

San Juan County Commission Regular Meeting December 16, 2025

Chairman Fortner called the San Juan County Commission meeting to order on December 16, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers located in the County Administration Building, 100 S. Oliver Drive, Aztec, New Mexico. Mike Stark, County Manager gave the invocation and Alyssa Kuhn, County Clerk 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
UNDERSHERIFF	Cory Tanner
COUNTY MANAGER	Mike Stark
DEPUTY COUNTY MANAGER	Steven Saavedra
DEPUTY ATTORNEY	Ellen Wayne
EMERGENCY MANAGER	Mike Mestas
DEPUTY CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	Travis Sisco
PARKS & FACILITIES DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR	Michelle Murray
PUBLIC WORKS ADMINISTRATOR	Nick Porell
ADULT DETENTION ADMINISTRATOR	Daniel Webb
FIRE CHIEF	David Vega
DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF	Donovan Mack
PUBLIC RELATIONS & FILM MANAGER	Devin Neeley
MARKETING ASSISTANT	Tim Mietty
PROJECT MANAGER	Porter Smith
PRESS: Tri-City Record	David Albright
VISITORS:	9

A motion was made by Commissioner Lanier, seconded by Chairman Pro-Tem Gonzales to call to order the Board of Finance Meeting. Upon voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Board of Finance Meeting

1. Consideration of Resolution No. 25-26-43, Authorizing Investment of Monies in the Local Short-Term Investment Fund

Carol Taulbee, County Treasurer, indicated that each year, the San Juan County Commission must authorize the County Treasurer and the Chief Deputy Treasurer to invest County monies

in the local short-term investment fund, pursuant to Section 6-10-10.1, N.M.S.A., 1978, which is managed by the New Mexico State Treasurer. Resolution 25-26-43 authorizes Carol Taulbee, County Treasurer and Bryan Myers, Chief Deputy Treasurer to deposit or withdraw monies in the local short-term investment fund. Chairman Fortner asked if the recent change in Federal interest rates had an impact on the County's investments. Ms. Taulbee stated that Federal interest rates have dropped but County is still expected to see a return on its investments. A motion was made by Commissioner Todacheene, seconded by Chairman Pro-Tem Gonzales to approve Resolution No. 25-26-43, Authorizing Investment of Monies in the Local Short-Term Investment Fund. Upon voice vote this motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Lanier, seconded by Commissioner Todacheene to adjourn the Board of Finance Meeting and call to order the Regular Meeting. Upon voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Regular Meeting

Approval of Agenda

Mike Stark, County Manager, stated that there was one change to the agenda. New Business Item #3, Consideration to Serve as Fiscal Agent for the Kirtland-Fruitland Cemetery Capital Outlay Funding Request will be presented by Brian Washburn. A motion was made by Commissioner Todacheene, seconded by Commissioner Lanier to approve the agenda as amended. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes for November 10, 2025
2. Approval of Treasurer Check Register for November 2025
3. Approval of Finance Check Registers for November 2025
4. Approval of FY26 Budget Adjustment #7 – Resolution No. 25-26-42

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

New Business

1. **Consideration of Resolution No. 25-26-41, A Proclamation Honoring the Bloomfield High School Football Team**

Terri Fortner, Chairman, stated that December 16th will be proclaimed "Bloomfield High School Football Team Day" in honor of the BHS Bobcats winning the 2025 4A State Football Championship on November 30, 2025. Commissioner McDaniel read aloud the proclamation:

**SAN JUAN COUNTY, NEW MEXICO
RESOLUTION NO. 25-26-41
A PROCLAMATION HONORING THE
BLOOMFIELD HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM**

WHEREAS, the Bloomfield High School Football Team won the 2025 NMAA 4A State Football Championship on November 30, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the #1 Bloomfield High School Bobcats defeated the #2 St. Pius X High School Sartans 58-27 at Nusenda Field in Albuquerque, completing a 12-1 season, and setting a New Mexico record for most points in a season; and

WHEREAS, this championship is the fourth championship in Bloomfield High School history.

WHEREAS, the Bloomfield High School Bobcat Football team are back-to-back state champions for 2024 and 2025.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of County Commissioners of San Juan County, New Mexico, hereby declares December 16, 2025, as "Bloomfield High School Football Team Day" in San Juan County, New Mexico in recognition of their fourth State football championship.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 16th day of December, 2025.

Coach Mike Kovacs acknowledged Evani Velasquez as the first girl to play in a championship football game and recognized his team for their hard work. A motion was made by Chairman Pro-Tem Gonzales, seconded by Commissioner McDaniel to approve Resolution No. 25-26-41, A Proclamation Honoring the Bloomfield High School Football Team. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

2. Consideration to Serve as Fiscal Agent for the San Juan River Dineh Water Users 2026 Capital Outlay Funding

Dan Smith, San Juan River Dineh Water Users Interim CEO, indicated that the San Juan River Dineh Water Users (SJRDU) services about 880 farmers in Shiprock and Mr. Smith requested that the County serve as fiscal agent equipment outlay funds only; the County has served as a fiscal agent for SJRDWU previously in 2017 and 2018. The Navajo Nation declined to serve as fiscal agent and a letter was provided to the County stating their refusal. Staff recommended serving as fiscal agent if the amount of capital outlay requested exceeds the cost of the equipment (no gap funding provided by the County) and appropriate insurance which meets the County's insurance carrier requirements. A lease agreement approved by the County Legal Department is also required. Commissioner Todacheene expressed concerns regarding secure storage for the heavy equipment, staffing turnover/oversight, distribution of funding, and that the Navajo Nation's declined to serve as the fiscal agent. Mr. Smith stated that the water company now has a perimeter fencing and cement blocking to store the equipment, along with GPS tracking installed on all equipment/vehicles; audits are conducted on funding received over \$1 million; and the Navajo Nation declined to serve due to the lack of staff and resources. Following discussion among the Commission, a motion was made by Commissioner McDaniel,

seconded by Chairman Pro-Tem Gonzales to table the Consideration to Serve as Fiscal Agent for the San Juan River Dineh Water Users 2026 Capital Outlay Funding until the next Commission Meeting in January. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

3. Consideration to Serve as Fiscal Agent for the Kirtland-Fruitland Cemetery Capital Outlay Funding Request

Brian Washburn, Kirtland-Fruitland Cemetery Treasurer, requested that the County serve as the fiscal agent for the Kirtland-Fruitland Cemetery for capital outlay received for equipment in the upcoming legislative session. Previously, the County has served as fiscal agent for other agencies, but only for equipment related purchases that are approved by the Commission in advance of a Legislative session. Staff recommended serving as fiscal agent if the equipment is received and a lease agreement approved by the Legal Department is developed between San Juan County and Kirtland-Fruitland Cemetery. The Commission asked various questions. A motion was made by Commissioner Lanier, seconded by Commissioner Todacheene to approve to Serve as Fiscal Agent for the Kirtland-Fruitland Cemetery Capital Outlay Funding Request. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

4. 2025 Energy and Water Audit Preliminary Results

Porter Smith, Project Manager, indicated that RDH Building Science Inc is currently conducting an energy and water audit on the County's most utilized buildings, totaling 800,000 square feet. The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant is part of the U.S. Department of Energy's initiative to improve energy efficiency in buildings by reducing energy consumption, lowering costs, and cutting fossil fuel emissions by providing funding for projects to state/local governments and tribes. Since the last audit in 2009, numerous improvements have been made to the County's infrastructure to conserve energy and lower costs. The current audit aims to identify areas that can be improved with new technology and quantify the gains made by the enhancements following the previous audit. Voytek Gretka, RDH Building Science Inc Senior Engineer and Timon Bruulsema, RDH Building Science Ince Associate Engineer, presented a brief overview and preliminary results of the energy/water audit. The Commission asked various questions.

5. San Juan United Way ALICE Program

Cathryn Abeyta, San Juan United Way Executive Director, stated that the Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) refers to households that earn above the federal poverty level but still cannot afford basic needs such as housing, childcare, food, transportation, and healthcare. In San Juan County, nearly 30% of residents fall into the ALICE category at some point during the year, showing that many working families struggle to cover essential expenses. Due to their income these households often do not qualify for public assistance, which leaves them financially vulnerable. The ALICE framework helps communities recognize these challenges and develop programs, such as the 2-1-1 hotline that connects individuals with resources for assistance. The Commission made various comments

Report from County Manager

Mike Stark, County Manager, reported the following:

- The Public Hearing for the Racino License transfer to Clovis, N.M. has been postponed and the period for public comment has been extended.
- Announced that Porter Smith, Project Manager, has resigned and was thanked for his service to San Juan County.

Reports From Elected Officials And Department Heads

Bonnie Hopkins Byers, New Mexico State University Extension Office County Director, reported the following:

- The address for the New Mexico State Extension Office is 400 Gossett Dr in Aztec and thanked the Commission for their support during its construction.
- Introduced Lena Sanchez as the new 4-H Agriculture Agent who will manage the livestock, horse and rodeo programs.
- Introduced Mary Frank, 4-H County Council President and Cadence Anderson, 4-H County Council Vice President, who thanked the Commission for their support of the 4-H Program and construction of the new Extension Office.

Nick Porell, Public Works Administrator, reported the following:

- Introduced Joseph Myers, Community Beautification Coordinator for Public Works.
- Updated the Commission on the bridge projects on Roads 3000 and 3500. The stop work notice on Road 3000 was lifted December 8th.

Joseph Myers, Community Beautification Coordinator, expressed his enthusiasm to help with efforts to clean up the community.

Commissioner Todacheene asked Fire Chief David Vega if fireworks will be permitted for New Year's celebrations. Fire Chief Vega stated that fireworks will be permitted.

Alyssa Kuhn, County Clerk, reported that on December 1st an audit was conducted per NMSA 1-14-13.2; no discrepancies were reported. On December 2nd a recount was conducted for Aztec School Board District 3, Farmington School Board District 3, and Bloomfield Municipal Judge; no changes in the outcome of the races were reported.

Comments / Input From The General Public

None

Closed Executive Session

A motion was made by Commissioner Lanier, seconded by Commissioner Todacheene to go into closed executive session Pursuant to Section 10-15-1(H)(7) - Discuss matters pertaining to threatened or pending litigation related to movement of the Sunray Racino License to Clovis,

NM. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously. Upon return a motion was made by Commissioner Lanier, seconded by Chairman Pro-Tem Gonzales 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 5:44 p.m.

APPROVED THIS 6TH DAY OF JANUARY 2026


BY THE SAN JUAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:



Chairman



Chairman Pro-Tem



Member



Member



Member

ATTEST:



Alyssa Kuhn, County Clerk

