

Pojoaque Valley Planning Committee Meeting Summary
Thursday, August 10th, 2006 6:30pm – 8:30pm
Sammy Quintana Community Board Room

(Note: This is a meeting summary and is not intended to give the meeting contents in its entirety. If you would like to get more details about the meeting, please contact another committee member that was present at the meeting, or the SF County Planning staff.)

The meeting started at about 6:35pm and was chaired by David Dogruel.

News from the Committee

Upcoming Meetings:

David D. informed the group that next Tuesday, August 15th there will be a meeting at the County Chambers at 4:00 PM where the City and County will discuss cost sharing for the Buckman diversion.

Commissioner Montoya will be at the El Rancho Community Center on Thursday, August 17th at 6:30 pm for a town hall meeting to discuss issues facing the community. Representatives from the County Animal Control, Sheriff's, Land Use, Public Works and Water Resources Departments will be in attendance.

High Speed Internet

Chuck and Don attended a meeting with the PRC and Qwest. Pojoaque and Tesuque Pueblo were invited but did not attend. Qwest said that it could not upgrade service because it cannot get rights of way through Tesuque Pueblo. In addition, Pojoaque Pueblo is going to go with a different telephone provider (MATI). Qwest has a facility on Pojoaque Pueblo land. The lease will expire in October 2007 and may not be renewed. This affects the "455" exchange and Los Alamos. Many people from Chupadero attended the meeting, as they are organized in an effort to get DSL to their area.

The subcommittee said it would be best to continue working on this matter with Ben Ray Lujan.

A committee member added that Valley residents can get DSL through Zia Net. If interested, you can call Mary Ann Granoff, 505-345-4771, to see if your line is adequate for DSL.

Agricultural Revitalization Initiative (ARI)

Lynne Velasco told us about the second meeting of the working group for the ARI that was held on August 9th. This meeting focused on the formulation of the mission statement. The group is made up of a coalition of entities including the NM Acequia Association various acequia commissions and other non-profit groups, and various people from State and County agencies. The group aims to put farmers together with agencies and help them navigate through opportunities to continue agricultural practices.

They will work on small projects to start. They want to project traditional agricultural lands that are at risk because of loss of water rights. The group wants to start by caring for land that is neglected or cannot be maintained in order to put the water rights to beneficial use. Lynne requested that if anyone knows of such agricultural land, please contact her at 455-3685. Lynne added that as gas prices increase, local agriculture will become more important and that our basin is one of the areas most at risk of losing agricultural land to development.

Action Plan

The Committee worked on the action plans for Goal Two: **“Ensure a clean water supply”**.

Action 2A: Changed the title to: *“Preserve acequias and improve diversions and delivery systems.”* This action plan's first steps were revised and edited.

Some of the discussion about this issue was about obtaining money for grants and about the role of the County. Carlos Ortiz and Dick Rochester both have experience in obtaining grants for acequias from a variety of sources. Someone commented that getting the County involved in obtaining the money would be counter-productive. He said it was easy to get money directly from the State once you get on the right track. Dick said that the Interstate Stream Commission and the NM Acequia Association were helpful in going through the process. Chuck commented that getting an environmental impact statement can often hold things up. Carlos commented that some diversions might be on Pueblo land which can also be an issue. A committee member added that this is really up to the individual acequias, but that the role of the County would be able to help educate about this process. Lynne and Dick said that the County could help get funding. David O. commented that the County is a stakeholder because it does a lot of maintenance on the diversions because they are antiquated.

Carl Berney suggested that maybe we should start with a smaller less ambitious project rather than start with the diversion issues. David O. said that diversions cost the same regardless of the number of people on the ditch and they are usually the root of most of the problems that are occurring for the acequias. We discussed the possibility of several acequias sharing a diversion as a place to start to identify a potential pilot project.

Action 2B: “Develop and implement strategies for water conservation”

We discussed the possibility of an ordinance to require new housing to have water conservation features. Some felt that this would be unpopular because it would add a burden to people trying to build new homes. Also, such an ordinance would be difficult to enforce. Others argued that this would be only a small percentage of the construction costs, and that we should make it an ordinance. We agreed that offering incentives and educating people about the options would be better than creating an ordinance. Renee will get back to us on the current ordinances now in place in regards to water conservation set by the Board of County Commissioners. Lynne suggested that we add something about recycling of wastewater to this Action.

We agreed that there were too many first steps in this Action. We consolidated the steps as follows:

- ? Choose strategies that are appropriate for our area.
- ? Disseminate information, for example by creating education initiatives so that schools and other entities can teach water conservation.
- ? Offer incentive and awards, for example by giving away water-conserving hardware.

Next meeting:

The next meeting will be Thursday, August 24th. We will continue working on the Actions for Goal Two.

Notes by E.B. and R.V.