

New Mexico Land Grant Council (NMLGC)
June 22, 2026 – 10:00am
UNM Continuing Education
South Building – Room 207
1634 University Blvd. NE - Albuquerque
Zoom Meeting I.D. - 910 3594 5352

**Final Meeting Minutes
Regular Council Meeting**

1. Call to Order - Roll Call

Chairman Juan Sánchez called the meeting to order at 10:05am MDT. Roll call of the Council members: Monica Rodríguez, Andrea Padilla, and Juan Sánchez were present.

2. Introduction of Guests

Juan Sánchez (NMLGC); Monica Rodríguez (NMLGC); Andrea Padilla (NMLGC); Arturo Archuleta (NMLGC/LGMI); Anissa Baca (NMLGC/LGMI); Greta Archuleta (NMLGC); Jacobo Baca (NMLGC/LGMI); Kendra Lucero Mateucci (San Antonio de las Huertas LG); Lenora Chavez; Camila Romero (NM SLO); Eric Chavez (Office of Sen. Ben R. Luján); Olivia Romo (Office of Sen. Martin Heinrich); A.J. Pacheco (Office of Congresswoman Teresa Leger Fernández); Tokey Boswell (BLM); Rita Padilla Gutierrez.

3. Approval of Agenda

Councilor Padilla made a motion to approve the agenda; Councilor Rodríguez seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Councilor Padilla – aye

Councilor Rodríguez – aye

Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes from May 29, 2026 Regular Council Meeting

Councilor Padilla made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of the May 29, 2026 Regular Council meeting; Councilor Rodríguez seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Councilor Padilla – aye

Councilor Rodríguez – aye

Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

5. Discussion and Possible Action on DFA Local Government Division and Infrastructure Planning and Development Division

Anissa Baca (NMLGC/LGMI) reported that ICIPs are due July 1st. She has been assisting land grants update and submit their ICIPs and the process is going smoothly thus far. Mr. Archuleta (NMLGC/LGMI) reported that he has been working with the LGD on the O'Neill estate issue. Councilor Rodríguez commented that the San Joaquín del Río de Chama Land Grant is concerned that DFA did not respond to a NOO submitted in March, which was later denied, but subsequently

approved a later NOO, which through them into a tailspin. The PARS system is hard to navigate and causes delays. They submitted a letter to DFA and their treasurer resigned in part because of this confusion.

6. Discussion and Possible Action on State Land Office Update

Camila Romero (NM SLO) reported that the Bearcat Project will be extended through July. The project has yielded more than 70 cords of wood and once chipping of slash is completed, more cutting and hauling will take place.

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

Tokey Boswell reported that BLM has been focused on oil and gas sales. Steve Pearce was sworn in as the new BLM Director. Staff is working on the next batch of land grant patents. Mr. Boswell reported that he attended a New Mexico energy policy symposium, where they discussed companies and state projects with grant funding available for smaller projects. Land grant communities are small and appropriately sized for energy consistency programs. He also provided Screw worm updates. The Carlsbad Field Office (CFO) has several active grazing allotments near Eunice, NM, that have the potential to be affected by the potential of NWS presence in Eunice, and the animal movement restrictions in place due to the NMLB's designated infested zone and adjacent surveillance zone. Fortunately, the case in Eunice is thought to be an isolated case. NMLB provided a new resource, [New Mexico Interactive Map of NWS Zones - Be Alert, Not Alarmed!](#) which illustrates the Lea County infestation and surveillance zones.

8. Discussion and Possible Action U.S. Forest Service Update

The packet includes press releases on the Osha Fire. Kendra Lucero Matteucci stated that the fire was discovered Friday by heirs and was out by Saturday.

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

Federal

Eric Chavez (Office of Senator Ben R. Luján) reported that the Senate Republicans will soon drop their version of the Farm Bill. Once they introduce it we will have a better chance to see where they will go. Senate Democrats will introduce their version there after. Senator Ben R. Luján sits on the Agriculture Committee and the Acequia Act and the Farmer Education Act are in the Democratic version of the bill. The Senator and Senator Heinrich introduced the Fence Act, which allow farmers to get ECP funding for virtual fencing. Both Senators are calling on the USDA to respond to new world screw worm. They sent a letter to USFS Chief Tom Schultz regarding the Gamma Resources uranium mining request and no application has been approved. Carson National Forest supervisor James Durán also stated that nothing has been approved as no clean application has been submitted. Councilor Padilla discussed the Cristo Rey pilgrimage in southern New Mexico and how the Trump administration is using imminent domain to put up a wall. Chairman Sanchez added that he will reach out to Johnathan Black regarding farmers and small producers in the Farm Bill. Mr. Archuleta asked for updates regarding the traditional use bill; Mr. Chavez responded that he will update soon.

Olivia Romo (Office of senator Martin Heinrich) held a roundtable with Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee where they discussed the effect of the closure of the Strait of Hormuth, including the effect on fertilizer, fuel costs, transportation, and food. With Senator Luján, he sent a letter to Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who, with the administration pulled the U.S. out of the WHO,

which effects public health preparedness. He also sponsored the America the Beautiful Act, which would reauthorize the NPS Legacy Act, which provides for improvement projects for the USFS, NPS, and wildlife refuges. Rita Padilla Gutierrez commented that Senator Heinrich should not have voted to confirm Mark Wayne Mullins and wanted her disappointment and anger on record.

A.J. Pacheco (Office of Congresswoman Teresa Leger Fernández) reported that Congresswoman Teresa Leger Fernández is working on the committee markup of the Traditional Use Bill. They are checking with Associate USFS Chief French to see if they want to offer technical assistance on the bill. They are working on the cemetery bill as well. Both she and Representative Gabe Vásquez co-sponsored in screwworm legislation. She will visit the state in early July and will focus on uranium mining.

State

Mr. Archuleta reported that the next interim committee hearing will be in July. The schedule is as follows.

- July 15-16 – Santa Fe
- August 25-26 – Española
- September 16-17 – Taos
- October 14 – Santa Fe

10. Discussion and Possible Action on Natural Resource Issues & Concerns

Tajique, Chilili, and Tierra Amarilla submitted solar access Technical Assistance Program applications.

11. Discussion and Possible Action on NM Department of Justice Treaty Division Update & Requests

Enrique Romero (NMDOJ Treaty Division) introduced Treaty Division summer interns Madeleine Casad, an NYU law student, and Kamden Vujevic, an undergrad from James Madison University. He reported that Lisa Brown left the Division and Megan is on annual leave. They do not have a permanent replacement for Lisa Brown, but Nick Estrada will join as a CGAC fellow and will start in mid-August and practice once he passes bar in October; he will do legal research and analysis until then. The Division met with NMLGC staff regarding the Las Vegas Land Grant memorial. The Division will reach out to court to understand appointments, the current board and other processes, and then will reach out to stakeholders and discuss how to move forward. The Division has also continued to work with the Cristobal de la Serna Land Grant and meetings with the Taos County commissioners, Assessors, etc., have been productive. They will present to the ILGC in September.

Litigation has kept the Division busy. The Manzano Land Grant case received its final order, which upheld the tax sale. They do not anticipate an appeal and plaintiffs needed to move their personal property. This will conclude NMDOJ representation of Manzano. For San Antonio de las Huertas, they filed a motion to stay the proceedings on the Newville case. They filed a petition for writ of error arguing that land grants should be immune as a political subdivision of the state. The Court has not taken up the motion. The Division has answered complaints and submitted counter claims. If the Court of Appeals accepts the case they can order district court to stay. In the other San Antonio de las Huertas case (where NMLA is co-counsel), the tax protest case, the District Court denied tax exempt status. The Grant will need representation at 2026 protest hearing. The

San Joaquín del Río de Chama Grant has put water to beneficial use and the MOU is signed so the Treaty Division will close out representation of the Grant. The acequia case regarding Tecolotito is up for trial and the Division is working with the La Joya acequia in Socorro County as well.

12. Discussion and Possible Action on Legal Services for Land Grants Updates & Requests – Including San Antonio de las Huertas Taxation Case D-1329-CV-2025-01233

The San Antonio de las Huertas Grant is considering an appeal of the District Court decision. In framing his decision, Judge Noll did not take into consideration the Grant's brief on what has changed and comes to the conclusion that no changes since the Las Vegas case decision in 1922 have taken place. He also claimed that there is a constitutional conflict with land grant residents and elections. This can be an opportunity to establish good case law and precedence. Kendra Lucero Matteucci (San Antonio de las Huertas LG) asked if any other grants received push back from their respective counties. Councilor Rodríguez responded that the San Joaquín Grant was taxed on newly purchased properties. The Rio Arriba County assessor seems to be following case as he has advised land grants file under other exemptions. Other counties do not have to follow this district court decision. Chairman Sanchez stated that he has had no issue with Bernalillo County and Tarrant County. Enrique Romero added that it would be helpful as San Antonio de las Huertas weighs its options, that many land grants filing protests are not resolved, Land grants can change evidence in their protest hearings and each will proceed on its own merits at protest board hearings. He feels that land grants should not roll over and claim other exemptions and the Council can help figure out what is happening in other counties with other land grants. Mr. Archuleta added that if the legislature made them a political subdivision akin to municipalities, it would clarify their status. Land grants could approach the legislature to clarify the nature of the governance of land grants as political subdivisions and municipal corporations. Mr. Romero added that the NMLGC should keep finger on pulse of this case and determine if legislation would be pursued. Mr. Archuleta added that, in the past, we explored costs and tax burden and we could do it again. Previously, the total statewide was less than \$50,000 total, so it is not a lot of lost revenue.

13. Discussion and Possible Action on Sen. O'Neill Estate Bequest

Mr. Archuleta presented a letter from the O'Neill estate in the packet, stated that property was sold and \$8 million will remain in the estate in August. The NMLGC will get a \$247,424 distribution and perhaps another to close out the estate. The Council reached out to Governor's Office and its general counsel felt the money needs to revert and be reappropriated. The only option we have is to expend the monies by June 30. The Council could use the monies to create a revolving fund and a low interest loan. It has worked with Manzano land grant on NMFA loan to pay off real estate contract and it offers a concrete project to fund with these monies. The Manzano Land Grant owes \$464,000 on its real estate contract. The Council could do a low interest loan with \$300,000 and once capital outlay is released in August, they can pay balance of \$170,000 with \$250,000 in capital outlay. We have flagged this idea with the Manzano LG and DFA and asked if we did a support fund agreement, would they be able to get monies out the door. Hallie Brown of DFA was going to run it through their legal counsel and ASD to see if they can get it out. The Manzano LG met, adopted the idea of a support fund agreement and a low interest loan.

Councilor Rodríguez inquired about the need and the benefit of such an arrangement to other land grants, and about their opportunity to engage in the process. Mr. Archuleta stated that the Council would create a land grant support revolving fund, funded by repayments and interest gained. The

interest rate would be low, between 2-4 percent. Land grants are tax exempt from federal taxes so there is no issue with obtaining the loan. The \$300,000 loan would last for 10 years. Five years ago, the Manzano Land Grant bought 750+ acres for \$800,000. With the assistance of the Council, the Grant Approached the New Mexico Finance Authority for a loan. The LGMAF just started and they didn't want the risk. Land grants and the Council attempted to create a land grant fund at the legislature, but legislators sent them back to NMFA, who then agreed to work with land grants. Manzano tried to use capital outlay to pay the loan, but the funding was vetoed because of this plan.

Since august, NMFA has its dragged feet and the loan from NMFA has unfavorable terms, including a higher rate, no early payment options, and one year payment paid early. They want a traditional mortgage, which the district court needs to approve (for a "dry closing"), which will take 6 months to a year. Their fifteen-year loan would cost \$42,000 per year, which they can only pay off after 10 years. The proposed NMLGC loan repayment would by \$37,000 per year. At a 4% interest rate, it would generate more than \$69,000 in interest for the Council fund. At a 2% interest rate, it would generate \$33,900 in interest and at a 3% interest rate, it would generate \$52,000 in interest. The Council would also petition the legislature to create a non-reverting fund, invest it, add new payments from the O'Neill estate and Manzano interest monies. The Council could rely on the legislature to reappropriate the monies, but there are no guarantees.

Councilor Rodríguez asked if the Council has the statutory authority to create a revolving loan fund. Mr. Archuleta responded that he believes it falls under the "program of support" and is similar to the Land Grant Support Fund. Enrique Romero stated that he was not sure that the loan aspect would fall under this and is not sure if other agencies that loan monies have anything in their statute with language to allow loans. The NMLGC is unique with its technical assistance mission but would need to have rules to administer the fund. Mr. Archuleta added that in the worst case scenario, the funding goes to the Manzano Land Grant as a grant, not a loan. The Manzano Land Grant could donate money back to NMLGC; there is nothing to prohibit it from doing so. The Legislature had problems creating a revolving fund because it was general fund monies; it might be amenable since its non-state monies that would create the fund. The Manzano LG likes that interest monies go back to help other land grants. This also offers better loan terms with no threat of foreclosure by the Council. Councilor Padilla preferred the idea of a grant rather than a loan. Mr. Archuleta responded that the advantage of a loan is repayment and interest income and Manzano would obligate only their assistance fund monies to repay the loan. Councilor Rodríguez asked if this was in line with Senator Bill O'Neill's wishes; Mr. Archuleta answered that estate did not add any parameters or restrictions to the funding. Councilor Rodríguez asked if DFA has signed off on the concept; Mr. Archuleta stated that they have been contacted and they have not responded.

The funding to Manzano has been drafted as a traditional Land Grant support Fund agreement. The grant adopted resolution for LGSF and Loan agreement, leaving two options open. Manzano would signed the LGSF agreement, as would Chairman Sanchez, and the NMDOJ would sign off for legal sufficiency. We are just not sure how quickly ASD cuts checks and what the process is for disbursement is since it is not capital outlay. Councilor Rodríguez stated that a 2.5% interest rate (which would generate \$43,000 in interest income) protects the greater benefit to all land grants. She asked if the Grant could repay the loan with capital outlay funding. Mr. Archuleta responded that Manzano would need the legislative language in their award to allow for payments from

capital outlay funding. Mr. Romero stated that the NMDOJ, as counsel for the Council, would need to look into issues with loan authority to sign off on an agreement with a loan. If the agreement is simply an LGSF award, it would be easy. Mr. Archuleta cautioned that DFA does not have authority to determine whether the NMLGC can give a loan.

14. Discussion and Possible Action on Land Grant Support Fund Loan Agreement to Merced del Manzano

See discussion above.

Councilor Padilla made a motion to approve a Land Grant Support Fund award for the Manzano Land Grant for \$300,000, in disbursement, subject to necessary changes for legal sufficiency by the Council's counsel, giving chair authority to sign off on changes; Councilor Rodríguez.

Roll call vote:

Councilor Padilla – aye

Councilor Rodríguez – aye

Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

15. Discussion and Possible Action on Torreón Election Update

Mr. Archuleta reported that he and Mr. Baca tabled at the Torreón Fiestas on both Friday June 12th and Saturday June 13th, where they distributed membership applications and other materials.

16. Discussion and Possible Action on Council FY 2026, FY 2027 and FY 2028 Budget

FY 2026

A budget update was provided, including \$5,440.06 in 'in state' council travel, \$51,217.50 in legal service contract, \$471,137.28 in the IGSA, including \$335,328.48 in staff, \$26,229.20 in surveyor contract, \$21,677.26 in facility rental, \$78,522.88 in F&A for grand total of \$537,816.82 spent and \$89,083.18 remaining.

FY 2027

None.

FY 2028

None.

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

Mr. Archuleta presented Pay Request #10 for \$40,121.03 including, but not limited to, \$30,405.85 in project personnel, \$1,970.66 in facility rental, and \$6,686.84 in F&A.

Councilor Rodríguez made a motion to approve Pay Request #10 for \$40,121.03; Councilor Padilla seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Councilor Padilla – aye

Councilor Rodríguez – aye

Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed.

Councilor Padilla made a motion to approve The Uncivilized Outdoorsman invoice for \$6,000; Councilor Rodríguez seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

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

The motion was passed.

Councilor Rodríguez made a motion to approve the FY 2027 Inter Governmental Services Agreement with UNM; Councilor Padilla seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

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

The motion was passed.

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

Territorial Land Surveying submitted invoice #06222026 for \$6,738.20 for work on the Cristóbal de la Serna Land Grant.

Councilor Rodríguez made a motion to approve Territorial Land Surveying invoice #06222026 for \$6,738.20; Councilor Padilla seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

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

The motion was passed.

19. Discussion and Possible Action on Land Grant Registry Update

Mr. Baca reported that the Cubero Land Grant submitted their election results and organization of their board.

20. Discussion and Possible Action on Land Grant-Merced Institute Update

Staff has continued distributing digital copies of relevant Spanish Archives of New Mexico documents (Surveyor General of New Mexico and Court of Private Land Claims records) to several land grants. Mr. Baca met with Georgia Roybal, the family of Roberto Mondragón and staff from the National Hispanic Cultural Center regarding his archive.

21. Discussion and Possible Action on Correspondence

None.

22. Discussion and Possible Action on Staff Assignments

None.

23. Public Comments – discussion only

None.

24. Miscellaneous Announcements

None.

25. Date and Location for July Council Meeting

The July 2026 New Mexico Land Grant Council meeting will be held on July 13, 2026 in Albuquerque at UNM Continuing Education at 10:00am.

26. Adjournment

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

Roll call vote:

Councilor Padilla – aye

Councilor Rodríguez – aye

Chairman Sánchez – aye

The motion was passed. The meeting adjourned at 1:12 pm MDT.

Approved:

Chair

Date