



MICHAEL NEALEIGH
Mayor

ROBERT WILSON
Mayor Pro-Tem.

VILLAGE OF JEMEZ SPRINGS

Municipal Office

080 Jemez Springs Plaza

PO Box 269, Jemez Springs, NM 87025

Phone (575) 829-3540 • Fax (575) 829-3339

Heather Gutierrez, Interim Clerk

voffice@jemezsprings-nm.gov

Website: www.jemezsprings-nm.gov



JUDY BOYD
Trustee

JAMES MCCUE
Trustee

MANOLITO SANCHEZ
Trustee

Jemez Springs Village Council Meeting Minutes Tuesday November 18, 2025, 6:00 PM Governing Body Conference Room

1. Call to Order - Mayor Nealeigh called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Council Members Present: Mayor Michael Nealeigh, Trustees: Judy Boyd, James McCue, Manolito Sanchez and Bob Wilson.

Also in Attendance: Interim Clerk Heather Gutierrez, Finance Director Consultant Jim Cox, Police Chief Joe Moreno, Library Director Andrew Adaryukov, Wastewater Operations Manager Rose Fenton, and community members Victoria Martinez and Greg Mertz.

2. Pledge of Allegiance - Mayor Nealeigh led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Certification of Agenda – Mayor Nealeigh certified that the agenda had been filed in its current form at least 72 hours before the meeting and acknowledged Interim Clerk Gutierrez for her work.

4. Approval of Minutes - Regular Council Meeting on 10-21-2025

Mayor Nealeigh asked for corrections to the minutes. Trustee McCue noted that a pronoun correction was needed in the second full paragraph on the third page, within the Mayor's Report section. Trustee Boyd identified a font issue on the second page. Trustee Boyd made a motion to accept the minutes with the corrections, which was seconded by Trustee Wilson. The motion passed by a voice vote.

5. Public Input

Mayor Nealeigh inquired if any members of the public wanted to address items not listed on the agenda. Dr. Greg Mertz stated his intention to speak later in the meeting.

6. Court Report

Mayor Nealeigh presented the municipal court report, reminding the Council of the court's independence from the mayor and the Village Council.

7. Mayor's Report

a. Code Enforcement

i. Short-term Occupancy Rental Conditional Use Permit violation

Mayor Nealeigh discussed a violation of a short-term occupancy rental conditional use permit. He reported that one operator had been significantly in arrears on their lodger's tax since July 2022. He stated that despite numerous communications and assurances, the issue had not been resolved. Mayor Nealeigh indicated he would ask the Planning and Zoning Commission to rescind the permit, after which the Village would issue a certified letter and a court citation.

Trustee Sanchez asked how this action would stop the operator and what the consequences would be if it did not. Mayor Nealeigh replied that while he would be reluctant to use severe measures like chaining the gate, violations would continue to accrue, with each new rental constituting a new offense and citation. He confirmed for Trustee Sanchez that any unpaid fines would eventually become a lien on the property. Mayor Nealeigh added that the back-due taxes totaled thousands of dollars.

b. Administration

i. General

Mayor Nealeigh called attention to a distributed article by Thomas Swetnam regarding saving Soda Dam. He announced that Dr. Swetnam will be included on the December meeting agenda to give a presentation on the topic, which Mayor Nealeigh deemed pertinent to the Village, the valley, and humanity at large.

Mayor Nealeigh then announced the results from the regular local election, reporting that the two candidates with the most votes were Victoria Martinez and Trustee Jim McCue. Trustee Wilson offered his congratulations.

Mayor Nealeigh provided an update on the addressing project, which is a component of a larger Geographical Information Systems (GIS) initiative to establish consistent addresses for first responders. He reported that substantial progress has been made, with correct addresses now officially designated for buildings at Canyon Court, the Bodhi Mandala Center, and the Jemez Springs Plaza. He noted his work with consultants working with Sandoval County Dispatch to affirm recommendations for another six to twelve properties, that letters had been sent to property owners, and that the data is being updated in CAD and 911 systems for eventual GPS integration. Mayor Nealeigh mentioned that the final step, placing the addresses on the buildings themselves, is still pending.

ii. Events Planning Committee

Mayor Nealeigh reported that the Harvest Festival on October 25 was a great success with a steady crowd. He mentioned activities such as scarecrow making, pumpkin decorating, and a petting zoo, crediting Trustee-elect Martinez and Autumn Trujillo for supplying the animals. He noted that the pie-making contest had few participants but raised **\$130** from four pies through donations. Mayor Nealeigh stated that craft and food vendors had good sales and the event felt like a hometown gathering. He noted that although the plaza is a suitable for small events, larger activities might be better accommodated at the community park since there is more parking.

Mayor Nealeigh gave details for the upcoming Jemez Holiday Festival on November 29. He announced the event would have three full-size hot air balloons, one from the Beef Council, and six smaller radio-controlled balloons performing glows at a Community Park location he coined as *Balloon Field*. Performances would feature the Jemez Mountains Community Chorus and the Heritage Dancers from the Jemez Valley High School. The festival will also include vendors, a cookie and ornament exchange, games,

and a toy drive culminating a visit from Santa Claus. He confirmed the presence of the 501st Garrison of Star Wars costumed characters. Victoria Martinez added that approximately three food trucks would be present. Mayor Nealeigh reported that a card-making workshop would take place at the community park building as a pre-event activity for the holiday festival. For a fee of \$30, participants would receive materials to create eight handmade cards. Responding to an inquiry from Trustee Sanchez about Fire Department support, Mayor Nealeigh confirmed the department would manage the bonfire, which would be located between the stage and the vault toilets. Mayor Nealeigh stated that the chorus would perform on a separate, lighted stage and that the entire event was contingent on the weather.

iii. Project Updates

He clarified that while the building is not an official community center, it is being utilized for various community functions, including as a rehearsal hall for the Jemez Mountains Community Chorus, and the location of a "Friendsgiving" potluck on November 22nd. He also plans to meet Representative Christine Chandler at the building to show her the space and its view of the park.

Mayor Nealeigh detailed remodeling plans for the building. A vendor has been engaged to install push-door locks on two doors and a high-quality digital lock on the front door, and he is preparing the notice of obligations for the grant that will fund the work. The Village has also received one bid for exterior lighting and the installation of two instant hot water units in the bathrooms. He also solicited a separate bid from a plumbing contractor to relocate plumbing lines for a possible kitchenette. Mayor Nealeigh noted that a little over \$21,000 is available for these projects, which he described as necessary irrespective of the building's future use.

Mayor Nealeigh informed the Council that the Department of Transportation had once again requested the Village to sign an agreement for the South Mooney Bridge project. He pointed out that this version of the agreement now includes a grant number and that a related resolution would be introduced later in the meeting.

Mayor Nealeigh shared his ideas for capital outlay requests for the state legislature, which were derived from the Village's approved Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP). He suggested two sets of priorities. The first set is focused on safety and efficiency, encompassing the repair of the retaining wall at the playground and the acquisition of a new wastewater truck. Wastewater Operations Manager Fenton confirmed that the current truck is a 2002 model.

The second group of projects is a response to community interest in a community center. These projects, which could be moved up from later years in the ICIP, include additional funds for the community park building's exterior, development of the park with playground equipment for all ages, an outdoor picnic area with a sun shelter, and the conversion of the vault toilets to facilities with plumbing. Trustee Sanchez recommended including a camera system in the park development plans. Mayor Nealeigh added that other improvements not on the current ICIP, like dark sky-sensitive lighting for the walking track, could also be considered in later iterations of the ICIP. Trustee McCue supported the ideas. Trustee Wilson remarked that significant work on the park's ground surface would be necessary before playground equipment could be installed. Mayor Nealeigh agreed and suggested that removing the large stage would create a covered

gathering place observing that it is assembled with screws and could potentially be taken down by volunteers.

c. Personnel

i. Office Cleaner

Mayor Nealeigh announced that after reviewing three applications for the office cleaner position, he made an administrative decision to fulfill the function through a contract. He has contracted with Cindy's Business for the cleaning of the police, court, and municipal offices.

ii. Wastewater Assistant

Mayor Nealeigh stated the wastewater assistant position is a full-time, permanent employee. He discussed Alec Elliott as the applicant that he has appointed to the position. If confirmed by the Council, he will start on December 1.

d. Community Relations

Mayor Nealeigh announced that he has a meeting scheduled with Representative Christine Chandler on November 25 at the community park building. He also stated Representative Chandler will return to the same location for a town hall meeting on December 13.

e. Boards and Commissions

Mayor Nealeigh suggested that the Council conduct its next meeting on December 11 at the community park building, an action that would require notices of time and location changes. Hearing no opposition, he stated he would make the arrangements.

i. Library Board

Mayor Nealeigh directed the Council to the Library Board report and the Planning and Zoning Commission minutes they had been provided. He noted that the Planning and Zoning Commission was facing challenges in establishing a quorum for its next meeting and would consequently merge its November and December meetings into a single meeting in early December.

f. Department Reports

Mayor Nealeigh presented the department reports and invited comments from Council members and department heads. Police Chief Moreno reported that MCM Consulting, the firm that supported Sandoval County with the GIS project, has been hired by the Sandoval County Dispatch Center to undertake a radio communication project in the Jemez Valley. Police Chief Moreno said he would be working with them, hoped their efforts would integrate with the Village's project with Skymira, and had a meeting with them scheduled for the following day.

Mayor Nealeigh asked Dr. Mertz if he wished to add anything, and Dr. Mertz indicated he would speak at a later time.

8. Trustee's Report

Trustee Boyd, Trustee McCue, Trustee Sanchez, and Trustee Wilson all indicated they had nothing to report.

9. Finance Board

Trustee Sanchez moved to convene the finance board, which Trustee McCue seconded. The motion was approved by a voice vote and the Finance Board convened at 6:41 p.m.

a. Interim Clerk Report

Mayor Nealeigh requested an update from Interim Clerk Gutierrez regarding sewer billing. Interim Clerk Gutierrez reported that the process is still on hold due to the

vendor's difficulty in managing the Village's multiple billing variations for in-town, out-of-town, and various uses and tax rates. Mayor Nealeigh commented that Interim Clerk Gutierrez had succeeded in getting a written response from the vendor about the issue.

b. Lodgers' Tax Board Report

Trustee McCue stated that there was nothing new from the Lodgers' Tax Board, other than the ongoing action against the non-compliant lodger.

c. Finance Director Report

Finance Director Consultant Cox delivered his report. He stated that regarding prior fiscal years, the auditors have received their samples and are in the process of testing. For the current fiscal year, he is continuing to monitor compliance and the budget. He noted that the state's tax and revenue department had not yet disbursed the most recent Gross Receipts Tax payment.

Mr. Cox reminded the Council that capital outlay requests for the legislative session are due by December 12, and reauthorizations must be submitted by February 1, 2026. He reported substantial progress with the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) on existing capital outlay funding. He explained that if the Village is able to go through a fiscal agent, it may be able to receive and execute grant agreements from previous authorizations. He has been in contact with the DFA and believes they are approaching a resolution. He also reported the processing of three questionnaires from the DFA concerning wastewater funding and library improvements, which he viewed as a positive sign.

Mayor Nealeigh added two items. First, the reauthorization request for the community park building funds has been submitted, has received positive feedback from Representative Christine Chandler, and the required forms are ready for her signature. Second, the 3% employee raise authorized by the Village Council has been released, which the Village had delayed pending a review of first-quarter GRT activity. Following the reports, Trustee Wilson moved to adjourn the finance board. The motion was seconded by Trustee Boyd and passed by a voice vote at 6:53 p.m.

10. Old Business

Mayor Nealeigh stated there was no old business but reminded the Council that the December meeting would be held on Thursday, December 11, at the community park building.

11. New Business

a. Approval of Police Department Standard Operating Procedures – 314, 432, 604, and 703

Trustee Wilson made a motion, seconded by Trustee Sanchez, to approve the Police Department Standard Operating Procedures. During the discussion, Trustee McCue identified a few typos in sections 314 and 703 that needed to be corrected. After a roll call vote, the motion to approve the procedures with the noted corrections passed unanimously.

b. Confirmation of the appointment of Alec Elliott as Wastewater Assistant

Mayor Nealeigh recommended the confirmation of his appointment of Alec Elliott as Wastewater Assistant. A motion to confirm the appointment was made by Trustee McCue and seconded by Trustee Boyd. Trustee Sanchez asked for more details about the

candidate. Wastewater Operations Manager Fenton explained that Mr. Elliott's parents are local, and he is relocating to the area. She described him as young, strong, willing to work, and handy. She acknowledged that while he does not have a wastewater background, he understands the job is difficult and is not afraid of getting dirty. Mayor Nealeigh added that Mr. Elliott previously owned a fine furniture business that was impacted by the economy and is now seeking a career path that offers advancement opportunities through experience and certifications. The confirmation passed unanimously following a roll call vote.

c. Resolution 2025-019 AUTHORIZING PARTICIPATION IN TRANSPORTATION PROJECT FUND PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Trustee Boyd moved to approve Resolution 2025-019, with Trustee McCue seconding the motion. During the discussion, Mayor Nealeigh explained that this resolution was similar to one passed previously but was distinguished by the critical inclusion of a project fund number. He noted that the resolution language specified a Village matching share of 5% or **\$50,000**. Mayor Nealeigh stated he would not sign the grant agreement if the match waiver was denied. He indicated that if the waiver was granted, he wished to proceed without delay. He requested the Council approve the resolution with the provision that language in line B could be altered to reflect a granted waiver without requiring another Council vote.

Trustee Sanchez requested clarification, and Mayor Nealeigh confirmed the **\$1 million** grant was for the planning and design of the South Mooney Bridge replacement. Trustee Sanchez also asked about the reference to a single lane. Mayor Nealeigh explained that while the current bridge is single lane, he would insist that the engineers address existing traffic problems rather than just replicating the current design. Trustee McCue inquired if the new bridge would have a bike or walking lane, to which Mayor Nealeigh responded that this would be decided in the engineering report. Mayor Nealeigh mentioned that the waiver decision was anticipated on November 20.

Trustee Sanchez moved to amend the resolution to permit changes to item B based on the waiver decision, thereby granting the requested flexibility. Trustee Wilson seconded the amendment, which passed on a voice vote. A roll call vote was then taken on the amended resolution, and the motion passed unanimously.

Additional Public Comment

Before adjournment, Mayor Nealeigh called for additional public comment. Dr. Mertz came forward to describe a recent fire call concerning a local resident who was experiencing disorientation. He detailed how Police Chief Moreno had previously contacted Adult Protective Services about this person and, during the recent incident, built a rapport with the individual. Dr. Mertz credited Police Chief Moreno's actions for convincing the individual to voluntarily go to the VA for an inpatient evaluation, which prevented a potentially difficult situation that might have involved EMS and restraints. He praised Police Chief Moreno for his management of the incident. Mayor Nealeigh thanked Dr. Mertz and also commended the Chief for his work on the difficult case.

12. Adjourn

Mayor Nealeigh adjourned the meeting at 7:11 p.m.