

City of Socorro Regular City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
September 2, 2014

Mayor Ravi Bhasker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Pat Salome, City Clerk, took roll call. Members present at roll call were: Mayor Ravi Bhasker, Councilor Donald Monette, Councilor Michael Olguin, Councilor Peter Romero, Councilor Ernest Pargas and Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez. Councilor Toby Jaramillo, Councilor Gordy Hicks and Councilor Nick Fleming were absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bhasker led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 2, 2014 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

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

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

a. August 18, 2014

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

PUBLIC FORUM

Ernest Anders introduced himself as the first 90 year old man to walk across America. Mr. Anders stated that a World War II LST (landing ship tank) was found and has been fully restored. Mr. Anders stated that he is walking from San Diego, California to Brunswick, Georgia in order to raise funds and support for the LST so that it can be returned to Normandy and placed in the same spot 75 years later. Mr. Anders stated that he is looking for runners to run alongside him, escorts, sponsors and donations for the ship. Mr. Anders stated that he will be running into Socorro on September 18th and leaving on September 20th.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

a. Resolution No. 14-09-02a – Approving City of Socorro 4th Quarter Financial Report

Mable Gonzales, City Treasurer, presented Resolution No. 14-09-02a which, if approved, adopts the 4th quarter financial report for fiscal year 2013-2014. Ms. Gonzales stated that approval of the resolution satisfies a new requirement from DFA. Ms. Gonzales stated that the report shows that the ending cash balance for the prior year matches the beginning cash balance for the new year.

Councilor Monette made a motion to approve Resolution No. 14-09-02a. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

b. Resolution No. 14-09-02b – Application for Funding to NMFA for a Long-Term Master Water Planning Document

Mayor Bhasker presented Resolution No. 14-09-02b which, if approved, authorizes the submission of an application for financial assistance and project approval to the New Mexico Finance Authority. Mayor Bhasker introduced Suzanne Smith who has been assisting the City with the City's water rights. Ms. Smith stated that she has been doing water rights work for 35 years and thanked the City for allowing her to assist the City with water resource planning. Ms. Smith stated that the first water supply in Socorro was established in 1887 and the City has plenty of water rights. Ms. Smith stated that the funds, if received, will allow the City to develop a long term master water plan.

Councilor Monette made a motion to approve Resolution No. 14-09-02b. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

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c. Resolution No. 14-09-02c – FY 2014-2015 SCCOG Participation

Mayor Bhasker presented Resolution No. 14-09-02c which, if approved, would allow the City to participate in the South Central Council of Governments for FY 14-15 along with payment of membership dues of \$2,663. Mayor Bhasker stated that the resolution requests a voting delegate and alternate be named and that in the past, he was the voting delegate and Councilor Hicks was the alternate.

Councilor Hicks arrived.

Mayor Bhasker stated that funding agencies look to see if an entity is a part of a Council of Governments when considering funding. Mr. Salome stated that approval of the resolution means the City is a member of the South Central Council of Governments and their activities. Councilor Olguin stated that he has talked to the Eastern New Mexico COG representative and stated that that representative is very active with the municipalities they represent. Councilor Hicks stated that he spoke with Jay Armijo, from the SCCOG, and that Mr. Armijo did not attend the meeting as he thought the resolution had already been passed. Councilor Romero stated that he feels there needs to be more reporting from the SCCOG to the City. Councilor Hicks stated that the SCCOG now has an engineer who will be based out of Socorro. Mayor Bhasker stated that there does need to be more dialogue between the SCCOG and the City and stated that he would support postponing the item until Mr. Armijo could attend the meeting.

Councilor Olguin made a motion to postpone the item. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Salome stated that there have been times the SCCOG is very active and there have been times when they have been less active depending on the political atmosphere and personnel. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City had been approached in the past about becoming part of the Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments. Mayor Bhasker stated that he feels the City should be part of a COG.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mable Gonzales, City Treasurer, stated that the Utility Committee has met several times and are currently putting a proposal together.

Councilor Olguin stated that a representative from the State Economic Development Office will be at the Socorro Chamber of Commerce on September 4th at 10:00 a.m. and invited everyone to attend.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilor Chavez-Lopez stated that she has attended other public meetings and noticed the elected officials have iPads or laptop computers. Councilor Chavez-Lopez stated that she feels the Council would have quicker access to packet information if they had a laptop or iPad. Councilor Olguin stated that having a laptop or iPad would make it easier to have digitized documents. Mayor Bhasker stated that he wanted to make it clear that elected officials must adhere to the Open Meetings Act and that if used improperly, technology can cause open meetings problems. Mr. Salome stated that e-mails between elected officials would be considered public record. Some discussion followed.

Mayor Bhasker stated that the acquisition of the National Guard Armory by the City had been completed. Mayor Bhasker stated that he will be presenting some information to the City Council at the next meeting about a State Statute that would allow an increase to the Lodger's Tax which would be used for the operation and maintenance of a civic center. Mr. Salome stated that the City Council will need to decide if they want to use the armory as a civic center and if yes, decide how it will be funded. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City will have to develop guidelines for the use of the civic center.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilor Monette made a motion to go into executive session. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

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

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

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Bhasker stated that the City Administration met with Christensen and Smith, the firm hired by the SEC. Mayor Bhasker stated that in a letter addressed to Board Chair Ann Dorough dated July 28, 2014 (33 days prior), the City requested that the SEC hold a member/owner meeting so that member/owners could see what was being proposed by both the SEC and the City and allow them to vote on what they may prefer. Mayor Bhasker stated that to date, there has been no response from Ms. Dorough. Mayor Bhasker stated that at a recent SEC Board meeting, Ms. Dorough did not bring up the idea of such a meeting. Mayor Bhasker stated that the SEC did have an agenda item at their last meeting regarding a \$270,000 grant they received (from CFC) to fight the City. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City is just requesting the member/owners be allowed to vote on the matter.

a. Final Budget Approval – FY 2014-2015

Mayor Bhasker read into the minutes that the New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration, Local Government Division had reviewed and approved the City's 2014-2015 budget.

Councilor Monette made a motion to approve DFA's approval of the 2014-2015 budget. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

b. Reporting on Personnel Changes

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

Paula Mertz – 9-30-14 – Library – Retirement

Donald Padilla – 10-1-14 – Library – Library Director – G-38 to G-45

Toby Jaramillo – 8-1-14 – Fire – Received FF II Certification – A-27 to A-30

Lupe Tarango – 9-1-14 – Dispatch – Hired in New Dispatch Director Position – H-22 to H-33

Edward Apachito – 9-2-14 – Parks – Adjust to Mid-Range – G-19 to G-21

Adolfo Baca – 9-2-14 – Water – Change Job Title to Operator III – I-26 to I-28

Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Bhasker stated that the City Council discussed personnel changes for the Gas and Street departments. Mayor Bhasker stated that the changes are still being reviewed for budget purposes.

c. Business Registrations

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

The Law Offices of David L. Dotson – C-2 – 203 Manzanares – David L. Dotson – Attorney at Law

A & J Extinguishers – Out of Town – Lemitar, NM – Mario Amaro & Wanita Jones – Sales & Service of Fire Extinguishers

MyCom North America Inc. – Out of Town – Roswell, GA – Corporation – Engineering Services

Kaufman Fire Protection Systems Inc. – Out of Town – Albuquerque, NM – Corporation – Construction – Fire Protection

Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

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d. Next City Council Meeting Announcement

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next City Council meeting would be held on Monday, September 15, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:29 p.m., Councilor Monette motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Olguin, motion passed unanimously.

THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation

/s/
Ravi Bhasker, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/
Pat Salome, City Clerk