

Regular Meeting Minutes–May 21, 2026

The Mayor and the Board of Trustees of the Village of Tularosa met in a Regular Meeting on Thursday, May 21, 2026, at 6:00 P. M. in the Court Conference Room of the Public Safety Facility located at 609 St. Francis Drive, Tularosa, New Mexico.

Present: Mayor Deborah Cooksey
Trustee Manuel Brusuelas
Trustee Mark Garwood
Trustee Christopher Rupp
Trustee Casey Otero

Also present was Rebekah Garcia Village Clerk also in attendance Village Attorney Nann Winters via Zoom.

At 6:00 P. M. Mayor Deborah Cooksey called the meeting to order asking that all rise and join her in the Pledge of Allegiance and the Salute to the Flag of the State of New Mexico.

Roll Call was taken:

Brusuelas-present, Garwood-present, Rupp-present, Otero-present

1. Trustee Brusuelas made a motion to accept the agenda; Trustee Garwood seconded the motion. All members voted aye; motion carried.

2. Unscheduled correspondence:

Larry and Tresa Van Winkle- Stated that he is the president of Lodge 20 of Woodman Life and he stated that one of the things they do is give away flags, they already have donated the flagpole and flag to the Senior Center and now are donating a flag to the Village.

Greg Gutierrez- Stated that they are still doing the community garden and he is also starting a sunflower project at the Trinity Turtle. He also wanted to express his support for the cell phone tower.

Schanen Yates-Unser- Stated that she has noticed the decline in Tularosa and it's been happening for decades and that it doesn't have to happen and change can be made and she is hoping that the board can do that.

Kyle Cooksey- Stated that what he is making a correction about a statement he had made about Lancon and the work at the sewer plant and he stands corrected that he was not the one who did the work.

Larry Berry- Stated that they put new electrical plugs in the courtroom also that they have a real big issue with dogs and he has a suggestion but they will have to work with code enforcement. There are several people in town with multiple dogs and when they keep coming to court they say it's a different dog. He suggest working on the ordinance to maybe limit the number of dogs a person can own and maybe have a mandatory microchip for the dogs.

David Gonzales- Stated that he lives in the area where the cell phone tower is proposed and he opposes it and doesn't want to see something obstructing his view and does not want that in his area.

Rebecca Maes- Stated that she lives at 305 1st St. and would like to comment on her neighboring property 303 1st St. owned by Carolina Moreno and has a few request for the village council. The issue of it being a fire hazard and presented the council with a describing the fire hazard and abatement. 303 1st St has trash accumulated which is now on her property, excessive combustible storage of wood pallets, blocked fire access routes, structures in danger of collapsing or burning easily, adjacent fire risks to buildings near it including two schools in our school district directly across the street from the elementary and intermediate school, and especially burning materials as the resident does not have trash service and does illegal burning without contacting the police dept. She would like to request the village to pursue the fire prevention powers in their jurisdiction and contact the state fire marshall. The other issue she would like to request is adopting ordinances relating to the school zone, related to public nuisance, harmful to minors, sign ordinance. We already have ordinance relating to other issues like drugs, firearms, traffic, sexual offender residency so as a municipality I understand the importance of protecting freedom of speech but of equal importance of protecting our children especially in a school zone. Children should not have to read foul language on the way to school along with vulgar pictures. The third request she would like to make is related to abatement of the property. She would like the village to pursue an emergency abatement but if not possible at least pursue an abatement with regular procedures. Carolina Moreno has active warrants, and she has personally filed a restraining order on Mrs. Moreno that cannot be enforced by law as it is not a domestic issue. She continues to violate that restraining order by making contact with her children as they walk to school. She continues to make false cyfd claims against her and is up to 6 unsubstantial claims. She has filed criminal charges but was dismissed because she was not found competent to stand trial. State police are currently working on charges for criminal trespassing and larceny as she has come on to her property, removed a camera, destroyed it after being criminally trespassed. She requests that the village council contact adult protection services to evaluate the safety of her living in a home.

3. Nann Winters, Village Attorney gave a brief training on Local Government in regards to Mayor-Council duties, OMA and IPRA, Rolling Quorums, Quasi-Judicial Duties and Procurement; work orders.

4. Geraldine Martinez, Chief of Police asked to approve the appointment of Leonard Vazquez as the full-time School Resource Officer at a pay rate of \$32.00/hr. Trustee Brusuelas made a motion; Trustee Otero seconded the motion. Trustee Otero motioned to approve, Trustee Brusuelas seconded the motion All members voted Aye; motion carried.

5. Rebekah Garcia, Village Clerk asked to approve new insurance plans regarding health, vision, dental, and life for employee benefits. Trustee Garwood made a motion; Trustee Otero seconded the motion. Trustee Rupp motioned to approve, Trustee Otero seconded the motion. All members voted Aye; motion carried.

6. Nancy Carr, Individual asked about sewer at 1290 Old Mescalero Rd. Nancy stated that in April she had been approved to build a house at 1290 Old Mescalero Rd. and that her property is not big enough for a septic tank and she was wanting to connect to the village sewer system. She presented the board with a letter about getting the sewer two blocks from Guilez Ln. Discussion only

7. Planning & Zoning, 2026-BP-011 (Rebecca Maes) recommended approval for an 8ft. privacy fence installation at 305 1st St. Virgil Johnson was sworn in from planning and zoning. Trustee Brusuelas made a motion; Trustee Rupp seconded the motion. Trustee Otero motioned to approve, Trustee Rupp seconded the motion All members voted Aye; motion carried.

8. Planning & Zoning, 2026-BP-012 (Charlene Chavez 11 Brittany Ln) recommended approval with conditions for installation of manufactured home at 11 Brittany Ln. Schanen Unser-Yates was sworn in. Conditions were that she get a separate address, get water meter and deposit, and NMED liquid waste permit. Trustee Otero made a motion; Trustee Rupp seconded the motion. All members voted Aye; motion carried.

9. Planning & Zoning, 2026-BP-002 (Rebecca Maes 305 1st St.) recommended approval for a plat easement vacation at 305 1st St. Trustee Brusuelas made a motion; Trustee Rupp seconded the motion. Trustee Otero motioned to approve, Trustee Brusuelas seconded the motion. All members voted Aye; motion carried.

10. Planning & Zoning, (Carolina & Felipe Bermudez-Moreno) presentation of Comprehensive Report of Findings and Recommendation for Emergency Abatement. Trustee Brusuelas made a motion; Trustee Otero seconded the motion. Trustee Otero motioned to postpone, Trustee Garwood seconded the motion All members voted Aye; motion carried.

11. Planning & Zoning File Procedures (Closing, Signature requirements and Filing Procedures) Schanen Yates-Unser stated that they are asking the Village to formalize the procedures for final signature requirements for applications, the closing of those files and the record keeping of those files. Planning and zoning is happy to organize and keep those files for the village in the building that is provided to store them there. They want to ensure that the village staff is aware of their responsibilities to sign off on each file and ensure Otero County is notified when necessary. She stated that the village attorney had brought this up during her discussion 3-11-7 that the mayor shall sign all permits. Discussion only. Trustee Brusuelas made a motion; Trustee Rupp seconded the motion.

12. Omitted.

13. Discussion/Action: Special Use Permit Application 2026-SUP-001 Cell tower installation for Sean Mikes/Nancy Carr. Trustee Brusuelas made a motion; Trustee Otero seconded the motion. Trustee Rupp motioned to approve, Trustee Otero seconded the motion. Trustee Garwood disapproved, Trustee Brusuelas disapproved. Vote was a tie. Mayor Cooksey approved. motion carried

14. Old Business:

Trustee Otero asked to attorney if she has made any progress looking into the planning & zoning updates regarding the ordinances. Nann stated that she has started looking at those and they are fairly comprehensive and detailed so she asked if they could give her until the next regular meeting.

Trustee Otero asked about the contract with TCDC. Nann stated that they received notice about a week after the previous meeting that the relationship between the ditch corporation and their attorneys had ended and that a new attorney had taken over. They have reached out to the new attorney a couple of times to get status and see if he would oppose continued extensions to the procedural schedule and they have not heard back from him.

Trustee Otero asked if they could have an executive session at the next special meeting to discuss personnel matters.

Trustee Otero also asked for an update regarding the gas tickets and if it is resolved. Mayor Cooksey stated that they are working on it right now and are actually through 2025. Mayor Cooksey explained to the public that there is no gas being stolen or hiding anything, there is nothing going on. What had happened was it was a 50/50 fault, some employees lost tickets and didn't turn them in. Our auditors told us that we could only pay off of the tickets and not the statement. Even when she became Mayor she discussed with the employees

about turning their tickets in and quite a few tickets had not been turned in from all departments. But the problem lied in the accounting system that Kendrick Oil had which they didn't have one. They were not sending statements, they didn't tell us we were late, that we owed any money so we thought that what we were paying every month was correct. Then one day they contacted us saying we were \$24,000 behind in payments. She stated that they are taking responsibility on their end and she has talked to the gentleman in charge and he doesn't expect for us to pay it all up front. We are currently going through all our tickets and have gotten the bill down to and have paid \$14,000. It was an oversight on their part and oversight on our part, but nothing strange is going on and that was the issue. They have admitted that that was their fault that they never sent us a bill or never even told us we were late so we were unaware that we owed them since we paid off of the tickets being turned in.

Trustee Garwood stated that he recently went to two meetings, one was SERTPO and one was NMDOT. He stated that he has a handout for the last 5 years of TPF applications and awards. He stated that we missed 2024 and that is very important that we get these applications in on time, it's not that they don't want to give us money and it's not just Tularosa it's a lot of other communities are sending it incomplete or late applications so we really need to focus as a village to make sure that we not miss anymore dates because it is going to hold up funding. Let's say we get awarded a planning stage of the project, the next year we put in for the funding for the project. It looks like this year we got everything perfectly on time, everything went well. The SERPTO board scored us at 91 and we got 4 extra points, so we have 95 points towards getting the award for the planning and engineering of 1st St. We asked for \$340,000 and we were rated #1 as the top scorer for that particular category. Everything used to be in one category now they have separated it, so we have to put in for planning part of it first and then put in for the funding second next year. He just wanted to update the public that we are trying to get 1st St. done but with the way the legislator works and the way the SERTPO works and the commission it's a process so from start to finish you're looking at a 3-year plan. He just wanted to brief the public that the board and the clerk are working on trying to get 1st St. fixed and it looks like we probably more than likely will get approved for that \$340,000. Trustee Brusuelas stated that he would like to thank Mr. Garwood because he has gone to every SERTPO meeting, he's been pushing this for the last 2 and a half years and if we get this which we should it's because he's done all this work.

Trustee Brusuelas asked the village clerk Rebekah about the roof estimate and she asked the grant coordinator to come up and speak to explain what process we are in at the moment. Kendra King stated that we got three estimates from J3systems with NMSIF. They checked out the PD building, the museum, the village hall and the recycling center and all of those quotes came back extremely affordable, unfortunately we can't just pour all of our money directly into them. The PD building was 44,000, the museum was 32,000, village hall was 38,000 and the recycling center was close to 40,000. Secondly, we are working on

expending some village hall renovation funds and plans on fixing PD roof with those funds.

Trustee Brusuelas asked where we were at regarding our wells. The village clerk stated that they are in the process of acquiring property for that project and they have already done 3 appraisals, but we might have to do eminent domain because nobody is wanting to sell their property because when they see the appraisal they want more than what it's worth. Trustee Rupp asked what process needs to be done to get this going and the clerk stated that our engineers have already contacted the village attorney to discuss the process of that.

Village Clerk stated that we have two items regarding the contracts for our water plant with Ray Ramos and Prodigy. Mayor Cooksey stated that we have three bids and the lady from NMRWA will be submitting within the next 10 days.

Trustee Rupp asked about any updates for Granado St. Schanen Yates-Unser stated that she has gotten the numbers and she should have them to us within the next week for them to look at including solar street lights, the planters, and benches.

15. New Business:

Trustee Rupp stated that he wanted to thank the village and the surrounding communities that came to the Rose Festival as it was a great turnout for the very first time having it. The beauty pageant was fabulous and had pretty big crowds at the park, but he thinks the bull riding was the best out of everything with over 1,000 people there. It really showed how much we needed something like this in our community, and he is looking forward to everyone volunteering next year. A big thank you to everyone who helped to make this possible. On second note he would like to specifically say a big thank you to S&S Sawmill for their big donation making sure we had those benches redone and got the wood and what she went through to get that for us.

Trustee Brusuelas was wondering if maybe they can come up with a fourth of July celebration.

Trustee Garwood asked if there was a way they could get a tracking system for highway projects that are currently funded or upcoming ones or a monthly briefing so the board can track that.

16. Adjourn: 8:28 pm

Deborah Cooksey, Mayor

ATTEST: (seal)

Rebekah Garcia, Village Clerk