

New Mexico Land Grant Council (NMLGC)
October 17, 2025 – 10:00am
UNM Continuing Education
South Building – Room 207
1634 University Blvd. NE - Albuquerque
Zoom Meeting I.D. - 998 9368 2180

**Meeting Minutes
Regular Council Meeting**

1. Call to Order - Roll Call

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

2. Introduction of Guests

Juan Sánchez (NMLGC); Steve Polaco (NMLGC); Monica Rodríguez (NMLGC); Andrea Padilla (NMLGC); Arturo Archuleta (NMLGC/LGMI); Greta Archuleta (NMLGC); Anissa Baca (NMLGC/LGMI); Mark Meyers (SLO); Miguel Torrez (Santa Cruz de La Cañada Land Grant); Manuel Garcia y Griego (Cañon de Carnué Land Grant); Bella Mollard (USFS); Rachel Montoya (TLF); Randolph Chavez (Resident of Torreón); Lenora Chavez (Resident of Torreón); Lisa Brown (DOJ); Eric Chavez (Sen. Ben Ray Luján)

3. Approval of Agenda

Councilor Polaco made a motion to approve the agenda; Councilor Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

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

The motion was passed.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes from September 26, 2025 Regular Council Meeting

Councilor Padilla made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of the September 26, 2025 Regular Council meeting; Councilor Polaco seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

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

The motion was passed.

5. Discussion and Possible Action on State Land Office Update

Mr. Meyers stated that the Bear Cat project is in the works, and they are trying to find more funding for the project. The State Land Office will share updates as they come along.

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

None.

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

Bella Mollard stated that the Encino Vista project is set to begin soon, however, given the government shutdown, there is a lot of shifting. Many Forest Service employees have been furloughed, and many duties are shifting to align with the priorities of the current administration. Ms. Mollard also mentioned that the Borrego Burn has been postponed, and fuelwood permits are available online. She shared that she and other US Forest Service employees presented to the Land Grant Committee earlier in October.

Councilor Rodriguez requested to see the Encino Vista plan and Ms. Mollard will provide more information soon.

Councilor Rodriguez asked if the EQUIP due date had been pushed back. Applications were initially due today (October 17). Ms. Mollard later let the Council know that it was best to abide by the original due date to avoid confusion or disqualifications.

Councilor Monica commented on the Encino Vista project. She suggested that the Forest Service find ways to support local communities so that timber profits stay within New Mexico. Ms. Mollard provided information in the chat regarding wood banks, fuelwood grants and programs (see below).

Leonard Martinez asked about the Llaves Cemetery and a water pump was of interest to the San Joaquin del Rio de Chama Land Grant, but was either given or sold out of state. Councilor Rodriguez and Mr. Martinez stressed the importance of the larger pump, as the land grant was interested in using it for their irrigation project, and is now trying to make due with a smaller pump.

Mr. Martinez also inquired of the MOU with the Council and stressed this importance, since the irrigation project cannot begin without this MOU in place.

Ms. Mollard also included the following links and information in the Zoom chat:

Community Wildfire Defense Grants (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/fire/grants/cwdg>)

The USDA Forest Service has awarded Alliance for Green Heat \$1.4 million to carry out the fourth year of the Firewood Bank Assistance Program. (<https://www.firewoodbanks.org/applynow>)

USFS Wood Innovations (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/science-technology/energy-forest-products/wood-innovation>)

Wood Innovations Grant Program

Community Wood Grant Program

Wood Products Infrastructure Assistance (WPIA) Grant

Firewood permits for the Carson National Forest are now available for purchase through a new online E-Permit system. Permits may be purchased by computer or mobile device any time, eliminating travel to your local Forest Service office.

Firewood permits, including free-use permits, will still be available at local Forest Service offices.

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

Federal

Rachel Montoya (Rep. Teresa Leger Fernandez) stated that there are currently no major updates given the shutdown. Rep. Leger Fernandez joined the October 12th press conference that supported infrastructure funding for land grants and acequias at the state level.

Mr. Archuleta stated that he testified on the Small Cemetery Conveyance Act in front of the Natural Resources Committee in Washington DC. This bill has been carried by Rep. Teresa Leger-Fernandez.

Eric Chavez from Sen. Ben Ray Luján's office stated that the federal government is still in the midst of a shutdown, so there were no major updates.

State

Three bills (in packet) were adopted by the Land Grant Interim Committee at their last hearing on October 7.

The Council decided to wait on bill endorsements until the bills are assigned numbers.

9. Discussion and Possible Action on NM Dept. of Justice & Treaty Division Updates and Requests

Mr. Enrique Romero gave the following updates to the Council regarding projects the Treaty Division has been working on:

They have worked on legal representation agreements including filing an amicus brief for the Cristobal de La Serna Land Grant. They also represented the San Antonio de Las Huertas Land Grant at a county tax protest and are currently representing the Manzano Land Grant in a quiet title claim. The Treaty Division also met with the Cebolleta Land Grant concerning a spring the land grant wanted access to.

Mr. Romero also stated that Treaty Division staff presented to a Historic Preservation Conference and Meghan Veech is currently working on a cannabis guide for acequia commissioners.

Mr. Romero also stated that an interview for the Community Governance Attorney Program will take place later today (October 17). He is also investigating a procurement violation from a land grant.

Dr. Manuel Garcia y Griego stated he would like to share a small point to the Treaty Division regarding the U.S. v. Sandoval case. The case's interpretation is based on Spanish law, not Mexican. He referenced the paper where he found this information and promised to send it to the Treaty Division.

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

None.

11. Discussion and Possible Action on Council FY 2026 Budget

Mr. Archuleta presented a budget updat (in packet), which includes travel for the month of September, salary and fringe.

Mr. Archuleta also presented the invoices for tort liability and bonds for the Santa Cruz de La Cañada Land Grant, which the Council had agreed to pay for in a previous meeting.

Councilor Padilla made a motion to approve invoice GSD-122993 for the Santa Cruz de La Cañada Land Grants tort liability for \$1,000; Councilor Polaco seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

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

The motion was passed.

Councilor Padilla made a motion to approve invoices GSD-122814 and GSD-122815 for two bonds for Santa Cruz de La Cañada's board members for \$920 each; Councilor Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

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

The motion was passed.

Mr. Archuleta stated that he has spoke with OVPR at UNM to see it would be possible for him to provide direct law services to land grant. He would like to start this process by receiving access to the LexisNexis data base and use the budgeted \$600 for subscriptions to go towards this purchase.

Councilor Polaco made a motion to approve the purchase which allows access to the LexisNexis database for ; Councilor Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

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

The motion was passed.

12. Discussion and Possible Action UNM FY 2026 Intergovernmental Services Agreement

Mr. Archuleta presented Pay Request #2 for \$42,929.11, including \$30,529.31 in project personnel, \$1,970.66 in facility rental, and \$7,154.85 in F&A.

Councilor Padilla made a motion to approve Pay Request #2 for \$42,929.11; Councilor Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Councilor Padilla – aye

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

The motion was passed.

13. Discussion and Possible Action on Legal Services 2026 Contract Update & Legal Services Requests

None.

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

Mr. Archuleta presented two request from the Santa Cruz de La Cañada and San Joaquin del Rio de Chama Land Grants for surveyor services.

Councilor Padilla made a motion to approve the addition of Santa Cruz de La Cañada (for an easement) to the list; Councilor Polaco seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

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

The motion was passed.

Councilor Polaco made a motion to approve the San Joaquin del Rio de Chama Land Grant to the list; Councilor Padilla seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

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

The motion was passed.

15. Discussion and Possible Action on Land Grant Registry Update

None.

16. Discussion and Possible Action on Correspondence

None.

17. Discussion and Possible Action on Staff Assignments

Mr. Archuleta updated the Council on the developments on the heirs list staff is creating for the Torreon Land Grant.

18. Public Comments – discussion only

Councilor Padilla shared that there has been many off-highway vehicles, such as ATVs and UTVs driving on Tomé's roads. She asked where she can find the rules for state highways and is concerned someone might get hurt.

Leonard Martinez from the San Joaquin del Rio de Chama Land Grant stated that the land grant is creating a partnership to come up with a plan to clean up water sheds. He also met with the Soil and Water Conservation District who might give the land grant money for seeding through a Healthy Soils Grant.

19. Miscellaneous Announcements

Anissa Baca stated that capital outlay is open starting November 3 and closes on December 12.

Councilor Padilla let everyone know that the jailsite will be open for Halloween and a holiday crafts fair will be held in Tomé on November 22.

The Manzano Land Grant is having the annual matanza tomorrow (October 18).

20. Date and Location for November Council Meeting

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

21. 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 12:28 pm MDT.

Approved:

Chair

Date