

**SIERRA COUNTY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
July 21, 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, July 21, 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**

Clerk of Board: Teresa Sopkowiak for Amy Whitehead

County Attorney: David Pato

County Manager: Amber Vaughn

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

NEW MEXICO STATE FLAG PLEDGE:

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Monica Zepeda, Steve Mull-Sentinel, Scott Ruch, Dave Ruch, Tim Kuzdrowski, Jessica Pena, Ernie Armijo, Josh Baker, Denise Balko, Patrice Love, Ryan Williams, Steven Green, Ariel Dougherty, Orlando Resendez, Suzanne Carlstedt, Rebekah Parr, Melissa Veale, Vance Veale, Mark VanFonge, Melanie VonFonge, Morning Star Black, Jeremy Sumner, Mary Ellen Carroll, Gary Whitehead, Billy Neeley, Chealsey Garcia, Julia Masaoka, Dan Warren, William West, Patrick Flores, Denise Cunningham, Karen George, James George, Maja Perz, Dave Leming, Monica Miller, Dawes Cochran, Cheryl Ray, Sulome Anderson, Joan Baker, Michael Hutchins, Alice Hutchins, Connie Brown, Patricia Wiley Smithpeter, Ariel Dougherty, David Bean, Cristal Jones, Kyle Smith, Dan Warren, Nate Stephens, Teri Davis, Jack Diamond, Jessie Emerson, Jessie Emerson, Dave Mooney, Kayce Edwards, Donna Poisson, Corrinne Farner

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: (Special 6/9/2026 & Regular 6/23/2026)

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

III. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Public comments were shared by the residence of Sierra County regarding their concerns on a possible AI Data Center being built near the Spaceport.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. Resolution No. 2026-42 Accounts Payable**
- B. Resolution No. 2026-43 Indigent Claims**
- C. Claim of Exemption 26-003-Rutledge**
- D. Claim of Exemption 26-004-Roberts**
- E. Lodgers Tax Board Fund Recommendation for Sierra County Arts Council Advertisements**

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

V. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS:

- A. Years of Service awards**
- B. Department Reports**

VI. BOARD OF FINANCE:

- A. June 2026 Reconciliation**

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

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Contract between Sierra County and T or C Municipal Schools for School Officer Position

Commissioner Jones MOVED to approve the Contract between Sierra County and T or C Municipal Schools for School Officer Position as presented. Vice Chair Hopkins SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Road Closure Request-New Mexico Spaceport Authority (August 12, 14, & 21, 2026)

Commissioner Jones MOVED to approve Item A. Road Closure Request-New Mexico Spaceport authority as presented. Vice Chair Hopkins SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes

B. Direction to Staff to Publish the Title and General Subject Matter of an Ordinance Repealing Sierra County Spinlaunch Leda Ordinance No. 20-004

Item B.- Direction to Staff to Publish the Title and General Subject Matter of an Ordinance Repealing Sierra County Spinlaunch Leda Ordinance No. 20-004 has been removed due to typo error.

IX. CONTRACT-AGREEMENTS-PROCUREMENTS

A. MOU between Sierra County and the City of T or C Regarding Coordination of Development along Shared Boundaries.

Commission Chair Paxon TABLED the MOU between Sierra County and the City of T or C regarding Coordination of development along the Shared Boundaries.

B. MOU between Sierra County and Sierra County Regional Dispatch Authority for HR Services

Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve MOU between Sierra County and the Regional Dispatch Authority for HR Service. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes.

C. Work and Financial Plan between Sierra County and APHIS-WS

Commissioner Jones MOVED to approve the Work and Financial Plan between Sierra County and APHIS-WS as presented. Commission Vice Chair Hopkins SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes.

D. Agreement between the County of Sierra and the City of Truth or Consequences regarding the administration and enforcement of the City's Floodplain Management Regulations

Commission Chair Paxon MOVED to approve the Agreement between the County of Sierra and the City of T or C. Commission Vice Chair Hopkins SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes with the exception that the word "Enforcement" be removed from the title and that the \$5000 fee be removed from the agreement as well.

E. Amended JPA County of Sierra Sheriff and City of Elephant Butte Provision of Law Enforcement Services

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

F. Local Government Road Fund Cooperative Agreement-CAP

G. Local Government Road Fund Cooperative Agreement-SB

H. Local Government Road Fund Cooperative Agreement-SP

Commission Vice Chair MOVED to approve items F-H under one vote. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes on items F-H.

X. RESOLUTIONS – ORDINANCES – PROCLAMATIONS

- A. Resolution No. 2026-44 CAP 27 Participation in Local Government Road Fund Program and Request for Match Waiver Administration by New Mexico Department of transportation.**

Commissioner Jones MOVED to approve Resolution No. 2026-44 as presented. Commission Vice Chair Hopkins SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes.

- B. Resolution No. 2026-45 SB 27 Participation in Local Government Road Fund Program and request for Match Waiver Administration by New Mexico Department of Transportation**

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve Resolution No. 2026-45 SB 27 as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Districts 1-2-3 voting yes after the Match Waiver language is removed

- C. Resolution No. 2026-46 SP 27 Participation in Local Government Road Fund Program and request for Match Waiver Administration by New Mexico Department of Transportation**

Commissioner Jones MOVED to approve Resolution No. 2026-41 as presented. Commissioner Hopkins SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes.

- D. Resolution No. 2026-47 Approving the participation in the program of the South-Central Council of Governments FY 26-27**

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve Resolution No. 2026-47 as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes. Commission Vice Chair Hopkins accepted the designation of representing the South-Central Council of Governments with Commissioner Jones accepting the role as alternate representative.

- E. Resolution No. 2026-48 FY26-Budget Adjustment**

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve FY26 Budget Adjustment as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes.

F. Resolution No. 2026-49 FY26-Fourth Quarter Financial Report Ending June 30, 2026

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve Resolution No. 2026-49 as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes.

G. Resolution No. 2026-50 Adopting the Fiscal Year 2027 Final Budget

Commissioner Jones MOVED to approve Resolution No. 2026-50. Commission Vice Chair Hopkins SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes.

H. Resolution No. 2026-51 Resolution Opposing Development of Large-Scale Data Centers Within Sierra County

Commission Vice Chair Hopkins MOVED to approve Resolution No. 2026-51 as presented. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. Motion carried with Commissioner Districts 1-2-3 voting yes with a roll call vote. Sierra County Commissioners and County Attorney Pato also instituted an 18-month moratorium to further explore the effects a large-scale data center could impose on Sierra County and its water resources.

XI. Executive Session (SECTION 10-15, E-H)

N/A

XII. OPEN SESSION ACTIONS FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

N/A

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 August 18 , 2026 at 10:00 A.M. at the Sierra County Commission Chambers 1712 N. Date Street Truth or Consequences, New Mexico.

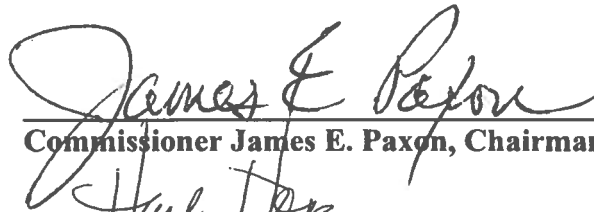
Commission Vice-Chair Hopkins MOVED to adjourn the meeting.
Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

Dated this 21st day of July 2026.

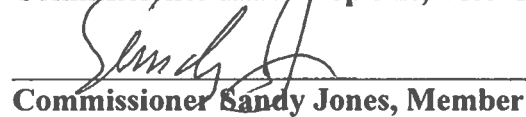
SIERRA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Commissioner James E. Paxon, Chairman



Commissioner Hank Hopkins, Vice-Chairman



Commissioner Sandy Jones, Member

ATTEST:



Amy Whitehead, County Clerk