Town of Mesilla, New Mexico

TOWN OF MESILLA

PLANNING, ZONING AND HISTORICAL APPROPRIATENESS COMMISSION (PZHAC)
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, November 02, 2026

Mesilla Town Hall - 2231 Avenida de Mesilla, Mesilla, New Mexico

(MINUTES)

Commissioners Present

- **Chair Walkinshaw**
- **Vice Chair Gallegos**
- **Commissioner Alvillar**
- **Commissioner Mulvihill**
- **Commissioner Lucero**

Staff Present

- **Community Development Paulo Rocha**
- **Historic Preservation Liana Aguirre**

Public Present

- **Bill Cook**
- **Janice Cook**
- **Jesse Barragan**

REGULAR MEETING 6:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Eric Walkinshaw called the regular meeting of the Planning, Zoning and Historical Appropriateness Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, November 2, 2026, at Town Hall. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

The roll call identified Chair Eric Walkinshaw, Vice Chair Gallegos, Commissioner Lucero, Commissioner Alvillar and Commissioner Mulvihill as present. the roll call was reported to establish a quorum. The voting record throughout the meeting reflects four voting members.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Mulvihill moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Alvillar seconded. The Chair called for discussion; none was recorded. The roll-call vote was four in favor. Motion carried, 4–0.

4. PUBLIC INPUT

The Chair invited public comment regarding the sole action item, Case No. 062200, concerning electrical equipment and electric-vehicle charging facilities at 5000 Calle del Norte. No public comment was recorded.

5. CONSENT AGENDA — October 27, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes

The Chair introduced the October 27, 2026 regular meeting minutes. Commissioner Mulvihill moved to approve the consent agenda and Commissioner Alvillar seconded. No discussion followed. The roll-call vote was four in favor. Motion carried, 4–0.

6. ACTION AND CONSIDERATION — PZHAC CASE 062200, 5000 CALLE DEL NORTE

First Motion: Vice Chair Gallegos

Second motion: Commissioner Lucero

Located at 5000 Calle del Norte, identified during the presentation as the Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park property. Applicant identified as Teresa Fresquez. Requested approval to install electrical equipment for Level 2 and Level 3 DC fast electric-vehicle chargers in the Rural Farm zone.

Vice Chair Gallegos moved to approve Case No. 062200. Commissioner Lucero seconded the motion. The Chair requested the staff background and opened discussion.

Staff described the proposed installation as including replacement of an existing utility transformer, a new service meter socket, a new dry-type transformer, inverter, related electrical equipment and EV charging stations. The site already has solar panels. The application packet included ownership documentation, photographs, drawings, site and electrical plans, equipment illustrations and a departmental signature sheet. Public Works, Fire, NM CID and Community Development had reviewed the plans. The estimated project cost was reported as $300,000. Staff explained that the project was presented to the Commission for transparency because it involved the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department, on the recommendation of the Community/Economic Development Director. No representative of the state department attended the meeting.

Commissioners asked whether the chargers would be accessible to the public or reserved for state-park or agency use, and who would pay for electricity used by public vehicles. Staff could not confirm the intended access or payment arrangement and agreed to seek

clarification. Members noted that the location in a parking area could suggest public availability, but did not treat that as established. Commissioners also asked about the ownership and location of the equipment and whether overhead lines would be installed. Staff referenced the state ownership materials and the Chair identified a conduit trench detail on plan sheet E101, suggesting underground installation.

The Commission discussed whether a state government project should be charged or exempted from municipal permit fees. Members recalled a prior school project for which fees had been waived, expressed differing views about equitable treatment of public and private applicants, and requested a consistent policy and legal/code clarification. Staff indicated that the Board Action Form sought guidance regarding permit fees. Members distinguished the requested approval of the electrical installation from a separate determination about fees. No fee waiver was approved by the recorded motion.

Commissioners also asked staff to investigate the status of existing EV chargers in Town that had not yet been placed into service. Staff understood there had been discussion of screening the chargers but agreed to inquire about their operational status. Following discussion, commissioners indicated the project could be approved while staff continued to clarify public access and fees. The Chair called the roll. Four Commissioners voted yes. Motion to approve Case No. 062200 carried, 4–0.

7. DISCUSSION - New Mexico Municipal League Land Use Officials Handbook

Staff member Paulo Rocha introduced portions of the New Mexico Municipal League Land Use Officials Handbook to seek guidance for supporting future Commission meetings following Director Salazar's reduced attendance. Staff highlighted the handbook's recommendation that agendas and supporting materials be provided to commissioners at least seven days before a meeting. Rocha explained that he had been targeting Wednesday packet delivery and hoped to work toward a full week of advance review, while recognizing the difficulty of coordinating complete applications, site plans and departmental signatures.

Commissioners appreciated earlier packet delivery but emphasized the need for a clear application cut-off date so staff and department heads would have sufficient time to review projects. Rocha discussed a potential Friday submission deadline during the preceding week, with sufficient time for departmental routing and packet preparation. He noted that different permits have different requirements and not all applications go before PZHAC or the Board of Trustees. No formal deadline was adopted during this discussion.

Rocha then reviewed handbook guidance for processing motions: members obtain the floor, make and second motions; the chair restates motions, invites debate, puts the final motion including amendments to a vote, and announces the result. Rocha asked whether he should continue assisting by requesting discussion and announcing votes. The Chair indicated that the current practice should continue. A commissioner recommended a future work session to consider additional handbook best practices, and staff offered to schedule the subject on a future agenda.

8. COMMISSIONER AND STAFF COMMENTS

Liana Aguirre discussed federal legislation identified in the recording as S. 5653, the "American Affordability and Jobs Act," and expressed concern about potential effects on historic preservation, Section 106 review, tribal consultation, local land protections and permitting. Liana Aguirre reported having contacted Senator Heinrich to request changes and encouraged careful scrutiny of projects affecting Mesilla's historic and cultural resources. These remarks were comments, not findings or an adopted position of the Commission.

Paulo Rocha thanked the commissioners for their guidance and the opportunity to support meetings, and invited feedback on improving staff processes. Commissioners expressed appreciation for his work and for introducing the Municipal League handbook.

A commissioner asked staff to check the status of fire hydrants on Bolt Street, particularly a hydrant at the end of the street reportedly out of service and another whose functionality was uncertain. The commissioner requested a repair timeline if necessary and characterized the issue as a safety concern. Staff acknowledged the request. Discussion indicated that one hydrant may have been nonfunctional for years and that hydrant replacements had occurred in the subdivision.

Another commissioner expressed support for following the handbook's rules and municipal best practices. Rocha explained that he had reviewed the handbook after an Albuquerque trip and understood the 2019 version to be the one currently posted by the League.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The Chair asked whether there were further comments and whether members agreed to adjourn. Agreement was voiced and the meeting concluded at 6:37 p.m.

Eric Gallegos, PZHAC Vice Chair

Planning, Zoning and Historical Appropriateness Commission

Gloria Maya

Town Clerk/Treasurer