

**MINUTES
of the
FIRST MEETING
of the
LAND GRANT COMMITTEE**

**June 26, 2017
State Capitol, Room 307
Santa Fe**

The first meeting of the Land Grant Committee (LGC) for the 2017 interim was called to order by Representative Miguel P. Garcia, chair, on June 26, 2017 at 1:15 p.m. in Room 307 of the State Capitol in Santa Fe.

Present

Rep. Miguel P. Garcia, Chair
Sen. Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics, Vice Chair
Sen. Gregory A. Baca
Rep. Jimmie C. Hall
Sen. Linda M. Lopez
Rep. Sarah Maestas Barnes
Sen. Richard C. Martinez
Sen. Bill B. O'Neill
Sen. Cliff R. Pirtle
Rep. Debbie A. Rodella

Absent

Rep. David M. Gallegos
Sen. Sander Rue
Rep. Tomás E. Salazar
Rep. Christine Trujillo

Advisory Members

Rep. Alonzo Baldonado
Rep. Harry Garcia
Rep. Derrick J. Lente
Rep. Patricia A. Lundstrom
Rep. Matthew McQueen
Rep. Jim R. Trujillo
Sen. James P. White

Rep. Eliseo Lee Alcon
Sen. Carlos R. Cisneros
Sen. Stuart Ingle
Rep. D. Wonda Johnson
Sen. Gay G. Kernan

Staff

Mark Edwards, Legislative Council Service (LCS)
Michelle Jaschke, LCS

Guests

The guest list is in the meeting file.

Handouts

Copies of all handouts are in the meeting file.

Monday, June 26

Introductions and Announcements

Representative Miguel P. Garcia welcomed committee and audience members and asked members and guests to introduce themselves. He then provided background information on the LGC, the history of land grants in New Mexico and his personal connection to New Mexico land grants.

Laguna del Campo/Senior Lake: Proposed Closure by the Department of Game and Fish

Steve Polaco, president, Tierra Amarilla Land Grant-Merced (Tierra Amarilla), presented information regarding the proposed closure of Laguna del Campo, a family fishing area open to young children and seniors in the Los Ojos/Parkview area. He and other community members objected to the lack of notice and the lack of information provided to the community regarding the proposed closure. Mr. Polaco recalled that at a meeting of the LGC during the 2016 interim, Alexa Sandoval, director, Department of Game and Fish (DGF), had stated that the DGF would improve its efforts to provide information to the community regarding scheduled meetings and any DGF plans that might affect community water use and wildlife issues.

Other community members, including Melvin Apodaca, treasurer, Tierra Amarilla, reported that they felt the DGF had treated the community with contempt in its failure to follow through on promises to publicize meetings and hearings and its failure to respond to specific community requests. Mr. Apodaca asked which state agency or entity — the DGF, the Office of the State Engineer (OSE), the Interstate Stream Commission or the State Game Commission (SGC) — should be contacted for information regarding the proposed closure. Committee members discussed a reported plan to divert water from Laguna del Campo to the acequias, and questioned why the water would be distributed to the acequias if, as reported, it belongs to Tierra Amarilla. LGC members also expressed concern and frustration regarding the continuing failure of the DGF to communicate effectively and appropriately with land grant communities, and committee members asked that the DGF be requested to attend a future meeting of the LGC to answer questions and provide information regarding the proposed closure of Laguna del Campo.

2017 Interim Work Plan and Meeting Schedule Discussion

Mr. Edwards presented information on the status of the legislation endorsed by the committee during the 2016 interim, and he provided an outline of the 2017 interim work plan and meeting schedule that focuses on three areas of continuing interest to the committee:

- strengthening the governance capacity of land grant communities;
- accessing state and federal lands for traditional and cultural uses; and
- developing economic opportunities for land grant communities.

In addition, Mr. Edwards noted that the LGC traditionally hears status reports from the land grant communities visited by the LGC during the interim. Members asked that specific items be added to the work plan, including:

- inviting representatives of the DGF, the OSE and the SGC to attend a meeting to discuss community notification protocol and the proposed closure of Laguna del Campo;
- asking representatives of the State Parks Division of the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department and the DGF to provide updates regarding the status of land parcels at Marquez and Villanueva;
- requesting an update from the Anton Chico Land Grant-Merced regarding its water rights issues and economic development plans;
- requesting a presentation from the New Mexico Finance Authority (NMFA) on how the NMFA can be of assistance to land grant communities with respect to project financing;
- continuing discussions with the Department of Finance and Administration to enable land grant communities and acequias to access legislative appropriations made to land grants and acequias; and
- investigating the possibility of modifying Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) regulations to include building renovations as an eligible use of LEDA funds.

Mr. Edwards also presented the following proposed 2017 meeting dates and locations:

- June 26 — State Capitol, Santa Fe;
- July 12-13 — Arroyo Hondo Arriba Land Grant-Merced;
- August 29-30 — San Miguel del Bado Land Grant-Merced;
- October 30-31 — Town of Tomé Land Grant-Merced; and
- November 20 — State Capitol, Santa Fe.

On a motion duly made and seconded, the committee voted without objection to adopt the work plan and meeting schedule with the suggested changes.

Public Comment

Community members addressed the committee regarding the need for additional access to public lands for traditional and cultural uses and for job development in northern New Mexico. The chair asked that more in-depth presentations be given by the land grants represented at the meeting when the committee meets at the respective land grant locations. Ericka Luna, New Mexico state liaison for Region 3 of the United States Forest Service, introduced herself to the new committee members, and the chair invited Ms. Luna to attend all of the upcoming LGC meetings.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the committee, the committee adjourned at 2:58 p.m.