

## Council Goals

Envision a safe, flourishing downtown that provides a strong commercial tax base

Strive to be active stewards of existing aging infrastructure

Recognize importance of experience, well trained, and community minded staff

Ensure its electorate is well informed of on-going successes and future plans

Envision a safe, secure community for its families and youth

Promote redevelopment of existing businesses and neighborhoods and increase quality of life for all its residents



## AGENDA REGULAR MEETING LA JUNTA CITY COUNCIL

La Junta, Colorado  
January 5, 2026  
6:00 PM  
Council Chambers  
Municipal Building  
601 Colorado Avenue

CALL TO ORDER (Mayor Ayala)

INVOCATION (Mayor Ayala)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (Mayor Ayala)

ROLL CALL (City Clerk)

Council Members  
Ramirez (Ward 1)  
Velasquez (Ward 1)  
Johnson (Ward 2)  
Ayala (Mayor)  
Ochoa (Ward 2)  
Pantoya (Ward 3)  
Rikhof (Ward 3)

PROCLAMATION – America 250 - Colorado 150

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION (*5-minute time limit per person*)

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Regular Meeting Minutes December 15, 2025
- B. Application for a Special Events Permit by La Junta Chamber of Commerce, Christina Tozzie, Event Manager. The event is their Annual Banquet to be held January 26, 2026 from 5:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at 1802 Colorado Avenue
- C. Application for Renewal of a Fermented Malt Beverage and Wine Liquor License by Mini Mart Inc., d/b/a Loaf'n Jug No. 13, 918 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Board Appointments (Mayor) (Action)
  - 1. Reappoint Zach Miner to the Urban Renewal Board – term to expire 12/31/2030
  - 2. Reappoint Angel Saucedo to the Urban Renewal Board – term to expire 12/31/2030
  - 3. Appoint Marty Fleischacker to the Urban Renewal Board – term to expire 12/31/2028
  - 4. Appoint Cheryl Lindner to the Urban Renewal Board – term to expire 12/31/2027
- B. Annual Resolutions (City Attorney) (Action)
  - 1. Posting of Open Meetings
  - 2. Designating Official Depositories for City Funds
  - 3. Offenses against City Property
  - 4. Publication of Legal Notices
  - 5. Designating Enterprise Funds
- C. A Resolution Reappointing Gary Cranson as the City of La Junta's Representative to the Arkansas River Power Authority Board of Directors for a Four-Year Term (City Attorney) (Action)

- D. Committee/Board Report
- E. City Manager Report
- F. Community Events/Council Report
- G. Governing Body Report
- H. ADJOURN



## America 250 – Colorado 150 Proclamation

**WHEREAS**, the year 2026 marks the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence; and

**WHEREAS**, the year 2026 marks Colorado's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of statehood; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of La Junta, founded in 1881 has contributed proudly and significantly to the history of our nation and our state for more than 144 years; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2016 the United States Congress established by Joint Resolution the America 250 Commission to encourage observance of the 250 years of our nation's existence; and

**WHEREAS**, The Colorado legislature established the America 250 – Colorado 150 Commission with the passage of Senate Bill 2022-011, and the Commission has determined its mission and purpose is to celebrate Colorado by acknowledging the completeness of our shared history, an honor which makes Colorado unique, and strive toward a more perfect union; and

**WHEREAS**, it is appropriate that the City of La Junta engages fully with our past and looks toward a shared future; and

**WHEREAS**, the mayor and city council of the City of La Junta thus encourage its citizens to create and participate in programs that will commemorate the history of our city, our state, and our nation; and

**NOW, THEREFORE**, be it resolved that I, Joseph Ayala, do hereby proclaim that the City of La Junta will fully engage in commemorative activities leading up to and during the Commission's stated length of observance: July 4, 2025 through December 31, 2026.

I urge all community members to take advantage of the resources available from the America 250 Commission, the America 250 – Colorado 150 Commission, and the City of La Junta to observe the Sesquicentennial anniversary by coordinating commemorative events, planning historical activities, providing opportunities for public discourse, creating new scholarship around Colorado's complete history, creating new educational opportunities for historic preservation. The City of La Junta pledges to uplift, support, and generate commemorative opportunities.

**PROCLAIMED** this 5<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2026.

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph Ayala, City of La Junta Mayor

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING – December 15, 2025**

STATE OF COLORADO )  
COUNTY OF OTERO ) SS  
CITY OF LA JUNTA )

**CALL TO ORDER:** The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of La Junta, Colorado, was called to order by Mayor Ayala on Monday, December 15, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.

**INVOCATION:** Mayor Ayala gave the invocation.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Mayor Ayala led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL:** The following Council Members were present:

Damon Ramirez, Ward 1  
Paul Velasquez, Ward 1  
Carly Johnson, Ward 2  
Joe Ayala, Mayor  
Chandra Ochoa, Ward 2  
Lisa Pantoya, Ward 3  
Maureen Rikhof, Ward 3

  
Subject to approval at the  
January 5, 2026  
City Council Meeting  


Absent: none

Also present: Michael Hart, City Manager  
Erin Harris, City Attorney  
Melanie Scofield, City Clerk  
Pam Denahy, Director of Tourism/Econ. Dev.  
Joven Green, La Junta  
Mindy Green, La Junta  
David Polley, La Junta  
Kayleigh Hart, La Junta  
Luci Gendreau, La Junta  
Nancy Harrington, SECO News  
Bette McFarren, RF Gazette

**EMPLOYEE SERVICE AWARDS**

**A. November 2025**

**1. Cesar Carrillo, Industrial Park – 25 years.**

- 9/16/1999-11/1/1999 Part time Laborer Street Department
- 4/17/2000 Part time Laborer Park Department
- 11/1/2000 Transferred to Sanitation Department as Full time Refuse Collector
- 2/16/2002 Transferred to Industrial Park as Maintenance Worker I
- 2/16/2022 Promoted to Maintenance Worker II

**B. December 2025**

**1. Mitch Zgorzynski, Police – 10 years**

- 11/16/2015 Full time Academy Cadet
- 12/1/2015 Police Officer
- 12/2021 Sergeant
- 01/2025 Investigator

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING – December 15, 2025****2. Virginia Roybal, Warehouse – 20 years**

- 2/20/2002 Part time bus driver
- 12/1/2005 Full time Electric/Motor Pool Secretary

**3. Melanie Scofield, City Clerk – 30 years**

- 7/24/1995 Part time Clerk/Typist Police Department
- 12/11/1995 Full time Accounting Technician Finance Department
- 1/1/2015 Deputy City Clerk
- 1/1/2016 City Clerk
- 1/1/2025 Added Urban Renewal Director responsibilities

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION (5-minute time limit per person):**

1. There was no citizen participation.

**REPORTS****A. Tourism/Economic Development (Pam Denahy).**

- 2025 Tarantula Fest had more than 2,000 people go through the Education Pavilion. There were 100 people who attended the presentation at Otero College. The tours booked quickly. There were five busses and a waitlist of over 100 people. There were also 107 vendors, including food and merchants. The next Tarantula Fest will be September 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026.
- The procurement request for the Design & Engineering services of the MMOF, the Welcome Center, was approved. There have been conversations with the Chamber as well as other partners.
- America 250/Colorado 150 will be celebrated in 2026. We will be bringing a proclamation to council in January.
- Continuing to work on the short-term rental compliance. It's been challenging to get it done with rules and regulations changing. In 2016, we had 2 short-term rentals and now we're up to twenty-four. Based on the numbers, an estimated \$17,000 in revenue is expected.
- Having lots of conversation around the structure of Economic Development and what it should look like. We've done some research and re-instated the La Junta Economic Development Inc. The next step will be looking at bylaws, board of directors, budgeting and how best to move forward.
- The three priorities from the Economic Development Summit were: 1) beautify storefronts in downtown La Junta, 2) identify new primary industries to recruit to La Junta Industrial park by 2030, and 3) reassess and upgrade all aging city infrastructure.
- La Junta Creative Mainstreet, which used to be called La Junta Rise, is a program under DOLA. This is where we received the grant for the parklet. In 2026, we'll be focusing on re-branding.

**CONSENT AGENDA****A. Regular Meeting Minutes December 1, 2025**

MOTION TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 15, 2025 CONSENT AGENDA: Ramirez

SECOND: Rikhof

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING – December 15, 2025****UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- A. Second Reading/AN ORDINANCE REQUIRING SHORT-TERM RENTAL MARKETPLACES TO COLLECT AND REMIT LODGING TAXES ON BEHALF OF HOSTS WITHIN THE CITY OF LA JUNTA, COLORADO.** The ordinance was introduced by title only, there being copies available to those in attendance.

MOTION TO PASS THE ORDINANCE ON SECOND READING: Ochoa

SECOND: Velasquez

DISCUSSION: There is concern regarding Section 2, Item 1 and Section 4, Item 2 referencing a policy/license that does not exist.

VOTE: Those voting YES: Ramirez, Velasquez, Johnson, Ayala, Ochoa, Pantoya

Those voting NO: Rikhof

The motion carried 6-1

- B. Second Reading/AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF LA JUNTA SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS TO ESTABLISH A PROCEDURE AND CRITERIA FOR LOT MERGERS AND TO REQUIRE REZONING REVIEW FOR MERGERS INVOLVING MULTIPLE ZONING DISTRICTS.** The ordinance was introduced by title only, there being copies available to those in attendance.

MOTION TO PASS THE ORDINANCE ON SECOND READING: Rikhof

SECOND: Johnson

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

**NEW BUSINESS****A. Board Appointments****1. ARPA Board****a. Gary Cranson (term to expire 12/31/2029)**

MOTION TO REAPPOINT GARY CRANSON TO THE ARPA BOARD: Rikhof

SECOND: Velasquez

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

**2. Historic Preservation Board****a. Aimee Hill (term to expire 12/31/2027)**

MOTION TO APPOINT AIMEE HILL TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD: Rikhof

SECOND: Pantoya

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

**3. La Junta Housing Authority****a. Luann Cannon (term to expire 12/31/2030)**

MOTION TO APPOINT LUANN CANNON TO THE LA JUNTA HOUSING AUTHORITY:  
Rikhof

SECOND: Ochoa

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

**b. Diana Pennington (term to expire 12/31/2029)**

MOTION TO APPOINT DIANA PENNINGTON TO THE LA JUNTA HOUSING AUTHORITY:  
Rikhof

SECOND: Ochoa

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

**4. Library Advisory Board**

**a. Nickolas Burdick (term to expire 12/31/2028)**

MOTION TO REAPPOINT NICKOLAS BURDICK TO THE LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD:  
Johnson

SECOND: Rikhof

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

**b. Sara Holt (term to expire 12/31/2028)**

MOTION TO REAPPOINT SARA HOLT TO THE LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD: Ramirez

SECOND: Johnson

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

**5. Planning Commission**

**a. Gregg Portch (term to expire 12/31/2031)**

MOTION TO REAPPOINT GREGG PORTCH TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION:  
Velasquez

SECOND: Rikhof

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

**6. Senior Citizens Board**

**a. Mary Sue Holland (term to expire 12/31/2027)**

MOTION TO APPOINT MARY SUE HOLLAND TO THE SENIOR CITIZENS BOARD:  
Velasquez

SECOND: Pantoya

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

**b. Connie Ortiz (term to expire 12/31/2027)**

MOTION TO APPOINT CONNIE ORTIZ TO THE SENIOR CITIZENS BOARD: Velasquez

SECOND: Rikhof

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING – December 15, 2025**

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**7. Tourism Advisory Board****a. Ruth Ayala (term to expire 12/31/2028)**

MOTION TO APPOINT RUTH AYALA TO THE TOURISM ADVISORY BOARD: Ramirez

SECOND: Pantoya

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

**8. Board of Utilities****a. CaSandra Thomas (term to expire 11/2027)**

MOTION TO APPOINT CASANDRA THOMAS TO THE BOARD OF UTILITIES: Rikhof

SECOND: Johnson

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 7-0

**B. Committee/Board Reports****1. Senior Citizens Advisory Board (Council Member Velasquez):**

- The action item at the last meeting was the appointment of the two ladies to the Board.
- Next meeting will be on January 8<sup>th</sup>.

**2. Utilities Board (Council Member Velasquez):**

- The Utility Department will be closed on Fridays. Office hours will be Monday – Thursday from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Drive-Up will be open until 5:00 p.m.
- If you anticipate difficulty paying your utility bill, please see Aliza.
- The fire hydrants in La Junta are inspected once a year by the Water Department.
- If you receive a mailing in reference to water quality in La Junta, this is an independent company and has nothing to do with the City of La Junta.
- Appointed CaSandra Thomas to the Utility Board.
- Christmas lighting contest starts tonight and will end on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

**3. Library Advisory Board (Council Member Rikhof):**

- Took December off.

**4. Planning Commission (Council Member Rikhof):**

- Will meet this Thursday.

**C. City Manager's Comments**

- Just about finished up with the demo at 1220 Rice Avenue.
- Martin is in the process of pursuing a grant to get two more houses torn down.
- The Gibson building parking lot is looking much better. We have been working with them for the last several months. Their plan is to rehab the building.
- Have a meeting on the 30<sup>th</sup> regarding the MMOF to discuss the next steps, establishing the parameters of the RFQ.
- Met with Scott with SECOM, he gave the City a check for \$1,000 to pass along to Associated Charities to help out with the donations.
- Covered dish is this Wednesday.
- Got together with supervisors today and had a festive celebration of breakfast and a gift exchange. I appreciate every one of the supervisors we have here at the City.

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING – December 15, 2025**

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**D. Community Events/Council Reports**

- Council Member Rikhof noticed that out of the eleven people appointed tonight, four were reappointments and seven were appointments. Hopefully this is showing a trend towards new people getting involved on our committees and boards.
- Thanked those who supported YEEHAW on Friday night. It was amazing. In less than two hours, over \$1,000 was raised.
- Meeting days/times may be found on the City's website for all of the various boards.

**E. Governing Body Reports**

1. There were no governing body reports.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m.

**ATTEST:**

**CITY OF LA JUNTA**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph Ayala, Mayor

## RESOLUTION NO. R-1-2026

### A RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE POSTING OF OPEN MEETINGS

**WHEREAS**, public cannot exercise its right to attend open meetings unless sufficient notice is provided to its citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, the Open Meetings Law requires the public to receive full and timely notice of any meetings held; and

**WHEREAS**, the Open Meeting statute (24-6-402) provides in part as follows:

Any meetings at which the adoption of any proposed policy, position, resolution, rule, regulation, or formal action occurs or at which a majority or quorum of the body is in attendance, or is expected to be in attendance, shall be held only after full and timely notice to the public. In addition to any other means of full and timely notice, a local public body shall be deemed to have given full and timely notice if the notice of the meeting is posted in a designated public place within the boundaries of the local public body no less than twenty-four hours prior to the holding of the meeting. The public place or places for posting such notice shall be designated annually at the local public body's first regular meeting of each calendar year. The posting shall include specific agenda information where possible.

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED** that the City Council of the City of La Junta, the Board of Utility Commissioners, the Planning Commission of the City of La Junta, the Airport Advisory Board, the Urban Renewal Authority, the Tourism Board, and any other advisory boards which have been created by Ordinance and which are required by ordinances of the City of La Junta to comply with the open meetings law shall comply with this Resolution.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that notice of the meetings shall be issued by the Clerk of the City of La Junta.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that designated place for posting of the meetings shall be the main foyer of the City Building, located at 6<sup>th</sup> and Colorado, La Junta, Colorado and the City website.

**ADOPTED** this 5<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2026.

**CITY OF LA JUNTA**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph Ayala, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

**RESOLUTION NO. R-2-2026**

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of La Junta that the following are hereby designated as official depositories for the various funds for the City of La Junta for the calendar year 2026:

1. The Colorado Bank & Trust Company of La Junta;
2. State Bank and Trust Company of La Junta;
3. TBK Bank;
4. First National Bank of Las Animas and La Junta;
5. U.S. Bank;
6. Other financial institutions that comply with the intent of the terms of this resolution.

Whenever investment circumstances exist that prohibit banks from accepting City funds as deposits without requiring deposit fees be paid by the City, the City Manager or his designee, is authorized to locate other financial institutions; provided however that all funds be maintained in a federally insured account and all funds must be fully insured by the FDIC.

Priority considerations shall be given to institutions that offer competitive interest rates on City deposits.

**ADOPTED** this 5<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2026.

**CITY OF LA JUNTA**

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Joseph Ayala, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

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Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

**RESOLUTION NO. R-3-2026**

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of La Junta that it shall be the policy of this Council that all discovered or reported offenses against the property of this City shall be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency in this county for such action as may be deemed proper.

**ADOPTED** this 5<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2026.

**CITY OF LA JUNTA**

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph Ayala, Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

**RESOLUTION NO. R-4-2026**

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of La Junta that all legal notices required to be published by the ordinances of the City of La Junta shall be published in the La Junta Tribune-Democrat, a paper of general circulation within the City of La Junta.

**ADOPTED** this 5<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2026.

**CITY OF LA JUNTA**

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph Ayala, Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

**RESOLUTION NO. R-5-2026**

**WHEREAS**, the Taxpayer’s bill of Rights anticipates that certain City enterprises are exempt from the provisions of the Taxpayer’s Bill of Rights; and

**WHEREAS**, the Taxpayer’s Bill of Rights defines the criteria upon which an enterprise becomes exempt from the operative provisions of the Taxpayer’s Bill of Rights; and

**WHEREAS**, it is the belief of the City of La Junta that certain operational funds within its control are “enterprises” as defined by the Taxpayer’s Bill of Rights.

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:**

1. That the following City of La Junta funds are considered to be “enterprises” as used within the Tabor Amendment:
  - a. Electric Fund;
  - b. Sewer Fund;
  - c. Water Fund;
  - d. Sanitation Fund;
  - e. Property Management Fund.

**ADOPTED** this 5<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2026.

**CITY OF LA JUNTA**

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph Ayala, Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

**CITY OF LA JUNTA, COLORADO  
RESOLUTION NO. R-6-2026**

**A RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING GARY CRANSON AS THE CITY OF LA JUNTA'S  
REPRESENTATIVE TO THE ARKANSAS RIVER POWER AUTHORITY BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS FOR A FOUR-YEAR TERM**

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**WHEREAS**, the City of La Junta is a member of the Arkansas River Power Authority (“ARPA”), a political subdivision of the State of Colorado, formed pursuant to intergovernmental agreement; and

**WHEREAS**, under the ARPA governing documents, member municipalities appoint representatives to serve on the ARPA Board of Directors for fixed terms; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of La Junta is entitled to appoint one representative to the ARPA Board of Directors; and

**WHEREAS**, Gary Cranson has served as the City of La Junta’s representative to the ARPA Board of Directors and is eligible for reappointment; and

**WHEREAS**, at its December 9, 2025 meeting, the City of La Junta Utility Board voted unanimously (4-0) to recommend the reappointment of Gary Cranson to the ARPA Board of Directors for a four-year term; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council finds that reappointing Gary Cranson to continue serving as the City’s representative to the ARPA Board of Directors is in the best interests of the City of La Junta.

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**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF  
LA JUNTA, COLORADO, THAT:**

**1. Reappointment.**

Gary Cranson is hereby reappointed as the City of La Junta’s representative to the Arkansas River Power Authority Board of Directors.

**2. Term.**

The term of appointment shall be for four (4) years, beginning January 1, 2026, and ending December 31, 2029, unless earlier resigned or removed in accordance with applicable law or governing documents.

**3. Authority.**

The Mayor, City Clerk, and other appropriate City officials are authorized to take

all actions necessary to effectuate this appointment, including providing certified copies of this Resolution to the Arkansas River Power Authority.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the City Council of the City of La Junta, Colorado, this 5<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2026.

**CITY OF LA JUNTA, COLORADO**

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Joseph Ayala, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

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Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk