City of Rio Communities Council Regular Business Meeting

City Council Chambers - 360 Rio Communities Blvd
Rio Communities, NM 87002
Monday August 10, 2026, 6:00 PM

Minutes

Please silence all electronic devices.

Mayor - *Joshua Ramsell*
Mayor Pro Tem - *Lawrence R. Gordon*
Council – *Michael Melendez, Thomas Nelson, Matthew Marquez*

Call to Order

Mayor Ramsell called the meeting to order at 6:07pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Councilor Gordon led the pledge of allegiance.

Roll Call

Governing Body	**Staff**
Mayor Joshua Ramsell	Manager Dr. Martin Moore
Councilor Matthew Marquez	City Attorney Cori Strife
Councilor Lawrence Gordon	
Councilor Thomas Nelson	
Councilor Michael Melendez	

Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Councilor Gordon to approve agenda. Seconded by Councilor Melendez.

Voting Yea:
Councilor Melendez
Councilor Gordon
Councilor Nelson
Councilor Marquez

Motion Passed with a 4-0 Vote

Consent Agenda
Motion made by Councilor Gordon to approve consent agenda. Seconded by Councilor Melendez.

Voting Yea:
Councilor Marquez
Councilor Nelson
Councilor Gordon
Councilor Melendez

Motion passed with a 4-0 vote

Public Comment

No Public Comment at this time.

Manager Report

Maverick Update. Construction is progressing with 20 crew members on-site. Sewer and gas sections are nearing completion, and streetlight locations are being finalized.

Don Diego Update.. Driveway connections for phases 1 and 2 are performing well, and phase 3 fill work has commenced.

Streetlight Update -The city is 100% complete on the design for lights funded by the Capital Outlay grant. Solar technology is being considered for the Don Diego project corners, with a 95% certainty of grant coverage.

Fire Department Activities- A new ambulance has arrived and is being outfitted with medical equipment. This replaces units that are nearly 10 years old and experiencing mechanical issues.

Action Items

Discussion, Consideration, and Decision – Authorization to expend up to $6,100.00 for City Council to Attend the NMML Conference in Las Cruses, NM August 25, 2026 – August 28, 2026)

The Council authorized up to $6,100 for attendance at the New Mexico Municipal League Conference in Las Cruces (August 25–28). While the budget was previously tightened, the authorization provides a cushion for increased registration and lodging fees.

Motion made by Councilor Melendez to Approve Authorization to expend up to $6,100.00 for City Council to Attend the NMML Conference in Las Cruses, NM August 25, 2026 – August 28, 2026) . Seconded by Councilor Gordon.

Voting Yea:
Councilor Melendez
Councilor Gordon
Councilor Marquez
Councilor Nelson

Motion Passed 4-0 Vote

Discussion, Consideration, and Decision – Approval to Prepare and File Electronic TAP application with NM Water Trust Board.

The Council approved the preparation of an electronic Technical Assistance Program (TAP) application. This will provide state-funded engineering assistance to scope water and sewer needs for the city's undeveloped areas.

Motion made by Councilor Nelson to Approve to Prepare and File Electronic TAP application with NM Water Trust Board. Seconded by Councilor Melendez.

Voting Yea:

Councilor Melendez
Councilor Gordon
Councilor Nelson
Councilor Marquez Motion Passed with a 4-0 vote

Discussion – Regarding Moratorium for Large (Hyperscale) Developments.

The Council engaged in an extensive discussion regarding a proposed moratorium City Attorney Cori Strife suggested a specific time frame from 90 days, 120 Days to 180 days and Councilor Nelson suggested duration of 1 Year to 18 Months on "large-scale developments" and data centers.

Strategic Concerns:

- Resource Drain: Potential impact on water and electrical grids.
- Environmental Impact: Concerns regarding fossil fuel reliance for power vs. New Mexico's solar and wind potential.
- Zoning Fidelity: The need to ensure developments align with the comprehensive plan and do not occupy land better suited for housing.
- Tax Revenue: Councilor Melendez highlighted the importance of "compensating tax" on tangible assets (computers/servers) and noted that companies like Meta often seek tax breaks that may offset local revenue benefits.

Next Steps for Ordinance: The City Attorney will draft a moratorium ordinance for the next meeting. The Council emphasized that the definition of "data center" must be precise to avoid blocking desirable economic development (e.g., gas stations or smaller commercial entities) while effectively pausing "hyperscale" projects.

Executive Session - Pursuant to NMSA 1978 §10-15-1 (I)(2) and NMSA 1978 §10-15-1.(H)(2) Limited Personnel Matters, for the Purpose of Interviewing and Reviewing Applicants for the Position of Chief of Police. and for the Purpose of a NM Water Service Company Rate Case DOC #26-0000123-UT Subject to Attorney-Client Privilege, for the Limited Purpose of Discussing Threatened or Pending Litigation Pursuant to §10-15-1(H)(8)No Action will be Taken at this Meeting

Motion and roll call vote to go into close session

Motion made by Councilor Nelson to go into close session. Seconded by Councilor Gordon.

Voting Yea:
Councilor Melendez
Councilor Marquez
Councilor Nelson
Councilor Gordon Motion passed with a 4-0 vote

Motion and roll call vote to go back into the regular business meeting session

Motion made by Councilor Gordon to go back into the regular business meeting session. Seconded by Councilor Nelson.

Voting Yea:
Councilor Melendez
Councilor Marquez
Councilor Nelson
Councilor Gordon — Motion passed with a 4-0 vote

Welcome everyone back and statement by the Mayor:

Mayor Ramsell Stated that on Monday August 10, 2026, City of Rio Communities City Council did hold an Executive Session - For the Purpose Pursuant to NMSA 1978 §10-15-1 (I)(2) and NMSA 1978 §10-15-1.(H)(2) Limited Personnel Matters, for the Purpose of Interviewing and Reviewing Applicants for the Position of Chief of Police. and for the Purpose of a NM Water Service Company Rate Case DOC #26-0000123-UT Subject to Attorney-Client Privilege, for the Limited Purpose of Discussing Threatened or Pending Litigation Pursuant to §10-15-1(H)(8. No Action was taken and no other items were discussed at this time.

Motion made by Councilor Nelson to approve the statement by the mayor. Seconded by Councilor Melendez.

Voting Yea:
Councilor Melendez
Councilor Marquez
Councilor Nelson
Councilor Gordon — Motion passed with a 4-0 vote.

Council Discussion

Councilor Marquez- The update came during council comments when a councilor asked staff for a status check on state-provided transparency training: "I wanted to ask Dr. Moore. We discussed having training for IPRA OMA by the state has. Has that been requested yet?" Staff confirmed the request had already been made but said scheduling was still pending: "Yes, it's been requested. We don't have any dates. We haven't given this a date schedule yet. But we have requested."

Councilor Gordon Stated it was good to be back after a long-needed vacation.

Councilor Nelson- Councilor Nelson said she attended the Hispano Chamber of Commerce gala and felt the city was not well recognized outside its boundaries, explaining, "It seems like we don't exist outside of the city." She urged more outreach in positive settings rather than only during problems, saying, "We need to make our presence more known in positive ways."

Councilor Melendez- The council discussed ongoing efforts to secure a distinct postal identity for Rio Communities and said the city had already proposed a practical option: "We've even identified. Identified a zip code that's never been assigned to any place within the state." The mayor added that despite offering solutions, the Postal Service has not engaged: "And for whatever reason, the Postal

service has been unwilling to move or act or anything like that." The city manager explained that this has been tried before: "There have been two significant efforts by the city and we worked through our congressional offices." He said USPS ultimately rejected the requests because "they indicated that they we just flat didn't meet the delivery threshold for them to consider us under their quote unquote current rules," and clarified that the issue was "actually the number of deliveries" rather than population.

Mayor Ramsell- Gave a thank you to the Police department for great National Night out and thanked the Community for showing up.

Our Next Regular Scheduled Meeting will be Monday August 24, 2026, at 6:00pm

Motion made by Councilor Nelson to Adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Marquez.

Adjourn at 8:26pm

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Gauna Municipal clerk
(Taken and Transcribed by Patricia McCloskey, Deputy Clerk)

Date: 8/24/26

Approved:

Joshua Ramsell,
Mayor

Lawrence R. Gordon,
Mayor Pro-tem/Councilor

Michael Melendez,
Councilor

Thomas Nelson,
Councilor

Matthew Marquez,
Councilor