



ROGER SWEET
Mayor

DAVID RYAN
Mayor Pro-Tem

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BOB WILSON
Trustee
MANOLITO SANCHEZ
Trustee
DR. JULIETTE SWEET
Trustee

**MINUTES FOR THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED VILLAGE COUNCIL MEETING:
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17, 2020 AT 6:00 P.M.**

**MEETING TO BE CONDUCTED IN THE VILLAGE PLAZA WITH PROPER SOCIAL
DISTANCING PRACTICES—REMEMBER YOUR MASK--GOVERNOR'S ORDERS!**

1. Call to Order-Mayor Sweet called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Also present were Mayor Pro-Tem Ryan, Trustees Wilson, Sanchez & Sweet, Police Chief Felix Nunez, Clerk/Treasurer Yvonne Dickey, and Volunteer Firefighters Craig Francois, Mark Michel, Ramona Whitaker, Nick Alton, Charlie Pate, Carlos Alvarado, Gerald Weeks, and Flor Valenzuela and Jemez Valley Alley reporter Bettyann Legans.
2. Pledge of Allegiance-The Mayor led the pledge.
3. Approval of Agenda-Trustee Wilson moved that the agenda be approved. Trustee Sanchez seconded and the agenda was approved unanimously.
4. Approval of Minutes from 5/20/20 Meeting-Trustee Wilson moved that the minutes from the last meeting be approved as presented. Trustee Sweet seconded and the minutes were approved with no changes.
5. Discussion about Volunteer Fire Department possible merger with Sandoval County. Interim County Fire Chief Eric Masterson presented the Council with a proposal for our Fire Department to merge with Sandoval County. The proposal outlined three options in which the Village could consider merging with the county in order to secure EMS services from the County. While better EMS Services are clearly in the best interest of our constituents, the "price to be paid" needs to be considered. Mr. Alvarado pointed out that all three options provided by Masterson seem rather one-sided in the County's favor. In option one, the Village would give all

supplies, equipment, and apparatus to the county, allocate all state fire funds to the county, allow the county to use our fire station at no cost, and the Village would remain responsible for the maintenance, utilities, and associated costs of the building we could no longer use. In option two, the Village would still operate our fire department, but would pay Sandoval County to respond to all emergency calls in an “automatic aid” capacity. In the third option, the County would only respond to “high acuity requests for aid” for which the Village would still have to pay. Chief Francois explained that he understands the County is trying to save money and utilize stations, but he questioned the logistics seeing that our fire department is state funded and those funds are earmarked to be used by our municipality, but county personnel would be using our assets. To address the EMS need, Chief Francois reminded the council that our department and La Cueva Volunteer Fire Department have always been able to work collaboratively. He showed the council sample Memoranda of Understanding that we could use to formalize a partnership with neighboring departments for EMS without giving up so much autonomy to the county. Mr. Michel explained how the fire department is funded. Every homeowners’ insurance policy generates revenue that goes to a fund that the State distributes to local departments for general operations. In years past, this amount has been about \$50,000, but since our department worked so hard to get the community’s ISO rating improved, the funding amount has gone above \$84,000. This money is dedicated for firefighting operations (thus could not be used by either us or the county for EMS). It is the Friends group that buys any rescue equipment our department needs but we have no EMS and receive no EMS funds. Mr. Michel went on to clarify that a second source of funding is competitive grants that our fire department has aggressively pursued and this has netted over \$200,000 of funding that has gone directly to our community. Gerald Weeks said that if the county were to absorb our department and it was county fire personnel responding, because they are not right in our community like our volunteers are, this increased response time would cause our community’s ISO rating to be lowered and homeowners’ insurance rates to go up. Trustee Ryan said he is aware of other communities who have partnered

- with the county successfully, and that there may be some benefit. He asked to study the Memorandums and continue the discussion next month. Mayor Pro-Tem Ryan recognized this is a complex topic and that all the pros and cons must be weighed based on what is best for our community. Trustee Wilson said that he understands that EMS service is something many constituents are concerned about, and Fire Chief Francois noted that both Ms. Whitaker and Ms. Valenzuela have expressed desire to become trained as EMS providers-perhaps the solution to the lack of EMS is within our community already. Trustee Sanchez indicated that he is hesitant to just sign over control and assets which we have worked so hard to acquire over the years. Mayor Pro-Tem Ryan suggested the discussion continue next month, and the discussion was tabled.
6. Executive Session-Discuss Personnel Issues-At approximately 7:30 p.m. it was properly moved and seconded that the Council go into executive session. Issues were discussed with Chief Nunez, although no action was taken. At approximately 7:40 p.m. it was properly moved and seconded to end the executive session.
 7. Reports
 - a. Maintenance-submitted
 - b. Bath House-Mayor Sweet explained that the Bath house is still struggling to reopen. His concern is that it would be harder on the attendants if we brought them back to work too soon and they had to go back on unemployment again if cases of COVID increase. Trustee Wilson asked whether a plan was being formulated for when the Bath House eventually does reopen. Mayor Sweet has notes from Ms. Lovato and Ms. Dickey is beginning to obtain supplies for when it is time to reopen. Trustee Wilson reiterated that the Bath House is an enterprise fund and needs to pay for itself eventually. All other Village entities (Library, etc.) are following the Governor's reopening plan, and that the plan already allows for businesses like the Bath House to be open.
 - c. Library-Mayor Pro-Tem Ryan pointed out that Ms. Phillips' reopening plan for the library is extremely thorough and well-thought-out.
 - d. Court-submitted

- e. Wastewater-A monumental grease plug in front of Los Ojos caused havoc with raw sewage running across Highway 4, and was removed. However, removing the clog allowed grease and scum to flow down into the wastewater treatment plant resulting in a bacterial overgrowth that was difficult to remedy. Things are back to normal at the plant but this caused a lot of extra work for Ms. Nalezny and Mr. Betz. Trustee Sweet asked whether this was something the property owner should be fined for. Mayor Sweet explained that while our ordinances certainly do allow for a sewer customer to be fined in this circumstance; it seems the business owners are doing their due diligence and that this is hopefully an isolated event.
 - f. Police Chief-submitted. Chief Nunez explained that as people begin to return to work, his officers will begin issuing citations again. Traffic is expected to be down to one lane at the bridge project for the foreseeable future, so extra enforcement may be needed there. Chief Nunez continues to update policies and procedures to protect residents as the COVID situation unfolds.
 - g. P&Z Commission-not submitted
 - h. Volunteer Fire Department-submitted
 - i. Lodgers' Tax Advisory Board-not submitted
8. Clerk/Treasurer's Report-Ms. Dickey explained that revenue collection exceeded our expectations, and that financially, the Village is in a stable position. Most departments are within their budgets, or the budgets were exceeded by small amounts because of supplies needed in response to COVID-19. The DFA has already sent out memos explaining that they understand every municipality will have similar challenges. The final quarter's report and the resolutions related to the final budget will need to be addressed next month. In the meantime, the office is reopening with abbreviated hours to minimize exposure. We are building up a strategic stockpile of cleaning supplies and protective gear for our personnel over the summer to prepare for a potential flare-up in the fall. Ms. Holder resigned as MVD Clerk, so a new clerk will be sought as this is a very important service to the community.

9. Mayor's Report

- a. Mayor Sweet-Mayor Sweet reported that after last month's meeting, County Commissioner Eichwald never kept his word to follow up about the County Commission issue. Mayor Pro-Tem Ryan and Trustee Wilson shared the opinion that this matter may not be worth pursuing since the real problem is Sheriff Casaus. Trustee Sweet suggested a petition, but in the end, the council directed Ms. Dickey to write a letter to Commissioner Eichwald explaining to him that by blowing off an entire community of constituents, he has acted in a way that is detrimental to not just us, but to voters' perceptions of him as well. On a positive note, Mayor Sweet reported that he and Ms. Dickey, along with Bill Musser and a few other community members are working with Erica Velarde from Trane to have an energy audit done. The end goal would be to explore the feasibility of solar, geothermal, and other ways to achieve energy independence. The cost is about \$3,000. There is also forward momentum with the Dark Skies Initiative and the Friends Group for the Valles Caldera has donated light fixtures that will bring all Village properties into compliance.
- b. Mayor Pro-Tem Ryan-Mayor Pro-Tem Ryan noted that he prefers outdoor, socially-distanced meetings to virtual meetings. He shared with the council his desire to study more carefully the fire department issue, stating that his concern is the best interest of the community. He also reported that as of today, the 87025 zip code still had no reported cases of COVID-19. Mayor Pro-Tem Ryan also complimented the landscaping in front of the police station.
- c. Trustee Wilson-nothing
- d. Trustee Sanchez-Trustee Sanchez also shared his positive impression of the landscaping.
- e. Trustee Sweet-nothing

10. Adjourn-At approximately 8:00 p.m. Trustee Sanchez moved that the meeting be adjourned. Mayor Pro-Tem Ryan seconded and the meeting was adjourned unanimously.