working with Santa Bárbara Land Grant to get fuelwood from the burned areas for communities in the Peñasco area. They have 300 cords of wood in a staging area in Rodarte and have prioritized recipients and have received requests for 500 cords of wood from local residents. They are awaiting monies to hire a contractor to do work, but SBLG president Bonifacio Vásquez has had problems getting monies transferred. The Camino Real RD has allowed people to access projects, including the mayordomo project on the former Trampas Land Grant lands. 30 acres are in process right now and they hope to be done before snow falls.

6. Discussion and Possible Action on State Land Office Update

Camila Romero (NM SLO) reported that the Bearcat Project has started and the SLO is meeting on August 23 to discuss removal and transport with a contractor. The Villanueva project is in planning and the SLO wants the project to start no later than October. Councilor Martínez reported that the San Joaquín del Río de Chama Land Grant will be opening their wood lot on August 29, 30 and 31st.

7. Discussion and Possible Action on BLM Update

Lisa Morrison (BLM) reported that the Northern New Mexico Resource Advisory Council is scheduled to meet in Santa Fe on December 1 and 2. Work continued in the Farmington-Mancos-Gallup RMP, including NHPA compliance. No new wood collections areas will be created until the RMP is adopted. The Rio Grande del Norte Plan is on hold until the RMP is done. Invitations for cooperating agencies will go out in early 2023. The BLM also is doing an environmental assessment target shooting in Santa Fe County and has opened up the process for comments through October 24th.

8. Discussion and Action on Natural Resources Issues & Concerns – Local, State and Federal

Mr. Archuleta commented that ENMRD has sent out a survey regarding conservation, seeking definition for the implementation for '30 x 30' programs. Valencia County approved the NROZ, despite protest by concerned local communities, including the Town of Tomé Land Grant.

9. Discussion and Possible Action on Federal and State Legislative Update

Federal

The Council has received no new word on federal legislation. Both bills have received hearings and are in markup. Aurora Valdez (Office of Senator Heinrich) reported that Senator Heinrich's office received the Council's letter regarding fuelwood in Taos County.

State

Anissa Baca (NMLGC/LGSP) reported that she was part of a panel presenting on land grant-merced youth programs for the Interim Land Grant Committee hearing in Taos on August 18 and 19th. Ms. Baca was joined by Chas Robles of the Ancestral Land Conservation Corps. The Arroyo Hondo Arriba Land Grant hosted the committee hearing at UNM Taos and gave presentations from past board members, current board members and their land grant youth mentees. The Grant toured the committee in and around Valdez. (*see packet for handouts and ILGC agenda*). Presentations were also given by the Los Vigiles Land Grant, the NM Acequia Association and the U.S. Forest Service.

Chair Padilla honored Councilor Correa Skartwed, who offered her resignation from the Council. Council members and staff thanked Councilor Correa Skartwed, who had served on the Council since 2019 and on the San Antonio de las Huertas Land Grant board for nearly 10 years.

10. Discussion and Possible Action on Office of the Attorney General & Treaty Division

Novela Salazar and Ricardo Dow y Anaya provided updates on the Land Grant and Acequia repository, thanking all of those that attended. They thanked Mr. Archuleta and Dr. Baca for their assistance and for offering remarks during the July 15th opening. The repository seeks to interview land grant and acequia representatives and does not want to duplicate items in other repositories. The gallery is a snap shot of items in the repository and will mostly be a digital rather than hard copy repository.

11. Discussion and Possible Action on Professional Surveying Services Contract Update and Requests

Contract surveyor Chris Chávez (Territorial Land Surveying) gave a presentation on his process for surveying the Trampas plaza, which gained the 0.6118 acre plaza for the Santo Tomás Apóstol del Río de Las Trampas Land Grant. He discusses the old school house and research that went into creating deed and that surveys needed to meet legal sufficiency as though they would go to court. Las Trampas Land Grant president Alex Lopez was concerned encroachment near the Trampas Church and thanked the Council and Mr. Chavez for his work. The escuelita is up for sale, and the land grants and local acequias are interested in the purchase. Mr. López is requesting additional help from Chris Chavez as the property requires a survey. Mr. Archuleta will follow up with Mr. López to ascertain the details of the request before the Council entertains approving the request.

12. Discussion and Possible Action on FY 2022, FY 2023 & FY 2024 Budgets

No updates were provided as the Council contract with UNM is not in place.

13. Discussion and Possible Action on Land Grant-Merced Assistance Fund

Mr. Archuleta gave an update on the Land Grant-Merced Assistance Fund and what documents will need to be submitted to the NMLGC before distributions begin. Our next deadline is October 1, and distributions should begin taking place during the same month.

14. Discussion and Possible Action on UNM Intergovernmental Services Agreement

Mr. Archuleta gave an update. The Intergovernmental Services Agreement is currently in DFA Legal for review. Once approved, it will be sent to Novela Salazar of the Treaty Division for review and will be put into the UNM system. Once approved, it can be back billed to July 1, 2022.

15. Discussion and Possible Action on Legal Services Contract – Update and Requests

The contract with New Mexico Legal Aid contract is in process. A contract with attorney Joe Lennihan is in process as well, as is a contract with Holland and Hart.

16. Discussion and Possible Action on *United States v. Sandoval*

Councilor Martínez reported that he is working with Dr. LM García y Griego on legal research the *US. v. Sandoval*, which has been cumbersome and onerous. Monica Rodríguez of the San Joaquín Land Grant is assisting.

17. Discussion and Possible Action on Mercedes Unidas Center Update

Councilor Martínez reported that Rhea Serna of New Mexico Mainstreet is back on contract to work with the Mercedes Unidas. Monica Rodríguez working on sealed bid process for an electrician. They are working to determine the location and suitability of the water wells and the number of acre feet water that they own.

18. Discussion and Possible Action on Laguna del Campo Update

Councilor Polaco reported that the Tierra Amarilla Land Grant has met with attorney David Benavides regarding the Laguna del Campo to review the transfer of the deed to the Grant.

19. Discussion and Possible Action on Land Grant Registry Update

None.

20. Discussion and Possible Action on Land Grant Institute / Land Grant Studies Program Update

Arturo Archuleta gave an update on the Land Grant Institute / Studies Program. Dr. Garcia y Griego is continuing work on the Land Grant Institute. Dr. Baca gave an update on the ALGE project.

21. Discussion and Possible Action on Correspondence

Dr. Jacobo Baca gave an update on the various letters submitted on behalf of the Santa Barbara Land Grant (in packet).

22. Discussion and Possible Action on Staff Assignments

Councilor Andrea Padilla had a request regarding internet for the Tomé Land Grant. Mr. Archuleta stated that he is continuing to work on getting assistance form the Congressional delegation on issues with updating EIN numbers with the IRS.

23. Public Comments – Discussion only

None.

24. Miscellaneous Announcements

None.

25. Date and Location for September Council Meeting

The September NMLGC meeting will be held on September 20th, 2022 at 10:00am in Albuquerque, location tbd.

26. Adjournment

Councilor Martínez made a motion to adjourn; Councilor Polaco seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Chair Padilla – aye

Councilor Martínez - aye

Councilor Polaco - aye

The motion was passed. The meeting adjourned at 1:48pm MDT.

Approved:

Chair

Date