

**City of Socorro Regular Scheduled City Council Meeting**  
**City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801**  
**April 16, 2018**

Mayor Ravi Bhasker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Stephanie Saavedra, City Clerk, took roll call. Members present at roll call were: Mayor Ravi Bhasker, Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez, Councilor Anton Salome, Councilor Deborah Dean, Councilor Peter Romero, Councilor Michael Olguin, Councilor Toby Jaramillo and Councilor Nick Fleming. Councilor Gordy Hicks was absent.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Connor Johnston led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF APRIL 16, 2018 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA**

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

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES**

**a. April 2, 2018**

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

**PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS**

Mayor Bhasker congratulated City employees Mike Czosnek (Administration), Mable Gonzales (Finance), Abie Baca (Gas), Shanon Crespín (Street), Reyes Rosas (Auto Maintenance) and Rick Gutierrez (Landfill) on their retirement. Mayor Bhasker and the City Council thanked the employees for their many years of hard work and dedication to the job. Rick Gutierrez was present to receive his plaque and thanked the Mayor and City Council.

Councilor Hicks arrived.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

**a. Connor's 5K – Connor Johnston**

Connor Johnston invited everyone to his 5K and 1 Mile Walk on April 21, 2018 to raise money for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. Connor stated that the first 200 people to sign up will receive a t-shirt.

Herb Anderson stated that he would like to develop a rehabilitation center for the homeless in the City's industrial park. Councilor Chavez-Lopez asked what kind of funding will be used for the project. Mr. Anderson stated that he would be applying for grants but would not do so until he had the City's permission for use of the land. Councilor Romero asked if there were plans for the facility. Mr. Anderson stated that there is not a plan yet. Mayor Bhasker stated that another agency has already moved forward with a similar project. Councilor Chavez-Lopez, who is also the director of the El Camino Real Housing Authority, stated that she would be happy to meet with Mr. Anderson to show him plans for the permanent supportive housing project that are already in place and moving forward.

Bill Stone, the NM Tech liaison, stated that recent events at NM Tech include a carnival and the annual Inventors & Entrepreneurs Workshop. Mr. Stone stated that he will be attending the Higher Education Governance Summit later this week.

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**DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION**

**a. Resolution No. 18-04-16a – Asset Management Plan**

Donald Monette, City Administrator, presented Resolution No. 18-04-16a which, if approved, adopts an asset management plan for the City of Socorro, adopts a reserve policy identifying an allocation of reserves to fund the asset management plan and establishes a rate schedule adequate to fund the reserve.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Resolution No. 18-04-16a. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

**b. Resolution No. 18-04-16b – Utility Service for Seriously Ill Individuals**

Mr. Monette presented Resolution No. 18-04-16b which, if approved, formally adopts, as City policy, State Statute 62-8-10 which allows for the continuation of natural gas and water services for individuals who are seriously ill and do not have the financial resources to pay their utility charges.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Resolution No. 18-04-16b. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

**c. Resolution No. 18-04-16c – Banking Resolution (First State Bank)**

Mr. Monette presented Resolution No. 18-04-16c which is needed in order to update the signature cards for the City's bank accounts located at First State Bank.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Resolution No. 18-04-16c. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

**d. Resolution No. 18-04-16d – Banking Resolution (Wells Fargo)**

Mr. Monette presented Resolution No. 18-04-16d which is needed in order to update the signature cards for the City's bank accounts located at Wells Fargo.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Resolution No. 18-04-16d. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

**e. Recreation Department – Youth Sports Concussion Policy**

Mr. Monette explained that the City's liability insurance carrier has recommended that the City adopt a concussion policy for youth sports. Councilor Olguin stated that National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) offers free online training and certification and suggested that the City add the link to the policy

Councilor Hicks made a motion to adopt the City of Socorro Youth Sports Concussion Policy with the addition of a link to the free online training and certification through the NFHS. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

**f. City Substance Abuse Policy – Medical Marijuana - Discussion**

Mayor Bhasker stated that the issue of medical marijuana use in the workplace has been raised. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City's policy allows for the use of medications, such as opiates, with a valid prescription and needs to consider whether or not the City will allow the same policy for medical marijuana. Councilor Chavez-Lopez stated that allowing the use of medical marijuana by employees could negatively affect the City receiving federal grants. Some discussion followed.

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Mayor Bhasker stated that the City will do more research and bring the topic back to the City Council at a future meeting.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **a. Appointments to Mural Committee**

Mr. Monette stated that the Administration is still working on finding people to appoint to the Mural Committee.

## **DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR REPORTS**

Jim Dewey Brown, Tourism Director & Events Manager, stated that City employee Felipe Romero (who was at the meeting) has been busy working on tourism related items while he has been busy with events at the rodeo arena. Mr. Brown stated that Socorro has been so busy with rodeos that one local business (which is a national franchise) asked the high school rodeo participants not to come back because they could not accommodate them. Mayor Bhasker stated that he realizes there is high demand during events but that is the type of economic development everyone has been asking for. Mr. Brown stated that he turned in a proposal to host 8 out of 10 high school rodeos in Socorro and is waiting to hear back from the board.

Ruby Lopez, Finance Officer, stated that the online payment system has been inoperable since March 1<sup>st</sup> due to a software issue and she has a meeting on April 17<sup>th</sup> to try and resolve the issue. Ms. Lopez stated that she is currently working on the budget and meeting with the Budget Committee weekly. Ms. Lopez stated that the delinquent budget billing program is currently open to interested parties. Mayor Bhasker stated that gross receipts revenues are down 10% from this time last year. Mayor Bhasker stated that the Administration has decided to decrease the hours for the itsQuest contract workers to 3 days per week in order to help with the budget. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City's initial medical renewal for employees is 19%. Mayor Bhasker stated that he does not want to increase gross receipts tax.

Michael Lucero, Sanitation, Landfill and Recycling Superintendent, stated that operations are normal in the Sanitation, Recycling and Landfill departments. Mr. Lucero stated that crews have been busy picking up litter due to the high winds. Mr. Lucero stated that after being down for maintenance, the commercial sanitation truck would be back in operation tomorrow.

Isacc Angel, Gas Superintendent, stated that crews have been busy installing test stations on the main line. Mr. Angel stated that the current meter audit is ongoing. Mr. Angel stated that crews are also busy with the annual survey and preparing the public safety awareness "mail outs". Mr. Angel stated that crews will soon begin routine line replacements.

Mayor Bhasker stated that he had some concerns regarding the amount of interaction between the City Council and City employees. Mayor Bhasker stated that the Councilors should field their questions or concerns through either himself or the City Administrator. Mayor Bhasker stated that an employee who is approached by a Councilor could feel intimidated or harassed. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City Council is responsible for setting policy and the City Administration is responsible for implementing that policy. Councilor Dean stated that she feels the Councilors wear many hats and does not mean to manage employees but rather be out there and available. Mayor Bhasker stated that he does not mean an employee cannot speak to a Councilor as a member of the public but should not approach a Councilor as an employee. Councilor Olguin asked if an employee can be on a committee with Councilors if they are developing a policy. Mayor Bhasker stated that it would be fine as long as the employee was appointed to the committee by the Administration. Councilor Olguin stated that an employee's input would be valuable

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when creating policy. Mayor Bhasker stated that the "Department Director Reports" section of the Council meeting agenda should be used as time for the City Council to ask Department Heads questions.

Joe Gonzales, Fire Chief, provided a handout to the Mayor and Council. Chief Gonzales stated that the department has been very busy. Chief Gonzales stated that the new ambulance should be delivered by the end of the fiscal year. Chief Gonzales stated that employee training is ongoing. Mayor Bhasker commented that there have been a lot of ambulance runs to Veguita. Chief Gonzales stated that he has approached AMR to take over that portion of the County but they are not interested. Chief Gonzales stated that there will be an audit in May and he is hoping the department's ISO rating can change from a 5 to a 4. Chief Gonzales reminded residents not to burn vegetation if it is windy.

Mayor Bhasker stated that Polo Pineda, IT Director, will be getting additional job duties including procurement, economic development and the management of items related to the Socorro Electric Cooperative. Mr. Pineda stated that he manages the messaging system which has over 650 members. Mr. Pineda stated that he also manages the City's tourism website and the government website which is ADA compliant. Mr. Pineda stated that all of the grants are up to date and all of the grant reimbursements have been submitted. Mr. Pineda stated that he manages the City's GPS program and that 90% of the City's vehicles have a GPS unit. Mr. Pineda stated that the mural contest closes on May 7, 2018.

Demecio Silva, Street Department Director, stated that the traffic lights on California Street stopped working recently due to high winds. Mr. Silva stated that in that situation, the NMDOT will reset the lights but the City is responsible for replacing burned out lights and providing either stop signs or police presence until the light is fixed. Mr. Silva stated that crews are currently cutting weeds in the Santa Fe Lane/Main Street area along the railroad tracks. Mr. Silva stated that for events, he would like to purchase a small tent to use together with the small tent the City already owns.

Val Alonzo, along with Regina Valencia from Finley Gym & the Youth Center, stated that youth flag football and youth cheerleading is almost over and that the participants will receive trophies and/or ribbons. Ms. Alonzo stated that the department is currently taking registrations for youth baseball, adult softball, swim lessons and the swim team. Ms. Alonzo stated that lifeguard certification will take place May 4-6 at the NM Tech swimming pool. Ms. Alonzo thanked the crew from the Water Department for assisting with painting and maintenance at the gym.

Chelsea Lyons, Library Director, provided a handout to the Mayor and Council. Ms. Lyons stated that a four way stop has been installed in front of the library at the intersection of Park Street & McCutcheon Street. Ms. Lyons stated that crews are currently installing fencing and a locking gate at the library. Ms. Lyons stated that there are two vacancies on the Library Board to which Mayor Bhasker suggested asking the librarian from NM Tech if he/she is interested in serving. Ms. Lyons stated that the library still participates in the RIF Program (Reading is Fundamental) which provides children in grades kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade with free books. Ms. Lyons invited everyone to attend the Cinco de Mayo event on May 5<sup>th</sup> from noon to 2:00 p.m.

Jay Santillanes, Transportation Director, stated that the airport has received a State grant for the electrical vault. Mr. Santillanes stated that high winds have affected flights in and out of the airport. Mr. Santillanes stated that the Transportation Department no longer provides the route to the dialysis center in Los Lunas and is only doing the on demand rides and the route to the Railrunner.

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Mike Winders, Police Chief, provided a handout to the Mayor and Council of Police Department stats from March 2018. Chief Winders stated that a recent arrest on Highway 60 netted a large amount of marijuana and CDB oil. Chief Winders stated that officers recently saved a man who was trapped in a car that was overturned in a ditch.

Lupe Tarango, Dispatch Director, provided a handout to the Mayor and Council of Dispatch Department stats from March 2018. Mr. Tarango stated that dispatch staff began their new annual training cycle. Mr. Tarango stated that there will be a State NCIC audit in May and an FBI NCIC audit in July neither of which he foresees any issues. Mr. Tarango stated that the Socorro dispatch center is not eligible for upgraded equipment until 2021. Mayor Bhasker stated that Mr. Tarango will be taking over as director of the animal shelter. Mr. Tarango stated that there had not been any citations issued by animal control in quite some time and he will be making sure that violators of the animal control ordinance receive citations.

Ms. Saavedra stated that the City started accepting applications for summer youth jobs and that the program will be advertised in the newspaper, utility bill flyer and on the website. Ms. Saavedra stated that there are currently advertisements for a mechanic position and lifeguard positions. Ms. Saavedra stated that she will be scheduling the annual substance abuse training meeting for new employees. Ms. Saavedra stated that she continues to manage and participate in monthly POC and Safety Committee meetings. Mayor Bhasker stated that Ms. Saavedra also handles all aspects of the City's liability insurance including auto, worker's compensation, auto, airport, etc. Mayor Bhasker stated that in regards to the medical insurance, he would like to offer a higher deductible plan to the employees, along with the current plan, and allow the employees to choose the plan that is best for them.

Mr. Monette stated that he has been working with Socorro County on a memorandum of understanding for the annual exchange of funds (the County provides jail service and the City provides ambulance service). Mr. Monette stated that he had spoken with Dennis Engineering staff that morning regarding various projects. Mr. Monette stated that he has been attending several meetings including STEM and broadband meetings at NM Tech, budget committee meetings and animal control ordinance update meetings. Mr. Monette stated that once he has reviewed the final draft of the new animal control ordinance, he will forward it to the City attorney for review.

**NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Councilor Hicks made a motion to go into executive session. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to go back into regular session. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Bhasker reported out of executive session the discussion of one personnel matter. No action was taken.

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**MAYOR'S REPORT**

**a. Personnel Changes**

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

Felix Saavedra - 3-12-18 – Water - Transfer to Customer Service Position - O-33 to O-35  
Felipe Romero - 4-1-18 – Tourism - Transfer to Office Manager Position - A-21 to A-25  
Chris Carrillo - 4-16-18 – Landfill - New Hire\*(Landfill Gatekeeper) - A-25  
Jim Dewey Brown - 4-1-18 – Tourism - Additional Job Duties/Merit - B-42 to B-48  
Donald Monette - 4-1-18 – Administration - Appointed to City Treasurer (Maintains City Administrator Position) - \$9,417/Month  
Lloyd Martinez - 4-1-18 – Utilities - Additional Job Duties - \$7,742/Month  
Stephanie Saavedra - 4-1-18 – Administration - Appointed to City Clerk - \$6,517/Month  
Polo Pineda - 4-1-18 – Administration - Additional Job Duties - E-48 to E-54  
Ruby Lopez - 4-1-18 – Finance - Promotion to Finance Officer - \$4,584/Month  
Lupe Tarango - 4-1-18 - Dispatch/Animal Shelter - Additional Job Duties - L-40 to L-46  
Joe Gonzales - 4-1-18 – Fire – Merit - \$6,151/Month  
Patrick Gonzales - 4-13-18 - Animal Shelter – Resignation

Temporary New Hires: None

Temporary Renewals: Elias Jacquez, Chris Carrillo, Paul Foulfont, Jerry Griego, David Chavez, Zach Anaya, Tiara Jojola, Justin Lopez, Ray Aragon, James Chavez, Steven Chavez, Deekota Chavez, Wade Dixon, Marcia Amaro, Eva Chavez, Ever Sedillo

Student Workers: Taylor Saavedra, Damian Townsend, Ambriel Mauldin, Lucas Madril, Amanda Torres

Referees (7), Zumba/Yoga (4)

Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

**b. Business Registrations**

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

Inhalers Isle - C-2 - 301 S California Street - Philip & Cheyenne Holt & Tischa Becker - Hookah Lounge  
Biotec Partners LLC - Out of Town - Albuquerque, NM – Corporation - Pest Control  
GK Page Transport Inc. - Out of Town - In Socorro County – Corporation - Trucking  
MWI Inc. - Out of Town - Albuquerque, NM – Corporation - Electrical Contractor

Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

**c. Voucher Run**

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve vouchers 144201 to 144484 in the amount of \$887,869.68 plus Payroll Transfers (\$316,317.61), for a total of \$1,204,187.29. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

**d. Announcement – Next City Council Meeting Dates and Times**

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next regular City Council meeting will be held on Monday, May 7, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

At 7:57 p.m., Councilor Hicks motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

**THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
/s/  
**Ravi Bhasker, Mayor**

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
/s/  
**Stephanie Saavedra, Deputy Clerk**