**MEETING MINUTES**

Merced de Santo Tomas Apóstol del Rio de Las Trampas

Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting, Escuelita in Las Trampas, March 13, 2025

Present: Board Members: Alex Lopez, Arnold Lopez, Sam Lopez, Ruby Lopez and Pat Aguilar. Members and Guests: Priscilla Lopez, Ben Aguilar, Florence Vigil, Benny Vigil and Virgil Vigil.

Purpose of the Meeting: Standard agenda items and to discuss Priscilla Lopez, Las Trampas Water Association, request on sharing cost of the stove installation in the Escuelita.

Meeting called to order by Alex Lopez at 10:02 a.m. Five Board members present constitutes a Full Quorum.

Key Actions: Arnold presented a revised agenda which differed from the posted agenda in that it included an item on NMDOT 2025 Hardship Sale for approval. After discussion it was agreed that we should stick to the posted agenda and schedule a Special Meeting to discuss the NMDOT 2025 Hardship Sale. Reviewed the posted agenda. **Motion by Ruby, seconded by Sam, to approve the agenda as posted. Motion passed unanimously**.

Arnold presented a letter from Priscilla Lopez, President of the Las Trampas Water Association, which states that the Water Association replaced and installed all stove pipes in the Escuelita at a cost of $5,079.09. It states that “This improvement will benefit our community and encourage the use of the schoolhouse for local activities.” The letter requests that this cost be shared equally between the Land Grant and the Water Association considering that these two organizations are the primary users of the Escuelita.

After some discussion, **Motion by Pat, seconded by Arnold, to approve the request and to have Arnold and Sam work with Priscilla to obtain necessary documentation to meet our fiscal requirements. Pat requested a roll-call vote. The chair called on each Board Member for their vote on the motion. Results were, Sam-yes, Pat (understood by the Chair as yes), Arnold-yes, Ruby-yes, Alex-yes. Motion Passed**.

Reviewed the draft minutes of our February 13, 2025 meeting. Pat stated that he had corrected the paragraph at the middle of the second page which states that Sam stated that he would call paid up members as next priority to offer them 1 cord free. Arnold had noted that he did not recall Sam making this statement. The corrected sentence now reads “Paid up members will be called as next priority to offer them 1 cord free.” **Motion by Arnold, seconded by Ruby, to approve the draft February 13, 2025 minutes as corrected. Motion passed unanimously.**

Treasurer’s Report: Current Checking Balance: $319,878.59; Last month’s balance was $319,866.81; the difference of $11.78 reflects a Deposit of 60.00 in member dues minus 48.22 paid to VISA credit card.

Current Savings Balance: $332.03; Last month’s balance was $331.97. The difference of $0.06 reflects the addition of dividends from the credit union.

Visa Card Balance: $237.38. This includes $55.68 for printing of liability waivers for the wood distribution project; $51.85 to Tractor Supply for grease and lube for the wood processor; Diesel from Picuris Travel Center for $41.25, $43.84 and $44.76 for the wood processing project.

**Motion by Pat, seconded by Arnold, that the Treasurer’s Report be approved as presented. Motion passed unanimously**.

Sam presented 8 new member application forms for Board approval. He has reviewed each and recommends approval. This includes applications from Vivian Pamela Pacheco, James John Martinez, Gwendolyn Victoria Naranjo, Wilbert R. Lopez, Reanna M. Ogas, Joey A. Cruz, Ramona L. Fresquez and Renae F. Cruz. **Motion by Pat, seconded by Ruby, to approve these 8 membership applications. Motion passed unanimously**.

Board of Trustee Updates:

Alex stated that the owner of the land we are using for wood processing, Alfredo T. Romero, is concerned about personal liability resulting from our activities. Mr. Romero provided a waiver of liability form we could use but agreed that he would be OK with us using it or the one Arnold is currently using. Arnold stated that he prefers to use his version since he is currently requiring anyone entering the processing site to sign it. Arnold stated that he is also requiring that any children accompanying someone getting their wood to remain in the vehicles and not allowed to roam the work site. He is also keeping the entry gate closed. Arnold will look into improved signing at the gate as well.

Arnold stated that he has not been able to start the Ford 150 pickup. He thinks it was converted to propane and needs to be shifted back to gas.

Board of Trustees updates on agreed Action Plan items:

1. Gravel the Plaza Area – Alex: Alex shared an email from Larry Lopez, Gravel Driveway Specialists, which states that he has scheduled the project to gravel the Land Grant plaza area for March 25, 26, 27th & 28th.
2. Entering Las Trampas Land Grant signs on Highway 76 – Pat: Still waiting for sign for HW 73.
3. Land Grant History sign for the Plaza Area – Alex: stated that the NM Historical Society has approved the Land Grant History sign which they will place along the highway at a location close to the Escuelita. We will consider installing our own in the plaza area.
4. Obtaining wood and managing distribution of firewood – Arnold: Arnold stated that the next priority, after Members in Good Standing get their free cord of wood, will be availability of a cord for $100 to residents of the land grant communities except Ojo Sarco since they got their wood directly from the Forest Service. After the land grant communities, the final priority will be making the $100 per cord of wood available to the general public. Members in Good Standing can obtain a second cord of wood for $100 when it’s available to the general public.

Arnold stated that the Forest Service plans to provide the Land Grant additional logs for firewood in a few months. He is looking into locations to process those logs since the land owner of the site we are currently using is not interested in us continuing to use his place.

1. Obtaining land in Las Trampas for a Headquarters Office – Alex: No change. No land available. Arnold stated that he is looking into a couple of parcels in Chamisal within the Land Grant.
2. Managing and Coordinating Legislative requests for tours and meetings – Ruby: No requests.
3. 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 when time allows.
4. Developing a posture size map of the Land Grant by the State Forester’s Office--Pat. The next version of the map should be ready in about a week.
5. Updates for Website – Pat: Will work with Morgan to establish a location for archives. The site is lastrampaslandgrant.org.
6. Capital outlay request for a Skid Steer to be shared by Acequia de Chamisal and the Land Grant –Arnold: Pending approval by the legislature.
7. Carson National Forest Plan – Pat: Has not had time to begin review yet.

Comments from Members: Priscilla Lopez provided comments on why the Land Grant should assist with paying an equal share of the cost of the firewood stove installation at the Escuelita. Florence Vigil stated that there’s a need for better communication with the public about firewood distribution. Virgil Vigil stated that he will continue to pursue avenues for the Land Grant to regain ownership of the Common Lands. Ben Aguilar noted that Mora has a sign at their wood distribution area which we should look at for our use regarding liability.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

A Special Meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 24, 2025 to discuss the NMDOT 2025 Hardship Sale and to approve any new member applications.



Pat Aguilar, Secretary