

New Mexico Land Grant Council (NMLGC)  
January 17, 2025 – 10:00am  
UNM Continuing Education  
South Building – Room 207  
1634 University Blvd. NE - Albuquerque  
Zoom Meeting I.D. – 924 5926 0456

**Final Meeting Minutes  
Regular Council Meeting**

**1. Call to Order - Roll Call – 10:03am**

Chairman Juan Sánchez called the meeting to order at 10:03 am MST. Roll call of the Council members: Steve Polaco, Monica Rodríguez, Andrea Padilla and Juan Sánchez were present.

**2. Council Potential Quorum Disclosure - none**

**3. Introduction of Guests**

Juan Sánchez (NMLGC); Steve Polaco (NMLGC); Andrea Padilla (NMLGC); Monica Rodríguez (NMLGC); Arturo Archuleta (NMLGC/LGSP); Greta Archuleta (NMLGC); Lisa Rivera Morrison (BLM); Enrique Romero (NM DOJ); Lisa Brown (NM DOJ); Bella Mollard (USFS/Carson NF); Camila Romero (State Land Office); Brian Martínez (Santa Cruz de la Cañada LG); Leonard Martinez (San Joaquín del Río de Chama LG).

**4. Approval of Agenda**

Councilor Polaco made a motion to approve the agenda with said changes; Councilor Padilla seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Councilor Padilla – aye  
Councilor Rodríguez – aye  
Councilor Polaco – aye  
Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

**5. Approval of Meeting Minutes from December 13, 2024 Meeting**

Councilor Padilla made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of the December 13, 2024 Regular Council meeting; Councilor Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Councilor Padilla – aye  
Councilor Rodríguez – aye  
Councilor Polaco – aye  
Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

**6. Discussion and Possible Action on Bureau of Land Management Update**

Lisa Rivera Morrison from the Bureau of Land Management reported that BLM has completed Rio Grande del Norte Plan, the Rio Puerco Plan, and one other plan have been adopted. She also sent information on funding opportunities for fuels management reduction. [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). These

were e-mailed to Arturo and Jacobo. Lisa Rigby is the point of contact for the funding. BLM is still working on the patent request. Lastly, Taos Field Office is also working on land disposals for cemeteries.

### **7. Discussion and Possible Action on U.S. Forest Service Update**

Bella Mollard reported that the Santa Fe National Forest is working on the Upper Pecos Watershed withdrawal. There will be a public meeting with BLM February 26, regarding proposed withdrawal of upper Pecos Watershed. The Carson NF is celebrating Aldo Leopold by opening up his house near Tres Piedras for overnight stays to the general public. Look at recreation.gov to see how to book. They are also doing scoping for Questa Trail between Questa and Red River. These will be more accessible than most of trails on the Carson, they will be completely open trails. She is continuing to work on MOA to move forward with Council and NM Acequia Commission. Councilor Rodriguez reported that the San Joaquín del Río de Chama Land Grant got to visit historic original settlement at the Cañón de Chama with 3 representative of the Santa Fe National Forest, including the Deputy Supervisor. She was thankful for the meeting and opportunity to advance the land grant's future use of the property.

### **8. Discussion and Possible Action on State Land Office Update**

Camila Romero from the State Land Office reported that the fuelwood area in Tres Piedras is still open, and that there is plenty of piñon and juniper fuelwood available. The Villanueva project is on hold, waiting for contractor to finish another job. Once the contractor available they will set up a meeting with the land grant to discuss fuelwood pickup and distribution. Finally, she reported that the Bearcat Project is just waiting for Dee Tarr with Claunch Pinto SWCD to figure out who the contractor is going to be to complete the project. Once the contractor is in place SLO will have another meeting onsite with the land grants.

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

#### *Federal*

No new updates

#### *State*

Arturo Archuleta went over the existing bills concerning land grants for endorsement by the council.

*HB 21* - to amend the Land Grant-Merced Assistance fund to increase the requirement for the first distribution tier to \$100,000 and make the fund non-reverting. The bill is sponsored by Rep. McQueen and endorsed by the Land Grant Interim Committee. Councilor Polaco made the motion to endorse HB 21, seconded by Council Padilla. Chairman Sanchez called roll for the vote,

Councilor Polaco – aye

Councilor Rodríguez – aye

Councilor Padilla – aye

Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

*HB 24* - to amend the Community Governance Attorney Program to increase the number of eligible contracting agencies to house program participants and remove the state-match limitations. The Bill is sponsored by Rep. Miguel García and endorsed by the Land Grant Interim Committee.

Councilor Polaco motioned to endorse the bill as pre-filed, seconded by Councilor Padilla.

Chairman Sanchez called roll for the vote:

- Councilor Polaco – aye
- Councilor Rodríguez – aye
- Councilor Padilla – aye
- Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

HB-24 recommended amendments to pre-filed bill endorsed by the Community Governance Attorney Commission from their meeting held on January 10, 2025. Arturo Archuleta explained the proposed changes. Councilor Padilla moved to endorse the bill; Councilor Polaco seconded.

Chairman Sanchez called the roll for the vote:

- Councilor Polaco – aye
- Councilor Rodríguez – aye
- Councilor Padilla – aye
- Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

HB-25 – Sponsored by Rep. Miguel Garcia and endorsed by the Land Grant Interim Committee to create a Land Grant-Merced Infrastructure Fund, through an annual set aside of Capital Outlay funding. Arturo Archuleta explained that the Acequia leadership from the Acequia Commission and Acequia Association has approached the Land Grant to get support for adding Acequias to the legislation. The fund amount would need to be doubled and the money proportional split 50/50 between the land grants and acequias. Councilor Rodriguez made a motion to sponsor the bill as introduced; Councilor Padilla seconded the motion. Chairman Sanchez called roll for the vote:

- Councilor Polaco – aye
- Councilor Rodríguez – aye
- Councilor Padilla – aye
- Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

Leonard Martínez (San Joaquín del Río de Chama LG) commented on being cautious about adding acequias this late before the session starts.

Councilor Rodríguez then motioned to endorse the proposed amendment to include acequias in the bill, this was 2nded by Councilor Polaco. Chairman Sánchez called roll for the vote:

- Councilor Polaco – aye
- Councilor Rodríguez – aye
- Councilor Padilla – aye
- Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

Arturo Archuleta explained that those are the only bills that have a pre-filed number assigned to them. Councilor Rodríguez indicated that the Senate pre-filed bills are also available online. The Council then reviewed the Senate pre-filed bills and the bills endorsed by the Land Grant Interim Committee.

The first additional bill discussed was the Land Grant exemption from the Sub-Division Act. This bill was endorsed by the Land Grant Interim Committee but has not yet been filed. Councilor Polaco made the motion to endorse, Seconded by Council Padilla. Chairman Sanchez called roll for the vote.

Councilor Polaco – aye  
Councilor Rodríguez – aye  
Councilor Padilla – aye  
Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

Next the Council discussed the bill to recognize the Santa Cruz de la Cañada Land Grant as a political sub-division of the State. The bill has been pre-filed by Senator Leo Jaramillo and was endorsed by the Land Grant Interim Committee. Councilor Padilla made the motion to approve, seconded by Councilor Rodriguez. Chairman Sanchez called roll for the vote.

Councilor Polaco – aye  
Councilor Rodríguez – aye  
Councilor Padilla – aye  
Chairman Sánchez – aye

Mr. Archuleta then mentioned the bill to create a Solar Access Fund. The fund would provide grants for certain entities to do solar projects for community purposes. The bill advocates reached out to Mr. Archuleta at the request of Rep. McQueen and included land grants as eligible entities. Arturo Archuleta relayed to the bill advocates that land grants would definitely take advantage of the fund for their community centers and community water systems. The bill is being pre-filed by incoming House Majority Floor Leader Rep. Szczepanski. Councilor Polaco motioned to endorse the bill, seconded by Councilor Padilla. Chairman Sanchez called roll for the vote.

Councilor Polaco – aye  
Councilor Rodríguez – aye  
Councilor Padilla – aye  
Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

Last, Mr. Archuleta mentioned a bill that was pre-filed by Senator Woods that would require Land Grant Mercedes, Acequias, County Commissions and NM Legislature approval of New Mexico Department of Game and Fish land acquisitions. Councilor Rodríguez made a motion to endorse the legislation, seconded by Councilor Polaco. Chairman Sanchez called roll for the vote.

Councilor Polaco – aye  
Councilor Rodríguez – aye  
Councilor Padilla – aye  
Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

### **10. Discussion and Possible Action on NM Dept. of Justice & Treaty Division Update**

Updates on projects from Assistance Attorney General Lisa Brown. She reported that Nicole Silva with the Treaty Division is sending out media updates and will be putting together a legislative tracker. DOJ is also monitoring and tracking pending litigation and rule-making that might affect land grants and acequias. They will be coordinating quarterly trainings land grants and acequias

starting in the Spring. The DOJ's memo regarding academic scholarships to heirs by land grants has not received any inquiries yet. They are actively following San Antonio de Las Huertas Land Grant taxation valuation protest and will also be looking at conservation easements for land grants and acequias, to determine if those will be useful tools for land grants.

Enrique Romero, Director of the DOJ Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo Division also mentioned they are looking into historic preservation for land grants and acequias and looking to determine how historic preservation affects planning and zoning. They will also be getting another Honor's Attorney and are looking into entering into representation agreements with individual land grants and acequias that have a public interest element. One example is with Cristobal de la Serna.

Mr. Archuleta mentioned DOJ assisting with access to Game and Fish properties to land grant communities for traditional uses.

Councilor Rodríguez asked about *U.S. v. Sandoval* litigation status and Enrique Romero mentioned that they would be sending out letter to the affected land grants in the coming weeks.

Councilor Polaco asked about the DOJ's work on the Tameling case, and Enrique Romero stated they would be having discussions with Council staff about that in the future. Mr. Romero also mentioned that DOJ has reached out to State Engineer regarding water adjudications in Tierra Amarilla regions to determine the status.

### **11. Discussion and Possible Action on Natural Resource Issues & Concerns - Local, State and Federal**

None.

### **12. Discussion and Possible Action on Council FY 2025 Budget**

Arturo Archuleta went over the Budget update report the following expenditures to date:

\$28,650 in Legal Services Contract; \$3,781.16 in Council in-state travel; \$185,921.65 in the UNM Intergovernmental Services Agreement.

### **13. Discussion and Possible Action UNM FY 2025 Intergovernmental Services Agreement**

Mr. Archuleta presented Pay Request #3 for \$40,969.03, including \$28,148.91 in project personnel, \$521.29 in personnel in-state travel; \$3,500 to the UNM Clinical Law Program; \$1,970.66 in facility rental, and \$6,828.17 in F&A.

Councilor Polaco made a motion to approve Pay Request #3 for \$40,969.03; Councilor Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

- Councilor Polaco – aye
- Councilor Rodríguez – aye
- Councilor Padilla – aye
- Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

**14. Discussion and Possible Action on Legal Services Contract Update & Requests**

Mr. Archuleta reported the departure of one staff attorney and the Community Governance attorney from Legal Aid.

**15. Discussion and Possible Action on Professional Surveyor Services Contract Update & Requests**

Arturo Archuleta presented the first pay request under the new contract for surveyor services for work done on easement in Arroyo Hondo de Arriba. The total for the pay request # 01172025 being \$3,895.59 for 27 hours of work.

Councilor Padilla made a motion to approve pay request #01172025 for surveying services; 2nded by Councilor Polaco. Chairman Sánchez called the roll for the vote.

Councilor Polaco – aye

Councilor Rodríguez – aye

Councilor Padilla – aye

Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion passed.

**16. Discussion and Possible Action on Land Grant Merced Institute Update**

Mr. Archuleta mentioned that the Institute is in discussions with Malcolm Ebright on additional purchases from his collection. Mr. Archuleta also mentioned that a new student hire will be coming on board in a few weeks.

**17. Discussion and Possible Action on Land Grant Registry Update**

None.

**18. Discussion and Possible Action on Correspondence**

None.

**19. Discussion and Possible Action on Staff Assignments**

None.

**20. Public Comments – discussion only**

**21. Miscellaneous Announcements**

Mr. Archuleta reminded that Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo Day at State Legislature will be on February 3 and that the keynote speaker will be Moises Morales. Leonard Martinez (San Joaquín del Río de Chama LG) reported on their meeting with the U.S Forest Service regarding the irrigation project on their former common lands and that the Land Grant would like to lease the water and eventually lease the 1,500 acres to be able to do more improvements.

**22. Date and Location for February Council Meeting**

The February 2025 New Mexico Land Grant Council meeting will be held on February 21, 2025 in Albuquerque at UNM Continuing Education at 10:00 am.

**23. Adjournment**

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

Roll call vote:

Councilor Polaco – aye

Councilor Rodríguez – aye

Councilor Padilla – aye

Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed. The meeting adjourned at 11:31am MST.

**Approved:**

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Chair

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Date