

**MINUTES  
of the  
SECOND MEETING  
of the  
LAND GRANT COMMITTEE**

**July 25-26, 2024  
Northern New Mexico College  
921 North Paseo de Oñate  
Española**

The second meeting of the Land Grant Committee for the 2024 interim was called to order by Representative Kristina Ortez, vice chair, on July 25, 2024 at 10:18 a.m. at Northern New Mexico College (NNMC) in Espanola.

**Present**

Sen. Leo Jaramillo, Chair  
Rep. Kristina Ortez, Vice Chair  
Rep. Miguel P. García (7/25)  
Rep. Stefani Lord (7/25)  
Sen. Shannon D. Pinto

**Absent**

Sen. Crystal Brantley  
Rep. Susan K. Herrera  
Sen. Antonio Maestas  
Rep. Matthew McQueen  
Rep. Tanya Mirabal Moya  
Sen. Gerald Ortiz y Pino  
Rep. Cristina Parajón  
Sen. Joshua A. Sanchez

**Advisory Members**

Rep. Eliseo Lee Alcon  
Rep. Harry Garcia  
Sen. Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics (7/25)

Sen. David M. Gallegos  
Rep. D. Wonda Johnson  
Sen. Linda M. López  
Rep. Rod Montoya  
Sen. Bill B. O'Neill  
Rep. Luis M. Terrazas

**Guest Legislator**

Rep. Joseph Sanchez (7/25)

**Staff**

Mark Edwards, Bill Drafter, Legislative Council Service (LCS)  
Nancy Martinez, Bill Drafter, LCS  
Nicole Waguespack, Researcher, LCS

**Guests**

The guest list is in the meeting file.

## **Handouts**

Handouts and other written testimony are in the meeting file and posted on the legislature's website.

## **References to Webcast**

The time reference noted next to each agenda item in this document is cross-referenced to the webcast of the committee meeting, which can be found at [www.nmlegis.gov](http://www.nmlegis.gov), under the "Webcast" tab. The presentations made and committee discussions for agenda items can be found on the recorded webcast for this meeting.

## **Thursday, July 25**

### **Welcome and Introductions (10:18 a.m.)**

Representative Ortez welcomed everyone and asked committee members, staff and attendees to introduce themselves.

### **Welcome and Status Report: NNMC (10:34 a.m.)**

Hector Balderas, president, NNMC, introduced Larry Guerrero, associate vice president for student success, NNMC; Sandra Rodriguez, chair, Teacher Education, Department of Education, NNMC; Lori Baca, chair, Department of Business Administration, NNMC; Frank Loera, D.B.A., director, Career Technical Education, Department of Technical Trades, NNMC; and Joseph Padilla, chair, Department of Technical Trades, NNMC. Mr. Balderas welcomed committee members and guests and provided an update on the student success, nursing and trades programs at NNMC. He also discussed some of the challenges he has faced since becoming president of the college.

Mr. Guerrero said that NNMC offers associate's and bachelor's degrees, but most importantly, the college offers an opportunity for students to obtain trades certifications. Mr. Guerrero also said that the college now has a food and clothing pantry for students. Ms. Rodriguez discussed the recent increase in enrollment and noted that the offering of online classes is a major contributor to the increase. Ms. Baca said that the NNMC's Department of Business Administration offers three bachelor's degrees and many certificate programs. In addition, the college's Department of Business Administration partners with the Workforce Solutions Department and Los Alamos National Laboratory for student employment opportunities. Mr. Loera spoke about the NNMC's Department of Technical Trades and said that in the trades program's first year, 130 students were enrolled, and now, two years later, 590 students are enrolled. In addition, Mr. Loera said that the program makes presentations to students in high schools in the region about the trades program. Mr. Padilla spoke about the Multi-Craft Core Curriculum program, which is a pre-apprenticeship direct-entry certificate. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LGC&Date=7/25/2024&ItemNumber=1>.

### **Santa Cruz de la Canada Land Grant (11:32 a.m.)**

Don Bustos, interim president, Board of Directors, Santa Cruz de la Canada Land Grant, introduced Christine Bustos, vice president, Board of Directors, Santa Cruz de la Canada Land Grant; Brian Martinez, secretary, Board of Directors, Santa Cruz de la Canada Land Grant; Joseluis Ortiz y Muniz, corresponding secretary, Board of Directors, Santa Cruz de la Canada Land Grant; and Miguel A. Tórrez, chair, Heirship Committee, Santa Cruz de la Canada Land Grant. Mr. Bustos said that the mission of the of the land grant is to provide living heirs, families and neighbors with an organized mechanism for exercising their communal, economic and traditional sovereignty. In addition, Mr. Bustos and board members spoke about the history, people and original boundaries of the Santa Cruz de la Canada Land Grant. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LGC&Date=7/25/2024&ItemNumber=2>.

### **Status Update — Mercedes Unidas Center (formerly the Piedra Lumbre Visitors Center) (1:23 p.m.)**

Steve Polanco, president, Land Grant-Merced de los Pueblos de Tierra Amarilla, introduced Leonard Martinez, San Joaquin del Rio de Chama Land Grant-Merced, and said that the mission of the Mercedes Unidas Center is to promote economic development, educate the community and visitors to the community and regain historic lands. In addition, Mr. Martinez provided committee members with a strategic planning workshop draft. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LGC&Date=7/25/2024&ItemNumber=3>.

### **Update on Laguna del Campo Transfer and Other Issues Facing the Land Grant-Merced de los Pueblos de Tierra Amarilla (2:04 p.m.)**

Mr. Polanco introduced Melvin Apodaca, vice president, Land Grant-Merced de los Pueblos de Tierra Amarilla; Jose Belarmino Archuleta, sergeant-at-arms, Land Grant-Merced de los Pueblos de Tierra Amarilla; and Alberto Martinez, project manager, Land Grant-Merced de los Pueblos de Tierra Amarilla. Mr. Polanco spoke about the water delivery infrastructure from the Laguna del Campo to La Puente Ditch and emphasized the critical issues with the Department of Game and Fish in clarifying the maintenance responsibilities included in the quitclaim deed. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LGC&Date=7/25/2024&ItemNumber=4>.

### **Public Comment (4:54 p.m.)**

A list of individuals making public comment is available in the meeting file.

**Recess — Tour of Espanola by the Espanola Lowrider Association (2:55 p.m.)**

Members of the committee and staff received a tour of Espanola by the Espanola Lowrider Association.

**Friday, July 26**

**Tour of the Historic Santa Cruz de la Canada Land Grant (9:15 a.m.)**

Members of the committee and staff toured the historic Santa Cruz de la Canada Land Grant.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 12:00 noon.