

MEETING MINUTES

Merced de Santo Tomas Apóstol del Rio de Las Trampas

Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting, Escuelita in Las Trampas, November 14, 2024

Present: Alex Lopez, Arnold Lopez, Sam Lopez, Ruby Lopez and Pat Aguilar, Board Members; plus Virgil Vigil, Member.

Purpose of the Meeting: to discuss firewood sale price, employees and distribution, approval of a State BAR and Resolution 2025-7, approve new members, update on Rancho de Davi Fresquez, discussion on a Land Grant Historian, discussion on paying taxes on Common Lands and Board of Trustees updates on 2024 Action Plan items.

Meeting called to order by Alex Lopez at 10:00 a.m. Five Board members present constitutes a Full Quorum.

Key Actions: Reviewed posted agenda. **Motion by Pat, seconded by Sam, to approve the agenda as posted. Motion passed unanimously.**

Reviewed the revised October 10, 2024 minutes. **Motion by Arnold, seconded by Ruby, that the revised minutes be approved. Motion passed unanimously.**

Treasurer's Report: Current Checking Balance: \$319,519.81; Last month's balance was \$196,437.44. The difference reflects a deposit of \$100 membership dues and a deposit of \$123,121.00 from the Land Grant Assistance Fund plus \$384.72 refund from Western surety for cancelled bond. Expenditures since last month: \$139.35 VISA payment, \$84.00 paid for the Post Office mailbox and reduction of \$300 for the Land Grant dues check which has now been cashed.

Last Month's balance of 196,437.44 + \$100 + 123,121 + 384.72 = \$320,043.16 minus expenditures of \$139.35, \$84.00 and \$300.00 = \$319,519.81 current balance.

Current Savings Balance: \$140.29; Last month's balance was \$140.20. Difference reflects interest.

Visa Card Balance: \$0.00. Payment of \$139.35 was to Brownrice Internet for our annual renewal of the website.

As per the Las Trampas Land Grant procedure that requires management to review and approve non-standard journal entries, adjustments, and reclassifications that are posted to the Las Trampas Land Grant's general ledger, the Vice President had to change a non-standard journal entry on QuickBooks from a CC-credit to Amazon as 11999 – Uncategorized Asset for \$52.12 to expenditure code of 54040-Maintenance & Repairs – Vehicles. This was due to inadvertently charging a personal Amazon purchase to the Las Trampas Credit Card. The Vice President has reimbursed the Las Trampas Land Grant for this purchase. The reimbursement will be credited to expenditure code 54040 – Maintenance & Repairs – Vehicles. **Motion by Pat, seconded by Arnold, that the Treasurer's Report and the adjustments presented by the Vice President be approved as presented. Motion passed unanimously.**

Discussed Firewood project. Arnold presented a proposal and provided details on estimated expenditures to process the logs into firewood. After much discussion, Alex, Sam and Arnold suggested that they would run the wood processor in order to get a better estimate of how many cords can be processed in an hour. Feed back provided to Arnold include making wood pick up available on Thursday and Saturday. Arnold will take a closer look at differences between contracting the processing in parts or in whole or running the processor himself with help from Alex and Sam who volunteered to help. **Decision on Arnold's proposal was tabled until the December meeting** by when a better idea of expenditures will be available so that we can decide on processing and distribution procedure and sale price.

Arnold presented details of the BAR (Budget Adjustment Request) required by the State Finance Department. He proposed including \$1,100 for QuickBooks, \$7,000 for our annual audit, \$50,000 for purchase of a Skid Steer Loader, \$3,000 for the Treasurer's bond and an additional \$20,000 for surfacing the Land Grant parking lot. Total is \$81,100. Of the \$123,121 received from the Land Grant Assistance Fund, \$81,100 will be budgeted for items above and the balance, \$42,021 will be added to the Land Grant Headquarters land purchase earmarked amount of \$150,000. This will bring the land purchase earmark amount to \$192,021. **Motion by Sam, seconded by Pat, that the BAR be approved as discussed. Motion passed unanimously.**

Arnold presented Resolution No. 2025-7, A RESOLUTION APPROVING BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUEST(S) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025. **Motion by Pat, seconded by Sam to approve Resolution 2025-7. Motion passed unanimously. Resolution was signed by the President and Secretary.**

New member applications for Dolores I. Martinez, Andy L. Aguilar, David Anthony Lepre Jr. and Wilfredo E. Aguilar were reviewed for approval. **Motion by Sam, seconded by Pat that these four applications be approved for membership. Motion passed unanimously.**

Arnold stated that Surveyor Chris Chavez located a picture of the Davi Fresquez property showing that it was used as private property prior to the Forest Service acquiring the Common Lands. Arnold stated that District Ranger Michael Lujan is open to the Land Grant obtaining a long-term special use permit for the 11 acre parcel to be used for our wood processing site. Mr. Lujan asked that Arnold contact other surrounding Land Grants of Truchas, Santa Barbara and Serna to offer them the use of this land for the same purpose. Pat suggested that the application for the permit be made by the Las Trampas Land Grant and that we could make the site available for the same use to surrounding Land Grants if they were interested. The special use permit would be issued to the Las Trampas Land Grant.

Discussed the need for a Land Grant Historian. We agreed that what we needed was a Color of Title documentation that traced our common lands back to the sovereign governments of Spain and Mexico and a record of each owner since then to the current Forest Service ownership and how each obtained the ownership. Alex agreed to contact Jacobo Baca of the Land Grant Council to request that he develop this document.

Discussed paying taxes on Common Lands. Sam stated that he met with the Taos County Assessor. She stated that we would need a survey of the Common Lands showing the Survey as being of the Las Trampas Land Grant. We agreed that the Color of Title research should include a survey of the Common Lands by previous owners so that we table discussion on property taxes until we locate a survey.

Board of Trustees updates on agreed 2024 Action Plan items:

1. Gravel the Plaza Area – Alex: No change. Waiting for reauthorization from the State regarding excess allocation for the Wood Splitter.
2. Entering Las Trampas Land Grant signs on Highway 76 – Pat: DOT stated that the sign to place in Rodarte at entrance to Llano de San Juan has been ordered and will be shipped to the Penasco maintenance staff for installation sometime this winter or Spring.
3. Land Grant sign for the Plaza Area – Alex: Alex stated that the Historical Society did not approve our recommended wording for the sign but sent wording for a sign they would like to place on Hwy 76 at the entrance of the Land Grant from the west. It was the Board's feeling that we should consider developing our own sign to place on the Land Grant's parking lot by the Church. This would be in addition to the sign the Society wants to place along Hwy 76.
4. Obtaining wood and managing distribution of firewood – Arnold: Logs for 210 cords have been delivered to the Tommy Romero site. He wants to process a few logs himself in order to get a good feeling of how many cords can be processed per hour. This will help him determine the best option for processing, sale price and distribution. Decision by the board is tabled until the next meeting.
5. Obtaining land in Las Trampas for a Headquarters Office – Alex: No change. No land available.
6. Managing and Coordinating Legislative requests for tours and meetings – Ruby: No requests.
7. Sharing knowledge of Land Grant corners and boundary lines on-the-ground with Land Grant Board and members – Arnold: Arnold will schedule a date for Board Members to view corners on the ground but will likely be next year.
8. Developing a posture size map of the Land Grant by the State Forester's Office--Pat. Pat stated that he obtained a Forest Service road map from the Carson National Forest which shows all FS roads and he will use those road numbers to update the map for the next revision.
9. Development of a Website – Pat: Pat stated that Morgan has made a number of additions and changes to the website. Minutes for 2024 have been uploaded.

Motion by Pat, seconded by Arnold that meeting be adjourned. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.



Pat Aguilar, Secretary