

**City of Socorro Regular Scheduled City Council Meeting**  
**City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801**  
**September 15, 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 Michael Olguin, Councilor Nick Fleming, Councilor Donald Monette and Councilor Toby Jaramillo. Councilor Ernest Pargas, Councilor Gordy Hicks, Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez and Councilor Peter Romero were absent.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Bhasker led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2014 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA**

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

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES**

**a. September 2, 2014**

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

**PUBLIC FORUM**

**a. Application for Special Use Permit – Rafel Montoya – 1206 El Camino Real - Withdrawn**

Mayor Bhasker stated that Rafel Montoya had applied for a special use permit for 1206 El Camino Real so that he could build a mobile home park at that location which is currently zoned R-3. Mayor Bhasker stated that Mr. Montoya has withdrawn his request for the special use permit. Mike Czosnek, Building Inspector, stated that a public hearing was held during a Planning and Zoning Commission meeting regarding the request and the P & Z Commission recommended approval of the special use permit to the City Council. Mr. Czosnek stated that after Mr. Montoya realized there was opposition to the special use permit, he decided to withdraw the request. Mr. Czosnek stated that the request was advertised on the City's website and in the local newspaper and that certified letters were sent to neighbors within 100 feet of the location. Mayor Bhasker stated that he had received a petition signed by people opposing the request.

Mark Matthews, President of the Socorro County Fair Board, stated that the recent rodeo held over Labor Day weekend was an overall success. Mr. Matthews stated that he received complaints that there was not a carnival but pointed out that there was a carnival scheduled and the carnival did not show up. Mr. Matthews thanked the City of Socorro for being a sponsor of the event. Mayor Bhasker stated that he would like to meet with members of the Fair Board and possibly have them on an advisory committee for the City's new rodeo arena. Mr. Matthews stated that he would be happy to meet with the Mayor regarding the new rodeo arena.

John Mann stated that he is concerned about speeding in the school zones. Mr. Mann stated that he has already spoken to Police Department personnel regarding the matter and would like to meet with the Mayor. Mayor Bhasker scheduled the meeting for 9:00 a.m. on September 18<sup>th</sup> and asked the Police Chief to attend as well.

Deb Caldwell, from the Chamber of Commerce, invited everyone to attend the Chamber's Membership Appreciation Barbecue on September 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. at the DAV. Ms. Caldwell stated that local band Sauvecito would be playing. Ms. Caldwell stated that the Chamber continues to work on the Socorrofest event. Ms. Caldwell stated that there are several vendors lined up including bands, spirits, food and arts and crafts.

Mayor Bhasker stated that soccer games are being played at the City's new soccer fields. Mayor Bhasker stated that there needs to be signs to direct traffic to the fields as there is currently not access from Highway 60.

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**DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION**

**a. Request for Sidewalk – Corner of Sunset Street and College Avenue**

Shari Montazeri provided a written letter to the Mayor and City Council. Ms. Montazeri stated that she would like to request a sidewalk on College Avenue which is bordering her property located at 809 Sunset. Ms. Montazeri stated that she feels a sidewalk is needed as it is a high traffic walking area. Ms. Montazeri stated that she feels the sidewalk is warranted because she pays property taxes. Mayor Bhasker stated that if placed, the sidewalk would not attach to any other existing sidewalk. Mayor Bhasker stated that there is sidewalk along the south side of College Avenue from California Street to Franklin Street and the north side of College Avenue from Franklin Street to NM Tech. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City will install a cross walk that connects the two areas. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City did replace the sidewalk directly in front of Ms. Montazeri's property on Sunset Drive and feels the City met Ms. Montazeri halfway by doing so.

Councilor Romero arrived.

Mayor Bhasker stated that there is a 50/50 program that Ms. Montazeri could participate where the cost of the sidewalk is shared. Mayor Bhasker stated that there is a long list of residents who have requested sidewalk. Mr. Salome stated that due to the number of requests for sidewalk, it would be difficult to choose who would get sidewalk and who would not. Mr. Salome stated that when the City does road projects, the City tries to include sidewalks but they are not always a priority (due to limited funding). Mr. Czosnek stated that subdivision regulations state that the developer is responsible for installing sidewalks but the regulations do not state who is responsible for maintaining them. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City Council can vote on the matter. Jay Santillanes, Division Director, stated that any sidewalks installed would have to comply with ADA regulations.

Councilor Olguin stated that he lives in the same neighborhood and there is a lot of pedestrian traffic. Councilor Olguin stated that there are no crosswalks connecting the sidewalks on College Avenue. Councilor Olguin stated that he feels the sidewalk needs to be installed.

Councilor Hicks arrived.

Mayor Bhasker stated that it would be costly to place sidewalk along College Avenue's south side. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City will place a crosswalk connecting the sidewalks on the north and south side along College Avenue. Mayor Bhasker stated that the Budget Committee can consider future funds for sidewalk installations. Mayor Bhasker stated that in regard to property taxes, there are other purposes for the taxes such as police and fire, etc. Mr. Montazeri stated that she feels the request is a simple one and would make the City look nicer. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City has worked on surrounding streets and with NM Tech for parking which he feels was a way to make the area look nicer. Ms. Montazeri stated that she feels a crosswalk is a "band aid" solution. Ms. Montazeri stated that she does not feel it is a lot of money and that it is only a small portion of the amount she has paid in taxes.

Councilor Olguin asked where the right of way is located. Mr. Czosnek stated that the rights of way vary depending on location. Councilor Olguin asked who is liable if someone hits the edge of the curb where there is no sidewalk. Mayor Bhasker reiterated that there is sidewalk on the north side of College Avenue and bike lanes along the side of the road.

Councilor Olguin made a motion to install a sidewalk on College Avenue bordering the property located at 809 Sunset. There was no second. Motion died for lack of a second.

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

Mayor Bhasker presented Resolution No. 14-09-02c which, if approved, allows the City's participation in the South Central Council of Governments for 2014-2015. The item was postponed from the previous City Council meeting so that a representative from the SCCOG could attend and answer any questions.

Jay Armijo, Executive Director of the South Central Council of Governments, provided a handout and explained the many ways the SCCOG can assist the City including grant writing, economic development, fiscal agent services, workforce training, advocating for the City at the Legislative and Federal level, assisting with CDBG projects, etc. Mr. Armijo stated that there will be a public hearing on September 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the County Annex building regarding a long-range plan for the State. Mr. Armijo stated that Socorro brings a lot to the SCCOG and Councilor Gordy Hicks has been very involved with SCCOG activities. Councilor Olguin stated that his concern was that the City wasn't getting enough out of the SCCOG but after meeting with Mr. Armijo, he is ready to move forward. Mr. Armijo stated that services to Socorro can be improved and that he will attend more City Council meetings. Mr. Armijo stated that there will be a SCCOG staff member in Socorro located at the County Annex building and that will provide better access to the Socorro community. Mayor Bhasker stated that he learned the T or C airport hangars were all full and asked Mr. Armijo to direct interested parties to the Socorro airport. Mayor Bhasker also asked Mr. Armijo to encourage Sierra County to utilize the City's landfill as he feels our tipping fees may be less than what they currently pay.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Resolution No. 14-09-02c. Seconded by Councilor Olguin, motion passed unanimously.

**c. Change Order No. 1 – Waterline Replacement Project**

Steve Williams, of Dennis Engineering, presented Change Order No. 1 for the Waterline Replacement Project. Mr. Williams stated that the amount of the change order is \$163,687.00. Mr. Williams stated that the purpose of the change order is to include Additive Bid Schedule I (Evergreen waterline) to the project. Mr. Williams stated that the original award was for a portion of the project (NM Tech) and adding the Additive Bid Schedule I still leaves \$33,227.40 for contingencies.

Councilor Monette made a motion to approve Change Order No. 1 for the Waterline Replacement Project. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

**d. Resolution No. 14-09-15a – Police Department**

Mayor Bhasker presented Resolution No. 14-09-15a, which approved, increases the base salaries of City of Socorro police officers and changes the starting salary for new police officers. Mayor Bhasker stated that this is an attempt to improve the benefit package for police officers. Mayor Bhasker stated that the funds for the changes are already in the budget.

Councilor Olguin made a motion to approve Resolution No. 14-09-15a. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

**e. Discussion – Lodger's Tax – Convention Tax**

Mayor Bhasker stated that there is a State Statute that would allow an increase to the Lodger's Tax which would be used for the operation and maintenance of a convention center. Mayor Bhasker stated that the tax can be up to \$2.50 per room but that his suggestion would be \$1.50 per room. Mayor Bhasker stated that the revenue stream would allow the City to use the newly-acquired armory as a convention center. Mayor Bhasker stated that the increase must be in the form of an ordinance. Mayor Bhasker stated that he will present the ordinance to the City Council at a future City Council meeting.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Mayor Bhasker stated that the Utility Committee continues to meet to create a utility new rate structure.

Mr. Salome stated that the Police Oversight Commission continues to meet once a month.

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**DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR REPORTS**

Joe Gonzales, Fire Chief, stated that the Fire Department has acquired two new ambulances. Chief Gonzales stated that several employees attended the recent EMS Expo. Chief Gonzales stated that the department continues with employee training classes. Chief Gonzales stated that the Fire Department hosted the annual barbecue for Fire School and had 230 attendees.

Michael Lucero, Sanitation/Landfill/Recycling Director, stated that operation at the Landfill, Sanitation and recycling departments are normal. Mr. Lucero stated that crews at the landfill are relocating the pile of tree limbs. Mr. Lucero stated that crews at the landfill will start to spread mulch as per the permit plan. Mr. Lucero stated that one sanitation truck is in for repairs.

Mike Winders, Police Chief, provided a handout to the Mayor and Council of Police Department stats from August 2014 (112 arrests, 222 citations, 3 DWI arrests, 236 police reports filed, 16 traffic accidents, 3,435 calls received by dispatch, etc.). Chief Winders thanked the City Council for approving the resolution which increases the salary for police officers. Chief Winders stated that one of the new hires recently started at the Police Academy. Chief Winders stated that the department ordered two new police cars. Chief Winders stated that Officer Bobby Aragon has taken the School Resource Officer position. Chief Winders stated that Officers Padilla and Aragon spoke at Career Day at Parkview Elementary School.

Mable Gonzales, City Treasurer, stated that she attended the New Mexico Municipal League conference where they encouraged all cities to make their city photogenic. Ms. Gonzales stated the speakers encouraged the cities to place photos of their city on their websites as it is free advertisement for New Mexico. Ms. Gonzales stated that she conducted a rate analysis concentrating on commercial meter sizes and classifications and will bring her findings to the Utility Committee.

Mike Czosnek, Building Inspector, stated that the levy certification process is still ongoing.

Jay Santillanes, Utilities Division Director, stated that the Street Department has been working at the rodeo grounds, working on the weed pickup list and putting up (and taking down) the tents for events. Mr. Santillanes stated that the rodeo arena has been inspected and the City is now working on placing signage and grading the area in and around the arena. Mr. Santillanes stated that he attended the recent aviation conference where he received updates from the FAA. Mr. Santillanes stated that the M Mountain Fly In will be held September 27<sup>th</sup> and crews are getting the area ready. Mr. Santillanes stated that Gas Department crews continue natural gas line replacement on Leroy Street. Mr. Santillanes stated that bids will be received soon for the levy project.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Councilor Olguin read a letter from Jocelyn Garcia and Miguel Armendariz who are requesting water service at their residence located at 1202 Pinon Drive. Mayor Bhasker stated that the area in question is an unfinished subdivision and that the developer is responsible for placing the correct infrastructure in the subdivision. Mr. Salome stated that it is the City's responsibility to place a meter but it is the developer's responsibility to extend the lines to the individual lots and the homeowner's responsibility to get a permit. Mr. Salome stated that the problem could also be that a permit was not acquired by the homeowner to put the home on the lot. Mayor Bhasker stated that he would be happy to meet with the residents to find out why there is no service and explain the subdivision rules if necessary.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Mayor Bhasker stated that the City has engaged an appraiser to appraise Socorro Electric Cooperative assets in the City of Socorro. Mayor Bhasker stated that he met with the Director of the NM Rural Electric Cooperative Association to discuss the SEC and to also assure them that the City is trying to work out issues with the SEC. Mayor Bhasker stated that in a recent letter from Ann Dorough, SEC Board President, Ms. Dorough states that she will not entertain a yes/no vote from the member/owners at this time. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City is not interested in condemnation or filing of eminent domain but would simply like the member/owners to be able to vote on what direction they would like to take with the SEC. Mayor Bhasker stated that the cost of electricity would go down 20% if someone other than the SEC provided electricity. Mr. Salome stated that right now there is no one representing the member/owners and they should be able to decide if they are content with the way the current SEC Board and management are managing the SEC. Mayor Bhasker stated that the Administration is asking a consultant to see what the SEC is costing the City as it relates to economic development as well as a review of SEC rates and the morale of member/owners.

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Councilor Jaramillo reminded everyone that the 100 year celebration of San Miguel Church will be held soon.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

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

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

Mr. Salome reported out of executive session the discussion of the personnel change list which will be presented shortly. No action was taken.

**MAYOR'S REPORT**

**a. Resolution No. 14-09-15b – Gas & Street Departments – Job Description/Flow Chart Updates**

Mayor Bhasker presented Resolution No. 14-09-15b which, if approved, adopts new job descriptions, flow charts and personnel changes for the City's Gas and Street departments. Mr. Salome stated that in August, the City Council approved Gas and Street department job descriptions but that they have been modified slightly. Mr. Salome stated that approval of the new job descriptions at tonight's meeting will make them the official job descriptions.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Resolution No. 14-09-15b. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

**b. Personnel Changes**

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

Jay Santillanes – 9-1-14 – Division Director – Job Description Update – S-60 to S-62  
Abie Baca – 9-1-14 – Gas – Job Description Update – DZ-45 to DZ-49  
Rick Trujillo - 9-1-14 – Gas – Job Description Update – L-36 to L-42  
Isacc Angel - 9-1-14 – Gas – Job Description Update – Q-37 to Q-40  
Joe Flores - 9-1-14 – Gas – Job Description Update – H-34 to H-37  
Rene Perez -9-1-14 – Gas – Job Description Update – D-27 to D-34  
Shaun Fernandez - 9-1-14 – Gas – Job Description Update – E-22 to E-27  
David Gutierrez - 9-1-14 – Gas – Job Description Update – D-22 to D-25  
James Padilla -9-1-14 – Gas – Job Description Update – B-19 to B-25  
Shanon Crespín - 9-1-14 – Street – Job Description Update – AZ-44 to AZ-49  
Carlos Garcia -9-1-14 – Street – Job Description Update – B-17 to B-18  
Albert Hernandez - 9-1-14 – Gas – Job Description Update – \$7.50/hr to \$8.00/hr  
Demecio Silva - 9-1-14 – Road Crew – Job Description Update – F-37 to F-47  
Michael Benavidez - 9-1-14 – Road Crew – Job Description Update – G-20 to G-27  
Richard Montano -9-1-14 – Gas – Job Description Update – G-19 to G-25  
Marcus Gawne – 9-24-14 – Fire – Resignation  
Joseph Santillanes – 10-1-14 – Fire – New Hire (FF/EMT Recruit) – A-25  
Luis Espino – 9-1-14 – Fire – Certification (EMT-B License) – A-25 to A-26  
Gabe Sosa – 9-1-14 – Fire – Certification (EMT-B License) – B-26 to B-27  
Daniel Pacheco – 10-1-14 – Fire – Promotion to Lieutenant – H-34 to H-38  
Dustin Aldrich – 9-16-14 – Fire – Certification (Fire Inspection I) – D-34 to D-36  
Britta Herweg-Samuels – 9-16-14 – Library – Certification (Librarian I) – A-34 to A-36  
Candice Smith – 9-16-14 – Library – Merit – K-25 to K-27  
Tom Stidstone – 9-1-14 – Police Auto Maintenance – Salary Adjustment – R-34 to R-36

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Temporary New Hires: None

Temporary Renewals: Emena Gonzales, Rick Griego, Tony Montoya, Paul Marquez, Ramiro Garza, Albert Hernandez, Rick Silva, Elias Jacquez, Tony Silva, Regina Valencia, Sergio Cuevas, Angelica Vega, Michael Padilla, Jeremy Chavez, Kevin Gonzales, Shaina Lopez, Felipe Romero

Student Workers: Giovanna Rosas, Samantha Maldonado, Adrianna Griego, Zach Anaya, Jeremy Gallegos

Referees (10), Zumba (2)

Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

**c. Business Registrations**

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

J & D Contracting Co. Inc. – Out of Town – Albuquerque, NM – Corporation - Construction

Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

**d. Voucher Run**

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve vouchers 131140 to 131470 in the amount of \$998,378.89, plus Payroll Transfers (\$291,341.49), for a total of \$1,289,720.38. Seconded by Councilor Monette, motion passed unanimously.

**e. Announcement – Next City Council Meeting Date and Time – October 6, 2014 @ 6:00 p.m.**

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

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:06 p.m., Councilor Hicks 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**