

**MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
LUNA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
Thursday, August 27, 2015**

BE IT REMEMBERED that the Luna County Board of County Commissioners met in special session at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, August 27, 2015 in the County Commission Chambers of the Luna County Courthouse in Deming, New Mexico for the purpose of conducting any and all business to come properly before the Board.

The following staff and elected officials were present: County Manager Charles "Tink" Jackson, Assistant to the County Manager Glory Juarez, Clerk Andrea Rodriguez, Deputy Clerk JoAnna Zurinsky, Treasurer Dora Madrid, Chief Deputy Treasurer Gloria Rodriguez, Starmax Facilities Director Ira Pearson, Public Information Officer Matt Robinson, IT Technician Manny Armendariz, Community Projects Director Jessica Etcheverry, Community Well Being Director Jessica Moreno, Parents as Teachers Director Ana Barraza, Grant/Audit Compliance Monitor Palmira Valentine, Security Screener Moses Pastran.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Milo called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. and Glory Juarez led the Pledge of Allegiance and the salute to the flag of the State of New Mexico.

ROLL CALL: The roll call was conducted by Deputy Clerk JoAnna Zurinsky. The following Commissioners constituting a quorum were present:

Joe L. Milo, Jr., Chairman, District 1
Linda M. Smrkovsky, District 2
R. Javier Diaz, District 3

PUBLIC COMMENT: Chairman Milo opened the floor to receive Public Comment pertaining to the New Business item on the agenda. Fred Williams came before the Board and voiced his concerns pertaining to the purchase of the LCROA property. Mr. Williams summarized his understanding of the history involving the real estate transactions and the public auction of the LCROA property. Mr. Williams stated that he was not comfortable with the sequence of events, and that there was a possibility for collusion, and he could only find one quotable purpose for purchasing the property and that purpose was for obtaining Colonias Grants and for rental property incomes, and commented that he felt that the potential purchase of the property from a private citizen was an 'under the table kind of deal', and with unjustifiable reasons.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a) **AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY MANAGER TO PURCHASE THE FORMER LCROA PROPERTY:** Mr. Jackson stated this item is brought before the Board today to discuss the potential purchase of the LCROA Property. He explained there are several County


Staff members that have interests in the building and that they were here to discuss potential uses and ideas for the property that would enrich the lives of citizens in that particular area. He further stated that the County does not own a single piece of property located outside the City Limits. Mr. Jackson had Community Projects Director Jessica Etcheverry come before the Board and discuss the various Grants and Funding options available should the county decide to purchase the building. Some of the key programs Ms. Etcheverry discussed that may help with grants and funding were: Growing Food Connections, Parents as Teachers, Keep Luna County Beautiful, and Community and Economic Development. Various uses of the property discussed were: Events, Community Meetings, Community Garden, youth outreach and a Volunteer Center. Also discussed was the possibility of making the area a public transportation stop. Ms. Etcheverry stressed the fact that the County would need (to purchase or) own the property which is located in a Colonia, in order to be eligible or qualify for many of the grants and funding that is available. Commissioner Smrkovsky asked about the possibility of obtaining Sunshine School back from Deming Public Schools for nothing. She stated that Sunshine School is right on the highway and it was a better fit because of the cost and renovating it would be less than the cost of purchasing the LCROA property. Commissioner Smrkovsky also inquired on the status of the encumbrance of a purchase order that was obtained for the public auction to purchase the LCROA property, and if there were any appraisals on the LCROA property. Mr. Jackson stated that the money that was encumbered for the purchased price of the LCROA property is still available, but there is no appraisal available because there are no comparable properties that have recently sold in the County. Commissioner Smrkovsky stated that she felt that buying the LCROA building was not a good move. A discussion ensued amongst Ms. Etcheverry, the Board, and Mr. Jackson about the feasibility and importance of why the County must own a particular property before grant funding, especially on a federal level, is applied for or obtained. Mr. Jackson also explained that when the directors apply for a grant or funding, that the application and the monies received is not a superfluous process, and the funding is not returned and is being used, which wasn't always the case in the past with previous directors and/or programs. Community Well Being Director Jessica Moreno and Parents as Teachers Director Ana Barraza came before the Board. Ms. Moreno explained that the purchase of the LCROA property was important to the vitality of her programs and enhancing the lives of the citizens who live in that area because services are not easily accessed due to the geographic location of the Colonias, and gave examples of the services that would best benefit the population. Ms. Moreno stressed the accessibility of services would enrich the quality of life in the Colonias, and the LCROA building would help with this. Ms. Barraza explained to the Board that a director of CYFD was recently given a tour of the area, and was discouraged by the lack of services that the Colonias receives. A discussion ensued amongst the Board, Ms. Moreno and Mr. Jackson entailing the best or ideal ways to steward the taxpayer's dollars. Mr. Jackson gave a timeline of the LCROA property real estate history, and historical averages on property values that have sold in the County that would serve comparable purposes, and also outlined the County's history involving the potential purchase of the LCROA property. The Board expressed their reservations on obtaining all of the available grant funding if the County should purchase the property, and both Commissioner Diaz and Chairman Milo stated that

'the County is taking a chance on the 'if's', and although they were fully confident the funding could be obtained by the County Staff, the problem was in the waiting.' Commissioner Diaz asked about the possibility of other avenues, and if it would be possible for the County to participate in a land exchange. Commissioner Diaz motioned to table the item so the possibility of a land exchange or something similar could be negotiated, and stated that he would like to wait. A discussion ensued amongst the Board and the County Manager about the feasibility of having another Executive Session pertaining to the purchase of the LCROA property and negotiating a purchase price. Commissioner Diaz motioned to table to Authorizing the County Manager to Purchase the Former LCROA Property. Chairman Milo seconded the motion to table the item. The motion carried with a majority vote, with Commissioner Smrkovsky stating that she was opposed to this item.

ADJOURN: Chairman Milo adjourned the meeting at 9:53 a.m.

ATTEST:

**LUNA COUNTY BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**



Andrea Rodriguez, Luna County Clerk

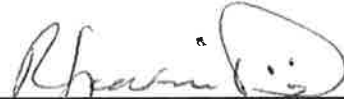


Joe L. Milo, Jr., District 1, Chairman

Approved: September 9, 2015



Linda M. Smrkovsky, District 2



R. Javier Diaz, District 3

