

City of Socorro Regular Scheduled City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
April 21, 2014

Mayor Ravi Bhasker called the meeting to order. Pat Salome, City Clerk, took roll call. Members present at roll call were: Mayor Ravi Bhasker, Councilor Donald Monette, Councilor Peter D. Romero, Councilor Toby Jaramillo, Councilor Gordy Hicks, Councilor Ernest Pargas, Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez and Councilor Nick Fleming. Councilor Michael Olguin Jr. was absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bhasker led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF APRIL 21, 2014 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

a. April 7, 2014

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS

a. Mayoral Proclamation – National Service Recognition Day

Mayor Bhasker presented a proclamation declaring April 1, 2014 as National Service Recognition Day which recognizes the positive impact of national service and local volunteerism. Mayor Bhasker stated that there are several volunteer organizations in Socorro including the Foster Grandparent Program, Library Board, Lions Club, El Puente, etc.

b. Proclamation – National Every Kid Healthy Week

Mayor Bhasker presented a proclamation declaring April 1, 2014 through April 25, 2014 as National Every Kid Healthy Week. The proclamation encourages exercise and nutrition in the hope of achieving health goals for Socorro's youth. Mayor Bhasker stated that there are many activities for the youth in Socorro including the swim team, soccer, baseball, etc.

PUBLIC FORUM

Dave Finley invited everyone to the Civil Air Patrol Open House on April 26, 2014 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the City's Airport. Mr. Finley gave a brief explanation on the background of the Civil Air Patrol.

Marie Watkins stated that she reviewed a report from District 4 of Socorro Electric Cooperative residential members and found out that of 2,068 members, there were 292 duplicate members. Ms. Watkins stated that the reduced number of members reduces the number of members required for a quorum. Ms. Watkins stated that she feels since the SEC provides Automated Election Services with the member lists, the SEC can alter what is given for quorum purposes. Ms. Watkins stated that there is an article in The New Mexican regarding the Mora/San Miguel Co-Op who recently fired their manager and their attorneys who are the same attorneys used by SEC. Ms. Watkins stated that the SEC sponsors a trip to Washington DC for high school students who enter a contest by writing an essay. Ms. Watkins stated that last year, the trip was awarded to SEC employee Eileen Latasa's grandson and this year the trip was awarded to Ms. Latasa's granddaughter. Ms. Watkins stated that she contacted the high schools and they were not aware of the essay contest for students. Ms. Watkins stated that this matter is being investigated. Mayor Bhasker stated that he will invite the attorney who is assisting the City on the franchise agreement for the SEC to a future City Council meeting to discuss whether or not the City should try to acquire the SEC or develop a franchise agreement. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City will try to get the pros and cons of both of those options. Some discussion followed.

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Deborah Dean stated that there were issues with parking for the carnival that was in Socorro the previous weekend. Ms. Dean stated that people who went to the carnival parked at the Alamo Arts Center which was unfortunate because the Arts Center had an event over the weekend. Mr. Salome stated that prior to setting up, carnival staff must come to City Hall and provide a copy of the certificate from the state and a copy of their liability insurance. Mr. Salome stated that in the past, parking arrangements have been made by carnival staff but getting patrons to use the designated parking has been difficult. Mr. Salome stated that to better manage the issues surrounding a carnival and similar businesses, the City Council would have to pass a license ordinance outlining regulations for certain types of businesses. Some discussion followed.

Deb Caldwell, Chamber of Commerce Director, along with Susanne Mikkelson, stated that the Chamber applied for a grant which, if awarded, would allow the creation of a pilot program to provide 10 to 20 kids with skills to help them become employable. Ms. Caldwell stated that each kid would be provided with a mentor and they would be placed in internships in local businesses. Mr. Salome stated that the City hires approximately 70 kids for the summer youth employment program and asked Ms. Caldwell if they would be willing to talk to the kids at the orientation about preparing for their new jobs. Ms. Mikkelson stated that she has been working with Mable Gonzales, City Treasurer, on the NM Clean and Beautiful Grant and would like to meet with the Mayor regarding the Co-Op Grant. Ms. Caldwell stated that the Chamber has been assisting the City with various items in the Tourism and Recreation departments. Ms. Caldwell stated that the Chamber would be willing to help manage major events if the City needed the assistance in the future.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

a. Final Change Order & Project Acceptance – JO Gallegos Road MAP Project – Dennis Engineering

Steve Williams of Dennis Engineering presented a letter which recommends the City of Socorro accept the JO Gallegos Road MAP Project as complete and further recommends the issuance of final payment to Albuquerque Asphalt Inc. in the amount of \$4,929.70. Mr. Williams stated that the City's acceptance should be made contingent upon the NMDOT's acceptance of the project and that a final inspection by NMDOT has been scheduled for April 29, 2014. Mr. Williams reviewed total project costs and total funding for the project.

Councilor Romero made a motion to accept the project as complete (contingent upon the NMDOT's acceptance of the project) and to issue final payment to Albuquerque Asphalt Inc. in the amount of \$4,929.70. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

b. Budget Resolution No. 13 – Wastewater Improvement Fund

Resources are Transfer from Joint Enterprise Water – Amount is \$35,000.00 – The increase is needed to allow for cash balance available. Ms. Gonzales stated that the funds will allow for payment for engineering prior to the construction of the Hope Farms Road Wastewater Expansion project.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Budget Resolution No. 13. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Romero stated that he spoke to Adam Edwards from the company who is assisting the City with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Councilor Romero stated that Mr. Edwards advised that the City can get started with pouring the footings for the memorial. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City is also placing metal art commemorating all of the military branches at the park. Some discussion followed.

Councilor Fleming stated that the Budget Committee continues to meet and that the committee will hold the public hearings soon.

Councilor Hicks stated that it is the 50th anniversary of Lonnie Zamora's UFO sighting and he is currently creating something that he would like placed at the site. Mayor Bhasker stated that on the anniversary, which is April 24th, he would like to invite the family of Mr. Zamora to the site to take photos. Mayor Bhasker stated that there was recently a film crew in Socorro filming a story about the event.

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Councilor Pargas stated that the third Maze of Life event had taken place and it was a very successful event. Councilor Pargas stated that juniors and sophomores participated in the event.

Councilor Romero stated that the acquisition of the National Guard armory is approximately 90% complete and that the process should be complete in the next couple of months.

Mayor Bhasker stated that there was a tragic event that occurred recently and that there have been questions surrounding the incident. Mayor Bhasker urged those that have questions to ask those questions to the Police Oversight Commission or City Hall. Mayor Bhasker stated that he feels there is no question as to what occurred and that the Police Department handled the matter properly. Mr. Salome stated that the City's attorney is currently handling a request to inspect public records regarding the matter. Mr. Salome stated that public records cannot be released until an active investigation is closed.

Councilor Jaramillo thanked City crews for keeping Clarke Field clean.

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR REPORTS

Mable Gonzales, City Treasurer, stated that the Budget Committee continues to meet and will have a public hearing on May 1st at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall. Ms. Gonzales stated that the Lodger's Tax Advisory Board will meet April 22nd at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall and that the public hearing for the Lodger's Tax Advisory Board will be April 29th at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall. Ms. Gonzales stated that she will be advertising these meetings.

Paula Mertz, Library Director, stated that kids can sign up for the summer reading program starting June 2nd. Ms. Mertz stated that Tax Help NM assisted approximately 118 people with their taxes this year while using the library's facilities. Ms. Mertz stated that the Friends of the Library made \$1,800 during their book/bake sale.

George Van Winkle, Police Chief, provided a handout to the Mayor and Council of Police Department stats from March 2014 (110 arrests, 161 citations, 4 DWI arrests, 255 police reports filed, 16 traffic accidents, 4,692 calls received by dispatch, etc.). Chief Van Winkle stated that the number of calls listed on the handout is reduced due to the new dispatch system that is in place (the number of calls is the same but how the system counts the calls has changed). Chief Van Winkle stated that the school resource officer will be giving brochures out at the local schools regarding pet education.

Polo Pineda, the City's IT Director, stated that the City is webcasting City Council meetings but that there are still minor issues to address. Mr. Pineda stated that the City is looking into upgrading the phone system. Mr. Pineda stated that the City's internet needs to be upgraded to adequately handle the amount of usage. Mr. Pineda stated that the GPS units are installed and currently being used. Mr. Salome stated that he would be presenting a GPS resolution/policy at the next City Council meeting.

Lloyd Martinez, Parks/Production/Water/Special Projects Superintendent, stated that water and sewer connections are complete at the rodeo grounds. Mr. Martinez stated that the electrical panels will be installed there soon. Mr. Martinez stated that construction on the bathrooms has started and that the modular building was moved in that day. Mr. Martinez stated that the recent tournament at the new soccer fields was a success and he received positive feedback from people who attended the event. Mr. Martinez stated that a pressure release valve was installed behind the armory to lower the water pressure (from 100 psi to about 55 psi) in the airport area. Mr. Martinez stated that Parks Department crews got Sedillo Park ready for the Easter Egg Hunt the prior weekend and the upcoming Cinco de Mayo event. Mr. Martinez stated that the wastewater treatment plant will need extensive rehabilitation. Mr. Martinez stated that he is working on the design of the footings for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Michael Lucero, Sanitation/Landfill/Recycling Director, stated that crews at the landfill are placing rip rap on the slope, grinding tree limbs and hauling rock from the rodeo grounds. Mr. Lucero stated that there is one sanitation truck currently undergoing maintenance. Mr. Lucero stated that normal operations continue in the Sanitation and Recycling departments.

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Jay Santillanes, Utilities Division Director, stated that the Street Department is currently chip sealing several City streets. Mr. Santillanes stated that the Gas Department is currently replacing natural gas meters and will continue to replace natural gas lines. Mr. Santillanes stated that north Melody Lane is closed as there is a large hole in the road and City crews will work with the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District to repair the hole. Mr. Santillanes stated that the contractor will start on the construction of the rodeo arena cover next week and that construction should be complete by September 1st.

Mike Czosnek, Building Inspector, stated that the City's levy certification should be complete in the next couple of months. Mayor Bhasker asked Mr. Czosnek to explain the complaint process for citizens who have issues with weeds, abandoned cars, etc. Mr. Czosnek stated that once a complaint is received, he determines who the owner of the property is and sends them a letter with a cleaning cost which has been determined by a contractor. Mr. Czosnek stated that the owner is given 15 days to clean the area and if not addressed, the City cleans the lot and sends the owner a bill. Mr. Czosnek stated that if the bill is not paid by the owner, a lien is placed on the property.

Cynthia Connolly stated that she is working on the 5-1-2-0 program again this year at Parkview and Midway elementary schools. Ms. Connolly stated that approximately 60 kids recently participated in Bosque Clean Up Day. Ms. Connolly stated that there will be a tree planting for Arbor Day on April 25th at Parkview School.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilor Chavez-Lopez stated that Ortega Road needs "Children at Play" or "Slow" signs.

Councilor Pargas stated that he would like to place the selection of a Mayor Pro-Tem on the next agenda. Councilor Pargas stated that he feels it is a good idea for other Councilors to be cross-trained in that position. Councilor Monette asked that the list of previous committee positions be provided so that they can be compared to the current committee positions. Councilor Monette stated that since changes are being made, maybe some of the committee positions that were not changed should be changed. Mayor Bhasker stated that as Mayor, committee appointments are his responsibility.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Bhasker stated that there was a miscalculation on an electric meter at the wastewater treatment plant. Mayor Bhasker stated that the back-billing of approximately \$70,000.00 was placed on the City's bill from the SEC. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City sent the SEC a letter asking for an explanation of the back-billing. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City has not yet received a response to the letter.

a. Organizational Chart – Community Services Division (Recreation & Tourism)

Mayor Bhasker reviewed a new organizational chart which includes the Recreation Department, Youth Center and the Tourism Department as well as new job descriptions for Sports Coordinator (Seasonal), Tourism Clerk and Community Services Superintendent. Mayor Bhasker stated that the Administration is trying to consolidate what is currently in place and that the Chamber of Commerce could assist the City with events if needed. Mr. Salome stated that as the City's personnel changes, the Administration tries to maximize the resources currently in place by altering flow charts. Some discussion followed.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve the organizational chart and job descriptions. The motion was seconded by Councilor Jaramillo.

Councilor Monette stated that he was not sure if the item could be considered under Mayor's Report. Mr. Salome stated that the change is an administrative one that has been shared with the City Council so that the minutes provide a permanent record of all administrative changes. Mr. Salome stated that item could be included under Discussion and Deliberation if the City Council so chooses.

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Councilor Hicks made a motion to postpone consideration to the next City Council meeting. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

b. Committee Appointments – Committee to Discuss Goals & Objectives for New Police Chief

Mayor Bhasker stated that in light of the current Police Chief retiring in June, he would like to appoint a committee to create a list of goals and objectives for the new Police Chief. Mayor Bhasker stated that he would like to appoint Councilor Jaramillo (as Chair), Councilor Chavez-Lopez and Councilor Pargas to the committee. Mayor Bhasker stated he would like the committee to bring their list of goals and objectives to the City Council for consideration. Mayor Bhasker stated that any of the City Councilors are welcome to participate. Mayor Bhasker stated that he hopes the public would submit their ideas to the committee. Mayor Bhasker stated that he would like to have the list ready prior to the Police Chief retiring in June. Mr. Salome stated the City Council would vote on the list as a whole and then it is up to the Mayor to hire a Police Chief with those goals and objectives in mind. Some discussion followed.

c. Personnel Changes

Councilor Hicks motioned to approve the personnel changes as read by Mayor Bhasker:

Richard Lopez – 4-18-14 – Police – Resignation
Britta Herweg-Samuels – 4-22-14 – Library – Completed Probation – A-32 to A-34
Richie Chavez – 4-21-14 – Wastewater – Completed Probation – C-17 to C-19
Humberto Lucero – 4-16-14 – Fire – Certification (EMT-B) – A-26 to A-27
Ruby Lopez – 4-1-14 – Finance – Additional Job Duties – E-30 to E-35
Deanna Saenz – 4-1-14 – Finance – Additional Job Duties – B-26 to B-30
Jeanette Lukesh – 5-1-14 – Finance – Merit/Keep Flow Chart Alignment – G-29 to G-30
Dustin Aldrich – 4-1-14 – Fire – Certification (FFII) – C-31 to C-34

Temporary New Hires: Eric Sewell

Temporary Renewals: Emena Gonzales, Rick Griego, Daniel Chavez, Paul Marquez, Carlos Alvarado, Ramiro Garza, Albert Hernandez, George Romero, Mike Jojola, Elias Jacquez, Tony Silva, Regina Valencia, Sergio Cuevas, Angelica Vega, Michael Padilla, Jeremy Chavez, Brittany McDaniel, Ryan Romero

Student Workers: Matthew Jojola, Tamera Chavez, Maria Alderete, Giovanna Rosas, Deanna Blair,

Samantha Maldonado, Geir Hareland

Referees (9), Zumba (2)

Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

d. Business Registrations

Councilor Romero motioned to approve the business registrations as read by Mayor Bhasker:

AccuStripe Inc. – Out of Town – Albuquerque, NM – Corporation – Parking Lot Striping & Signage
Ava's Kettle Corn – Out of Town – Belen, NM – Donetta Torrez – Kettle Corn
Post-Tensioning Reinforcing Services – Out of Town – Albuquerque, NM – Edward Aragon – Construction
Rodriguez Plastering – Out of Town – Las Cruces, NM – David Rodriguez – Construction
Christina Tenorio LMT, CHES – Out of Town – 3090 Tenorio Drive, Socorro – Christina Tenorio – Massage Therapy
Enriquez Family Shop – C-2 – 326 5th Street (Flea Market) – Enriquez Saavedra & Juanita Mohsen – Apparel, Accessories, Shoes, Concession
Advanced Painting LLC – Out of Town – Albuquerque, NM – Corporation – Painting & Construction

Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

e. Voucher Run

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve vouchers 129622 to 129921 in the amount of \$1,195,289.10, plus Payroll Transfers (\$299,576.55), for a total of \$1,494,865.65. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

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f. Announcement – Next City Council Meeting Date and Time – April 5, 2010 @ 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next City Council meeting would be held on May 5, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:43 p.m., Councilor Hicks motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation

/s/

Ravi Bhasker, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/

Pat Salome, City Clerk