

**Valencia Association of Local Elected Officials (VALEO)
Los Lunas Transportation Center
101 Courthouse Road SE, Los Lunas, NM 87031
Tuesday, August 20, 2024, 6:00 pm**

MINUTES

WELCOME:

Los Lunas Mayor Charles Griego called the meeting to order at approximately 6:10 pm and welcomed those in attendance. Attendees were invited to help themselves to the food provided by the Village of Los Lunas.

INTRODUCTIONS:

Mayor Griego invited all present to introduce themselves. Attendees included:

Charles Griego, Mayor, Los Lunas
Gregory Martin, Village Administrator, Los Lunas
Erin Callahan, Deputy Village Administrator, Los Lunas
Victoria Archuleta, Senior Economic Developer, Los Lunas
Gerard Saiz, Commissioner, Valencia County
Danny Monette, County Manager, Valencia County
Jhonathan Aragon, Deputy County Manager, Valencia County
Ronita Wood, Councilor, Bosque Farms
Lawrence Gordon, Councilor, Rio Communities
Art Apodaca, Councilor, Rio Communities
Ralph Mims, Consultant, Rio Communities
Nikolai Talento, Site Lead, Amazon (ABQ2)

REVIEW OF PAST MINUTES:

Mayor Griego mentioned that the minutes from the last meeting on May 21, 2024, as well as minutes from past VALEO meetings are archived on the Valencia County website.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Amazon Fulfillment Center (ABQ2), Nikolai Talento, Site Lead, Amazon (ABQ2)**
Nikolai Talento said Amazon has been open in Los Lunas for about six weeks. They have hired approximately 1200 employees, so far, and are expecting that number to rise to approximately 1500-1600 employees. The demand for employment has exceeded their expectations. Many of their employees have come from throughout Valencia County. They offer a great wage, great benefits, and a shorter commute for those that live locally. All of their current employees work fulltime and enjoy full benefits. ABQ2 is a new part of the Amazon supply chain, which supplies to other Amazon fulfillment centers and distributors, but does not deliver products directly to homes, unlike ABQ1 in Albuquerque, which handles smaller items and sends them directly to homes and consumers. The ABQ1 facility in Albuquerque is open for public tours, but ABQ2 in Los Lunas is not necessarily open to the public, however, a tour can be arranged for public officials. The new building itself is 1.3

million sq. ft., making it one of the largest building footprints in New Mexico. Most of the hourly workers are local. Some members of the management team are local as well, some of which transferred from other Amazon facilities. Her starting wage is \$17.00/hour, with step increases every quarter based on tenure, with starting wages ranging up to \$25.00/hour depending on the role. They offer an educational program called Career Choice after 90 days of employment. Eligible employees can get a grant upfront to pay for the degree of their choice. English as a Second Language (ESL) classes are also available on day one.

- **Economic Development Update, Victoria Archuleta, Senior Economic Developer, Village of Los Lunas**

Victoria has been with the Village of Los Lunas for one year. She said it has been a great experience, and that the growth in Los Lunas and Valencia County has been tremendous. She works hard to promote not just Los Lunas but Valencia County as a region. She regularly visits economic development trade shows and conferences to promote our region and attract and recruit new businesses and industries.

She said Los Lunas is the second fastest-growing community in New Mexico. The Village is in partnership with Bernalillo County and Sandoval County for the I-40 TradePort Corridor project, which will go through Bernalillo County, and will bring lots of trade and products through the area. Since NM 6 connects with I-40, the Village and the region will benefit from additional trade and products coming through area, piggybacking on the additional business activity. The rail spur at the Central NM Rail Park will also attract future businesses and commerce. The Rail Park is a BNSF certified site, which will help attract companies and jobs. The Village is currently building out utilities to the site. Victoria, on behalf of the Village, is also starting conversations about a future site for hydrogen fueling stations. The Village is expecting to break ground on the much needed and much anticipated I-25 Interchange/Los Lunas Boulevard Corridor project in early 2025.

The Village is experiencing rapid residential growth, with 550 homes currently in progress, and could increase to 2000 homes in the next several years and may eventually rival Rio Rancho in 10 years. There has been 100+ net new business registrations in Los Lunas so far in 2024. There are currently 2845 total registered businesses in good standing in the Village.

Other current or upcoming projects include:

- Allsup's on NM 6 and 263 is nearing completion
- Utah commercial strip near Allsup's on NM 6
- First Care of New Mexico clinic open on NM 6 near NM 314
- Fairfield Inn by Marriott under construction near Mariscos Altamar; will have 80-85 rooms and a small conference center

Leads for new companies also come from the New Mexico Partnership and Albuquerque Regional Economic Alliance (AREA). Advantages for locating in Los Lunas and Valencia County include available land, site readiness, workforce readiness, proximity to the Albuquerque metro area and transportation networks, and local and state incentives. The Village recently received a \$14,000 outdoor marketing grant to complete a promotional video for the area.

Victoria mentioned to “Save the Date” for the following upcoming events:

- New Mexico Governors Conference for Economic Development, September 25-26, 2024, Isleta Resort & Casino
- Valencia County Day (tentative), Thursday, February 6, 2025, State Legislature

General Comments:

Mayor Griego commented that the increased cost of housing (i.e. affordable housing) is an issue we are all having to deal with, in addition to the high cost and lack of availability of rentals, for which the Village is starting to look into available programs, resources and solutions.

Ralph Mims commented that housing projects are coming to Rio Communities but is also concerned about lack of affordability.

OLD BUSINESS:

- None

FUTURE VALEO MEETINGS:

- November 19, 2024, Hosted by City of Belen

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:50 pm.

Minutes prepared by Gregory Martin, Los Lunas Village Administrator.