

Thursday, August 20th, 2026 Special Village Council Meeting

- Overview
 - The Village Council met to discuss meeting minutes, personnel policy updates, mold remediation, and a new accounting contract.
- Meeting Minutes
 - Salazar requested corrections for several sets of minutes due to missing roll call votes, spelling errors, and inaccurate motion records.
 - The minutes from June 24, 2026, were tabled due to necessary corrections.
 - The motion to table the minutes from July 6, 2026, failed.
 - The minutes from July 29, 2026, were successfully tabled following a motion by Salazar.
 - Dominguez suggested that the council work to approve minutes more promptly in future meetings to avoid delays.
- Policy & Facilities
 - Salazar expressed concerns regarding the updated Village Personnel Policy, specifically questioning the legality of restricting employee grievances for suspensions or reprimands. Jasso noted that the policy was reviewed against state regulations and the Municipal League.
 - Dominguez proposed changing employee evaluations to a quarterly schedule rather than an annual one to improve communication.
 - The council voted to table the Updated Village Personnel Policy.
 - Regarding facility maintenance, the council discussed the cost of mold remediation for the MBD building. Jasso explained that remediating the mold is a prerequisite for applying for grants to fix cosmetic issues and ensuring ADA compliance. The council approved the remediation costs to allow employees to return to the building.
- Accounting Contract
 - The council debated a contract with The Becerra Group, LLC to replace Hinkle and Landers. Jasso argued that The Becerra Group, LLC is more cost-effective and provides better guidance for meeting DFA compliance standards.
 - Salazar raised concerns regarding the legal standing and past criminal allegations involving individuals associated with the firm.
 - Jasso clarified that Rick Chavez, a former DFA employee, would be assisting the village.
 - The council ultimately voted to approve the contract with The Becerra Group, LLC. Is there verified documentation regarding the administrative licensing or legal standing of the firm's leadership?
- Action Items
 - Correct all identified errors in the June 24, July 6, and July 29 regular/special council meeting minutes (roll call votes, spelling, motions, seconds, etc.) and prepare them for approval at the next council meeting. (Marlena Jasso)

- After completion of the mold remediation project, arrange for a second-party inspector to test the building for mold and safety and confirm it meets health standards before any staff occupy the facility. (Marlena Jasso)
- Research whether allowing employees to file grievances specifically for termination, suspension, or reprimand violates New Mexico state law or DFA requirements, using the updated village personnel policy as input.
- Coordinate with the appropriate contractor to design and install ADA-compliant ramps to the MVD offices building once grant funds are secured, to improve access for older residents.
- Verify the current professional and administrative licensing status of Rick Chavez (The Becerra Group), including checking for any active suspensions or disbarments, before proceeding with finalizing the new accounting contract.
- Speak with David to obtain confirmation on Steve Masserra's employment status, licensure, and whether his firm is currently under state contract, and report back relevant findings to the council.
- Outline
 - Approval of Agenda and Announcements
 - Marlena Jasso announced that an animal ordinance will be on the next agenda following coordination with Monica from the Kronos Foundation.
 - A presentation by the Chief and Officer Wood is scheduled for the upcoming meeting.
 - The council approved the meeting agenda without public comment.
 - Review of Previous Meeting Minutes
 - Council Member Salazar noted errors in the June 24, 2026, minutes, including missing roll call votes, spelling errors, and unrecorded motions.
 - The council voted to table the approval of the June 24, 2026, minutes until corrections are completed.
 - A motion to table the July 6, 2026, special meeting minutes failed during a roll call vote.
 - The council successfully voted to table the July 29, 2026, meeting minutes due to inconsistencies and absences.
 - Updated Village Personnel Policy Discussion
 - Council Member Salazar raised concerns regarding the legality of policies restricting employee grievances for terminations or reprimands.
 - Marlena Jasso clarified that the policy was reviewed for compliance with state regulations by legal counsel and verified with the Municipal League and DFA.
 - Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez suggested increasing employee evaluations from an annual basis to a quarterly basis to improve communication between supervisors and staff.
 - The council voted to table item nine regarding the updated personnel policy to allow for further research and redline comments.

- Mold Remediation in Village Building
 - The council discussed a proposal for mold remediation in a village building to allow employees to return after testing confirms it is safe.
 - Marlana Jasso explained that remediating the mold is a prerequisite for applying for future grants to fix cosmetic issues and improve ADA compliance.
 - Addressing these issues would also allow moving the water department back into its facility and improving accessibility for elderly residents.
 - A motion was carried to approve the remediation costs for moving employees back into the building once it passes safety tests.
- Contract Review for The Becerra Group, LLC
 - The council discussed replacing Hinkle and Landers with The Becerra Group, LLC to reduce monthly accounting costs from approximately \$14,000 down toward \$32,500 total for a specific project phase.
 - Marlana Jasso stated that The Becerra Group would help bring village processes into compliance with state standards set by the DFA following a special audit.
 - Council Member Salazar voiced concerns regarding potential legal issues involving Steve Passera's alleged past criminal connections found in online reports.
 - The council ultimately voted to approve the contract with The Becerra Group LLC despite discussions regarding their expertise and cost-effectiveness.

Mayor Herrera 00:20

Okay its 6 p.m. Will everybody please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Pledge of Allegiance 00:23

I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Marlena Jasso 00:24

Mayor Herrera.

Mayor Herrera 00:39

Here

Marlena Jasso 00:42

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 00:45

Here

Marlena Jasso 00:45

I'm sorry, Council Member Salazar.

Council Member Salazar 00:48

Here.

Marlena Jasso 00:49

Council Member Sandoval. He is not here. Council Member Olivas is not here.

Mayor Herrera 00:58

Okay. Next item is the approval of the agenda.

Council Member Salazar 01:04

Make a motion.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 01:04

I'll second.

Mayor Herrera 01:04

Next item is the public comment. Two minutes. Is there anybody there in this council that would like to have a public comment?

Marlena Jasso 01:22

I don't think so. I'll say a couple of things really quick, just about the couple of agendas. We did finally get. We have Monique from the Kronos Foundation, so we will be having an actual ordinance for the animals. So that will be on the next agenda as well, and then we will have a public speaking from Chief Huckabee and Officer Wood. So he will be speaking at the next agenda as well.

Mayor Herrera 01:56

We will be addressing the animals at the next meeting as well.

Marlena Jasso 02:06

I think so yes.

Council Member Salazar 02:06

What was it, Denny?

Mayor Herrera 02:30

Was asking if Chief Huckabee would address the animals at the next meeting.

Marlena Jasso 02:31

Yes at that time. Yes.

Mayor Herrera 02:32

Next item: The agenda is the old business. Discussion, consideration, adoption of approval of the minutes for the Regular Council meeting held on Wednesday, June 24, 2026.

Council Member Salazar 02:39

Make a motion.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 02:40

I'll second

Mayor Herrera 02:40

Any discussion from the council on this matter?

Council Member Salazar 02:44

There are corrections that need to be made. There's some roll call votes that weren't implemented. There's spelling that's needs to be corrected. There's motions that don't say who made the motion, who second the motion.

Marlena Jasso 03:14

We're working on those corrections as well. Kyle had brought them up as well.

Council Member Salazar 03:31

We should table them the corrections are done. I'll make a motion to table them.

Mayor Herrera 03:32

Do you feel comfortable tabling them until the next meeting until the corrections are done.

Mayor Herrera 03:57

Tabling the Meeting Notes for Wednesday, June 24, 2026.

Council Member Salazar 04:04

Make a Motion to Table.

Mayor Herrera 04:06

Do we have a second?

Council Member Salazar 04:13

No.

Mayor Herrera 04:13

So then we have roll call vote Mrs. Jasso.

Marlena Jasso 04:17

Okay, roll call vote for discussion, consideration, and action of the approval of the minutes for the Regular Council Meeting held on Wednesday, June 24, 2026. Mayor Herrera.

Mayor Herrera 04:17

This is just for the Council to Vote on

Marlena Jasso 04:17

Oh, I'm sorry. I apologize. Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 04:18

No.

Marlena Jasso 04:18

Councilwoman Salazar.

Council Member Salazar 04:18

No.

Mayor Herrera 04:18

Motion fails. Next item agenda is discussion, consideration, and approval of the minutes for the Special Council Meeting held on Monday, July 6, 2026.

Council Member Salazar 04:56

Make a motion.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 05:03

I'll second.

Mayor Herrera 05:04

Any discussion from the Council on this matter.

Council Member Salazar 05:09

On this one, I would also like to table the approval at this time until corrections are made. On this meeting, it hasn't been. I was not present, so make a motion to table until corrections are done.

Mayor Herrera 05:48

Do we have a second?

Council Member Salazar 05:48

No.

Mayor Herrera 05:48

Roll call, call, Mrs. Jasso.

Marlena Jasso 05:50

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 05:52

No.

Marlena Jasso 05:52

Councilwoman Salazar.

Council Member Salazar 05:53

No.

Mayor Herrera 05:53

Motion fails. Next item is the discussion, consideration, and action of the approval of the Regular Meeting held on Wednesday, July 29, 2026. Any discussion on this matter from the Council.

Council Member Salazar 06:01
Make a motion.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 06:02
Second.

Council Member Salazar 06:03
Would also like to table this item due to inconsistencies. Again, having me present at this meeting, I was not here. And corrections as far as who made a motion, who second it. Etc.

Mayor Herrera 06:43
Do we have a motion to table this?

Council Member Salazar 06:45
I'll make a motion to table this. I'll make a motion to table.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 06:47
I'll second the motion.

Mayor Herrera 06:48
Roll call vote to table Wednesday, July 29, 2026.

Marlena Jasso 06:52
Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 06:53
Yes.

Marlena Jasso 06:53
Councilwoman Salazar.

Council Member Salazar 06:54
Yes.

Mayor Herrera 06:54
Motion carries to Table the Minutes for July 29, 2026. Next item is new business discussion, consideration, and action of the Updated Village Personnel Policy.

Council Member Salazar 07:05
Make a motion.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 07:07

Mayor before we go on to that other one, I'd like to see if there's any way that we can approve the minutes from the prior meeting right away. You know, instead of waiting two or three meetings. If we can approve them right away at the next meeting.

Speaker 1 07:30

Okay, Miss Jasso, we will address that issue.

Marlena Jasso 07:34

Correct. Thank you.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 07:35

Okay thank you.

Mayor Herrera 07:35

Next item is new business discussion, consideration, and action of the Updated Village Personnel Policy.

Council Member Salazar 07:50

Sorry, I made a motion on that one, but we didn't get a second yet.

Mayor Herrera 07:53

Is there a second on the consideration of the Updated Village Personnel Policy.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 08:03

I'll second.

Mayor Herrera 08:04

Any discussion from the Council on this matter?

Council Member Salazar 08:14

Does this have to be approved today? Is there a deadline for it? Still going, and I feel like there's some stuff that shouldn't have been changed. for example, the grievance we're taking up grievance for employees if they get terminated, suspended, reprimanded, they're not allowed to be. I'm pretty sure that's illegal.

Marlena Jasso 08:54

So the attorney used state rules and regulations, and we provided this personnel policy to all of you several weeks ago for you to be go over and make redline comments if you had any. But he did say it's absolutely with state regulation, and he made sure of that with the municipal league and the DFA, I believe, is what he said. keep it completely in line with the state regulations.

Council Member Salazar 09:34

I would like to do more research because I'm pretty sure that you cannot allow an employee to grieve their termination, their suspension, their reprimand, and that's as far as I got on that one. There's others that I didn't get to look over thoroughly. It was sent to my .gov email at first, and I wasn't allowed able to get into that. I have fixed that. I have fixed that with Computer Corner now.

Mayor Herrera 10:44

When did you get his email then with the current policy?

Council Member Salazar 10:46

I'd have to look at my email. It was sent to my viallage email. I'm not sure of the date. Were you able to look at all the policy changes?

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 11:07

Well, I have a comment on one that I really I'd like to address. The one that I want to address is on page 17. The contents of evaluation in the middle of the page. It says about.

Mayor Herrera 11:31

The correct content.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 11:45

That if I rewrite that, the evaluation is like from the date from which an employee is the central position. But what I would like to say that these evaluations are just it's just like a communication tool between the employee and the supervisor, and they can they can work for our benefit if they're done correctly. What I'd like to do is I'd like to see if these evaluations are reviewed orally every three months. It doesn't do any good to hire somebody and not have an evaluation till 12 months later. That means that you're giving 12 months or whole year to more to do whatever they want.

Mayor Herrera 12:41

I know what you are saying, Mr. Dominguez. Before their six month probationary time, and then I wait to make a decision whether they will become a full time employee or not after the two evaluations before their six month period.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 13:00

Yeah, I'd like to see if they could be done quarterly every three months. Would be easier, you know. If somebody's not doing what they're expected to do, let them know right away. Also, if they're doing a good job. This evaluations are just a commendation tool.

Mayor Herrera 13:24

You need to make a good information in a timely manner. I understand, but you need to read the information and let us know. Like she said, the red line, and that way we don't run into issues at the cost of meeting. We can take care of this and can get the documents the way it should be. I understand you need some time to review them. We will vote to table this item.

Council Member Salazar 14:21

Motion to table.

Mayor Denny Herrera 14:22

Motion to table the Updated Personnel Policy. All this updating was done with state policy. We just took stuff out of our policies. Not even state policies. Just stuff that was added on by the village for state laws. Okay, so let's have a motion to table the item for the Updated Village Personnel Policy.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 14:32

I'll second.

Council Member Salazar 14:33

Motion to table item number nine, Updated Village Personnel Policy.

Mayor Herrera 14:38

Can we have a role call vote, Mrs. Jasso, to table item number nine, the Updated Village Personnel Policy.

Marlena Jasso 14:41

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 14:45

Yes. And the reason I voted to table is for all council member should be present and have full input and so yes.

Marlena Jasso 14:58

Councilwoman Salazar.

Council Member Salazar 14:59

Yes.

Mayor Herrera 15:03

Item number nine: the updated village personnel policy. And as far as the other council members, we can't stop working on village visits if the other council members do not attend the council meeting. Next item is discussion, consideration, and action of approval of the Mold Remediation.

Council Member Salazar 15:23
Make a motion.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 15:30
Can we discuss that a little bit? What is that?

Council Member Salazar 15:32
We need to make a motion first, and then we can discuss it.

Mayor Herrera 15:37
Is there any discussion from the council on this matter?

Council Member Salazar 15:44
This going to be the whole, not just the MVD part, but I was looking at it. It's the bathrooms and the kitchen. This is the price for that entire building. So if this is approved, that would let our employees move back to the building.

Marlena Jasso 16:13
Absolutely.

Mayor Herrera 16:13
And after the remediation is done, we're going to have a second party come out, not the person that did the remediation, to come out and test the facility to make sure that it passes before anybody already occupies the building.

Marlena Jasso 16:22
And that's before that.

Council Member Salazar 16:24
Okay. If it doesn't pass, they'll come back and fix what they were supposed to. Like say this company comes in and they fix the wall in the kitchen, and the kitchen still doesn't pass. They'll come back and redo it, right? Yes. So, so can I explain just a little bit?

Marlena Jasso 16:45

So, price to remediate the mold. This is not a price to obviously redo all the walls in the bathroom. This is a price to get all of the mold out of the building so we can move back in. But if that's done, and it also includes a price after remediation. the mold, everything is good and clear. We can leave the building, and then we can start looking at grants to you know fix the cosmetic in the building, fix the bathroom walls because those bathrooms aren't public anyway. We don't need them because there's other bathrooms that the employees can use, but would allow us to get the MVD open right away. It would allow us to put the water department back because that's a point of contention on the public. It's hard for them to go up there, so it would allow.

Mayor Herrera 16:45

Multiple times I've talked to the county about having ADA access to our offices there at the where are now they're going to work on it. They're going to work on it, but it's just a hard step for the older people in our community to have to walk through it. It's only going to get worse as the winter moves along, so that's just checking in on the on the issue.

Marlena Jasso 16:53

And they won't allow us to open up the MVD there without the ADA compliance, so we wanted to we can't open up. We can once we get this mold remediated, we can't get a grant to remediate the mold. But once we get this done, what this is for, then we can look for grants to fix the rest of the building. Yes.

Mayor Herrera 18:28

Any further discussion from the council on this matter? Roll call vote, Mrs. Jasso.

Marlena Jasso 18:35

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 18:36

Yes.

Marlena Jasso 18:36

Council Member Salazar.

Council Member Salazar 18:37

Yes.

Mayor Herrera 18:37

Motion carries. Next item on the agenda is the discussion, consideration, action of approval for the contract with The Becerra Group, LLC.

Council Member Salazar 18:54

Make a motion.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 18:57

I'll second.

Mayor Herrera 18:57

Any discussion from the council on this matter? I'll explain a little bit or Mrs. Jasso, would you like to explain what The Becerra Group is.

Marlena Jasso 19:06

Sure. If anybody, do you guys need to know, or did?

Council Member Salazar 19:12

Yeah. My question is, why are we changing from Hinkle and Landers?

Marlena Jasso 19:19

So Hinkle and Landers is very expensive for the village, and we don't need a different type of accounting software. We can handle it in house, and they're also what they're going to do is make sure that we are in line with everything from that special audit, because one of the things with Hinkle and Landers is they were called out in the special audit for not getting work because they should have already had those things in their sights telling us like this is wrong we need to be doing this and they didn't do that so we've been looking for number one for a less expensive option, but also for outside help to come in and really now of the processes we put in place, are they correct? Are they meeting state standard? Are we good with the DFA now? And that will help get us back into good standing where we don't have to have a Fiscal agent anyway.

Mayor Herrera 20:23

Hinkle and Landers for day-to-day bookkeeping. Yeah, just to make sure, kind of what the what the state auditor's office told us, we need to get some guidance. And this was way cheaper route than trying to find a month or whatever it was with the red belt. The prices were just we just couldn't pay. Looking for an alternative, just then.

Council Member Salazar 20:54

Does Hinkle and Landers charge hourly?

Marlena Jasso 21:00

It's not usually hourly. They do it by what they do for us, and we are usually paying them between \$12,000 and \$14,000 a month. This is for the Becerra Group. We're looking at hopefully one month they come in, they help us, we're good, and no more of that \$12,000/\$13,000 a month going out.

Council Member Salazar 21:18

Have you researched this company legally.

Marlena Jasso 21:21

We have two more. You guys want to look at it, but it was close to \$600,000 for them, and then we reached out to another accounting firm to get a different one, and this one is \$32,500, and they can't start helping until October. So yes, we didn't need.

Mayor Herrera 21:45

So the other thing we're going to look at after they're in the evaluation. The other thing they're going to do is give us a recommendation. If they feel that we need more help moving forward, then we will put it out to the end for the second phase.

Council Member Salazar 22:01

To any legal actions against The Becerra Group, have you looked into anything legal?

Mayor Herrera 22:09

We just looked at if they were in good standing with the state in which they were.

Council Member Salazar 22:13

I mean, I don't know if I can bring up legal issues, but he was convicted of money laundering, embezzlement. He was involved with a marijuana organization.

Mayor Herrera 22:57

That did not come up when we looked at them.

Council Member Salazar 22:58

Well, I searched it.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 22:59

Are they under state contract?

Mayor Herrera 23:00

I would not know if they're under state contract.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 23:03

What was that, Mayor?

Mayor Herrera 23:03

I'm not sure if they're under state contract or not. We are doing this as an emergency.

Marlena Jasso 23:12

The gentleman that would be coming out to help us, Rick Chavez, he used to work for the DFA, so he has a very good understanding of what we need to do to get to get in compliance.

Council Member Salazar 23:25

I'm just saying, Mrs. Jasso. He was indicted for alleged money laundering connected to marijuana. If he's enrolled, if he has an active license, I'd like to know that information before we switch companies.

Mayor Herrera 24:15

Did you say he was connected or indicted?

Council Member Salazar 24:17

I'd have to check his other records.

Mayor Herrera 24:17

Yeah, we wouldn't have that information.

Council Member Salazar 24:18

His license, his administrative, the licensing department, he has an administrative suspension of practice credentials.

Mayor Herrera 24:33

I don't think he's the controlling partner in the in the firm.

Council Member Salazar 25:01

He's the CEO.

Mayor Herrera 25:01

What's the lady name that runs everything there?

Marlena Jasso 25:02

We have Rick Chavez.

Speaker 4 25:02

We can't go with Hinkle and Landers because they're the reason we are in this.

Marlena Jasso 25:05

I'm not seeing anything that he i has been indicted, but I'm not finding it yet, so I don't know.

Mayor Herrera 25:30

That's the reason we went with this firm is because of all the experience he has with working the new DFA. He knows exactly what the DA is going to require is going to require to get us back into compliance. The other issue too is QuickBooks that we're using with Landers or whatever, not Landers, one to do our monthly books and stuff. That everybody talk to one down the line.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 25:39

Where is this Rick Chavez from?

Marlena Jasso 25:40

He is from Albuquerque.

Marlena Jasso 25:41

There is nothing indicating that The Becerra Group, an accounting and tax resolution firm is in legal or financial trouble, led by former IRS employee Steve Becerra continues to operate normally, providing tax and bookkeeping services.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 26:18

I was just going to ask Marlena if they're willing to come down and answer any questions that we might have.

Mayor Herrera 26:24

We can ask them.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 26:30

Yeah, come down. He can come down even if we have any questions that arise. He can come down and explain it to us.

Mayor Herrera 26:44

Yeah, that's a good time for you Ms. Salazar. You can ask those questions you have. So do we have a motion to table this and then further delay our compliance with the state of New Mexico. We have a motion to carry this for the approval of the contract for The Becerra Group, LLC.

Council Member Salazar 27:18

You said there was other quotes.

Council Member Salazar 27:19

Roll call vote Mrs. Jasso.

Marlena Jasso 27:21

There are other quotes. One is \$600,00 and one is \$32,500, and they can not start until October.

Council Member Salazar 27:25
And this one is 60.

Marlena Jasso 27:26
This one is well. This is 60 at the most, but we really do believe we can get it done for the 20 in one month. Because, but we have a very strong belief that we're going to be good within the month.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 27:55
Mayor, did you say we had a motion?

Mayor Herrera 27:57
Roll call vote.

Marlena Jasso 28:06
Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez.

Mayor Pro Tem Dominguez 28:10
Yes.

Marlena Jasso 28:11
Councilwoman Salazar.

Council Member Salazar 28:12
No.

Marlena Jasso 28:21
Is this? I'm sorry, you guys. I don't know. Is this where the mayor?

Council Member Salazar 28:25
What was it? A motion to table or no?

Mayor Herrera 28:28
It is a motion for the approval. Yeah, we gave. I asked for a table, and we said we're bringing action on the item.

Josephine Velarde 28:42
So is the person that was indicted the person that comes here?

Marlena Jasso 28:46
No, and I don't see anything about anyone being indicted.

Josephine Velarde 28:56

But is that individual who will be coming.

Marlena Jasso 29:15

No his name is Rick Chavez, and no.

Mayor Herrera 29:17

So Miss Jasso, just yeah, what's the vote so far?

Council Member Salazar 29:18

No and yes.

Mayor Herrera 29:18

Okay, so Jasso, you have to ask me what my vote is.

Marlena Jasso 29:19

What is your vote Mayor Herrera?

Mayor Herrera 30:06

Yes, motion carries. Next meeting is on September 9, 2026 at 6:00 pm. Next item is the adjournment of the meeting at 6:30 pm. Thank you, everyone.

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