

CITY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES, NEW MEXICO
CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS, 405 W. 3RD St.
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2026

A. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Rolf Hechler at 4:00 p.m., who presided and Angela A. Torres, City Clerk-Treasurer, acted as Secretary of the meeting.

B. INTRODUCTION:

1. ROLL CALL:

Upon calling the roll, the following Commissioners were reported present.

Hon. Rolf Hechler, Mayor
Hon. Destiny Mitchell, Mayor Pro-Tem
Hon. Amanda Forrister Commissioner attended via phone
Hon. Ingo Hoeppner, Commissioner was absent
Hon. Chaz Glines, Commissioner

Also Present: Gary Whitehead, City Manager
Traci Alvarez, Assistant City Manager
Jay Rubin, City Attorney
Angela A. Torres, City Clerk-Treasurer

There being a quorum present, the Commission proceeded with the business at hand.

2. SILENT MEDITATION:

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell: I wanted to ask the community to keep the family members of Tom Smith in your thoughts and prayers as they move forward in their difficult time in losing him.

Mayor Hechler called for fifteen seconds of silent meditation.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mayor Hechler called for City Attorney Rubin to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Commissioner Glines seconded the motion. Roll call was taken by the Clerk-Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell: I don't have much to report other than going to the COG meeting on Friday. I've been gone for a week.

Commissioner Glines: I don't have any announcements.

Mayor Hechler: I have one announcement. It's a public notice for road closures and construction safety. The city would like to remind all residents and visitors that we currently have multiple infrastructure improvement projects taking place throughout the community. As a result, there will be various road closures, lane reductions, and temporary traffic disruptions in different areas of town. We ask for your patience and cooperation as we work to complete these important projects that will benefit our community in the long-term. For your safety and the safety of our workers, please be advised that it is *illegal* to move, bypass, or cross any posted construction barriers, barricades, or traffic control devices. These measures are in place to protect both the public and construction crews. Thank you for your understanding, cooperation, and continued support as we make improvements across our city. Remember I've threatened you folks several times about construction fatigue, it's going to start happening. It's happened already in some areas, so as we put these multiple millions of dollars of funding into our infrastructure, we will have some construction issues, so please be respectful of these barriers, thank you.

6. STAFF COMMENTS:

City Manager Whitehead: Just to follow up on what you just brought up to the table on these projects; currently the Love's Truck Stop is finishing the road and the water line installation for us, so they've had to close that particular stretch of road. They worked with us really well to create a bypass to get traffic around. So we've got that project going on, which obviously creates some frustration in a small area of town. The critical water line project continues to move, we are now bringing that line live, it's hooking up to our system. For the next few weeks, we will have multiple water shutoffs as they tie that line in, just as we had today. This is a good example, the water valve to shut off on one block didn't function, so we had to move two blocks down, which ultimately shut off more of the city than anticipated. Those are just challenges that we just don't know until we come across them. The exciting stuff; for WSPI-1 bid, we did receive bids on that project, I think we had 8 contractors bid on that. We're excited, it came in under budget, looks like we have a qualified group of candidates, so we will be having that go to construction soon. We bid the water meter project, the costs came in. Again, we're

seeing good costs across the board, we're going to be able to bump that from 900 to 1,200 meters. That project will be going out quickly. For the boat dock, we're waiting for the river to come up so they can actually set the structure in, get it to float correctly, and we are finishing those rip-raps, covering that to get that done. The skatepark is just about finished, we're going to be adding on the agenda today, finishing up for fencing. For Foch Street, it looks like it's moving slow but it's really moving at a good pace now. The gas company came in, that was a real hangup and everybody was really concerned. They showed up Monday and they will be gone Friday. They worked until 8:00 last night finishing up. Once they're out of the way and that gas line is solved, it's going to be finishing up pretty quickly. You can see the progress, they're really getting on a trend. We were able to get the annex building stuccoed yesterday, so it looks fantastic. NMDOT has started the restriping downtown. We are finishing hooking up the sewer on Morgan Street to get that project online. We have a water line going in on Cherry Lane. At Cantrell, we've signed on with the engineers, that project is ready to get kicked off. We just received approval to go out to bid for the vac station engineering team. We turned in all of our road applications for new road grant money this last year, and we've started the budget process. We are busy. It's incredible to drive around, and I understand for the citizens, there are road signs and stuff going on, but if we can get through June, I think it will start balancing itself out. But we are working hard, every one of our employees is showing up and giving it a good effort every day. We're trying to get that information out, working hard on the website, so I really support the comments from the Mayor, and we ask the citizens to bear with us, we're trying to make things happen.

Mayor Hechler: Great report, thank you so much for that. The things that we've all worked so hard for are finally coming to fruition, and we have a great manager to make that happen.

City manager Whitehead: I don't know about that.

Mayor Hechler: Well we know enough about it to know, so thank you very much for your efforts.

City manager Whitehead: It's a lot of fun, it's a challenge but it's a lot of fun to see it happening.

C. PRESENTATIONS:

1. National Child Abuse Awareness Month Proclamation.

Mayor Hechler presented the National Child Abuse Awareness Month Proclamation.

D. PUBLIC COMMENT (3 Minute Rule Applies):

Kathleen Sloan addressed the Commission with comments related to:

- 708 Olivo, Williamsburg.

- I request that – you have your ICIP process starting, I believe, April 22nd, you will have two hearings on that day, and the way it usually works is that the public is essentially asked what they want – I'm asking that you educate the public and *then* let them give their input. Traci Alvarez goes around to city directors and she asks them what their priorities are for ICIP projects. I ask that department asset management plans be shown and explained, that support their priorities and any related engineering reports be shown and explained to the public, and *then* let the public give their input, thank you.

E. CONSENT CALENDAR:

1. Purchase report of items between \$20,000 and \$59,999.00
2. Take Home Vehicle Form: Police Department

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell moved to approve the Consent Calendar as submitted. Commissioner Glines seconded the motion. Roll call was taken by the Clerk-Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.

F. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion/Action: Request for Fee Waiver for Family Fun Fest at Ralph Edwards Park.

Korrie Scott, Casa De Luz: Thank you for allowing us to be here today, as we recognize that April is child abuse awareness month. A time to raise awareness, strengthen our commitment, and stand united in protecting the children in our community. Casa De Luz Positive Outcomes Family Advocacy Center, in conjunction with CYFD, would like to take a moment to invite our community to come together in a positive and uplifting way at the Family Fun Fest on April 18th, 2026, from 10am-2pm. Events like this remind us of the importance of connection, joy, and creating safe, supportive environments where children and families can simply enjoy being together, and have valuable resources gather to help and support the citizens of Sierra County. Additionally, we extend our sincere appreciation to Mayor Hechler, City Manager Gary Whitehead, and the City Commissioners, who will hopefully make the generous donation of Ralph Edwards Park for this community event. This gift will provide a space for families to gather, for children to play, and for our community to continue building strong, healthy connections, an important part of prevention and wellbeing. Here in our community, we are fortunate to have many organizations dedicated to protecting and advocating for our children and families. Casa De Luz, a Positive Outcomes Family Advocacy Center, provides a safe and supportive space for children and families navigating difficult circumstances. Casa De Luz, a Positive Outcomes Family Advocacy Center, works tirelessly to ensure that children who have experienced abuse receive compassionate care, advocacy, and the resources they need to begin healing. Casa De Luz, a Positive Outcomes Family Advocacy Center, in conjunction with the Children Youth and Families Department, form a vital network of protection and support. Together, we help investigate concerns, provide services, and work toward safe, healthy outcomes for children and families. The work is not easy, but it is essential. However, our efforts alone are not enough. Protecting our children is a shared responsibility, it requires awareness, vigilance, and

compassion from every member of our community. It means recognizing the signs of abuse, having the courage to report concerns, and supporting families before crises occur. Behind every case is a child who deserves to feel safe, to be heard, and to know they matter. Behind every act of prevention in a community is a community that chose to care. Prevention starts with connection. When families are supported, when parents have access to resources, and when communities come together, we create an environment where children can thrive, and this is what this event is about. Let us use this month of April, not to just raise awareness, but to renew our commitment. Let us support organizations in our community that are supporting families, let us be the voices for those who cannot speak, and let us ensure that every child in our community grows up knowing they are safe, valued, and protected. Together, we can make a difference. Together, we can build a safe future for all children.

Mayor Hechler: Thank you for that presentation, Ms. Scott. Did we have that event last year?

Korrie Scott, Casa De Luz: The year before in 2024, yes sir.

Mayor Hechler: And how did that event go?

Korrie Scott, Casa De Luz: It went great, we didn't do a count, it was my first year putting the event on, but I had been notified that it was the biggest event we've ever had in this community from that April Fun Fest. We're planning on having it just as big, if not bigger.

Mayor Hechler: Perfect. Well I can't think of a more worthwhile endeavor for you folks to take on. Thank you for all you do for our community.

Commissioner Glines: I find it very appropriate to waive these fees in April for the national child abuse awareness month for Casa De Luz. I like that.

City Attorney Rubin: I had a question, actually just looking at the rental agreement that was signed, I saw the name of the organization was listed as Casa De Luz/CYFD.

Korrie Scott, Casa De Luz: We're in conjunction with, we're working together with CYFD. We are contracted with CYFD, and we are collaborating to do this event.

City Attorney Rubin: Got it. I think that's important to note that.

Commissioner Forrister: I agree with Commissioner Glines about waving the fees for this event, it's a huge benefit to our community.

City Attorney Rubin: That's also important from a legal standpoint because, again, you're waiving the fees, but this is not an anti-donation issue as long as the Commission determines that this is actually a community benefit.

Mayor Hechler: That's what my question was going to be, we've got it answered.

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell moved to approve the Request for Fee Waiver for Family Fun Fest at Ralph Edwards Park. Commissioner Glines seconded the motion. Roll call was taken by the Clerk-Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.

City Manager Whitehead: I will just comment, OJ will reach out to Casa De Luz, we'll just need to put together an agreement on that, we have to do the contract with the waiving, the time, and those items. Our general rules that we passed, it is going to require that we do have a security deposit, so that is part of our rules so we will have to do that, get that waived, so we'll work through all those conditions as well.

Mayor Hechler: Sounds perfect. Let's make this one work.

City Manager Whitehead: Yep.

Mayor Hechler: Ms. Scott, thank you so much for your presentation, and thank you to your staff.

Korrie Scott, Casa De Luz: Thank you, appreciate your time, thank you very much.

2. Discussion/Action: Approval of the Elephant Butte Annex – 68.579 Acres.

City Manager Whitehead: I apologize, I don't have the date, I think in December, the Commission approved, in tentative discussions with Elephant Butte that we would not be adverse to their work to attempt to find out how they would proceed with changing the annex, or the boundary lines between the two cities. At that meeting, I'd indicated that the land appeared to be about 20+ acres. We were unaware, as we had not surveyed it. What you have in your packet now is the work performed by Elephant Butte to create the actual boundaries that we had discussed. The boundaries come out to be 68.579 acres, of which, 5 acres belong to the City of Elephant Butte, where their wastewater treatment plant is, and the remaining acres belong to the developer, Turtleback Mountain. You'll see the letter in the packet from those folks. One of the requirements of an annex would be that you would have comments from any affected property owners. In this case, we only have one property owner, and we do have a letter from the developer saying that they are in favor and they have no reason to be adverse to this particular action taken by the City. I took the additional time to reach out to the County Assessor to review the parcels of land. The Assessor, off of the tax rolls, estimates that the value of the land in that area has a value of \$53,963. So the taxing value for the entire track is \$1,728, of which, the City of Truth or Consequences, based on our mill levy, would receive \$227 annually of this particular track of land. One of the requirements of being part of our city would be that at some point, we would have to provide services, we would have to take water and sewer. The electric in that area is provided by Sierra Electric Co-op, so they would have to take care of that. By switching this property, I will again remind the public and the Commission that we do *not* own any

land in that, we are not giving up any property, nor any property value. All we're doing would effectively be changing the boundary of which the City of Truth or Consequences lies, and now the City of Elephant Butte has the jurisdiction and the responsibility for that. In this case, it would be in the developer's best interest to be working under one jurisdiction versus two. The potential opportunity for them to decide to now develop is an opportunity which would then, potentially, increase assessed property values in the county if they so chose to do so. The Assessor was clear and quick to point out to me that the majority of the land does lie inside Cuchillo Creek, so it's pretty much undevelopable land in that particular area. Before you today, you have the map that shows the process, the action today would be to approve and sign off on that particular map, and then authorize Elephant Butte to continue the process. Elephant Butte would submit this map to the Boundary Commission, they'll submit this map to the Department of Finance and Administration, they will also submit the map and the proposal to the Department of Taxation and Revenue; those three agencies have to either decide that they have jurisdiction or that they do not, and then primarily Taxation and Revenue, would then change the boundaries because of the taxing district. We would lose that particular part for taxing, Elephant Butte would pick it up for taxation, and the tax rate in that area would change. Your action today would be, again, to accept the plan, and then to authorize Elephant Butte to complete the process and provide us some notification from one or all three of those agencies that some formal action has taken place.

City Attorney Rubin: I think it's important to note that the City of Elephant Butte, they're the ones that have the responsibility of doing this. They're the ones that have to prepare the annexation application, and be in touch with the city agencies. Really, what we're doing is just concurring in their actions to do so. But again, we're not making any warranties or representations about how they should do that, that will be up to them to do it properly.

Mayor Hechler moved to concur with the City of Elephant Butte's efforts to annex the certain 68.579 acre track of real estate that is delineated in Exhibit A (attached). It is the City of Elephant Butte's sole responsibility to properly follow state law to effectuate said annexation. Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell seconded the motion. Roll call was taken by the Clerk-Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Discussion/Action: Approval of Cost-Based Internal Electric Billing for City Facilities.

City Manager Whitehead: Last year, coming on board, I didn't fully understand everything we do with utilities. We have over 105 meters in the city that we charge ourselves utilities. The primary reason, which is a quality reason, is to meter the water that we use. There is a cost to us for the electricity, but we're charging ourselves at the full set retail price, like we would charge any customer, and I have to budget those extra costs. So I'm paying myself, I'm moving those costs into the electric, water, wastewater plant, solid waste, and then I'm transferring those dollars out. This came to light, as we are a little bit over budget on the utility side of the house. In order to fix that, I have to do

a budget adjustment to bring that up, and it's not revenue, it's not dollars to us, it's really a fictitious number, if you will, it's an inflated process within our budget. So, the proposal before you today would be to allow us to change the rate within our city Utility Department to be cost plus a penny. So, we have a set cost of about 9 cents per kilowatt hour on the electric side of the house, that's the biggest expense to us. Now, we can't waive the fee because we pay for the electricity. We buy the power from Sierra Electric, through an agreement with Tri-State, so we have a real cost. This would allow us to make sure that the Electric Department makes that compensation, and that the Electric Department does receive at least a penny per kilowatt hour from these City Departments to help them maintain the infrastructure. So that's the request, and then as we complete the budget, I would be able to clean this up a little bit more, and present an overarching plan on how we might potentially charge ourselves for water, wastewater, and trash collection. In this case, you can see by the presentation, this will save us about \$25,000 in the last quarter for an adjustment, which I hope will help us stay in line so that we're not having to submit for a budget adjustment for dollars that we're really not transferring, we're moving them from one pocket to the other. Just a little clean up to help us keep the budget in line. We're running a really good budget, everybody has worked really well on it, we're not over budget in many areas, except this one here that we missed. With that I will stand for any questions.

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell: Just one comment, how is this going to work with the dissolution of the penny? Just kidding.

City Manager Whitehead: I'm going to collect more pennies.

Commissioner Glines: Do we have intent to do this with water and wastewater that's going to our building?

City Manager Whitehead: That would be my intent, it's a little bit difficult to assess the amount per gallon, because we charge ourselves in thousand-gallon increments. To offset what our costs are, it's a bit of a – but yes, it would be the intent, to cover our costs for production for the City, and that ultimately, we know every meter, we measure every meter, and we know what our consumption is. Without metering, we potentially could be wasteful.

Mayor Hechler: Thank you. It sounds like it's streamlining the effects of what you're trying to do, so it makes it easier and simpler for you folks as far as budgeting goes, and it makes it easier for us as far as approving things. I think it's a good catch.

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell moved to approve the Cost-Based Internal Electric Billing for City Facilities. Commissioner Glines seconded the motion. Roll call was taken by the Clerk-Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Discussion/Action: Earth Week Cleanup & Earth Day Partnership with Sierra County.

City Manager Whitehead: Mayor, soon after coming on board, you and I had many conversations on how we could continue to improve the pride in our community, and work on those efforts. We have a long way to go, there are a lot of challenges in, but one of them was to try to bring back the Earth Day and that free day when citizens could bring residential waste to clean up their yards. In talking with staff, we identified some challenges early on. They had done those days where you collected one day only on Saturdays, and the staff felt that it was a very intense and hard day on everyone including the system. Cars would line up all the way down Broadway for hours, you would have angry customers, and then it also felt like we were taking waste from everywhere throughout the county, so you weren't just getting residents. Early on, Sierra County Commissioner Jones came to us and said that he really wanted to do something county-wide. In working together with the county manager, the county has come up with a plan for the 24th. They're going to use their collection stations, buy and pay for additional carts so that residents of the county will be able to bring waste to their locations, and then the county will bring that waste to us. What we tried to come up with was a way that we could just benefit the citizens of T or C and the citizens of Williamsburg, both that pay a tipping fee for us. What we've come up with is a 4-day opportunity. We would offer to every citizen that pays an electric or trash bill, on the 17th, 18th, 20th, and 21st, at one time only during those dates, they could bring up to 2,000 pounds of trash, one ton, and we would recognize them as a resident or user of the system, and we would accept that trash at no cost to them. We think by spreading that out over a period of time, it should work where we're not killing the system, residents could decide when they wanted to come on off days. We expect that Saturday will still be busy, we're going to run a full crew on Saturday, and then what we would do is partner with Sierra County on the 24th and take dumpsters to the Sierra County Fairground to add to their dumpsters, and then we could accept trash from organizations that want to do a potential cleanup, if they want to go out and pick up trash and do a street pickup or anything like that, they could bring us bagged trash on that day and we will also collect it. We will *not* be taking trash at a free nature after the 21st. What we're asking today would be that you acknowledge and approve us to provide the citizens of Truth or Consequences only, that have a utility bill, up to one ton of trash at no cost to them, during this period of the Earth Week program. We would also ask that you allow us to charge the county on the 24th for the tipping fee that they would have, to reduce that to our exact cost what it would cost us to take that trash for them and move it out. That's our benefit to say to Sierra County, "You will collect it, we won't have to take those citizens in through our system, you'll bring it to us." And they have agreed they will try to stagger that over three days, so they will bring some Saturday, and some Monday and Tuesday. We're not going to get killed and have extra debris staying on the tipping floor. The staff has worked through this, we've round-tabled it four or five times to come up with what we think is a fair and reasonable idea. The consideration on this would be that we're cleaning up our residential areas and we're providing a service back to the citizens of Truth or Consequences, so it would qualify.

Mayor Hechler: It sounds like a great program.

Commissioner Glines: My only question is, is it per resident, per utility bill, or is it per utility bill, if a resident has multiple bills?

City Manager Whitehead: We're hoping that the spirit would have residents come one time with one utility bill at one address, and bring a couple thousand. Obviously we know we don't exactly know how it's going to go, so I think we could talk about all the conditions that could happen. You know, I don't think we're going to ID you and scan you in, we would hope that the spirit of the event is there. This is not for commercial trash, this is strictly for residential customers. If you're over that one ton limit, we are going to charge you, and we've talked about a condition. If somebody came in with 2,300 pounds, we are going to take it. If somebody comes in with 3,000, we're going to have to charge them for the extra 1,000 pounds. But yeah, the spirit would be one resident, one bill, but you could have a property on both sides of town and come twice.

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell: That was just my concern too, what about people in apartment complexes where the utility bill is in the landlord's name? Same kind of thing?

City Manager Whitehead: If you look at the bottom of our flier, for those residents that are renting and don't have the utility bill, they can contact the utility office, and we will prepare a manual voucher we will give them once they verify that they're paying the bill through their landlord. And again, one time, so that would take the landlord's ability to do that. We're trying to be as receptive as we can.

Mayor Hechler: I thin the goal is to accept as much trash, get as much trash out of our community as possible, and not try to be overly enforcing in the way we interact with folks, so that we can get this stuff off the street. I do have one question about Code Enforcement, and their efforts prior to this event. Maybe we can entice people to clean up their properties a little bit better?

City Manager Whitehead: The Chief and I have spoken about Codes being able to drive around, provide a letter, and ask residents and remind them that this is an opportunity for them to clean up and kind of take that first step. We will be trying to do some enhanced enforcement where we can.

Mayor Hechler: Thank you, good progress on this project.

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell moved to approve the Earth Week Cleanup & Earth Day Partnership with Sierra County. Commissioner Glines seconded the motion. Roll call was taken by the Clerk-Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Discussion/Update: FY2028-2032 Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan Implementation.

Assistant City Manager Alvarez: We're getting ready to move into the ICIP timeframe, so what I've brought to you today are some proposed public meeting dates and overall dates of presentation and implementation. We're proposing to hold a public meeting in the afternoon on the 22nd of April, and again, on the 22nd of April after the 4pm Commission meeting. On May 13th, we would like to do a public meeting prior to the 9am Commission meeting, and then presentation to the Commission during that Commission meeting, we can get some input from the Commission and then potentially come back to the Commission around the 27th of May, and then have you do your review and final ranking. The ICIP plan entries are due July 1st, so that leaves us plenty of time to review and implement. As a reminder, last year they implemented a new system; it's kind of an ever-changing system, it's a much better system than what it was previously, but they are still making some tweaks and updates. It seems like every couple months, there's new information we have to input, so I wanted to ensure that there was plenty of time. We will be working with our COG again, Evette, that assisted us last year with the ICIP. She will be assisting us again this year. Within your packet, you have the projects that were identified and ranked last year, so this will give you the opportunity to start reviewing what we had on that list, and you'll recognize some of those as ones that you guys vetted for up in Santa Fe as well. There is no action on this, it's really just an update. With that, I will turn it over to the City Manager for any input and guidance he has.

City Manager Whitehead: Thank you Traci, I appreciate the effort. The process is changing a little bit, it's getting more streamlined which is really nice. What I would ask each of you to do – I've looked it over and again, I don't see much on the list that would come off. It's kind of a living document, so we'll keep moving some projects down. Certainly, each one of you need to be looking through your neighborhoods. The most important is that you, as representatives of your citizens, need to find those projects that you feel you've been asked about that may or may not be on there, so we can begin to vet those items. Look through the list to see what comes up that need to potentially move up. Primarily for us, the only time that ranking is valuable is when we go to the state legislature for capital outlay. That's when they're looking to see if it's in our top 5. The year before last, they said you should kind of divide them up and present in two phases, your top 5, some to the governor, some to the legislature. This year, when we were at the legislature, they all said, "You should have put them all in to us." So there's no hard, fast book. But I think the most important thing would be recognizing what the top 5 things are that you would expect us to go back to Santa Fe for next year, to advocate for. And again, what are the projects on here that need to be moved up, and what projects are not on here that you've heard from your citizens about, that deserve to be on here, or at least deserve to be presented to the documents.

Mayor Hechler: The first thing we want to look at is the dates to make sure they will work for all of us so that we can attend at least some of the meetings.

Assistant City Manager Alvarez: We'll be doing the advertisements in the paper, and of course, we'll be accepting public comment via email. Last year we took it off Facebook postings as well. We'll gather as much public comment as we can.

Mayor Hechler: Can people mail in comments?

Assistant City Manager Alvarez: They can do that. They can call them in if they'd like to call. They are welcome to give me a call and I can make notes.

City Manager Whitehead: I would assume that even our online portal will be better this year. We were just kind of getting started, and I think this is one of the first acts that Carrie, as our new PIO, kind of got started, where the public can put their requests in through the website. We'll continue to mature that process as well.

Mayor Hechler: I'm very comfortable with the new format, it looks a lot better than previous years, where we had multiple pages. This is condensed, it's a little easier to read, and it makes a little more sense, I'm glad it comes out this way. I had a question about the first 5 projects – we've had movement on several of the projects, with funding in various stages. How do we deal with the top 5 projects as we move forward, knowing that we've had some success with some of these projects? Do they stay in the top of do we move some others up that we're maybe trying to push a little bit harder?

City Manager Whitehead: You would move items up that you feel we need to push on. For example, let's take the 10 megawatt substation. We didn't receive any real motion on that, it didn't seem to really catch anyone's attention, so it may be one of those items that's not going to get capital outlay intention, but it's still important to us. So maybe it slips down to 6, 7, or 8. I think that's how we have to consider these items, what do we have with the best opportunity to potentially get funded. Wastewater – we certainly want to keep that in the top 5 tier, we still need to raise another couple million dollars in those funds, so it certainly needs to be there. Marie Street – we were fortunate, we received \$375,000 to start planning, we have an application in for \$1.5 million to Colonias. If that fund comes, it would be easy to slip Marie back down to 6, because we would have a pot of money to begin working. That's the way I'm going to be looking at its structure, what do we have the ability to do, and what do we still need to fight for?

Mayor Hechler: And we don't want to jeopardize any success that we may have, but we want to identify the items that we need, obviously.

City Manager Whitehead: I re-emphasize, with the exception of capital outlay, that's the only place that asks us to only bring them our top 5 projects. Otherwise, the funding organization says, "Is it on your planning document?" so we should know what we're fighting for in the next few years and make sure it's on the document, whether it's 1 or 15, they're not asking us for its ranking, they're just asking if it's something we're planning for. That's where I think it's important for you to use your connection to the public and those folks that are visiting with you to determine what's not on here that needs our attention.

Mayor Hechler: We're not looking for approvals here, but just a general discussion, are we all okay with the dates?

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell: Yes.

Commissioner Glines: Yep.

Mayor Hechler: Okay, seems like we're okay. That was an update item only, so we don't need to take any action.

6. Discussion/Update/Action: Purchase of 8inch Pressure Sustaining Valve within the Shovel Ready Project.

City Manager Whitehead: For this project, the action item we had on the agenda, we were going to bring this for approval, the contractor was ready to go, and it fell under the threshold, so we approved the change order and the purchase for this valve. One of the challenges we've had with the schools is for a period of time, the City has had issues with our system, and those issues have caused the schools to shut down. Primarily after the roundabouts were put in, there was a period of time where they couldn't get enough water pressure, that lack of water pressure caused the fire system to not be adequate, so there were many days where the school had to close. This past year, with two water leaks, we shut the schools down twice. The school had began to prepare to ask for emergency funds to put a storage tank on the property so that they could effectively have enough water supply, if we couldn't supply them water, or while we're doing our construction, they wouldn't be shut down. They have days they have to get kids to school, and it's a challenge every time that happens. In looking at the project, we recognize that first, it would be a really tough timeline for the schools to find \$1.5 million to \$2 million from state emergency funds to get here, design, and construct before we're going to be done building the water lines in their area. Our position, and what we shared with the school and the school's superintendent was that we felt like we were putting them in a position where they would be potentially taking money from a system, and it would end up being a waste. We never failed in delivering them water until recent times. So what we did is we had our engineer go back and look at what we could do in that particular area, and the first major thing that we could accomplish would be to install this pressure sustaining valve. At the top of Silver Street, this will actually catch Sierra Vista Hospital, it will take care of Palomas Springs Healthcare, and the schools. If you take a look, with this valve, if we have a failure of water below the system, below the hospital, anywhere from there to the river, this valve is going to pick up when pressure drops below 50 PSI, and it will automatically shut down, which will then protect the loop. The water comes in from two directions, it comes in on Smith Street, you can see it on the map within your packet, water feeds in from the roundabouts, and it comes all the way down to Silver, that's where we're putting the new water line. Right at the bottom of Silver Street will be one of our new pressure relief valves for that whole area, which will be fantastic, but this is going to be at the top. So this valve will shut off pressure and the

school will not lose pressure, it'll come in from the North loop. If we have a failure on the line on Smith Street while we're building – because that's the next place where we'll be installing a new line – a new water line will come all the way from the roundabouts, around the elementary, and down to Silver Street. If we had a failure there, we've identified all the valves, we are starting to test those valves with the school, we're going to work directly with the school so they can go in and shut – so then we could shut off the valve from the North side, and create water flow from the South through this particular valve, where we would be able to maintain pressure at the school under any condition. Then we would have the same situation at the high school, we have one main feed that comes in from our 12-inch line that feeds the tanks up by the new Love's. You can see, on the map within your packet, the yellow line coming in from left to right. Those are the two valves that we could not find this last year when that main line broke. If we could have found one of those two lines, we would have been able to shut the water off there and the school would not have had to shut down, but because we couldn't, we were just back feeding the flow from there. So we've now located each of those lines. Each of the blue dots on the map would represent an area that we could shut off for the schools. What we've put together, in working with the schools, is a map and an emergency plan that would allow us to preserve and protect the schools so that we don't have a water loss, and they don't need to go ask and request money that's going to do us zero good, it's not going to be a benefit to us. You can see from this map, the water loops, whether it goes out the yellow line to the tanks, water would come in from the Wets to the East, or it feeds around by the roundabouts and comes in from the East to the West. So the school is protected from two ways, by looping, and by having these valves and this pressure sustaining valve, we should be able to protect the school from having a loss of water pressure. Them having the confidence in us gives them the ability to maintain. The last time, they shut the school down within the first 30 minutes of the pressure dropping, and we had the water pressure back up when we got to the valve on top of Smith. So again, our efforts here, Mayor, are to follow your lead and say that we're doing everything we can to be a good partner with the schools, and not have families needing to pick up their kids in the middle of the day, and potentially lose a school day. So that's what's in front of you, there technically is no action. You could vote to accept the plan, move the plan, authorize the change order, but we've already authorized that and the construction company is in place, putting that valve in. The other thing I asked them to do with this valve, the green line that feeds around the elementary school is a 6-inch line, we're putting in an 8-inch line and a 12-inch line. We're not putting any main feeders to 6-inch anymore, so this sustaining valve is an 8-inch valve. Once we're done and we disconnect the 6-inch line, and it's no longer serving the schools, we'll take this valve out, put it into inventory, and we can move it and use it in other locations. Really, again, not wasting these dollars, and putting them to the best use we can for the community.

Mayor Hechler: Perfect report, you answered all the questions.

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell moved to approve the Purchase of 8inch Pressure Sustaining Valve within the Shovel Ready Project. Commissioner Glines seconded the motion. Roll call was taken by the Clerk-Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.

City Manager Whitehead: And again, we've also included the superintendent and the director of school maintenance into our weekly meetings for water, all the water projects. So they're getting emails, they're getting the updates, we're inviting them, so we're attempting to get everybody that's involved into the room to be a part of what we're trying to do. That way, we're not leaving anybody behind or making errors that we could have avoided.

Mayor Hechler: Thank you.

7. Discussion/Action: NMFA Planning Grant Award – Effluent Water Preliminary Engineering Report (PER).

Assistant City Manager Alvarez: We applied for a planning grant award to the NMFA, and we were awarded. The funding award is \$75,000. This will give us a preliminary engineering report pertaining to our effluent water, it'll take a look at the Armijo park effluent pond, and pumps park irrigation, a truck fill, and the booster station there, as well as the effluent course main to the golf course. And it'll look at the golf course effluent ponds, pumps, and irrigation system there. As well as potentially identify additional locations where we can utilize effluent sewer for irrigation, potentially all the way up to the cemetery, for which we're using potable water now. Again, the award is for \$75,000, we need to enter into a contract or proposal with an engineering firm by July of this year. Our hope is that that proposal would come in at the \$75,000. We have a great City Manager who's really good at negotiating with the engineers. But if the proposal comes in above the \$75,000 that would come out of our local funds.

Mayor Hechler: Manager Whitehead, we have an excess amount of effluent water, don't we? Doesn't most of it go into the river?

City Manager Whitehead: That's correct.

Mayor Hechler: So a beneficial and efficient use for this effluent water would be a great benefit for our community.

City Manager Whitehead: That's correct. I had an opportunity to actually sit and look at our newsletter, I get to see it and proof it, but I never really sit and read it. If you take a look on the right hand side, it tells you how much effluent water we produce, what we sell to trucks, what we put on the golf course, and we generate about 600,000 gallons of wastewater per day. Our discharge permit is for 1 million gallons per day, and we're at about 60%, and we're not even close to using that. Every place that we can find to use it is a recycle opportunity, it would save us dollars, and it's a good benefit.

Mayor Hechler: It is, perfect.

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell moved to accept the NMFA Planning Grant Award – Effluent Water Preliminary Engineering Report (PER). Commissioner Glines seconded the motion. Roll call was taken by the Clerk-Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.

8. Discussion/Action: Variance request 312 N. Joffre St. pursuant to setback requirements.

Assistant City Manager Alvarez: We had a public hearing for a Variance request at 312 North Joffre on March 9th. There was a motion made at the P&Z meeting to recommend approval. We had two members vote yay, two members voted nay, we were one member short at the meeting. The applicant is requesting a Variance, they want to do a remodel on their kitchen, and a small extension on there, but the extension of the kitchen would be placed within 11-foot setback from the property line. The R-3 district requires a 20-foot setback. You'll see on the site plan within your packet, it does show where the kitchen extension area will still be within their existing fence line, so they are not exceeding outside where their existing fence line is. You'll also see, there are parcel maps within your packet, if you look at the overall property line, you'll see that the structures that are in that area do extend out farther than potential remodel or extension. The applicant was unable to attend the P&Z meeting, he was out of state at the time, he is here if the Commission does have any questions, and with that I'll stand for questions as well.

Nick Gadbois, Applicant: Hello, I don't think I've ever done a Variance in my life, but in this case, this house at 312 N Joffre, I measured the kitchen today, it's 6 feet by 8 feet. So it's like a submarine kitchen. The entire property, as you can see, there's a wooden fence that goes across these two houses, so it's not really visible to anybody. I was glancing through, from the minutes from the meeting before that I wasn't able to attend, and there was one concern about "Well why not just put it out in the back?" well, that's not possible because it's a drop-off, like three feet from the back of the house, it's just a drop-off down to the city maintenance facility. I like to try and upgrade a property the best I can, for the sake of the property, and it's a small addition, but it would just let the kitchen kind of breathe, and be more enjoyable. You could even have a tiny little dining room there, but otherwise, there's nothing. Any questions?

Mayor Hechler: Since Planning & Zoning came to a 2-2 tie on it, I made a visit to the property earlier today, to see what it looked like. I had some concerns in that it looks really busy, it's really congested. I have some fire concerns, just because we're going to add another addition there, but I spoke with Assistant City Manager Alvarez, and it's going to be reviewed by our Fire Chief, right, if we do approve the Variance?

Assistant City Manager Alvarez: If the Commission approves the request for Variance, then he'll have to submit the site plans and development plans to our office. Any

development plans also go through a flood plane and Fire Chief review and approval, that's part of my process.

Mayor Hechler: That was my only concern. I noted that it is kind of in an alleyway.

Nick Gadbois, Applicant: Yeah, I mean, North Joffre is an alley, it's gravel. Garbage trucks, I saw some just today, they're going through there. A small fire truck could do it. 316, that house is already way closer to the fence line than this red house extension that I'm proposing, and the house on the corner of Joffre and Ash Street, that house is right up 3 feet from the alley. So that's grandfathered in, that's already there. So I'm not really changing anything, I understand the concern about fire.

Mayor Hechler: I think you're okay, I would be inclined to request to approve the Variance, contingent upon inspection by the Fire Chief. If he's okay with it, I think I am.

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell moved to approve the Variance request 312 N. Joffre St. pursuant to setback requirements contingent on the inspection by the Fire Chief. Commissioner Glines seconded the motion. Roll call was taken by the Clerk-Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.

9. Discussion/Action: Conditional Use Permit 809 Juniper.

Assistant City Manager Alvarez: This is a Conditional Use Permit for a shipping container. The property is located in the R-2 district. The container has been located on the property since 2020, which was prior to the implementation of our Shipping Container & Special Use requirement. Approving this would bring the property into current compliance.

Mayor Hechler: We tackled one of these a couple of meetings ago, and approved that. For that reason, I think I'd be inclined to do it again here.

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell moved to approve the Conditional Use Permit 809 Juniper. Commissioner Glines seconded the motion. Roll call was taken by the Clerk-Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.

G. ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS/ZONING

1. Discussion/Action: Resolution No. 50 25/26 Budget Adjustment Request.

City Manager Whitehead: In front of you is a budget resolution, I am presenting that today for our Finance Department, as they are off at training, which is always exciting. You have three items on the budget adjustment. The first one is our insurance for unemployment insurance. As typical for insurance, the rate came in a little higher than what we had budgeted, so we need to increase to \$34,660. We definitely need to pay

our unemployment insurance. The second item is the \$75,000 grant that you've approved from the New Mexico Finance Authority. The adjustment would accept the revenue into our budget, and authorize the expenditure. The final item is for parks & rec increase, this will go into the Parks budget at \$20,000 which will go into fixing and repairing the fence around our skate park. Our skate park is being completed, but we need to fix and protect the fence. We are going to put a three sided fence to catch the side, so that on the street side and the river side, the structure is protected from potentially skaters losing their valuable boards into the river or onto the street. Those are the items on this adjustment.

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell moved to approve Resolution No. 50 25/26 Budget Adjustment Request. Commissioner Glines seconded the motion. Roll call was taken by the Clerk-Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Discussion/Action: Resolution No. 51 25/26 Sale of Surplus Property to be sold at the April 11, 2026 Willard Hall Auction.

City Clerk Torres: We have our dome that used to be over the swimming pool, that we can no longer use, and it's just taking up space. We're wanting to try and sell it in an auction. Willard Hall is having an auction on April 11th, so we're going to try to put it in there and see if we can get it sold. It does have some accessories that go along with it, so hopefully somebody can use it for something. It's worth the effort, though, because it's just taking up too much space right now.

Mayor Hechler: Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell, I'd like you to weigh in on that.

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell: Yeah, the dome is no longer able to be used at the swimming pool, so it's just been taking up space for years. Some of the accessories include electronic door frames that would open and close to keep the bubble up, I think there are some lights in there, stuff like that. But it's all just wasted space right now.

Mayor Hechler: What material is it?

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell: The canvas is some kind of polyether urethane, to be the inflatable part. There's also a tarp that covers the pool for construction purposes, that's included in that as well. We did have somebody make an offer to buy it from us last Summer, and I think that's what started this conversation to get it. Mainly, it's in the only shaded place at the swimming pool where people can sit, and they can't sit there because it's full of all of this useless stuff we can't use anymore. OJ did a complete survey of everything that was in there to include, and hopefully it can go to auction and be removed so we can have some shaded seating area opened up.

Mayor Hechler: When was the last time we put it up?

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell: 2017.

City Clerk Torres: Yeah, it's been a while. And we will take pictures, of course we can't take it to the auction, but we'll have pictures available over there so they can see what it looks like.

City Manager Whitehead: I would also point out, the canvas structure, as I looked at it, is probably the least expensive part of it. There's a fully-functional air conditioner system that's still on the site, that we would potentially try to find a buyer for down the road, and then there's an auxiliary pump that was used to keep the air pressure up. Both of those are pad-mounted inside the structure, so there will be some additional value, and we can find out how to move those.

Mayor Hechler: So those won't be separated from the auction, they'll identify those things as the value –

City Manager Whitehead: We would sell those separately.

City Attorney Rubin: What the City Clerk and I spoke about yesterday is that we're convinced the value of this is a very modest amount. That kind of lessens some of the requirements I would normally be concerned about.

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell moved to approve Resolution No. 51 25/26 Sale of Surplus Property to be sold at the April 11, 2026 Willard Hall Auction. Commissioner Glines seconded the motion. Roll call was taken by the Clerk-Treasurer. Motion carried 3-0.

H. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- 1. Threatened & Pending Litigation (Dianne Gunning) pursuant to 10-15-1(H.7).**
- 2. Threatened & Pending Litigation (Ron Fenn) pursuant to 10-15-1(H.7).**

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell made a motion to go into executive session at 5:12 p.m. to discuss Threatened & Pending Litigation (Dianne Gunning) pursuant to 10-15-1(H.7) and Threatened & Pending Litigation (Ron Fenn) pursuant to 10-15-1(H.7). Commissioner Glines seconded the motion. Roll call vote was taken by the Clerk-Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Hechler reconvened the meeting in open session at 5:22 p.m.

Mayor Pro-Tem Mitchell certified that only matters pertaining to Threatened & Pending Litigation (Dianne Gunning) pursuant to 10-15-1(H.7) and Threatened & Pending Litigation (Ron Fenn) pursuant to 10-15-1(H.7) were discussed in Executive Session and no action was taken in executive session.

I. RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION; ACTION (if any)

- 1. Threatened & Pending Litigation (Dianne Gunning) pursuant to 10-15-1(H.7).**
- 2. Threatened & Pending Litigation (Ron Fenn) pursuant to 10-15-1(H.7).**

No action was taken.

I. ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Hechler adjourned the meeting at 5:23 p.m.

Passed and Approved this 8th day of April, 2026.



Rolf Hechler, Mayor

ATTEST:



Angela A. Torres, CMC, City Clerk

Angela A. Torres, CMC, City Clerk