

**SIERRA COUNTY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
January 27, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER: 10:00 am Regular Meeting

The Sierra County Board of County Commissioners met in Regular Session at 10:00 A.M. on Tuesday, January 27, 2026, at the Sierra County Commission Chambers, 1712 N Date St, Truth or Consequences, New Mexico.

ROLL CALL:

**Commissioner Jim Paxon, Chairman
Commissioner Hank Hopkins, Vice-Chair
Commissioner Sandy Jones, Member (Joined via telephone)**

Clerk of Board: Amy Whitehead

County Attorney: David Pato

County Manager: Amber Vaughn

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

NEW MEXICO STATE FLAG PLEDGE:

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Monica Zepeda, Josh Baker, Steve Mull-Sentinel, Patrick Flores, Tim Kuzdrowski, Jessica Pena, Ernie Armijo, Keith Whitney, Patrice Love, Ryan Williams, Kayce Edwards, Billy Neeley, Virginia Lee, Candace Chavez, Joffe Blomquest, Joel Trejo, Barbara Bencomo, State Police

I. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Commissioner Hopkins MOVED to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioners District 1-2-3 voting yes.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. Regular Meeting December 16, 2025

Commissioner Jones MOVED to approve the minutes as presented. Commission Vice Chair Hopkins SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioners District 1-2-3 voting yes.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT: LIMITED TO 3 MINUTES

Ray Pierce USDA Wildlife gave a quick report and introduced the new Supervisor for Southern NM- David Carrasco. Mr. Carrasco is from the Las Cruces office and looks forward to working with Sierra Co.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. Resolution No. 2026-01 Accounts Payable**
- B. Resolution No. 2026-02 Indigent Claims**

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve the Consent Agenda as presented in one motion. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes.

V. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS:

- A. Years of Service awards- Presented an award to Virginia Lee for RETIREMENT!**
- B. Department Reports**
- C. 2025 Sheriff's Annual presentation**
- D. FY26 2nd Quarter Budget Report**
- E. Sierra County Earth Day (Community Cleanup)**
- F. Prescribed Fire and Seasonal Outlook**

VI. BOARD OF FINANCE:

- A. December 2025 Reconciliation**

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve the December Reconciliation as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioners District 1-2-3 voting yes.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

N/A

VIII. NEW BUSINESS:

A. County Road Closure Request for New Mexico Spaceport Authority (Upham Road)

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve County Road Closure as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes

B. Approval of appointment of freeholders for petition for Road Vacation CR26-001: Request to vacate Trout in the Hot Spring Landing South Subdivision

Southern End of Trout Rd. at the intersection of Bass Rd. Once vacated, the county will not maintain it any longer. Emergency access will have a key code.

Commissioner Jones MOVED to approve the Appointment as presented. Commission Vice Chair Hopkins SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioners District 1-2-3 voting yes

IX. CONTRACT-AGREEMENTS-PROCUREMENTS

A. Fiscal Agent agreement between Sierra County and the Hillsboro Community Library

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes

B. MOU between Catron County, Sierra County, Socorro County, and Torrance County regarding implementation of SB 3 funding for Region 7.

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes

C. Request for approval for the purchase of a new 2027 Rosenbauer, South Dakota 4x4 engine/pumper for the Hillsboro Fire Department

Commissioner Jones MOVED to approve the purchase as presented. Commission Vice Chair Hopkins SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes.

D. Request for approval for the purchase of a new custom pumper Model 22 Premier HME 1871 Chassis Fire Engine for the Las Palomas Volunteer Fire Department. Ryan Williams was able to get a \$600k grant and the remainder \$159,878K was covered by capital outlay funds.

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve the purchase as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes

X. RESOLUTIONS – ORDINANCES – PROCLAMATIONS

A. Resolution No. 2026-03 Budget Amendment

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve Resolution No. 2026-03 as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes.

B. Resolution No. 2026-04 Appointment of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of Sierra County Commission

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to keep things the way they currently are with Chair Paxon and Vice Chair Hopkins. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes.

C. Resolution No. 2026-05 Open Meetings Act.

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve Resolution No. 2026-05 as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes

D. Resolution No. 2026-06 Resolution describing procedures for Request for Inspection of Public Records.

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve Resolution No. 2026-06 as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes

E. Resolution No. 2026-07 County Manager Authority

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to Approve Resolution No. 2026-07 as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes.

F. Resolution No. 2026-08 Parliamentary Procedures and Robert's Rule of Law

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve Resolution No. 2026-08 as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes.

G. Resolution No. 2026-09 Public Participation and Sierra County Commission Meetings

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve Resolution No. 2026-09 as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes.

H. Resolution No. 2026-10 Establishing Depositors

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve Resolution No. 2026-10 as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes.

I. Resolution No. 2026-11 Signature Authority on Checks

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve Resolution No. 2026-11 as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes

J. Resolution No. 2026-12 Establishing a license tax under the Liquor Control Act.

Commissioner Jones wanted to do away with the \$250 tax UNLESS it is collected across the Board. He doesn't think it is fair if some pay it and others don't and the County lets them get away with it. He suggested that if not collected by July 30, we turn them in to the alcohol board. He requested that the County Clerk give a report every year during the August meeting with an update. Clerk Whitehead sent an email to Commissioners, Mgr and Attorney Pato that Sierra County currently has 2 Liquor license holders and they are both paid up.

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve Resolution No. 2026-12 as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes

K. Resolution No. 2026-13 A resolution supplementing resolution No. 109-057 and confirming Sierra County's Acceptance of maintenance responsibility for NM 436 in connection with the Spaceport Road (A-013) Exchange

Commissioner Jones expressed his concern that the road has not been maintained as it should and he is surprised no one has been hurt. Billy Neeley stated that the County has spent a lot of money and time maintaining that road. Commissioner Jones stated that he would “reluctantly” 2nd the motion to approve and hopes it is better maintained in the future.

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve Resolution No. 2026-13 as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2 voting yes and 3 voting nay

C. EXECUTIVE SESSION SECTION (10-15-E thru H):

PENDING AND THREATENED LITIGATION:

A. Misty Gustin v. Sierra County

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to go into Executive Session for Personnel, Real Estate, Pending and Threatened Litigation. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Roll call vote was taken with all Commissioners present voting yes.

**District 1 – Yes
District 2 – Yes
District 3 – Yes**

XI. OPEN SESSION ACTIONS FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

No Action was taken

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT REGULAR SIERRA COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING:

The date and time of the next Regular Sierra County Commission Meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday February 17, 2026 at 10:00 A.M. at the Sierra County Commission Chambers 1712 N. Date Street Truth or Consequences, New Mexico.

Commissioner Jones MOVED to adjourn the meeting. Commission Vice Chair Hopkins SECONDED the motion.

ADJOURNMENT:

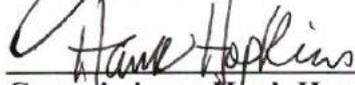
There being no further business to come before the Board, Commission Chair Paxon adjourned the meeting.

Dated this 27th day of January 2026.

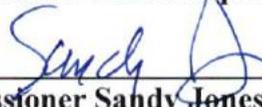
SIERRA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Commissioner James E. Paxon, Chairman

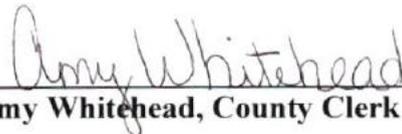


Commissioner Hank Hopkins, Vice-Chairman



Commissioner Sandy Jones, Member

ATTEST:



Amy Whitehead, County Clerk

