



NOTICE OF SANDOVAL COUNTY
LODGERS TAX ADVISORY BOARD MEETING – MINUTES
February 9, 2026
10 a.m.

Attendees: (Owners or Operators of Tourism-Related Industries): Mary Street, Owner, Ponderosa Winery; Gabe Pacheco, Owner, Dream Vacations: (Owners or Operators of Lodging Entities): Mike Kloepfel, Short-Term Rental Owner, (General Public Representative): Ruth Bouldes, County Resident. County Tourism Department Staff: Natasha Remchuk, Tourism and Event Coordinator; Dora Dominguez, Director of County Business & Economic Development, Sandoval County.

Not in Attendance: (Owners or Operators of Lodging Entities): Anne Soto

The Sandoval County Lodgers Tax Advisory Board held its quarterly meeting in person on Monday, February 9, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. Meeting location, El Zocalo Event Center (Salazar Building, 2nd Floor Offices), 282 S. Camino Del Pueblo, Bernalillo, NM 87004.

Submission of public comments and access to this and past meeting agendas and minutes are available on the County's website under Sandoval County Lodger's Tax Advisory Board or linked at:

<https://www.sandovalcountynm.gov/departments/economicdevelopment/lodgers-tax-advisory-board/>

For questions or assistance, please contact Natasha Remchuk, Sandoval County Tourism Coordinator, at (505) 867-7599 or email NRemchuk@sandovalcountynm.gov.

MINUTES

1. Introductions – Natasha Remchuk, Tourism & Event Coordinator, welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Lodgers' Tax Advisory Board. A reminder was provided that the Board is a state statute-required advisory board for any local government entity with a lodgers' tax remittance ordinance in place that requires payment of lodgers' tax from all lodging businesses, both traditional and short-term rentals.
2. New Board Member Introduction - Gabe Pacheco, Owner of Dream Vacations, Rio Rancho, NM, provided a brief introduction about his business. Gabe will fill one of the two open board seats within the Owners or Operators of Tourism-Related Industries. Mary Street, Owner of Ponderosa Winery, is the other board member in this board category. Gabe Pacheco asked about the requirements for board members. Dora responded that the role is to advise on how lodgers' tax monies are spent and to assist in recommending upcoming projects or ideas where funding for new tourism events is lacking or requires technical assistance. Dora provided an overview of how the

department is staffed within both the Tourism and Business/Economic Development Departments for Sandoval County.

3. Lodgers' Tax Financial Report – Dora Dominguez, Sandoval County Tourism Director
 - a. FY26 Budget carryover is \$678.52. FY26 Budgeted Revenues - \$9,500.

Note: The sole source of lodgers' tax revenue for Sandoval County (unincorporated areas of the County) is from short-term rentals.

A reminder was provided that the Board is a state-statute–required advisory board for any local government entity with a lodgers' tax remittance ordinance. Lodgers' tax applies to all lodging businesses, including traditional lodging and short-term rentals. There is a requirement that up to 50% of the money be allocated to marketing and advertising.

Year to date, the total amount of lodgers' tax received by the county is \$10,787.47. FY26 proposed budget: \$9,500.00. The current budget year's nonrecurring expenditures include:

- New exhibit booth and podium – Total Cost \$6,396.91. Part of the cost was funded through unspent grant funds from the prior year grant of \$4,994.00, plus \$1,446.00 from Lodgers' Tax incentives. New Outdoor Recreation Guide – Total cost of \$8,552.15, County Fair expenses of \$3,115.01, New Mexico Tourism Cooperative payment of \$5,000.00, paid September 2025.

The Advisory Board was asked to keep in mind that these expenditures will not be recurring in the next fiscal year, and ideas for projects to fund are encouraged. The explanation of the increase in lodgers' tax received to date of \$10,787.47 as direct responses from the Lodgers' Tax letter mailed in December, 2025.

Short-term rental owner data used to track activity in the unincorporated areas of Sandoval County is a purchased list in 2022 from Granicus, which is a short-term-rental tracking service. The County paid \$8,000.00 approximately three years ago to obtain this list. In the coming fiscal year, the County will purchase an updated list of short-term rental activity for unincorporated areas of Sandoval County. A question/suggestion was raised by Mike Kloeppel advising staff to consider the cost of managing the activity list, including mailing of letters and tracking responses, should be part of the overall administrative cost of managing short-term-rental revenues for the county. Ideas on what other roles the revenues from the lodgers' tax could support include, once again, staffing regular hours at the El Zocalo Visitor Center. Dora discussed how at one time the Visitor Center and costs related to operating from Monday to Friday were covered partially from the lodgers' tax.

Other ideas for how to staff the Visitor Center include creating a volunteer docent group or designating specific times during the week when the Visitor Center would be open to the public.

- Other questions related to allowed uses of lodgers' tax included - Ruth asked if the Visitor Center sign on Highway 550 needs to be removed. The response was that the sign directs visitors to other locations in Bernalillo where visitor information is available, including at El Zocalo.
 - Mike recommended that the LTAB support new events within the County by offering funds toward banners for first-time events, with a suggested amount of \$500. This could be an application-based reimbursement program requiring submission of receipts. Grant applications for banners would need to be submitted at least one week before LTAB meetings.
 - Ruth asked whether these funds would be available countywide or limited to unincorporated areas. Mary responded that the program should apply only to the unincorporated areas of the County.
 - Staff suggestions and follow-up to include budget projections into FY2027 to explore the possibility of the creation of a small marketing grant fund to support new or emerging tourism events to help cover the cost of event banners. The idea would be to start with \$500 and work with other lodgers' tax councils in the county to identify startup events that could use help to cover costs related to printed banners. How the funds could best be tracked, as either reimbursable funds or by the county paying for the printing directly, was part of the discussion, with no final idea presented.
4. SeeSandoval, Tourism Website (SeeSandoval.org) Update – Natasha Remchuk reminded everyone that the SeeSandoval.org website is an excellent resource for outdoor activities and events happening in the county. Website analytics and the Visit Widget show a spike in users searching for events. The second-highest search interest is for Jemez Hot Springs.
 5. New Mexico True Cooperative Marketing & Advertising Grant Update – Natasha, reminded everyone that the FY27 NM True Cooperative Advertising Grant survey is currently open and is being completed with information on demographics, advertising agency participation, and projected FY27 contributions. Final implementation of the FY26 grant-funded marketing initiatives is still in progress. These include static and video ads scheduled to be finalized by April 2026.
 6. Outdoor Adventure Guide 2026 Update – Natasha, informed everyone that the Outdoor Adventure Guides have been reviewed and ordered. The cost for the guides is \$8,552.15. The guides are scheduled to be delivered in time for staff to use at the New Mexico Outdoor Adventure Expo on February 13-15, 2026, at the Expo New Mexico State Fairgrounds.
 7. New Mexico Outdoor Adventure Expo – Natasha, informed every one of the department's plans to be a vendor at the NM Outdoor Adventure Expo. County tourism staff will be showcasing the new booth. Plans are to also offer a raffle with items donated from our local communities. The raffle will assist in tracking traffic and visitors who stop by the booth.
 8. Social Media Platforms Like & Share Reminders – Natasha reminded members to view and engage with SeeSandoval.org social media accounts on Instagram, X, and Facebook. Dora mentioned that Esparza Digital+Advertising will place the Outdoor

Adventure Guide on the website in a printable version and that Esparza is now posting tourism events on the SeeSandoval.org social media platforms.

9. Other items discussed:

- Mike asked about a Route66 event at El Zócalo in May. Staff clarified that the event will include a car show and is scheduled for October 3, 2026.
- Gabe suggested the possibility of hosting marathon events in Sandoval County similar to the Half Ironman event held every year in Roswell.

10. Next Meeting Date Proposed

- a. 05/04/2026 at 10 a.m.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m. Motion by Mary Street; second by Gabe Pacheco.