



Town of Mesilla, New Mexico

**THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES (BOT) OF THE TOWN OF MESILLA WILL HOLD A
REGULAR MEETING AT THE MESILLA TOWN HALL, 2231 AVENIDA DE MESILLA**

APRIL 13, 2026

(MINUTES)

TRUSTEES: Russell Hernandez, Mayor
Stephanie Johnson-Burick, Mayor Pro Tem
Biviana Cadena, Trustee
Veronica Garcia, Trustee
Gerard Nevarez, Trustee

STAFF: Ben Azcarate, Marshal
Lorenzo Astorga, Public Works Director
Greg Whited, Fire Chief
Eddie Salazar, Econ & Com Development Director
Gloria S Maya, Town Clerk/Recorder

PUBLIC: Crystal Whited Eric Walkinshaw
Charlie Bowes Catherine Walkinshaw
Kellie Pirtle Jonathan Valdez
Brenda Prieto Jensen Huang
Xavier S. Richard Whited
Cole Morris Andrea Bryan
Greg Lester Janice Cook
Bill Cook Andy Embury
Andrew Whited

1. Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call & Determination of Quorum

Roll call was conducted and a quorum was established. Mayor and all Trustees present

3. Approval of Agenda

Dialogue:

- Mayor presented the agenda for approval
- No discussion recorded prior to action

Action:

- **Motion:** Made by Trustee Nevarez
 - **Second:** Made by Trustee Garcia
 - **Result:** Approved
-

4. Approval of Consent Agenda

Dialogue:

- a) ***BOT MINUTES** – Minutes of BOT, March 23, 2026
- b) ***PURCHASE REQUISITION:** A-Mountain - Calle de Norte PH.III – \$23,159.96
- c) ***PURCHASE REQUISITION:** CES - Mesilla Signage - \$30,858.13
- d) ***PURCHASE REQUISITION:** CES - Public Safety Canopy - \$5,175.93
- e) ***PURCHASE REQUISITION:** Souder, Miller & Assoc. - Colonias Emergency - \$26,695.72
- f) ***PURCHASE REQUISITION:** Alpha Southwest – Colonias Emergency - \$79,208.29

Action:

- **Motion:** Made by Mayor Pro Tem Johnson-Burick
 - **Second:** Made Trustee Cadena
 - **Result:** Approved unanimously
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5. Presentation – Fire Protection Plan

Speaker: Fire Chief Greg Whited

Dialogue:

- Chief Whited introduced the presentation and emphasized:
 - Complexity of fire protection operations

- Need for improved communication with the public
- Explained department mission:
 - Life safety
 - Incident stabilization
 - Property conservation
- Discussed:
 - Department structure (combination staffing)
 - Identified operational gaps
 - Improvements already implemented
 - Future planning needs
- Noted that public perception may not reflect operational realities and stressed transparency

Board Interaction:

- Trustees asked questions regarding:
 - Staffing
 - equipment
 - service levels

Action:

- No motion
 - Presentation and discussion only
-

6. Staff Updates & Comments

Marshal Department – Ben Ascarate

Dialogue:

- Reported no major incidents during recent events
 - Continued focus on public safety outreach
 - Ongoing leadership development and training
 - Budget remains stable
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Fire Department – Chief Greg Whited

Dialogue:

- Reinforced need for continued training and certification
- Discussed equipment replacement cycles

- Mentioned participation in professional conferences
 - Emphasized firefighter safety and operational readiness
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Public Works – Lorenzo Astorga

Dialogue:

- Reported:
 - Completion of Calle de Norte levee project
 - University Avenue improvements nearing completion
 - Ongoing work includes:
 - Community garden improvements
 - EV charging station installation
-

Community & Economic Development – Eddie Salazar

Dialogue:

- Reported successful Frontier Days event
 - Planning:
 - Preservation Month
 - Cinco de Mayo event
 - Noted:
 - Website improvements
 - Newsletter expansion
 - Ongoing economic development coordination
-

Finance / Administration – Gloria Maya

Dialogue:

- Annual audit completed and approved
 - Audit presentation scheduled for future meeting
 - Continued fiscal monitoring
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7. Public Input

Public comments were received.

Jerry Garcia commented on Fire Chief presentation and feeling ignored by department when passing by.

8. New Business

a) NM 101 Project (Discussion)

Speaker: Mayor Hernandez

Dialogue:

- Mayor Hernandez discussed coordination with NMDOT
- Noted Town request to be involved in final project punch list
- Discussed:
 - Maintenance responsibilities
 - Project turnover to Town
- Stated:
 - A joint public meeting with NMDOT is being arranged
 - Additional coordination meetings with engineers and contractors are planned
- Emphasized need for:
 - Clear answers
 - Transparent communication with residents

Action:

- No motion
-

b) Approval: PZHAC Zoning Case #62109

Dialogue:

- Item introduced by staff
- No detailed discussion

Action:

- **Motion:** Made Mayor Pro Tem Johhson-Burick

- **Second:** Made by Trustee Nevarez
 - **Result:** Approved
-

c) Resolution 2026-20 – TPF Participation (McDowell Road)

Dialogue:

- Presented as infrastructure participation item
- Limited discussion

Action:

- **Motion:** Made by Trustee Nevarez
 - **Second:** Made by Trustee Garcia
 - **Result:** Approved
-

d) Resolution 2026-21 – TPF Participation (Calle de Colon)

Dialogue:

- Presented as continuation of TPF participation approvals
- No extended discussion

Action:

- **Motion:** Made by Mayor Pro Tem Johhson-Burick
 - **Second:** Made by Trustee Garcia
 - **Result:** Approved
-

e) Resolution 2026-22 – NMFA Local Solar Access Fund

Dialogue:

- Solar installation proposed for water wells
- Focus on sustainability and grant funding

Action:

- **Motion:** Mayor Pro Tem Johnson-Burick
- **Second:** Trustee Garcia
- **Vote:** Roll call – unanimous

Result: Approved

f) Resolution 2026-23 – Fire Truck Grant

Dialogue:

- Restoration of historic fire truck discussed
- Project partially supported through donations
- Grant would complete restoration

Action:

- **Motion:** Mayor Pro Tem Johnson-Burick
- **Second:** Trustee Cadena

Result: Approved

g) Resolution 2026-24 – Visitor Center Remodel

Dialogue:

- Re-submission of prior unfunded grant
- Design process to follow if awarded

Action:

- **Motion:** Mayor Pro Tem Johnson-Burick
- **Second:** Trustee Cadena

Result: Approved

h) Roofcare Estimate – Town Hall Roof Repairs

Dialogue:

- Item presented as maintenance necessity
- No detailed discussion

Action:

- **Motion:** Made by Trustee Nevarez
 - **Second:** Made by Trustee Garcia
 - **Result:** Approved
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i) DAC FY 2026/2027 Vector Control Agreement

Dialogue:

- Routine agreement presented

Action:

- **Motion:** Made by Mayor Pro Tem Johhson-Burick
 - **Second:** Made by Trustee Cadena
 - **Result:** motion to amend by Trustee Garcia to postpone until contract expires. Second by Trustee Nevarez. Approved to postpone
-

j) Comcast Franchise Agreement

Dialogue:

- Franchise agreement presented

Action:

- **Motion:** Made by Mayor Pro Tem Johhson-Burick
 - **Second:** Made by Trustee Garica
 - **Result:** Approved
-

k) Approval: Ripple Franchise Agreement

Dialogue:

- Item introduced by the Mayor
- Presented as a franchise agreement for services within the Town
- No detailed discussion

Action:

- **Motion:** Made by Mayor Pro Tem Johnson-Burick
 - **Second:** Made by Trustee Garcia
 - **Result:** Approved
-

l) Discussion: ICIP Listing & Project Funding

Dialogue:

- Discussion focused on **Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP)** priorities
- Staff and Board discussed:
 - Potential projects eligible for funding
 - Importance of aligning Town priorities with available funding sources
- Emphasis placed on:
 - Identifying projects that meet community needs
 - Leveraging state and grant funding opportunities

Discussion reflected a proactive approach to long-term planning and funding strategy.

Action:

- No formal motion
 - Discussion and direction only
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m) Discussion: Positions & Salary Schedules

Dialogue:

- Trustees discussed the need for **advance review of salary schedules and staffing positions**

“If we could get the salary schedules and positions... so we can review it in advance...”

- Board emphasized:
 - Importance of receiving materials ahead of meetings
 - Improving efficiency of work sessions

- Discussion included:
 - Potential staffing adjustments
 - Budget implications of salary structures

Action:

- No motion
 - Direction provided to staff to supply information in advance
-

n) Discussion: Budget Work Sessions

Dialogue:

- Board discussed scheduling and structure of upcoming budget work sessions

“Wednesday the 22nd... at 5:00...”

- Trustees noted:
 - Preference for earlier start times
 - Need for sufficient time due to length of sessions

“Work sessions can be two and a half to three hours...”

- Discussion included coordination with:
 - Existing meetings
 - Community events (e.g., Earth Day activities)

Outcome:

- Budget work session scheduled for:
April 22, 2026 at 5:00 PM

Action:

- No formal motion
 - Consensus direction provided
-

9. Closed Executive Session (8:54pm-9:04pm)

Dialogue:

- Mayor announced entry into executive session for:
 - Personnel matters
 - Attorney-client privilege

Action: to go into executive closed session

- **Motion:** Made by Trustee Garica
- **Second:** Made by Trustee Nevarez

Upon Return:

Action: to go back to regular meeting and out of closed session

- **Motion:** Made by Trustee Nevarez
 - **Second:** Made by Trustee Cadena
 - Confirmed:
 - Only listed topics discussed
 - No action taken
-

10. Public Input (Post-Executive Session)

None

11. Board of Trustee Committee Reports

Dialogue:

- Agricultural collaboration discussed (Trustee – likely Nevarez)
 - Budget coordination updates (Trustee Garcia)
 - Transit updates including EV buses (Mayor Pro Tem Johnson-Burick)
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12. Board Comments

General remarks and updates provided.

Adjournment

Dialogue:

- Meeting concluded following final comments

Action:

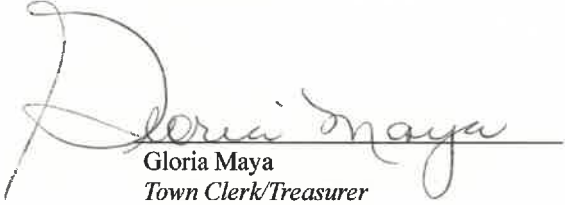
- Motion to adjourn

APPROVED THIS 11th DAY OF MAY, 2026.



Russel Hernandez
Mayor

ATTEST:



Gloria Maya
Town Clerk/Treasurer



