

**Valencia Association of Local Elected Officials (VALEO)
UNM Valencia Workforce Training Center
1020 Huning Ranch East Loop SW, Los Lunas 87031
Tuesday, March 29, 2022, 6:00 p.m.**

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER:

Los Lunas Village Councilor Chris Ortiz called the meeting to order at approximately 6:05 p.m., and encouraged attendees to help themselves to the food provided by the Village of Los Lunas.

INTRODUCTIONS:

Los Lunas Village Councilor Chris Ortiz invited all present to introduce themselves. The following individuals were present:

Chris Ortiz, Village Councilor, Los Lunas
Charles Griego, Mayor, Los Lunas
Greg Martin, Village Administrator, Los Lunas
Kristen Gamboa, Senior Economic Developer, Los Lunas
Peggy Gutjahr, Mayor Pro-Tem, Rio Communities
Jim Winters, City Councilor, Rio Communities
Marty Moore, City Manager, Rio Communities
Ralph Mims, Economic Development Consultant, Rio Communities
Joseph Bizzell, County Commissioner, Valencia County
Danny Monette, County Manager, Valencia County
Nancy Gonzales, Community Development Director, Valencia County
Robert Noblin, Mayor, Belen
Frank Ortega, City Councilor, Belen
Steven Holdman, City Councilor, Belen
Jim Rickey, Citizen

REVIEW OF PAST MINUTES:

Los Lunas Village Councilor Chris Ortiz referenced copies available of the last VALEO meeting on November 16, 2021, which are/will be posted on the Valencia County website.

NEW BUSINESS:

➤ **Tour: UNM Valencia Workforce Training Center**

Rita Garcia with the UNM Valencia Workforce Training Center conducted a tour of the new facility, which opened approximately two months ago in Los Lunas.

➤ **Panel Discussion: Regional Economic Development in Valencia County**

Los Lunas Village Councilor Chris Ortiz welcomed the guest speakers and turned the time over to them to introduce themselves and discuss the topic of Economic Development in Valencia County.

Ralph Mims, Economic Development Consultant, Rio Communities, introduced himself and discussed the following:

- Working on Rio Communities infrastructure.
- Getting the word out about Rio Communities:
 - Brochure
 - Rack card
 - Website
- Finding out what is needed in Rio Communities.
- Housing developers looking at south part of county due to less cost of land.
- Retailers increasingly looking at Rio Communities, as well.
- Economic development all about contacts, relationships; must be willing to talk to people.
- Going to trade shows, conferences, etc., to get the word out about Rio Communities and New Mexico.
- Ninety percent of parcels in Rio Communities are in an “Opportunity Zone.”

Kristen Gamboa, Senior Economic Developer, Los Lunas, introduced herself and discussed the following:

- Amazon recently announced construction of a warehouse/fulfillment center in Los Lunas.
 - Amazon will hire 200 employees/year for the next three years (600 total).
 - Amazon plans to open in 2023.
- Other large manufacturing companies are also looking at coming to Los Lunas.
- Companies are attracted to Los Lunas and Valencia County by its strategic location.
- Retailers opened recently or looking at locating in Los Lunas include:
 - Starbucks (east side)
 - Mister Carwash (former Benny’s II location)
 - Two Boys Donuts
 - New Mexican Ice Cream Shop (314 location)
 - Maverik
 - JV Design
 - Gametopia
 - Hot Yoga Studio
- Current Village of Los Lunas projects include:
 - Road and sidewalk improvements
 - Water and sewer upgrades and expansion for existing and new subdivisions
 - New I-25 interchange and East-West Corridor
 - 60% design complete (two phases)
 - Construction to begin September 2023
 - Project 200 new homes per year; 5-7-year growth
 - Interest and room to grow in existing commercial/industrial parks

- NMDOT projects:
 - NM 6 lane widening project (west from Los Morros Road to Central NM Rail Park)
 - Adding dual northbound turn lanes onto I-25
 - Recently completed synchronized signalization project throughout Main Street
- Department of Workforce Solutions Labor Study estimates 375,000 labor force in Albuquerque MSA
- Two upcoming community events:
 - Meta (Facebook) Politics and Government Workshop coming up in April 2022
 - Valencia County Partnership Student Job and Intern Fair planned in April 2022

Nancy Gonzales, Community Development Director, Valencia County, introduced herself and discussed the following:

- Third year in current position for Valencia County.
- Spent time working on Comprehensive Plan, focusing on “conscious growth.”
- Priority growth areas:
 - South of Los Lunas/North Belen
 - Meadow Lake Corridor
 - El Cerro Mission Blvd
 - Morris Road Corridor
- Evaluating housing options:
 - Higher density developments
 - Eastland Hills subdivision (300 affordable houses)
- Evaluating ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funding for business assistance
- Managing several film projects in Valencia County
- PED Summer Enrichment Program (work skills for seniors and juniors)
- Meadow Lake restaurant/RV park (10 acres)
- Focusing on abatement, property cleanups in Valencia County

Other discussion by the group included the following:

- Lots of Valencia County Sheriff’s Office (VCSO) job openings; law enforcement agencies need to work together to attract and retain applicants and employees
- Hospital RFP has been released/advertised; site will be selected by provider
- Crime is a problem all over
- Need to work together on everything (police, fire, economic development, schools, quality of life, etc.) through MOUs, MOAs, etc.
- Regional cooperation is happening in many areas, not just economic development (public safety, administrators/managers, information technology, etc.)
- Healthcare is economic development
- VALEO is working together great with lots of excitement and momentum. Let’s keep it going!

FUTURE VALEO MEETING SCHEDULE:

Los Lunas Village Councilor Chris Ortiz reminded everyone that the next VALEO meeting is scheduled on Tuesday, May 17, 2022, hosted by City of Belen. Other future meetings are scheduled on August 16, 2022 (Rio Communities), and November 15, 2022 (Valencia County).

Los Lunas Mayor Charles Griego and Village Councilor Chris Ortiz thanked the presenters for their presentation, and everyone for their attendance. There was general support and excitement amongst the group for supporting VALEO and continuing the positive momentum we have going forward as a county.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:20 p.m.

Meeting minutes prepared by Los Lunas Village Administrator Gregory Martin.