

**San Juan County Commission
Regular Meeting
September 16, 2025**

Chairman Fortner called the San Juan County Commission meeting to order on September 16, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers located in the County Administration Building, 100 S. Oliver Drive, Aztec, New Mexico. Chairman Pro-Tem Gonzales gave the invocation and Commissioner Lanier led the Pledge of Allegiance. Those present were:

CHAIRMAN	Terri D. Fortner
CHAIRMAN PRO-TEM	Sam Gonzales
MEMBER	Sandra L. Lanier
MEMBER	GloJean Todacheene
MEMBER	Gary McDaniel
CHIEF DEPUTY ASSESSOR	John Kuhn
CLERK	Alyssa Kuhn
TREASURER	Carol Taulbee
SHERIFF	Shane Ferrari
COUNTY MANAGER	Mike Stark
DEPUTY COUNTY MANAGER	Steven Saavedra
ATTORNEY	Joe Sawyer
DEPUTY ATTORNEY	Ellen Wayne
EMERGENCY MANAGER	Mike Mestas
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	Kim Martin
PARKS & FACILITIES ADMINISTRATOR	Steven Dansie
PARKS & FACILITIES DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR	Michelle Murray
PUBLIC WORKS ADMINISTRATOR	Nick Porell
ADULT DETENTION ADMINISTRATOR	Daniel Webb
FIRE CHIEF	David Vega
COMMUNITY HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECTOR	Megan Cullip
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR	Michele Truby-Tillen
PUBLIC RELATIONS & FILM MANAGER	Devin Neeley
PRESS: Tri-City Record	David Albright
VISITORS:	13

Chairman Fortner requested prayers for the many people affected by the recent tragedies locally and nationally. Ms. Fortner expressed the importance of kindness, regard, and respect for others.

Regular Meeting

Approval of Agenda

Mike Stark, County Manager, stated that there were no changes to the agenda. A motion was made by Commissioner Todacheene, seconded by Chairman Pro-Tem Gonzales to approve the agenda as presented. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes for August 19, 2025
2. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes for September 2, 2025
3. Approval of FY26 Budget Adjustment #2 – Resolution No. 25-26-23
4. Approval of Treasurer's Check Register for August 2025
5. Approval of Finance Check Registers for August 2025

A motion was made by Commissioner Todacheene, seconded by Commissioner McDaniel to approve the Consent Agenda. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

New Business

1. Consideration to Order County Assessor to Impose 2025 Property Tax Rates

Kim Martin, Chief Financial Officer, reported that the Board of County Commissioners is required to issue a written order imposing the property tax at the rates set on the taxable value of property allocated in the appropriate governmental units. The order must be issued within five days of receipt of the Department of Finance & Administration's (DFA) Property Tax Rate Setting Order, however, for the fourth straight year, DFA is allowing additional time for the governing body to respond; this year's deadline is September 19th. The written order must be delivered to the County Assessor immediately. The finance officers of the municipalities, school districts, and San Juan College have been notified and have confirmed in writing the new tax rates for their governmental units. Ms. Martin presented the following information:

- DFA and the County Commission issue and deliver its own written order to the County Assessor. No later than October 1st, the Assessor prepares and delivers the property tax schedule to the County Treasurer who mails the tax bills no later than November 1st.
- Tax rates can be set by a combination of taxing authorities, however tax rates set by the taxing authority are subject to change due to the Yield Control Statute.
- The Yield Control Statute considers growth control factors such as inflation and new construction
- Other than Eddy County at 7.5 mills, San Juan County remains the second lowest in the state at 8.5 mills for the 2025 tax year
 - Residential mill rates decreased .11%, from 7.020 to 6.942
 - Non-Residential mill rates decreased .007%, from 8.5 to 8.493
- No General Obligation Bond debt has been issued by the County in 34 years
- The last property tax increase was in FY2005 in which the mill rate increased from 8 to 8.5 mills to fund the Water Reserve Fund for the San Juan Water Commission

A motion was made by Chairman Pro-Tem Gonzales, seconded by Commissioner McDaniel to approve to Order County Assessor to Impose 2025 Property Tax. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

2. Consideration of Application for Variance from San Juan County Cannabis Ordinance No. 120 for Kannabis Klub, LLC – 5641 Bloomfield Hwy, Farmington, NM

Joe Sawyer, County Attorney, announced that the Commission will only be relying on evidence gathered at the original variance hearing so as not to violate the due process rights of parties involved. Michele Truby-Tillen, Community Development Director, stated that Benjamin and Marlene Nunez, co-owners of Kannabis Klub, LLC submitted a Variance Application to the Community Development Department on August 7, 2025, seeking a variance from the minimum separation distance from a residence requirement in Section 3(A) of Ordinance No. 120. Kannabis Klub proposed utilizing an existing structure at 5641 Bloomfield Hwy in Farmington, to operate a retail cannabis dispensary; the facility was previously approved for a Cannabis Variance for the purposes of manufacturing on April 16, 2024. The facility is within 300 feet of three residences and of those residences, one is within 50 feet of the proposed retail structure. The proposed retail structure is accessed from the Bloomfield Hwy and does not have access to the neighborhood to the south and is separated from the closest residential structure by a privacy fence and trees on the property line. The applicant is seeking a variance to last the life of the business at this location. San Juan County Community Development Director, Michele Truby-Tillen, determined in Staff Comments that the variance would not be contrary to the intent of San Juan County Ordinance 120. Staff recommended approval based on there being no objection from the impacted residents, the previously approved Cannabis Variance, the historical use of the structure as a VFW Club/liquor Establishment, and the access of the Cannabis Business not impacting the residential community. A public hearing was held before hearing officer T. Ryan Lane on September 3, 2025. The requested variance was not opposed in writing or in person prior to or during the hearing. No residents were present at the hearing. Hearing Officer Lane recommends that the variance be granted based on the hearing findings as follows: that the granting of the variance would not be contrary to the intent of San Juan County Ordinance 120, that the structure was previously approved for a manufacturing variance, the previous use of the property as a liquor establishment, access to the proposed Cannabis Dispensary being solely off of Bloomfield Hwy is not impacting the residential neighborhood, and the lack of protest from the three residential properties within the 300-foot variance request. A motion was made by Commissioner Lanier, seconded by Commissioner Todacheene to approve the Application for Variance from San Juan County Cannabis Ordinance No. 120 for Kannabis Klub, LLC – 5641 Bloomfield Hwy, Farmington, NM. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

3. Consideration of Resolution No. 25-26-22, Acceptance of NMDOT Transportation Project Fund (TPF) Grant Funding for Bridge 8113 Rehabilitation

Nick Porell, Public Works Director, indicated that an application was submitted to the New Mexico Department of Transportation for the FY26 Transportation Project Fund (TPF) in May 2025. On August 27, 2025, San Juan County's TPF application for \$1,210,000 through the program for a bridge rehabilitation project on Bridge 8113 (APS Bridge) on Road 6675 was

approved by the Transportation Commission. A resolution of acceptance from the County Board of Commissioner and associated commitment to the required 5% local match (\$60,500.00) is required to finalize the cooperative agreement process. Staff requested approval of Resolution No. 25-26-22 and signature of the Cooperative Agreement for LP50068. A motion was made by Chairman Pro-Tem Gonzales, seconded by Commissioner Lanier to approve Resolution No. 25-26-22, Acceptance of NMDOT Transportation Project Fund (TPF) Grant Funding for Bridge 8113 Rehabilitation. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

4. Resolution No. 25-26-21, Report on Inspection of Detention Center

Joe Sawyer, County Attorney, reported that NMSA 1978, §33-3-4, Inspection of Jails and Detention Centers, provides that the governing body shall conduct an annual site visit to inspect the overall conditions at the detention facility and present an inspection report at a regular meeting of the governing body. The last report was submitted on September 17, 2024. All members of the Commission inspected the Detention Center in 2025. Resolution No. 25-26-21 reports the findings of the inspection and the conditions at the Detention Center. A motion was made by Commissioner Todacheene, seconded by Commissioner McDaniel to approve Resolution No. 25-26-21, Report on Inspection of Detention Center. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

Report from County Manager

Mike Stark reported the following:

- The funeral for former Commissioner Mike Sullivan will be held on Friday, September 19th, at 10:00 a.m. at the Church of Jesus Christ Latter-Day Saints. Mr. Stark expressed his condolences to the Sullivan family.
- The SB3 Behavioral Health Planning Grant application has been submitted.
- National Public Cleanup event will be held on September 27th; Fall Household Hazardous Waste Day will be held on October 11th in the San Juan County Administration Parking Lot; Dumpster Days will be October 18th and 19th- there will be no charge to dispose of regular waste at the transfer stations
- October 1st and 2nd there will be a Special Legislative Session with the focus on Federal funding gaps

Reports From Elected Officials And Department Heads

Commissioner Todacheene thanked Daniel Webb, Adult Detention Administrator, for accommodating her inspection to the Detention Center on Saturday and thanked Mike Mestas for notifying her regarding the tornado warning.

Daniel Webb, Adult Detention Administrator, reported the following:

- Thanked the Commission for inspecting the Detention Center
- The Detention Center open house on August 10th had limited attendance however, it was a success; the next open house will be on November 5th.
- There is a program in the development stages to assist detainees seeking employment prior to release.

Megan Cullip, Community Health & Social Services Director, announced that Suicide Prevention Day was September 10, 2025; a vigil was held at Berg Park in Farmington, in remembrance of the lives lost due to suicide.

Nick Porell, Public Works Administrator, presented the following:

- Update on Roads 3000 and 3500 bridge construction
- In the event of a road maintenance emergency after normal business hours, contact non-emergency dispatch at (505) 334-6622, they will contact the on-call road maintenance staff.

Commissioner McDaniel requested an update on the 5-mile Bridge. Nick Porell, Public Works Administrator, indicated that requests for funding have been denied, however, he will continue to seek out grants.

Steve Dansie, Parks & Facility Administrator, recognized Larry Don Chitty and the Farmington High School Basketball Team for their community service project providing maintenance to the pig barn show ring at McGee Park. Mr. Chitty introduced Derrick Jaramillo, Donathan Tracy, and Zander Griego. The Commissioners commended the team for the services provided.

Mike Mestas, Emergency Manager, announced that there will be a full-scale drill at the Detention Center on September 17th at 8:00 a.m.; briefing begins at 7:00 a.m.

Devin Neeley, Public Relations & Film Manager, reported the following:

- San Juan County Film Backlot has been listed with the State Film Office as a qualifying facility; productions using the backlot and NM vendors will receive a 40% tax rebate on the production.
- The County and Commissioner Todacheene sponsored the Four Corners Film Festival on September 12th and 13th; there were an estimated 120 local students in attendance on Friday and 80 students purchased tickets to the film festival on Saturday.

Commissioner Lanier thanked Steve Dansie, Public Works Director and Michelle Murray, Deputy Director for the services they provided to the Leadership San Juan event at Cascade Village.

Comments / Input From The General Public

None

Closed Executive Session

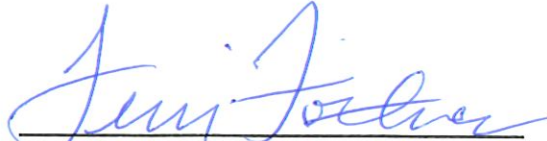
A motion was made by Commissioner Lanier, seconded by Commissioner McDaniel to go into closed executive session pursuant to Section 10-15-1(H)(8), discussion for the possible purchase, acquisition or disposal of real property or water rights by the public body, specifically land adjacent to McGee Park. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously. Upon return a motion was made by Commissioner Lanier, seconded by Commissioner Todacheene to go back into open meeting. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Lanier stated that nothing other than what was stated in the motion to go into closed executive session was discussed.


Adjourn

Being no further business, Chairman Fortner adjourned the meeting at 5:35 p.m.


APPROVED THIS 7TH DAY OF OCTOBER 2025

BY THE SAN JUAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:


Chairman Terri D. Fortner


Chairman Pro-Tem Sam Gonzales


Sandra L. Lanier


GloJean Todacheene


Gary McDaniel

ATTEST:


Alyssa Kuhn, County Clerk

