

Valencia Association of Local Elected Officials (VALEO)

February 26, 2021

Meeting hosted virtually by the City of Belen via Zoom

Meeting Minutes

WELCOME/CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Jerah Cordova called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Noted there is a section for introductions and it looks like there are a lot of folks on and represented; Valencia County, Los Lunas, Rio Communities and others, he decided not to go over one at a time. I do want to thank the administrators who are on with us tonight. We do have Belen, Los Lunas, and Rio Communities represented among our administration. I do apologize if I missed anyone.

NEW BUSINESS:

Legislative up-date by AJ Forte with NMML

AJ Forte it's been a unique session, we are not allowed in the building. We are right across the street from the State Capitol, there is a lot of police presence. There is good and bad with COVID, I do hope that we do keep the component of Zoom, I do love the face to face but not everyone can make it.

I am going to go through the highlights; there are some good ones and some difficult. We call it the data center bill. This has been done before, 3 or 4 run it's tough for us. Its Senate bill 26, the title is GRT deduction for data center. They are creating a deduction for compensating tax and GRT. The way I read the bill it also removes property tax for all telecommunications. It is the state saying we are going to take all your revenue stream whether you want and this is not acceptable. This bill was tough and ultimately it was tabled but we are going to continue conversations.

LEDA bill house bill 11 GRT and permanent fund for LEDA project \$350 million or more. It is a partnership between State, Cities, and Counties. It is a 56% reduction in GRT. This worries me a bit? He hopes this will have a little more flexibility on this with more discussion.

I am going to focus on some good bills. As far as partnership with the executive, one thing I've seen within the NMML we have several; sub-sections and one of those is EQA Environmental Quality Association, basically of water, wastewater. There is a fee a water conversation fee, this shows up on our bills to make sure the water is tested to make sure we are all compliant. We worked with the Environment department and re-named it the Clean Water Testing Act.

He asked if there were any specific bills that anyone would like to talk on.

Question regarding the Hold Harmless Bill?

AJ Forte advised this was such a tough topic. Should we as a state tax food? When the tax is pulled off the food we shrink the base. This just shifts to other areas. This will still need to be addressed and now more since we've seen a shift with COVID, how we get through today. Right now because of internet

purchases the local municipality does not receive GRT's it all comes to the State. Now with house bill 6 the revenue will kick in for internet sales on September 1, 2021.

Question regarding where do we stand on civil rights laws and qualified immunity.

On house bill 4 we close to it, it's all punitive measures on the back end, there is no reform in this bill to give anyone the tools on the front end. In the substitute that was present in the house judiciary they put a cap, there was a \$2 million cap on the bill and it removed legislators and judges. I have a problem with that we eliminated the folks that have months or years to make a decision, but the folks who have to make a split second decision we didn't give them any rules or trainings and doesn't make sense. So this is why we need to push 375.

AJ Forte spoke on a couple of more bills working their way through.

Senate bill 1, he looks at this bill as a safety net. If this passes they will allow restaurants to collect the GRT but they do not have to remit to the State. This will really help the restaurants especially during this time. Then what the bill does is create a safety net for local governments, by creating a hold harmless for that safety net it's a good targeted bill.

Roads: last year we ran a bill, we all pay a motor vehicle excise tax, that generates real money to the State, but what they do is a distribution, the state road fund, and local fund. \$120 million go to the general fund which is a concern. What they did last year is take a third of that fund to go to a project fund for a 95% match. We are going to push 220 again, we were not able to this year, and it's a big bill and not the right year to do it.

Mayor Jerah Cordova asked if AJ Forte could speak to the COVID relief funding's.

Our hope is that the CARES is going to be giving out another package, the previous package ran through DFA. Some municipalities were not able to get enough of the funding due to some lack of communication. He is hopeful for another package where everyone will be able to get the most out of the package. The application process will be done by NMFA, they have been amazing and exceeded all expectations. If you as a municipality having any problems CARES or any projects please reach out to them and they will assist.

Mayor Jerah Cordova noted that most municipalities were going to see a decline in GRT's. It seems like there are some positive signs and does he see some hope here?

AJ Forte advised it really comes down to human behavior, will they remain local or go out of the community? It's hard to determine this right now. I hope people stay close to home to support local communities.

Mayor Jerah Cordova opened it up as the meeting has about five more minutes to have AJ Forte address.

Greg Martin expressed some issues some of us house bill 240 which was in the house health and human services committee regarding the contracting the hospital contract definition. Those of us there know this was passed. Thanked everyone who worked on this and hopes it passes.

A Resolution that was supposed to be introduced by Alonso Baldonado for the temporary property easement for corridor project. AJ Forte take a look at that one.

Mayor Jerah Cordova thanked AJ Forte for the update information with the Legislative update.

Upcoming Meetings:

May 18, 2021, Town of Peralta

August 17, 2021, Village of Bosque Farms

November 16, 2021, Valencia County