

New Mexico Land Grant Council (NMLGC)
May 29, 2025 – 10:00am
UNM Continuing Education
South Building – Room 207
1634 University Blvd. NE - Albuquerque
Zoom Meeting I.D. - 996 4118 6365

**Final Meeting Minutes
Regular Council Meeting**

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

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

2. Council Potential Quorum Disclosure

None.

3. Introduction of Guests

Juan Sánchez (NMLGC); Steve Polaco (NMLGC); Monica Rodríguez (NMLGC); Andrea Padilla (NMLGC); Arturo Archuleta (NMLGC/LGSP); Anissa Baca (NMLGC/LGSP); Tokey Boswell (BLM – Deputy State Director) Richard Valdez; Ashley Beyer (Office of Sen. Martin Heinrich); Eric Chávez (Office of Senator Ben R. Luján); Bella Mollard (Carson NF); Amanda Luján; Camila Romero (State Land Office); Lisa Brown (NMDOJ); Chris Chávez (Territorial Land Surveying); Louis Gallegos (San Miguel del Bado LG); Julia Nelson (NM State University Graduate student); Leonard Martínez (San Joaquín del Río de Chama LG).

4. Approval of Agenda

Councilor Steve Polaco made a motion to approve the agenda; Councilor Andrea Padilla seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Councilor Rodríguez – aye

Councilor Padilla - aye

Councilor Polaco – aye

Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

5. Approval of Meeting Minutes from May 29, 2025 Regular Council Meeting

Councilor Padilla made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of the May 29, 2025 Regular Council meeting; Councilor Polaco seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Councilor Rodríguez – aye

Councilor Padilla - aye

Councilor Polaco – aye

Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

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

Tokey Boswell (BLM) reported that Lisa Rivera Morrison retired from the BLM and now works with the New Mexico Legislative Council Service. The Carlsbad RMP will be released in the fall, with changes in oil and gas, solar and potash, grazing, habitat and endangered species protections. Funding has also been released for updated revisions of the Farmington RMP and Tent Rocks management plan. Maureen Joe is the contact for Farmington and Sabrina Flores for the Tent Rocks plan. The reopening of Tent Rock has been very successful and co-management with Cochiti Pueblo is going well. Mr. Archuleta commented that he spoke with Lisa Morrison and that she offered her gratitude and will miss the NMLGC. She continued working on the patent request but received no response from their records personnel. Councilor Martínez commented that they needed to postpone the meeting with the BLM that Lisa helped set up and Louis Gallegos (San Miguel del Bado) added that they would be meeting with Taos Field Office director Eric Valencia soon.

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

Bella Mollard reported that Anthony Madrid is now the Forest Supervisor for the Santa Fe National Forest. Ms. Mollard has also reached out to the Coyote Ranger District and asked that they look at areas outside of the Indio Fire burn scar that may be available for fuelwood projects. She also shared that the public comment period on Taos Canyon Restoration Project is open.

Julia Nelson, an NMSU graduate student, gave a presentation in which she talked about her research regarding collaborative forest management, and wood banks created through the Wood for Life Program. The program is a collaborative initiative that collects wood for communities that use firewood for heating and cooking.

8. Discussion and Possible Action on State Land Office Update

Camilla Romero reported that the Villanueva fuelwood project is complete and wood is ready to be hauled out. Arturo Archuleta stated the Council would be able to help fund a portion of the project.

Councilor Polaco made a motion to approve the purchase of permits and removal of wood for the Villanueva Project with a potential expenditure of up to \$6,900; Councilor Padilla seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Councilor Rodríguez – aye

Councilor Padilla - aye

Councilor Polaco – aye

Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

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

Eric Chavez (Sen. Ben Ray Luján) explained what could come with passing the Big Beautiful Bill. Sen. Luján worked on the HCBs relief act which would help Americans that rely services such as Home Services. He also joined other democrats in demanding that President Trump remove military forces in LA. Public Lands proposal is straight from the Representatives' side of the reconciliation bill.

Ashley Beyer (Sen. Henrich) mentioned the public land sale language in the Big Beautiful Bill. While the land sales were supposed to be for affordable housing, she said the language does not explain what type of housing is required. She stated that the it does not protect lands with grazing rights. If this bill passes, the USFS and BLM is required to sell 2-3 million acres of land. Mr. Archuleta analyzed the bill and presented his findings to the Council.

Lisa Brown (DOJ) stated the Treaty Division analyzed the bill and had two major concerns with it. The first is that the bill did not mention valid existing rights, such as water rights. The bill also mentions the Secretary of the DOI “may” consider local governments upon the sales, not shall. Valid existing rights – does this apply to water rights (rights for land grants and acequias). Chairman Juan Sanchez asked the Congressional Delegation’s staff to please keep Council staff in mind when recommending changes to the bill. Mr. Chavez requested feedback from the Council in writing so the delegation can consider how to move forward.

State

Mr. Archuleta presented the Land Grant Committee hearing schedule. The next meeting will be in the Las Vegas on July 14-15. Other hearings are as follows.

July 14-15 – Taos / Hermits Peak

August 14-15 – Tierra Amarilla

Sept 8-9 – Manzano

October 7 – Santa Fe

It is a priority of the NMLGC to have legislation endorsed during this 2025 interim season.

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

Ms. Brown stated that the San Antonio de Las Huertas Land Grant’s tax exempt status had a favorable decision, however, was been appealed. They are going to work with the land grant on moving forward.

Ms. Brown has also stated that they have received a deed from the Dept. of Game and Fish for the Laguna del Campo property. They are working with Legal Aid to review the deed.

Ms. Brown stated that the Treaty Division has also been working an appeal for the Juan Bautista Baldes Land Grant. She asked if the Council would like the Treaty Division to submit an amicus brief on behalf of the Council.

Councilor Polaco made a motion to allow the Treaty Division the option to submit an amicus brief for the Juan Bautista Baldes Land Grant; Councilor Padilla seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Councilor Rodríguez – aye

Councilor Padilla - aye

Councilor Polaco – aye

Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

Councilor Padilla made a motion to allow the Treaty Division to research and allow the Council to be involved in the San Antonio de Las Huertas Land Grant's tax protest appeal; Councilor Polaco seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Councilor Rodríguez – aye

Councilor Padilla - aye

Councilor Polaco – aye

Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

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

None.

12. Discussion and Possible Action on FY 2026 Land Grant-Merced Assistance Fund Certifications and Approval Process

Council staff presented the seven certifications to be used in the FY 2026 Land Grant Merced Assistance Fund distribution process (in packet). These are the same seven certification forms used last year and there is no need to adopt additional forms. NMDOJ suggested that the forms be passed via resolution. NMLGC staff can create a resolution template (sample resolution) for all seven certifications.

Councilor Padilla made a motion to approve all certifications forms, requesting that staff create a resolution template to send to land grants with the forms; Councilor Polaco seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Councilor Rodríguez – aye

Councilor Padilla - aye

Councilor Polaco – aye

Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

13. Discussion and Possible Action on Council FY 2025, FY 2026, and FY 2027 Budget *FY 2025*

Mr. Archuleta reported that in FY 2025, 100% of the legal service contract has been expended, \$1,800 remains in out of state travel, \$32,372 remains in staff salary and fringe, \$29,353.90 remains in the surveyor contract (though bills are pending). Some reversion in the Quickbooks support is likely to happen. The community and economic development contract never materialized, nor did the natural resource contract. The youth fly fishing camps were funded at \$5,000.00. Trial costs will help clear law clinic waiver budget. \$440,452.11 expended of \$541,099.98 contract to date.

FY 2026

No updates.

FY 2027

The budget request for FY 2027 was submitted to DFA a few weeks ago. The Council also wants to submit to the Legislative Finance Council its FY 2026 budget and FY 2027 request and request to present at an LFC hearing.

14. Discussion and Possible Action UNM FY 2025 Intergovernmental Services Agreement

Councilor Padilla made a motion to approve New Mexico Corrections Industries invoice 61345 for \$75.00; Councilor Polaco seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Councilor Rodríguez – aye

Councilor Padilla - aye

Councilor Polaco – aye

Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

Councilor Polaco made a motion to approve The Uncivilized Outdoorsman Invoice #1-NMLGC-2025 for \$2,500.00; Councilor Polaco seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Councilor Rodríguez – aye

Councilor Padilla - aye

Councilor Polaco – aye

Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

Councilor Padilla made a motion to approve CB4U invoice 7115 for \$161.44; Councilor Polaco seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Councilor Rodríguez – aye

Councilor Padilla - aye

Councilor Polaco – aye

Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

Mr. Archuleta presented Pay Request #8 for \$41,800.51, including \$28,055.65 in project personnel, \$1,715.70 in in state travel; \$2,526.72 in out of state travel, \$565.03 in quickbooks support \$1,970.66 in facility rental, and \$6,966.75 in F&A.

Councilor Padilla made a motion to approve Pay Request #8 for \$41,800.51 Councilor Polaco seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Councilor Rodríguez – aye

Councilor Padilla - aye

Councilor Polaco – aye

Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

Councilor Padilla made a motion to approve the FY 2026 Intergovernmental Service Agreement with UNM; Councilor Polaco seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

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

The motion was passed.

15. Discussion and Possible Action on Legal Services 2025 & 2026 Contract Update & Requests

Councilor Polaco made a motion to approve New Mexico Legal Aid Pay Request #5 for \$17,970 for 119.8 hours of work; Councilor Padilla seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

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

The motion was passed.

Councilor Padilla made a motion to approve New Mexico Legal Aid as the legal services contractor, and to approve the FY 2026 legal service professional service contract and scope of work for \$60,000.00; Councilor Polaco seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

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

The motion was passed.

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

Chris Chávez (Territorial Land Surveying) made a presentation regarding recent surveying work. Councilor Polaco made a motion to approve payment for Territorial Land Surveying LLC invoice 06202025 for \$6,784.43; Chair JS seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

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

The motion was passed.

17. Discussion and Possible Action Land Grant Merced Institute Update

The latest issue of *El Grito de las Mercedes* went out in early June. The LGMI also received word that famed land grant attorney and historian Malcolm Ebright passed away.

18. Discussion and Possible Action on Land Grant Registry Update

None.

19. Discussion and Possible Action on Correspondence

None.

20. Discussion and Possible Action on Staff Assignments

Mr. Archuleta reported that the Torreón Land Grant will need assistance conducting its next election as the current board is not functioning and there is distrust in the community with opposition to current leadership, making a path forward hard to find. Councilor Padilla made a motion that Council staff assist the Torreón Land Grant with their election and reorganization; Councilor Polaco seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

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

The motion was passed.

21. Public Comments – discussion only

Councilor Polaco reported that the Mercedes Unidas Center needs a new well. Councilor Martínez commented that they should go through CES to get a well drilling company. Councilor Rodríguez commented that HED held a comment period for changes to the Community Governance Attorney Commission, which passed the legislature in March. No comments were made and the commission (which she sits on) will meet on June 26, 2025 from 9 am-11am. Mr. Archuleta reported that he and Mr. Baca attended a DFA IPDD convening on June 9th of organizations that provide technical support for local public bodies.

22. Miscellaneous Announcements

Anissa Baca (NMLGC/LMI) reported that all ICIPs are finished and met the June 13th deadline. CPMS updates are due at the end of month. Mr. Archuleta commented that the DFA is transitioning to a new system that will replace the current ICIP and CPMS where land grants can complete draw down requests on capital outlay funding and other functions all on one site. The issue is that all entities have an access code with only two authenticated users per entity (land grant) and DFA will restrict people with access. This means that NMLGC staff will have a hard time assisting land grants if we don't have access to the land grant's user interface.

23. Date and Location for July Council Meeting

The July 2025 New Mexico Land Grant Council meeting will be held on July 11, 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 2:26pm MDT.

Approved:

Chair

Date