



County of Los Alamos

Minutes

Los Alamos, NM
87544
www.losalamosnm.us

County Council – Work Session

*Theresa Cull, Council Chair, Suzie Havemann, Council Vice-Chair,
Melanee Hand, Ryn Herrmann, Beverly Neal-Clinton,
David Reagor, and Randall Ryti, Councilors*

Tuesday, January 14, 2025

6:00 PM

Fire Station No. 3 – White Rock
129 State Road 4 – White Rock

1. OPENING/ROLL CALL

The Council Chair, Theresa Cull, called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Council Chair Cull made opening remarks regarding the meeting procedure.

The following Councilors were in attendance:

**Present: 7 – Councilor Cull, Councilor Havemann, Councilor Hand, Councilor Herrmann,
Councilor Neal-Clinton, Councilor Reagor, and Councilor Ryti**

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by: All.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Councilor Ryti, seconded by Councilor Havemann, that Council approve the agenda as presented.

The motion passed by a show of hands with the following vote:

**Yes: 7 – Councilor Cull, Councilor Hand, Councilor Havemann, Councilor Herrmann,
Councilor Neal-Clinton, Councilor Reagor, and Councilor Ryti**

3. STATEMENT REGARDING CLOSED SESSION

Item was read out of order after Item 5. Approval of Agenda.

Councilor Hand read the following statement to be included in the minutes: "The matters discussed in the closed session of County Council held on January 14, 2025 that began at 4:00 p.m. was limited only to the topics specified in the notice of the closed session, and no action was taken on any matter in the closed session. We request this statement to be included in the meeting minutes."

6. BUSINESS

A. Action to Suspend Council Rules for Work Session

A motion was made by Councilor Havemann, seconded by Councilor Ryti, that Council suspend their procedural rules for this work session, January 14, 2025, so that formal action may be taken.

The motion passed with the following vote:

Yes: 7 – Councilor Cull, Councilor Hand, Councilor Havemann, Councilor Herrmann, Councilor Neal-Clinton, Councilor Reagor, and Councilor Ryti

B. Discussion and Possible Action on FY2026 Budget Guidance

Ms. Anne Laurent, County Manager, spoke.

Ms. Helen Perraglio, Administrative Services Director, presented.

Public Comment:

None.

A motion was made by Councilor Havemann, seconded by Councilor Ryti, that Council endorse the recommended FY2026 budget guidance as presented.

The motion passed with the following vote:

Yes: 6 – Councilor Cull, Councilor Hand, Councilor Havemann, Councilor Herrmann, Councilor Neal-Clinton, and Councilor Ryti

No: 1 – Councilor Reagor

C. Continuation of the Discussion and Possible Action of a Draft Wildlife Feeding Ordinance

Chair Cull presented.

Mr. Alvin Leaphart, County Attorney, spoke.

Public Comment:
Ms. KokHeong McNaughton spoke.
Mr. Garth Reader spoke.
See attached eComments.

A motion was made by Councilor Ryti, seconded by Councilor Hand, that Council consider additional input and analysis, including traffic accident data and experience from the town of Ruidoso and other information as appropriate before returning to Council with a revised ordinance prohibiting the feeding of wildlife in the County.

The motion passed with the following vote:

Yes: 7 – Councilor Cull, Councilor Hand, Councilor Havemann, Councilor Herrmann, Councilor Neal-Clinton, Councilor Reagor, and Councilor Ryti

D. Discussion and Possible Action on Council Engagement with Small Business Community

Councilor Ryti presented.
Ms. Anne Laurent, County Manager, spoke.

Public Comment:
Mr. John Courtright spoke.
Mr. Allan Saenz spoke.
Mr. Kevin Holsapple spoke.
Dr. Lisa Shin spoke.
See attached eComments.

A motion was made by Councilor Hand, seconded by Councilor Ryti, that Council consider appointing no more than three (3) Councilors to an established group or organization working for small and local businesses in Los Alamos County and the Councilors assigned would report back to Council on the group's efforts and activities.

After further discussion Councilor Hand withdrew the motion.

No action taken.

RECESS

Councilor Cull called for a recess at 8:43 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 8:56 p.m.

E. Discussion and Possible Action on Potential Ordinances to Consider in 2025

Councilor Ryti introduced a potential ordinance on single use plastics.
Ms. Linda Matteson, Deputy County Manager, spoke.

A motion was made by Councilor Ryti, seconded by Councilor Neal-Clinton, that Council direct ESB to investigate single use plastics further.

After further discussion Chair Cull called for Public Comment.

Public Comment:

Ms. Jody Benson spoke.

See attached eComments.

After further discussion Councilor Ryti restated the motion.

A motion was by Councilor Ryti, seconded by Councilor Neal-Clinton, that Council ask the Environmental Sustainability Board to include in their work plan an evaluation of single use plastic bags, to include factors such as their ability to recycle them, and other alternatives that are being considered, and if there is a particular cost to the county associated with having single use plastic bags in our waste stream, and also requested that engagement include the local business community, as well as other interested citizens.

The motion passed with the following vote:

Yes: 6 – Councilor Cull, Councilor Hand, Councilor Havemann, Councilor Herrmann, Councilor Neal-Clinton, and Councilor Ryti

No: 1 – Councilor Reagor

Councilor Ryti introduced a potential ordinance on vacant and abandoned properties.

Ms. Linda Matteson, Deputy County Manager, spoke.

Public Comment:

Ms. Jody Benson spoke.

Mr. David Hampton spoke.

Chair Cull postponed this topic for further discussion at a later date.

Councilor Ryti introduced a potential ordinance on raising the minimum wage.

Mr. Alvin Leaphart, County Attorney, spoke.

Ms. Anne Laurent, County Manager, spoke.

Public Comment:

None.

No action taken.

Councilor Ryti introduced a potential ordinance on public safety.
Ms. Anne Laurent, County Manager, spoke.

Public Comment:
None.

No action taken.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:54 p.m.

INCORPORATED COUNTY OF LOS ALAMOS

Theresa Cull, Council Chair

Attest:

Michael D. Redondo, County Clerk

Meeting Transcribed by: Casey Salazar, Deputy Clerk

County Council - Work Session on 2025-01-14 6:00 PM

Meeting Time: 01-14-25 17:45

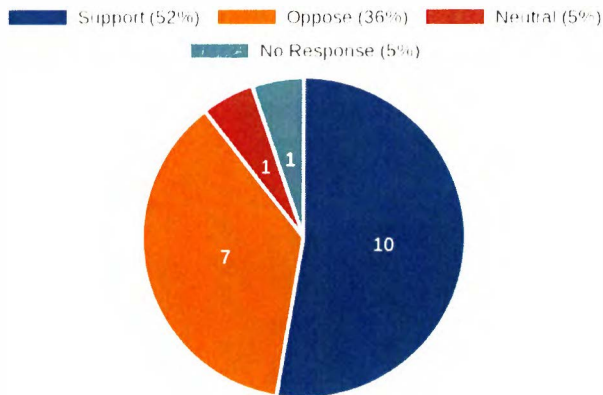
eComments Report

Meetings	Meeting Time	Agenda Items	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
County Council - Work Session on 2025-01-14 6:00 PM	01-14-25 17:45	15	19	10	7	1

Sentiments for All Meetings

The following graphs display sentiments for comments that have location data. Only locations of users who have commented will be shown.

Overall Sentiment



Los Alamos County Council
Work Session
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eComments for item(s) 6.C,
6.D, & 6.E

County Council - Work Session on 2025-01-14 6:00 PM

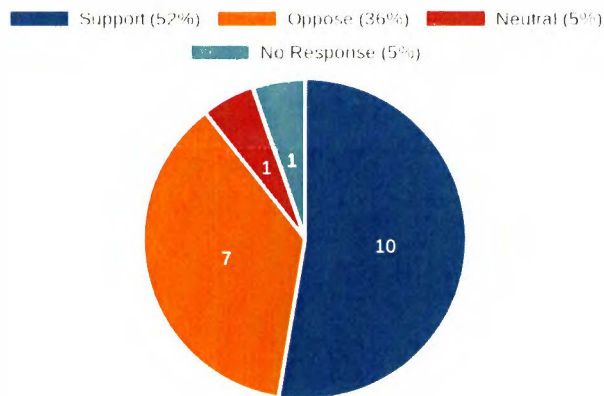
01-14-25 17:45

Agenda Name	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
C. 19601-25 Continuation of the Discussion and Possible Action of a Draft Wildlife Feeding Ordinance	7	3	4	0
D. 19598-25 Discussion and Possible Action on Council Engagement with Small Business Community	1	0	0	1
E. 19600-25 Discussion and Possible Action on Potential Ordinances to Consider in 2025	11	7	3	0

Sentiments for All Agenda Items

The following graphs display sentiments for comments that have location data. Only locations of users who have commented will be shown.

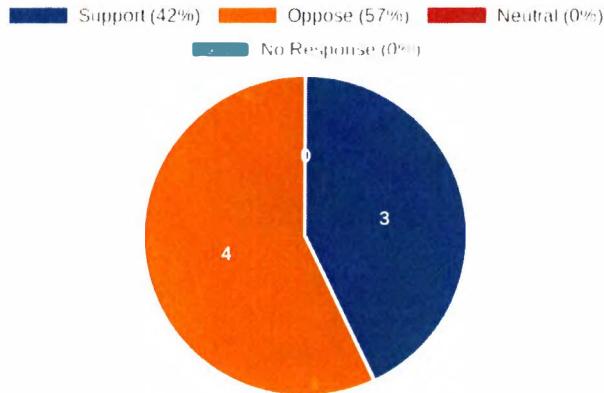
Overall Sentiment



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eComments for item(s) 6.C,
6.D, & 6.E

Agenda Item: eComments for C. 19601-25 Continuation of the Discussion and Possible Action of a Draft Wildlife Feeding Ordinance

Overall Sentiment



Akkana Peck

Location:

Submitted At: 10:00am 01-14-25

I don't support this ordinance. I've seen no evidence that deliberate wildlife feeding is significant or has any effect on wildlife in our town. Deer and bears will still come to town because of irrigated gardens and fruit trees;. We should require evidence before passing a ban.

That said, I commend staff for doing a good job rewriting the ordinance so that it no longer prohibits bird feeding and concentrates on a person's intent to feed wildlife. If we have to have a ban, this one isn't bad.

ALLEN SCHMIEDICKE

Location:

Submitted At: 9:24am 01-14-25

I do not support this ordinance. It is just another over reach by the county with the state expecting our police department and animal control to do the states job. I think the ordinance will be very difficult to enforce. I spoke to a member of the police department and they said basically what I am saying.

Barbara Calef

Location:

Submitted At: 8:50pm 01-13-25

I appreciate the effort that has been made to create an ordinance that permits us to continue feeding the birds. The deer will still graze on our lawns and fruit trees, but no one should intentionally be feeding them. I support the ordinance.

Charlie Trask

Location:

Submitted At: 6:30pm 01-13-25

I oppose this proposed ordinance. The County is the worst violator. The golf course and other County parks feed

deer, bunnies, and other small animals on a daily basis. Lets arrest and fine all the County employees involved in this covert operation. Declaring this a health, safety, and welfare issue is a joke. How about doing something proactive, like getting us bear-proof trash cans. I bet more kids were hurt by tricycles last year than wild bunnies.

Leslie Hansen

Location:
Submitted At: 5:20pm 01-12-25

I do not support adoption because the NMDGF regulation already provides the needed tool and this ordinance is overly broad and subject to interpretation and selective enforcement. Does growing plants count as feeding wildlife? What about squirrels eating bird food? I support continuing education, volunteers or paid staff to assist homeowners who wish to remove or address wildlife food sources but face obstacles, and increased speed limit enforcement and improved lighting at accident locations.

Susan Barns

Location:
Submitted At: 11:16am 01-12-25

I support this ordinance for the health of wildlife. I am glad to see the revised language around feeding birds. The other major attractive nuisances for predators are trash (hoping bear carts will take care of this!) and unattended domestic animals. I would love to see some action to reduce these attractants in future. Thank you for your work making this a better ordinance for our wildlife and community!

David Hampton

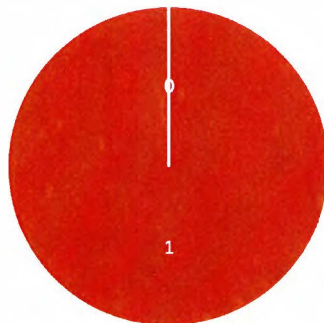
Location:
Submitted At: 7:17am 01-12-25

I strongly support passage of this ordinance as revised for the health of our wildlife population and to not encourage attraction of predators into our neighborhoods. Thank you for exempting bird feeding.

Agenda Item: eComments for E: 19525-25 Discussion and Possible Action on Council Engagement with Small Business Community

Overall Sentiment

Support (0%) Oppose (0%) Neutral (100%)
No Response (0%)



Kevin Holsapple

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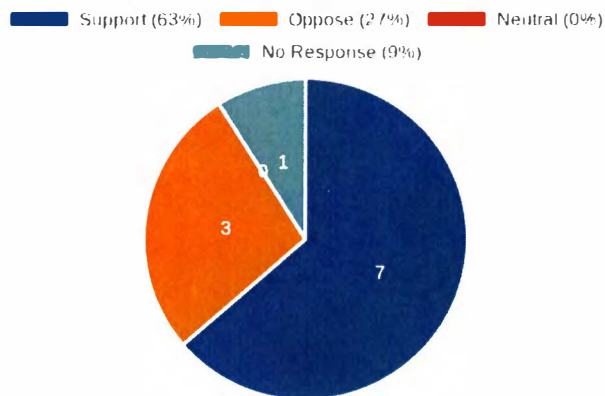
Location:
Submitted At: 8:33am 01-12-25

Thank you Council for scheduling a discussion of this important matter. I think that an important step that the Council could take to focus on this priority would be for the County to make following questions part of every important project and decision:

1. How will we provide for meaningful public engagement?
2. How does this affect local business? Or how can this benefit local business? What local business could be involved with this project?

Agenda Item: eComments for E. 19600-25 Discussion and Possible Action on Potential Ordinances to Consider in 2025

Overall Sentiment



Akkana Peck

Location:
Submitted At: 9:49am 01-14-25

I support a fee for single use plastic bags. People who feel strongly that they must use such bags still can, but the rest of us shouldn't have to subsidize a habit that's wasteful, clogs recycling machines and causes litter. Santa Fe went this way years ago and the sky didn't fall.

I also support raising the minimum wage, and at least looking into the problem of vacant and abandoned properties, and seeing what can be done within NM law.

ALLEN SCHMIEDICKE

Location:
Submitted At: 9:34am 01-14-25

i do not support this ban. When the council is already thinking of ways to spend the money before the ordinance is even passed then this tells me that it is not about the environment but about the revenue. If you plan on putting a fee on single use plastic, why not garbage bags, meat counter bags and any plastics that cover produce or any other item.

Laurie Zunner

Location:

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eComments for item(s) 6.C,
6.D, & 6.E

Submitted At: 8:25am 01-14-25

I support a fee on SU bags in Los Alamos. Most of the plastic bags are not recycled but end up as litter and pollute our environment and us as we breath and consume nanoplastics. Trackers put in bags collected at grocery stores have shown that most end up either in landfills or are shipped overseas adding to global pollution. Adding a fee will give people an incentive to bring reusable bags. It's so easy and will help reduce green house gases causing climate change. Every small step helps.

Barbara Calef

Location:

Submitted At: 9:10pm 01-13-25

I support an ordinance imposing a fee on single-use plastic bags. Those bags end up in trees and power lines and in our blue recycling bins. Smith's seems to have stopped collecting them recently.

Nancy Yuen

Location:

Submitted At: 8:56pm 01-13-25

Please, at the very least, impose a fee for the purchase and use of single-use plastic bags. If a ban is not acceptable, then a fee imposed upon those businesses who distribute them (a fee, I assume, that will be passed onto consumers) is in order. It is not onerous to ask shoppers to bring bags for their purchases. All over Europe, shoppers carry shopping bags used multiple times. Why can this country not at least follow good practices, since it cannot lead?

Charlie Trask

Location:

Submitted At: 7:12pm 01-13-25

I oppose any sort of fees or control of control of plastic bags. This is insane micro managing of the citizens in the kingdom of Los Alamos. I've heard of a proposal to raise the minimum wage, so I guess the County wants to take it back by charging fees for shopping bags ? Let's get back to basics.

Carol Bronisz

Location:

Submitted At: 3:05pm 01-13-25

Plastic bags recycle readily & Smiths collects them. They help prevent shoplifting. Plastic bags take minimal energy to produce & transport. Council has rejected twice. Next a Kleenex ban? Limit exhale of CO2? Madness Council must concentrate on real issues: inoperable fire hydrants in Denver Steels neighborhood which is sloped and surrounded by unburned canyon fuel. Resting on "we've let a contract to rebuild the water system" is inadequate if a fire happens now. Fires don't wait for schedules

Catherine Lukes

Location:

Submitted At: 1:06pm 01-13-25

Implementing a fee for (or ban on) single-use plastic bags is a simple yet effective way to reduce pollution, conserve petroleum resources, and promote healthier communities. By discouraging their use, we can cut down on plastic waste in landfills and waterways, lower our reliance on fossil fuels, and minimize harmful environmental impacts that threaten both human health and the planet's ecosystems. Please help make LA a leader in our state!!

Ellen Dueweke

Location:

Submitted At: 11:40am 01-13-25

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eComments for item(s) 6.C,
6.D, & 6.E

I support banning single use plastic bags, or at least charging a fee for them. Thousands of these bags are used in Los Alamos daily to get products from the POP to the customers' homes. An hour of convenience results in harmful toxic trash that lasts virtually forever. After littering streets, clogging recycling equipment, and killing wildlife, they eventually break down into microplastics which pollute our soil, our waterways, and eventually our bodies.

Diane Reese

Location:

Submitted At: 10:47am 01-13-25

As a retired USAF Colonel, I support banning single use (SU) plastic bags as a national security issue. Americans use 102.1 billion bags/year. The Wall Street Journal, estimated 12 million barrels of oil is required to make that many plastic bags! These bags end up in our beautiful landscape - leaving a site that no one wants- especially tourists and potential businesses. There's that impact on our economy too. Please ban SU bags - or at least a fee on them! Diane Reese, USAF, Col (Ret)

Susan Barns

Location:

Submitted At: 8:33am 01-11-25

re. Single Use Plastics: I support looking into reducing the use of single use plastics in LAC. This is important to reduce litter (which is a large problem), waste (during production and disposal), and GHG emissions (production and support of fossil fuel industry.) There are many ways to do this, with variable impacts on outcomes and costs/equity. I encourage further research, perhaps by the ESB. Thanks for considering this important topic!