

## San Juan County Commission Regular Meeting January 6, 2026

Chairman Fortner called the San Juan County Commission meeting to order on January 6, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers located in the County Administration Building, 100 S. Oliver Drive, Aztec, New Mexico. Commissioner Todacheene gave the invocation and Commissioner Lanier led the Pledge of Allegiance. Those present were:

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| CHAIRMAN                                | Sam Gonzales       |
| CHAIRMAN PRO-TEM                        | Sandra L. Lanier   |
| MEMBER                                  | Terri D. Fortner   |
| MEMBER                                  | GloJean Todacheene |
| MEMBER                                  | Gary McDaniel      |
| CHIEF DEPUTY ASSESSOR                   | John Kuhn          |
| CLERK                                   | Alyssa Kuhn        |
| UNDERSHERIFF                            | Cory Tanner        |
| 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        |
| CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER           | Roberta Padilla    |
| FIRE CHIEF                              | David Vega         |
| DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF                       | John Gilbert       |
| PUBLIC RELATIONS & FILM MANAGER         | Devin Neeley       |
| PROJECT MANAGER                         | Toni Sitta         |

VISITORS:

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### Election of Chairman and Chairman Pro-Tem

Chairman Fortner conducted the election for Chairman of the San Juan County Board of Commissioners for the 2026 Calendar Year. Chairman Fortner nominated Chairman Pro-Tem Gonzales to the position of San Juan County Chairman for the 2026 Calendar Year. A roll-call vote was conducted for Chairman Pro-Tem Gonzales as Chairman; Commissioner Lanier, Chairman Fortner, Chairman Pro-Tem Gonzales, Commissioner Todacheene, and Commissioner McDaniel voted in favor. Upon roll-call vote, Chairman Pro-Tem Gonzales was chosen as the Chairman for the 2026 Calendar Year. Chairman Gonzales presented the gavel to Commissioner Fortner thanking her for her service as Chairman.

Commissioner Fortner nominated Commissioner Lanier to the position of Chairman Pro-Tem for the 2026 Calendar year. Commissioner McDaniel nominated Commissioner Todacheene to the position of Chairman Pro-Tem for the 2026 Calendar year. A roll-call vote was conducted for Commissioner Lanier as Chairman Pro-Tem; Commissioner Lanier, Commissioner Fortner, Chairman Gonzales voted in favor of Commissioner Lanier. Commissioner Todacheene and Commissioner McDaniel voted against. Upon roll-call vote 3 to 2, Commissioner Lanier was chosen as Chairman Pro-Tem for the 2026 Calendar year.

## **Regular Meeting**

### **Approval of Agenda**

Mike Stark, County Manager, stated that there was one change to the agenda. At the request of Dan Smith, San Juan River Dineh Water Users Interim CEO, Old Business Item 1, Consideration to Serve as Fiscal Agent for the San Juan River Dineh Water Users 2026 Capital Outlay Funding, was removed from the agenda. Mike Stark, County Manager, indicated that they will be seeking the Navajo Nation to be fiscal agent. A motion was made by Commissioner Fortner, seconded by Chairman Pro-Tem Lanier to approve the agenda as amended. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

### **Consent Agenda**

1. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes from December 2, 2025
2. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes from December 16, 2025
3. Approval of FY26 Budget Adjustment #8 – Resolution No. 25-26-48
4. Approval to Apply for NMED Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust Grant

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

### **Old Business**

1. **Consideration to Serve as Fiscal Agent for the San Juan River Dineh Water Users 2026 Capital Outlay Funding- Removed**

### **New Business**

1. **Consideration of Community Benefits Agreement with Foxtail Solar**

Mike Stark, County Manager, indicated that the County Commission recently authorized issuance of Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRB) with DE Shaw Renewable Investments for two solar & battery projects (Foxtail Flats and Four Mile Mesa) located primarily on Ute Mountain Ute land in San Juan County. As a result of the IRB negotiations, fire protection and medical services to the sites would need to be provided by San Juan County Fire and Rescue (SJCFR) due to response and capacity constraints of the Ute Mountain Ute tribal nation. San Juan

County Fire and Rescue is agreeable to providing fire services to the area assuming a suitable agreement can be reached between the County and the Ute Mountain Ute tribe; to facilitate the ability to serve the area, the agreement outlines a one-time contribution of \$1,200,000 to the County to increase and enhance fire protection services to the project site. This fee is based upon a total projected capital expenditure of \$621,000,000; should project expenditures increase beyond that amount, the payment to the County will be based increased utilizing the payment percentage of 0.1932367 percent. In exchange for the funding, San Juan County agrees to use its best efforts to procure an agreement with the Ute Mountain Ute tribe to provide such fire protection and medical response services, assist with publicizing of Foxtail's contributions of the project, and exempt the project from any building or electrical permit fees. Given the solar and battery projects are located on tribal lands, the San Juan County Community Development Department does not have jurisdiction to permit/inspect the project thus resulting in no loss of revenue to the County. Funding for the fire apparatus will not be paid by DE Shaw Renewable Investments until an agreement has been reached between San Juan County and Ute Mountain Ute tribe. Additionally, fire and medical services will not be provided by San Juan County until such agreement is in place. Staff recommended approval of the Community Benefits Agreement with Foxtail Solar. Commissioner Fortner asked how long it would take to obtain an additional fire engine. Fire Chief David Vega stated that the build time for an engine is up to 3 years and a demo/stock truck is 1 year. A motion was made by Commissioner Fortner, seconded by Commissioner Todacheene to approve the Community Benefits Agreement with Foxtail Solar. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

**2. Consideration of Resolution No. 25-26-50, Acceptance and Approval of the FY25 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR)**

Kim Martin, Chief Financial Officer, reported that Section 2.2.2.10M(4) NMAC (2024 New Mexico State Audit Rule) requires that the FY25 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) be presented by the IPA (Pattillo, Brown and Hill, LLP) to a quorum of the County Commission at a meeting held in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. Furthermore, the New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration requires the Commission sign a resolution accepting the audit. Ms. Martin introduced Chris Garner, Partner with Patillo, Brown and Hill, LLP. Mr. Garner reported a successful compliance audit with a clean opinion. There were no difficulties encountered during the audit and no corrected misstatements. The County has received the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for 19 consecutive years. The Commission commended Kim Martin and the Finance Department. A motion was made by Commissioner Fortner, seconded by Chairman Pro-Tem Lanier to approve Resolution No. 25-26-50, Acceptance and Approval of the FY25 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

**3. Consideration of Resolution No. 25-26-47, Open Meetings Resolution**

Joe Sawyer, County Attorney, stated that the Open Meetings Act requires that the Board of Commissioners determine annually what notice for a public meeting is reasonable when applied to that body. Mr. Sawyer indicated that the Resolution includes that the meetings will be on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of every month at 4:00 p.m. and gave a brief overview. A motion was

made by Commissioner Todacheene, seconded by Chairman Pro-Tem Lanier to approve Resolution No. 25-26-47, Open Meetings Resolution. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

4. **Consideration of Resolution No. 25-26-49, Cancelling and Rescheduling Certain Meetings in Calendar Year 2026**

Mike Stark, County Manager, explained that in order to allow as much notice as possible, Staff prepares a list of potential conflicts with the next year Commission meetings and suggests changes to the meeting schedule. Below is a list of suggested changes for Commission consideration:

1. The second County Commission meeting in January conflicts with the New Mexico Association of Counties legislative conference- cancel 2nd meeting in January
2. The Primary election falls on the first meeting June requiring canvassing within 6-10 days- move 1st meeting in June to June 9th
3. The New Mexico Association of Counties summer conference conflicts with the second meeting in June- cancel 2nd meeting in June
4. The second meeting in July is traditionally moved to the last week in July for consideration of the final budget- move 2nd meeting in July to the 28th cancelling the 1st meeting in August
5. The General election falls on the first meeting in November requiring canvassing within 6-10 days- move 1st meeting in November to the 10th and cancel the 2nd meeting.

As a result, Staff is recommended canceling and rescheduling the Commission meetings as presented in Resolution No. 25-26-49. A motion was made by Commissioner Todacheene, seconded by Commissioner McDaniel to approve Resolution No. 25-26-49, Cancelling and Rescheduling Certain Meetings in Calendar Year 2026. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

**Report from County Manager**

Mike Stark expressed gratitude to staff, department heads, Board of Commissioners, and elected offices for their service to the community and the goals that were accomplished in 2025.

**Reports From Elected Officials And Department Heads**

Commissioner Fortner thanked Mike Stark, County Manager, for his leadership and highlighted various project completions and accomplishments within the County in 2025.

Commissioner Todacheene reported the following:

- Announced that this is her last year serving on the Commission and recognized the many staff and friends she has met during her service as Commissioner.
- Former United States Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell, mentor and example, recently passed away. Mr. Nighthorse Campbell was instrumental in the Animas-La Plata Water Project.

Steve Dansie, Parks and Facilities Administrator, announced that McGee Park Equine had been closed due to the EHB1 virus outbreak, by recommendation of the Livestock Board Veterinarian Samantha Hollick. Notification has been received that restrictions have been lifted in the State of New Mexico; McGee Park will re-open on January 9th and public riding/barrel racing will resume on January 12th.

Chairman Pro-Tem Lanier recognized Steve Dansie, Parks and Facilities Administrator, and staff for their efforts to ensure that McGee Park re-opened in a quick manner.

Steven Saavedra, Deputy County Manager introduced Toni Sitta as the new Project Manager. Ms. Sitta thanked the Commission for the opportunity.

Nick Porell, Public Works Administrator, updated the Commission on Road 3000 and 3500 bridge projects.

Roberta Padilla, Chief Human Resources Officer, announced that San Juan County has received the Family Friendly Platinum Award 2025 for the third year in a row and recognized Ashley Pulte, Senior HR Generalist, for her efforts in compiling and researching the information required to submit for the award.

#### **Comments / Input From The General Public**


None

#### **Adjourn**


Being no further business, Chairman Gonzales adjourned the meeting at 4:53 p.m.

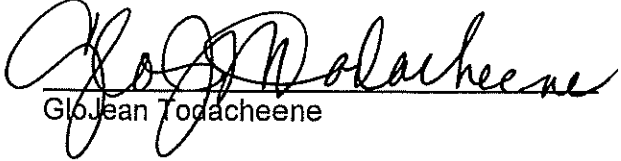
APPROVED THIS 3RD DAY OF FEBRUARY 2026


BY THE SAN JUAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:

  
Chairman Sam Gonzales

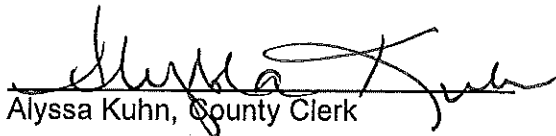
  
Chairman Pro-Tem Sandra L. Lanier

  
Terri D. Fortner

  
Glo Jean Todacheene

  
Gary McDaniel

ATTEST:

  
Alyssa Kuhn, County Clerk

