

Pojoaque Valley Planning Committee Meeting Summary
Thursday, August 11th, 2005 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 6:30pm. David Dogruel chaired the meeting and was assisted by Renee Villarreal from Santa Fe County, and Carl Moore, the group facilitator.

Diane Boissevain gave a recap of the Pojoaque Festival. Renee thanked the volunteers that helped work the booth throughout the day and also thanked Diane for the great new PVPC banners that made the booth look very professional.

The group began discussing the possibility of using the school for a multi-purpose community center. The people that went of the facility tour talked about the endless potential of using this space instead of demolishing it. David Dogruel commented that all of the above ideas should be communicated at the community meeting on August 27 when we discuss the creation of a community center.

Renee reported that she spoke with Len Cata, the director of the Pojoaque Wellness center at the recent Pojoaque Festival. She learned that he thought we were planning a center to compete with the Wellness Center. She was able to clarify that we are planning a multi-purpose center that would offer services currently not provided by the Wellness Center that are educational in nature. One idea would be a teen center that would attract older children not currently using the Boys and Girls Club. He would like to come and talk to us, and to collaborate with us if possible.

David Ortiz reported that he, Don Wilson and Harry Montoya met with Superintendent Trujillo of the Pojoaque School System to share our action plan. We are looking for space for a community center and thought space in the L-wing of the old high school at the old campus might be appropriate. The middle school is at the old campus and is expected to remain there. The L-wing is scheduled to be demolished in December of 2006. (When the legislature appropriated money for the schools, it stipulated that this wing be demolished and appropriated \$900,000 to do so. The wing is in good shape, but the legislature did not want to be responsible for future maintenance of it.) Superintendent Trujillo would like to use the rest of the old high school building for an alternative school. She felt that having a community center on the old campus would be helpful because it would enable interaction between the community and students. Community members could mentor students, and students could provide community service. The schools will start a new master plan in 2006 that would decide the future of the school buildings. We could provide before this time. We may be able to influence the legislature to rescind the requirement to demolish the L-wing. David learned from Harry Montoya that \$500,000 has been appropriated by the County for acquisition of a community center. There may be covenants affecting the use of the L-wing that may complicate this. However, there may well be a way to work out these various problems. Superintendent Trujillo invited us to give a presentation at the School Board Meeting on September 28. David Dogruel, Renee and Jack could do this, with the help of other committee members.

There were questions and discussion following David Ortiz's report. David O. thought the mid-school will be at the old campus for at least 10 years, but the master plan will address this. David O. did not know how big the alternative school would be. One issue was whether all of the school facilities should be in the same place. Ben suggested that we should ask about this at the school board meeting and the community meeting.

We had a presentation from Kathy Sanchez and Josephine Natseway about Tewa Women United, and their upcoming Gathering for Mother Earth.

Tewa Women United has existed since 1989, and became a formal organization in 2001. The board is multi-cultural: everyone is welcome. The organization is non-hierarchical and operates by consensus. They have four programs:

1. Mother Earth, which addresses problems caused by radiation from mining and from sites like LANL.
2. Voice, which is funded by the Crime Victims' Reparation Act, to address problems caused by sexual violence through counseling and prevention programs.
3. Women's Leadership Program, which fosters national and international connections among women.
4. The Birthing Project which seeks to reclaim native ways of birthing, using mid-wives and home births.

The group is funded by grants, not by any tribe, so it is not under sovereign nation control. There are 12 active core members, but the group is fluid and has non-formal members as well. They are hoping to get men involved in the future. One of the funding requirements is that officers must be Native American.

The ninth annual Gathering For Mother Earth is scheduled for September 17-18 at Ben's Gathering Grounds on highway 502, about 1.8 miles west of Cities of Gold Casino. The gathering is dedicated to the memory of Maria Martinez. The group is building an arbor in the shape of a turtle. There will be a holistic approach to ecological wellness. The goal is to integrate the scientific mindset with the native perspective. Both views address the sacred energy, but the scientific approach tries to appropriate the energy.

The program will run from sunrise to sunset on the 17th, and from sunrise to about 5 PM on the 18th. There is no charge. They are hoping farmers will bring organic food. There will be cooking using solar energy, traditional singers, and visitors from other nations near radioactive sites. There will be a relay run from Tsankawi to the site.

Space for booths is available. Information booths are free. There is a \$25 charge for crafts booths (less if an item is donated for a raffle.) Camping is available. They are looking for volunteers and runners. For more information, call Corrine Sanchez at 505-747-3259. Websites are: www.tewawomenunited.org, and www.gatheringformotherearth.org.

Mary Lou asked if we should work on getting a school named for Maria Martinez. Kathy said that, depending on the Pueblo, it is not traditional to name buildings after someone. She added that the group must work cautiously because there are so many differences among the sovereign nations. Native peoples need to heal.

Next, there was a presentation from Michael Lopez, director of the Pojoaque Pueblo training center. The purpose of the center is to provide technical training without requiring a 4-year commitment. They believe that the economy of the region can be improved through education.

The center provides free tutoring for students. Currently there are 10 students being tutored. There is a conference center facility with audio-visual services available for rent. This month LANL has the entire facility booked. The center can help prepare presentations. There are two computer labs with high-speed access. The center would like to be a satellite campus for a community college, and offer GED and evening programs. Workshops and classes happen monthly. Classes are small.

David Ortiz recently took a training class and was impressed by the facility, the small class size and the reasonable rates. Kathy Sanchez said she was interested in doing video presentations and would like to work with the training center.

Next we discussed the August 27th community meeting at the Parish Hall. This is the last public meeting before we present our plan to the County Commission. Carl asked what publicity methods worked for the February meeting. Answers were:

- Individual recruiting of people
- Flyers
- Email notices
- Notice in Parish Bulletin
- Newspaper article. (Kudos to Marissa for the articles she writes about us for the New Mexican.)

David Dogruel commented that we need to make it clear how this meeting is different from the one in February. David O. said this meeting is to get community reaction to what we've done with their input. Mary Lou said we should say, "We've listened to you, it's now in the plan, did we get it right?" Carl said we cannot present all of the action plans. We can present an overview. The details will be posted around the room. Mary Lou said that the big new ideas are the Community Center and the Valley Council. Carl suggested that we take a few ideas and feature them in a flyer.

We discussed mailing out announcements. Renee said that the last County mailing to our area was approximately 1600 people. 200 letters were returned. She is in the process of updating the database so that we can get better results.

David suggested we pass out flyers at the grocery store and post office on Saturday.

It might be possible to get the flyer in the Pojoaque supplement of the New Mexican on the 24th. Marissa will try to include our logo in her article next Wednesday to draw attention to it.

David O. said that he needs to get the flyer by Wednesday the 17th in order to get it in the church bulletin.

Carl agreed to write a draft of the flyer and email it out. We can send comments and suggestions to Carl and Renee, but there isn't much time left.

Before the meeting closed, Carl commented that he recently attended the Oppenheimer Lecture and that Mary Lou did a wonderful job hosting it.

Renee distributed an article about Del Rey Beach Florida, describing how a community used a non-traditional organization, similar to what we are thinking about in regards to a Valley Council, to organize their community and get things done.

The September meetings will be on September 15th and 29th, because of Labor Day and Fiesta.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be August 25th, two days before the Community-wide Forum. We will hash out final details for the forum at this time.

Notes by E.B. and R.V.