

City of Socorro Regular City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
April 1, 2019

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 Anton Salome, Councilor Deborah Dean, Councilor Nick Fleming, Councilor Michael Olguin, Councilor Gordy Hicks, Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez and Councilor Toby Jaramillo. Councilor Peter Romero was absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bhasker led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF APRIL 1, 2019 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. March 18, 2019

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

PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS

a. Recognition of Animal Shelter Volunteers

Mayor Bhasker, the City Council and Animal Shelter staff presented certificates to three people who volunteer at the City's Animal Shelter. Mayor Bhasker thanked Michael Donovan, Stephanie Mitchell and Ruth White for their hard work and dedication to the Animal Shelter. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City will receive a \$75,000 State appropriation for improvements to the animal shelter.

PUBLIC FORUM

a. Connor's Causes 5K – Connor Johnston

Connor Johnston invited everyone to his 5K and 1 Mile Walk on April 6, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. at the Socorro Plaza to raise money for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. Connor is the grandson of Councilor Gordy Hicks.

JC Trujillo invited everyone to attend a Town Hall meeting regarding Adverse Childhood Experiences on April 18, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. at Sarracino Middle School.

Dr. Peter Anselmo invited everyone to participate in the 4th Annual Inventors and Entrepreneurs Workshop on April 12th and 13th in the NM Tech Fidel Ballroom. Dr. Anselmo thanked the City for once again providing scholarships for community residents who are interested in participating.

Dr. Bill Stone, NM Tech liaison, stated that in regards to the recent NM Legislative session, NM Tech has not yet received a full funding report but hopes to get that information soon. Dr. Stone stated that NM Tech is still hiring new faculty members. Dr. Stone stated that enrollment numbers are still slightly down but that they should steady out soon. Dr. Stone stated that the NM Tech Spring Fling will be held the weekend of April 12th and the community is invited to attend. Dr. Stone stated that the State of NM approved NM Tech's alternative teaching licensure program.

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DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

a. RFP Responses and Information – Long-Term Wholesale Power Supply, Scheduling Services and Project Capital Financing

Nann Winter, one of the City's attorneys, stated that the Socorro Electric Cooperative (SEC) filed an application with the Public Regulation Commission (PRC) to raise rates. Ms. Winter stated that the PRC received enough protests to have a full review of SEC's application. Ms. Winter stated that a hearing for a full review has been scheduled for June 24-28 and testimony from protestors and intervenors is due by May 22nd. Ms. Winter stated that a public comment meeting in Socorro was requested and that the SEC is opposing the filing. Ms. Winter stated that in 2018, the SEC was put on notice that effective 1-1-2020, the SEC will be considered as trespassing on City property (in the industrial corridor). Ms. Winter stated that the SEC is a month to month franchise tenant and they have been asked to vacate the industrial corridor.

Mayor Bhasker stated that on average, people are paying 15.5 cents per kilowatt hour and the City will be able to offer a much lower rate.

Ed Reyes, an independent consultant, stated that in early 2016, the City did a feasibility study for municipal electric services and presented the results at a May 2016 town hall meeting. Mr. Reyes stated that the results helped create an RFP for three phases of a project. Mr. Reyes stated the City then passed an electric power ordinance to establish a City-owned electric utility service. Mr. Reyes stated that the City received three RFP's, issued a request for best and final offers and received two offers back by 2-8-19 (McQuarry and Guzman Energy). Mr. Reyes stated an objective assessment of the proposals was then made and are based on a 7-year contract with two phases – design/financing and construction/implementation. Mr. Reyes stated that an evaluation committee has been established to review the assessments and offer a recommendation to the City Council. Mayor Bhasker stated that the committee, made up of a member from Socorro Schools, a member from NM Tech, an industrial user and a person with a background in engineering, will evaluate the assessments. Mayor Bhasker stated that their final recommendation will be presented to the City Council for consideration.

Mr. Reyes answered questions from the City Council. Mayor Bhasker thanked Ms. Winter and Mr. Reyes for attending the meeting.

b. RFP Award – Airport Engineering Services

Polo Pineda, IT Director, stated that RFP's were received on March 13, 2019 for airport engineering services. Mr. Pineda stated that after the RFP's were reviewed and rated, he is recommending that the contract be awarded to Molzen Corbin. Kent Freier, from Molzen Corbin, stated that upcoming projects at the airport include the construction of a new electrical vault, construction of a new taxi lane and the acquisition of a new sweeper.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to award the contract to Molzen Corbin. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

c. Resolution No. 19-04-01 – Audit Acceptance Resolution

Ruby Lopez, Finance Director, presented Resolution No. 19-04-01 which, if approved, accepts and approves the completed audit report and findings for fiscal year 2018.

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Councilor Chavez-Lopez made a motion to approve Resolution No. 19-04-01. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Bhasker stated that the new minimum wage law will be effective across New Mexico on January 1, 2020 and the City Administration is working to address the change.

b. Budget Resolution No. 8 - Revised

Resources are Fire Protection Distribution Increase (\$4,190.00) – Requirements are Repair & System Maintenance (\$19,852.00) – The increase is needed to allow for the distribution increase and to allow for expenditures.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Budget Resolution No. 8. Seconded by Councilor Dean, motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Salome stated that the Seery Invitational is being held April 1st and 2nd.

Demecio Silva, Street Superintendent, stated that the road improvements on Western Hills are almost complete and improvements on South California Street will begin April 2nd.

Cindy Rivera, Recreation Director, stated that Finley Gym's 1st Annual First Responders Basketball Tournament was a big success.

Councilor Salome stated that the first senior bingo was a big success and the next bingo will be held April 12th.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Bhasker thanked everyone who worked on the grant/loan for improvements to the wastewater treatment plant.

Mayor Bhasker stated that the City Administration and Department Heads had a successful meeting with Representative Xochitl Torres-Small and that Representative Torres-Small will periodically have a representative in Socorro to take calls on her behalf.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

MAYOR'S REPORT

a. Reporting on Personnel Changes

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

Carlos Valenzuela - 3-12-19 – Police - Termination

Dustin Aldrich - 3-15-19 – Fire - Resignation

Elvires Otero - 3-31-19 – Fire - Resignation

Resen Messer - 4-12-19 – Fire - Resignation

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Scott Crespín - 4-15-19 – Fire - Resignation
Gonzalo Lopez - 3-25-19 – Police - Resignation

Seconded by Councilor Salome, motion passed unanimously.

b. Business Registrations

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

S & R Landscaping LLC - Out of Town - Veguita, NM - Rosa Ruiz - Landscaping Services
Culpepper & Merriweather Circus - C-2 - Fairgrounds Road (County Fairgrounds) - Eugene Key - Entertainment

Seconded by Councilor Salome, motion passed unanimously.

c. Next City Council Meeting Announcement

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next City Council meeting will be held on Monday, April 15, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:28 p.m., Councilor Hicks motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation

/s/
Ravi Bhasker, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/
Stephanie Saavedra, City Clerk