



Town of Mesilla, New Mexico

**THE PLANNING, ZONING AND HISTORICAL APPROPRIATENESS COMMISSION
(PZHAC) WILL BE HAVING A REGULAR MEETING AT THE MESILLA TOWN HALL,
2231 AVENIDA DE MESILLA.**

MONDAY-JANUARY 5, 2026, AT 6PM

(MINUTES)

COMMISSIONERS

Chairperson – Eric Walkinshaw
Vice-Chair – Eric Gallegos
Secretary – Lori Miller
Commissioner – Rosemary Alvillar
Commissioner – Martha Mulvihill
Alt. Commissioner – Stevie Paz
Alt. Commissioner – Mary Lucero

STAFF

Historic Preservation Specialist (HPS) – Liana Aguirre
Community & Economic Development Director (CED) – Eddie Salazar

PUBLIC

Andrea Bryan
Trina Witter
Mary H. Ratje

Chair Walkinshaw

All right, I think we're ready to go. Looks like pretty close to six. So, we're commencing a meeting for the Planning, Zoning, and Historical Appropriateness Commission. We're holding it in the regular meeting at the town hall. It's Monday, January 5th at six o'clock. So we'll start the meeting with the pledge of allegiance.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

2. ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

CED Salazar

Commissioner Gallegos - present.
Commissioner Miller - present.
Commissioner Alvillar - present.
Commissioner Mulvihill – present.
Commissioner Paz – present.
Mr. Chair Walkinshaw – present.

Mr. Chair, you do have quorum.

3. CHANGES / APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Walkinshaw

Now, it's time for any changes or approval of the agenda. Do I have any comments on that?

Commissioner Mulvihill

Yeah, I do. I wanted to look at number six, the election of the office. Has the Board of Trustees already approved them? The election of the chair, vice chair, and secretary.

CED Salazar

We have the elections here. We're the ones that nominate.

Commissioner Mulvihill

But two of them had to reapply. So they I think they're supposed to.

CED Salazar

If they wish to serve another term on the commission, they just take that into consideration as that position.

Commissioner Mulvihill

It still has to go to the Board of Trustees for them to approve. I read, that they would be approved for a certain amount of time.

CED Salazar

Well, because you were new to wasn't it? No. So, the answer is no, they didn't. I didn't catch that. Where would it say that? Do you have somewhere where that says?

Commissioner Mulvihill

I was just looking it up again. I didn't find it.

CED Salazar

If you had asked me a little bit sooner, I could have some answers for you, but right now I don't. Answer is no. I am going on my third year, and the commissioners that wish to stay continue. They don't go through the process of the Board of Trustees.

Commissioner Mulvihill

I had to go through it again at the beginning of year.

CED Salazar

Yes, but you were new

Commissioner Mulvihill

I was new and then when the term ended, because I got in at a later time and I had this last go around last year I had to request and it had to go in front of the board.

CED Salazar

I believe that it's the discretion of the mayor to decide whether the commissioner stays on. I think it stays with the mayor. They do talk about it, but they don't have to reapply. They just say, you know, commissioner so and so wishes to serve another term. It's up to the mayor.

Commissioner Mulvihill

You did ask us to go ahead and put in a request if we wanted to continue and I think we all did that. I thought they had to be reapproved. Agreed upon.

CED Salazar

No, it's discretion of the mayor. I guess I've never done that. I don't know if it's written anywhere in the code, but I guess it is the discretion of the mayor to a point, but they still have to be approved. I read that maybe, again I don't know. I don't want to give wrong information. All I know is the practice of it being the discretion of the mayor and if you're already on the commission and you wish to continue, you just submit a letter or some sort of notice that says I wish to continue and then we just continue. The Board of Trustees probably do discuss the terms when they are up and then the elected are re-enlisted. They vote on it as an action item, but I've never seen them do that. Maybe for a new commissioner.

It's up to the chair and the commission if you wish to postpone it we can postpone it for the next meeting to get better understanding.

I wish I would have known a little sooner. I could have answered those questions. But right now I don't want to say I'm 100% sure. It's not a practice that I've been practicing the last couple times, two three times that I've done the officers. I remember clearly the prior administration reading from the code book that it was totally the discretion of the mayor to see the commission.

Commissioner Mulvihill

Correct, that I do know it is and I'm assuming the mayor saw our or requests.

CED Salazar

Yes, I talked to him before the meeting and I asked him. Remember last time I asked a question or somebody asked the question as far as alternate had to reapply every year. He said no. He wishes to keep the same commission as they have experience. Again it's up to the chair. I wish I can give you a confident answer to your question. I am not 100%. I'm pretty certain that they don't have to but again I can't answer that question. This is for the change of approval agenda. We want to discuss it more. We can discuss it.

Commissioner Miller

Motion to approve agenda

Commissioner Gallegos

Second that Motion

CED Salazar

Okay. First motion made by Commissioner Miller. Second motion made by Commissioner Gallegos. Any further discussion? May I take a vote, Mr. Chair?

Chair Walkinshaw

Yes.

CED Salazar

Commissioner Gallegos, yes.

Commissioner Miller, yes.

Commissioner Alvillar, yes.
Commissioner Mulvihill, no.

Mr. Chair, you do have three yeases and one no. Motion passes.

4. PUBLIC INPUT

The public is invited to address the commission regarding items listed on the agenda as allowed by the chair. You can also email your comments to clerktreasurer@mesillanm.gov at least seventy-two (72) hours prior to the meeting. All comments/questions need to be in a professional and respectful by EVERYONE while quorum is established. The Chairperson has the authority to determine when matters are distasteful, and he/she will address them accordingly.

Chair Walkinshaw

Now, it's time for public input on any items on the agenda which are pretty minor (none).

5. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

**Note: Items on the Consent Agenda, indicated by an asterisk (*), will be voted on with one motion unless the commissioner requests that a specific item be removed for discussion.*

- a. ***December 15, 2025, PZHAC Regular meeting minutes**

Okay, we'll go ahead and go to item number five, which is approval of the consent agenda, which is December 15th minutes. Any comments on the minutes? Well, I just had one comment that I shared with it was the misspelling of my name. All right. So, we're ready for a motion.

CED Salazar

First motion by Commissioner Alvillar.
Second motion by Commissioner Mulvihill.

Commissioner Gallegos, yes.
Commissioner Miller, yes.
Commissioner Alvillar, yes.
Commissioner Mulvihill, yes.

Mr. Chair, motion passes 4 – 0.

6. ACTION AND CONSIDERATION

- a. COMMISSION'S ELECTION OF CHAIR, VICE-CHAIR, SECRETARY

Chair Walkinshaw

Now we're up to item number six, which is action consideration for the commissioner's election for the chair, vice chair, and secretary positions. So the format is let's just start with the chair. We just need nominations for the chair and then if there's any other nominations, they need to come forth.

Commissioner Miller

I nominate Eric Walkinshaw to remain chair (accepted).

Chair Walkinshaw

Anybody else? Any other nominations?

CED Salazar

All right. If there's no other nominations, we'll go ahead. Just going to do take the vote. I mean, it's just a formality. There's nobody else. So this is a yes or no for, Commissioner Walkinshaw to remain as chair.

Commissioner Gallegos, yes.

Commissioner Miller, yes.

Commissioner Alvillar, yes.

Commissioner Mulvihill, yes.

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Congratulations, 4-0 yes, remains as chair.

Chair Walkinshaw

Okay. The next position is the vice-chair, and I need some nominations for vice chair.

Commissioner Alvillar

I nominate vice-chair for another term.

CED Salazar

Any other nominations? No?

Great. Okay. Again, we'll do the same thing just for formality. Commissioner Gallegos, do you accept your nomination as a vice chair?

Vice-Chair Gallegos, yes.

Commissioner Miller, yes.

Commissioner Alvillar, yes.

Commissioner Mulvihill, yes.

Mr. Chair, motion passes, 4-0 yes. Congratulations. Commissioner Gallegos is vice chair.

Chair Walkinshaw

The last one here is nominations for the secretary.

Commissioner Alvillar

Nominates Commissioner Miller to continue as secretary.

CED Salazar

Okay. Anybody else? No? and you accept, Commissioner Miller

Commissioner Miller

Yes.

Commissioner Gallegos, yes.

Commissioner Miller, accepted.

Commissioner Alvillar, yes.

Commissioner Mulvihill, yes.

Mr. Chair, Commissioner Miller is this year's secretary. Congratulations.

7. DISCUSSION

a. INTRODUCTION- HISTORIC PRESERVATION QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Chair Walkinshaw

Now we're on item number seven, which is discussion about the introduction of historical preservation quarterly newsletter.

CED Salazar

Mr. Chair, commissioners, I'd like to invite Miss Liana. She's been working very hard on this. I think we're both very excited about this newsletter. As I mentioned before, Mesilla is a lot more than just buildings, right? There're stories, and culture. We're trying to tap into that. And hopefully with this newsletter we can motivate a lot of our residents to get involved. To share their information, their stories so we can hopefully make them last. Educate people you know now and forever.

HPS Aguirre

Good evening commissioners. I have already given you all a copy of the newsletter. Very excited to present it. This is just a very easy-going kind of start. Just the chip of the surface. Hopefully in the future I will be going in depth a little bit more on the historic preservation process and our nomination process. What it means. What historic preservation really is and what it entails. This is really as Mr. Salazar was saying, this is really to get the community thinking about history. Getting to think about the town that you know we all live in. The historic preservation and to slowly kind of get into depth and to encourage you and everybody in the town to really take on the responsibility that historic preservation brings to the town.

I know it's new for a lot of you and the residents since there hasn't been a historic preservationist. So a lot of, you know, there's going to be things coming up. I want to throw in some humor. I want to throw in a little bit of easygoing articles, but I also want to bring in a little bit more seriousness because we're at a time where historic preservation really, really matters. I mean, I don't know if I'm very familiar with the historic preservation act and one of the first kind of impetuses for that act was in 1963. There was the huge demolition of Pennsylvania station. If you don't know, I'm also a New Yorker so a lot of that resonates with me. In 1963, Penn Station was this glorious... almost like the Grand Central Terminal. If any of you have been to New York City and built it in 1910 and in only 50 years later they wanted to demolish it. People kind of protested that but because they wanted to build what is now Madison Square Garden that came to a demise. There was absolutely nothing wrong with the building but because it was more economically sound. It became more of an event space which in my mind I think Penn Station could have been an event space on its own and that's what we're talking about here. You know, we're definitely not New York City, but it's highly relatable when we talk about a lot of these buildings and what they can bring to us.

You know, a lot of these historic properties can be even spaces, can be a new home to you. Not necessarily as you know, a new home for somebody, but a new home for the community. That's what I would like to see. One of the key phrases that I'm always thinking of is this adaptive reuse and how we can incorporate these historic buildings but also keep the history and the heritage and the culture alive. Creating this pride and this sense of place for us. I think is crucial to what's happening right now.

A very interesting fact that I found was that the architects of Penn Station were also the architects for the east wing of the White House, and we see what happened there. Case in point. So I just urge you all, you know, and I would love it if anybody would love to contribute to this article. This is open-ended. I am not end all see all. The utility clerk Jakob Atwell was very excited. He's adding on to a column and I'm welcoming anybody who would love to either comment or as you can see in the back, please give me any feedback. I

want it you know and I'm sure the community wants it. We want to create a sense of identity in this town. You know, what is Mesilla with our space and these beautiful buildings and history where it's a unique place. That's why people come here and we want to maintain that. Otherwise, we won't know where we are. You know, it's not that it's not the same. That is just kind of scratching the surface, but I would love and I highly encourage you to please make more copies. Give it to your neighbors. I'm trying to figure out how we can actually get it mailed to everybody's home. In the future I would love to put out also a Spanish edition. It's a work in progress and I'm starting with this one front and back page. I really would love to see it grow and I'd love to see contributions and comments, letters to the editor. We created a historic preservation email just to respond in response to this. So it's just going to be historic preservation atmos.gov. There you can comment or you can send me whatever you would like. So, and I encourage and urge you to please do so. Like the first article, there is unity. It's the only way that we're going to make this happen and get things going. You know, there's a lot of; my family did this, my family did that, my family is here. Tell me, but let's bring it all together. We're in the same community and it's not a very big community. I think last time I checked it was about 2,000 people. So, it's a great way we all can share. We're under the same standing on the same earth, under the same breath. Thank you and I hope you enjoy it. But please, I received your feedback...

Chair Walkinshaw

I have a couple questions. Is it specifically just preservation focus mainly?

HPS Aguirre

I was going to touch on it, but I'm trying not to bore anybody either. Although historic Preservation to me is not, but I'm also trying to capture the reader, you know. So, I'm bringing a lot of historic factors, but all tying it to Mesilla and New Mexico. Mainly Mesilla to kind of gear towards that. Trying to keep it exciting so that people want to read it and that people actually begin to feel this sense of looking back and reflecting Saying this is really what it's about. Any other questions? Thank you. Thank you. People eat with their eyes first. So I had to make it look good. So thank you so much.

Vice-Chair Gallegos

This is amazing, you know all the stories that we are a part of you know this is a narrative here in Mesilla. To be able to express it this way. To remember that we are a community. I think that's very special.

HPS Aguirre

Yeah. Community is very important to me.

Commissioner Alvillar

Yeah, mail. Post office.

HPS Aguirre

Actually Jacob when he went to the post office today, he had a conversation and hopefully I'll be receiving an email. I was thinking about that, too. But he's even thinking maybe the postmaster for Mesilla can maybe help us and put it in the mailbox or something like that. So, we're going to see. That's very exciting to me. Without the cost. There's a lot of things I'm seeing with this. I work, you know, I'm very much into community and I'm hoping to extend to even the community foundation of southern New Mexico. See how they can take part in this. You know, it's really big. It's a big thing and I'm working hand-in-hand with, Caitlyn Beasley, who is the historic preservationist with the City of Las Cusus. So together you know a lot of these stories

for Mesilla is coming up in Las Cruces. So we also have to work together on that. We are our own entity, but you know we have neighbors which, together it's kind of you know flourish and change happening.

Chair Walkinshaw

So this is probably stupid question but I'm assuming it's going to be online too.

HPS Aguirre

Yes. In addition to distribution. Yes. And I'm also hoping to create a mailing list for those who would like to kind of you know subscribe. I'm working with Dorothy for historic preservation section on our website so that I can upload these as they are released. That way we can have almost a catalog of them and you know anybody who wants to read past catalogs or just you know go back to other resources or reference something or have questions that build upon the scale of the time that way they can go ahead and tell their stories.

That's really what I and I want to hear, everybody's story you know like I said good and bad because it's not always good. That feeds into the whole history of everything. So, yeah, I'm really looking forward to having this happen.

Just to make a quick note after this. A man with the same name on the second page, I had not found Mr. Snow's name. fifteen minutes before this meeting started his name is Oscar Snow, and I'll be writing a follow-up article for him. That's the way it works, right? So I hope you enjoy it and please share it. Please share it with everybody. Please take more copies. If you need more, I will be putting a stack on the right. There'll be a stack here. Jacob will also be handing out some and I will also put them at the post office in the meanwhile to see what can come out of that.

Commissioner Mulvihill

So make a recommendation maybe at um the restaurants and then Shorties as well. Shorties/Luckies.

HPS Aguirre

Thank you. Yes, I was thinking about that, having to get kind of restaurant's permission.

Chair Walkinshaw

One other question on another issue is what's the status of the CLG? Did you get it in on time?

HPS Aguirre

Yes, I got it in before Christmas, which is great. So that for me was a gift to the town, but for myself, too, and Eddie, the mayor. She has received the packet, which is great and it's under review. I'm sure there's a lot of things going on, but I'm very eagerly waiting to see.

Chair Walkinshaw

Before I ask this question, you're thinking about three months we might that is the expected time.

HPS Aguirre

That's what they say. Even in their code, it has to be at maximum three months. Hopefully some time before that we will receive a response.

Chair Walkinshaw

So, and while you're up there, I asked Eddie earlier today if the grant money, does it all come from federal, or can we get some from the state given the situation in the federal government? We absolutely can get some from the state. There are specific grants that are gearing towards of course, it's application for grant and I'm frequently sending grants to the mayor. It's difficult because we don't have a grant writer. We're working

on that, I think. However, there's money out there. I'm always thinking about, why can't the town maybe at some point have a trust that we can focus historic preservation funds. This can help with many things, including repairs for homes.

Commissioner Gallegos

I think it's a working process.

HPS Aguirre

Yes. Thank you. Thank you very much. [Applause]

Chair Walkinshaw

All right, it's time for commissioner and staff comment.

CED Salazar

I'd like to add a little bit on what Miss Liana was talking about the historic preservation. We mentioned restaurants and such. This is just the beginning. Obviously our goals for the future, we're planning for this to really take off that will benefit Mesilla not just the buildings themselves but also the stories and tourism. It's a small part of the big picture that we're planning. CLG is one of them, including our local registry. We talked about that as well. It is a possibility at one point; we can have these monthly if there is enough information and community involvement. We can start advertising businesses there and help pay for the paper. It doesn't have to be a lot; it's just something to kind of offset some of the expenses. It's very interesting talking to people when they come in for permits, sometimes they just want to come talk. A lot of times as we're working with these permits, I keep hearing all these stories and I'm like, man, it's just very fascinating. They just fascinate me. So, any of you that have been here in Mesilla for a long time, have family, relatives here, we would love to hear your stories, too. Bring your pictures or documents. Obviously, we'll take copies of them and return them. We would like to recognize the families that built Mesilla as it is today. So, anybody that's willing to volunteer we welcome you. The next thing I would like to talk about is the concern by Commissioner Mulvihill had regarding the election.

HPS Aguirre

I'm sorry. And just to add one thing. Very soon here I also would like to begin nominations on local properties on local historic properties. I will go through what that means again. Of course I think one of the better ways is also to put it through a newsletter so everyone can know, because anybody can do it. You can nominate your own property; you can nominate your neighbor's property. According to the code that we've all voted on, and it passed is that no owner's consent is required. For many reasons because if you gave owner consent, what do you think would happen? One of the articles that I'm writing, letter to the editor is about wanting to sell my property and I don't care what happens to it. When you come across owner consent it means you're kind of giving them full play. You know they can say no and most of the time they will say no because at the end of the day it's not the historic preservation that they're thinking of. It's a fine line. We want to make sure that it's historic preservation. We want to save these properties. In the long run, it's a record of history. It's a record of our past. So, opening that door for owner's consent is difficult. It's very much in the historic preservation act, you are allowed to say, no owner consent is required. It's a great thing to be able to build our own local registry and to have our own sense of pride. So, I just wanted to add that on. So, just keep an eye out. And once again, if you're looking to nominate a local property I have applications. I can send you one and I'll make those public as well once a tab in our website is created.

CED Salazar

Adding to that, anytime there's a nomination for a historic structure or landmark in a sense there is going to be a hearing and notices posted. So if the owner of the structure or the landmark wants to oppose, that would be the time where they would address the commission. It is a process; it's not something that you just tag your it. So we will listen to obviously anybody that has any concerns about being nominated.

COMMISSIONERS / STAFF COMMENTS

All right so going back to this question concern. It's a very small section. Fortunately I looked it up and I would like to read some parts of it. It's 18.06 06, planning and zoning historic appropriateness commission and it describes the powers of the commission, its members, the notices, the terms. On 18.06.010, it talks about the establishment what's the whole purpose of having a commission. Then it goes into the 18.06.020, the membership ex official members appointed qualifications terms and also pay. Which is not relevant. It says the planning and zoning historical appropriateness commission shall consist of five members who shall be appointed by the mayor with the consent of the Board of Trustees. A member of the board may be appointed as an Ex official non- voting member of the commission. Now keep in mind this is when the commission was first formed from the beginning. So this is how it started and the mayor with the consent of Board of Trustees shall appoint residents of the town of Mesilla to membership on the planning and zoning and historical comm appropriateness commission. On the first planning zoning and historical appropriateness commission, a majority of the members shall be appointed for one year term and the balance of the members shall be appointed for two years. Subsequent term of the members of the planning and zoning and historical appropriateness commission shall be for two years or less in order to maintain the original staggering of the terms of the membership. A vacancy in the membership of the planning and zoning and historical appropriateness commission shall be filled with the remainder under expired term. So in a sense I believe it was kind of what happened with Commissioner Mulvihill. She finished the term what was there and then the beginning of the year whenever she was chosen by the mayor, the Board of Trustees approved. That's why she had to go back thinking that she had to do it twice. She was finishing off her term and then she had to go back for the official assignment of the position. She was an alternate then. Then it says right below it, it says members may succeed themselves. So meaning you the commission, you can continue if you wish. Notice of the appointment. Each person appointed by the planning and zoning historical appropriateness commission shall be given notice of her appointment by a certificate stating that he or she appointed as a member of the commission. It just goes by appointments. In case there's a member being removed, there is a removal process. There's actually a hearing that's got to occur in order to remove somebody. At least 10 days prior to the hearing by the Board of Trustee, The member in question shall be given a written notice of specific grounds for which removal may be exercised and time, date and place of the public hearing. Then it goes into the vacancy appointment and term. In case somebody gets removed. We're just following the process, correct? If a vacancy occurs in the planning and zoning historical appropriateness commission the mayor with the advice and consent of the Board of Trustees shall appoint a qualified person to fill such vacancy for such remainder of an unexpired term right. Maybe there was a misunderstanding thinking that when your term is up it creates a vacancy and it really doesn't. The vacancy is when somebody is removed or is no longer wanting to volunteer. Any office vacant shall be filled by the election of the new officer who shall serve the remainder of the unexpired term . Then it goes into meetings place quorums voting. That's already passed the election or past the reassignment or the succeeding of the members that are already on the commission.

So I just wanted to read that. That's what I know. So is there anything else? Any comments on that? Obviously I'm all ears. But uh as far as I know, we did the voting process and the nominations correctly. I don't have anything other than that. I stand by for any questions or comments. No comments? Thanks.

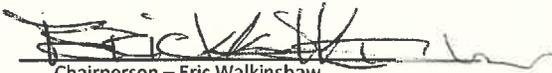
8. ADJOURNMENT

Typically the Mayor or Chair says, if no one has any objection, this meeting is adjourned. If no one objects, we all go home!

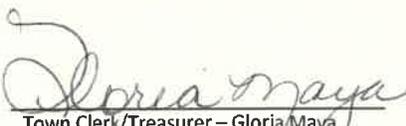
No objections-meeting adjourned @ 6:47pm.

NOTICE

If you need any accommodation for a disability to enable you to fully participate in the hearing or meeting, please contact us on 524-3262 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. Posted on 12/30/26 at the following locations: Town Hall - 2231 Avenida de Mesilla; Public Safety Building - 2670 Calle de Parian; Mesilla Community Center - 2251 Calle de Santiago; Lucky's Food Mart - 2290 Avenida de Mesilla; and the U.S. Post Office – 2253 Calle de Parian; Mesilla website <https://www.mesillanm.gov/minutes-agendas/>


Chairperson – Eric Walkinshaw

ATTEST


Town Clerk/Treasurer – Gloria Maya

