

City of Socorro Regular Scheduled City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
June 15, 2020

Mayor Ravi Bhasker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Mayor Bhasker took roll call.

Members physically present at roll call were: Mayor Ravi Bhasker

Members remotely present at roll call were: Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez, Councilor Michael Olguin, Jr., Councilor Anton Salome, Councilor Deborah Dean, Councilor Peter Romero and Councilor Nick Fleming. Councilor Toby Jaramillo and Councilor Gordy Hicks were absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bhasker led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Bhasker stated that this City Council meeting is in compliance with the standards set forth by the NM Attorney' General's Office for teleconference meetings held during the COVID-19 pandemic.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 15, 2020 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

a. May 18, 2020

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC FORUM

State Police Captain, Frank Alguire, stated that the NM State Police and the Socorro Police Department have been working well together and NM State Police will continue to support the Socorro Police Department in any way it can. Mayor Bhasker and the City Council thanked Captain Alguire for his comment.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

a. Lease Renewal between City of Socorro & NM Tech for Puerto Seguro Building

Mayor Bhasker stated that the property in the lease is currently being utilized by the Socorro Storehouse and Puerto Seguro. Donald Monette, City Administrator, stated that this is a 5-year lease with NM Tech. Mr. Monette stated that there will be an updated lease for Puerto Seguro forthcoming.

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve the lease renewal between City of Socorro & NM Tech for the Puerto Seguro/Storehouse building. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dean. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

b. ICIP – Public Input & Councilor's Priorities

Mr. Monette stated that the City is currently working on its ICIP and asked anyone who would like a project added to the ICIP to present their information to the City for consideration. Mr. Monette asked the Mayor and City Council to consider which projects they would like to see as the top five priorities. Mr. Monette stated the ICIP is due September 18th and asked that the priority sheets be returned to him by September 1st.

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c. Airport Runway Maintenance Grant Application

Mr. Monette stated that this is the annual grant application for runway maintenance at the City's airport.

Councilor Fleming made a motion to approve the Airport Runway Maintenance Grant Application. The motion was seconded by Councilor Romero. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

d. Bid Award – Airport Runway 15-33 Pavement Maintenance

Mayor Bhasker stated that two bids for pavement maintenance on runway 15-33 were opened on May 19, 2020. Mayor Bhasker stated that Molzen-Corbin is recommending that the bid be awarded to American Airport Maintenance in the amount of \$206,570.08.

Councilor Fleming made a motion to award the bid to American Airport Maintenance in the amount of \$206,570.08. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dean. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

e. Veronica Chavez – Land Valuation

Mayor Bhasker stated that the City Council had previously requested a land valuation for the property that Veronica Chavez wishes the City to vacate. Mayor Bhasker stated that the valuation for both pieces of land requested in the vacation is \$644.

Councilor Salome asked if the purpose of the agenda item is to display the appraisal of the property for Ms. Chavez or if the Administration is seeking to sell the property. Councilor Salome stated that he was under the impression that the City Council was to approve or not approve the request for vacation and that the City Council had already denied the request. Councilor Salome asked where this was headed. Councilor Salome stated that the reasons given for denial was because of the need for access to the other property owners and in case the railroad needs access to the property. Councilor Salome stated that Ms. Chavez stated there was other access to the property but that the access she refers to is the "green ditch" which is a Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District road. Councilor Salome stated that the ditch is physical access but not legal access and the property owners need legal access as the Conservancy "runs" that road.

Mayor Bhasker asked if Councilor Salome had spoken to the other property owners to see if they have concerns regarding access. Councilor Salome stated that it is logical that other property owners would have concerns since they would be losing their legal access to their property. Mayor Bhasker asked if the adjoining property owners were against this vacation and Councilor Salome replied "I don't know but if I were them, I would feel that way".

Councilor Hicks arrived. (6:21 p.m.)

Mayor Bhasker stated that he was under the impression the Council wanted the valuation. Mayor Bhasker stated the City would wait until Ms. Chavez approached the City again to consider further action. Councilor Salome stated that amount is not important, the access is. Mayor Bhasker asked if we know if the other property owners are against the vacation. Mayor Bhasker stated that this item is for information only and no action is needed.

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Councilor Romero asked if the Council could continue to review the new information and vote again at a future meeting to which Mayor Bhasker replied there would only be another vote if Ms. Chavez asks the City again. Councilor Olguin stated that he requested the valuation information and that access to Main Street is not completely shut off. Councilor Salome stated this information should be available in order to make a determination.

f. Resolution No. 20-06-15 – Surplus Equipment

Mayor Bhasker presented Resolution No. 20-06-15 which, if approved, deems several vehicles/equipment as surplus equipment. Mr. Monette stated that the list of items was compiled by Tim Stidstone, Head Mechanic. Mr. Monette stated that these items will also be removed from the City's insurance policy. Councilor Olguin asked what the City will do with the items. Mayor Bhasker stated once deemed surplus, the items can be auctioned or the City can work with other agencies who might need them. Councilor Olguin asked if the City is allowed to donate the items to which Mayor Bhasker replied government to government donations are allowed.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Resolution No. 20-06-15. The motion was seconded by Councilor Romero. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

g. Resolution No. 01A-001 – Ambulance Billing Write-Offs

Ruby Lopez, Finance Officer, presented Resolution No. 01A-001 which, if approved, removes uncollectible ambulance billing accounts from 2014, in the amount of \$142,847.12, from the City's list of accounts.

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve Resolution No. 01A-001. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dean. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

h. City Parks & Property will be Closed for the 4th of July

Mayor Bhasker stated that all City property and parks will be closed on the 4th of July so as to prohibit the congregation of people during this pandemic. Mayor Bhasker stated that NM Tech will be doing the fireworks from the top of the mountain so that people can watch them from their homes. Mayor Bhasker suggested that people remain at their residence to observe the fireworks. Mayor Bhasker stated that the property and parks will be monitored with the help of the Parks Department and the Police Department.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Bhasker stated that there has been a situation where several City employees were exposed to someone who had tested positive for COVID-19. Mayor Bhasker stated that these employees have been asked to quarantine and will have to have a negative test in order to return to work. Mayor Bhasker stated that the situation is no one's fault but the right thing must now be done to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Ms. Lopez stated that 8 City employees were exposed. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City Administration will continue to monitor the situation. Councilor Chavez-Lopez asked if the City has a written compensation/work plan? Mayor Bhasker stated no, not a written plan. Councilor Chavez-Lopez stated that she sent a link to Ms. Lopez regarding a work plan and she will also send it to Mr. Monette. Councilor Olguin stated that the local businesses are doing a great job following the guidelines. Mayor Bhasker agreed and further stated that the Asst. Police Chief has been visiting businesses to make sure they are in

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compliance. Councilor Dean asked if the City could do a marketing campaign letting people from out of town know that masks are required in the Socorro community. Mayor Bhasker stated yes. Councilor Olguin asked if we could supply masks to the local businesses. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City has done one distribution of masks and will be doing another distribution soon. Mayor Bhasker stated that he hopes the steps the City is taking will give people the confidence to start going out to local businesses. Councilor Salome stated that Dicaperl provided PPE to the Senior Center.

a. Personnel Changes

Councilor Romero motioned to approve the Personnel Changes as read by Mayor Bhasker:

Aidan Aragon - 6-10-20 – Fire - Resignation

Leo Petersen - 6-16-20 – Fire - New Hire*(FF/EMT Recruit) - A-32

Autumn Martinez - 6-16-20 - Animal Shelter - New Hire*(Kennel Assistant) - A-24

The motion was seconded by Councilor Dean. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

b. Business Registrations

Councilor Romero motioned to approve the Business Registrations as read by Mayor Bhasker:

Accurate Roofing LLC – Out of Town – Los Lunas, NM – Severiano Hernandez – Roofing Contractor

The motion was seconded by Councilor Dean. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

Chelsea Lyons, Library Director, stated that the library reopened. Ms. Lyons stated that the library is averaging 35 people a day and everyone is following the required guidelines. Ms. Lyons stated that the library closes at 1:00 p.m. daily so employees can clean. Ms. Lyons stated that people drop their books off in the outside drop box and the staff cleans them before redistributing.

Polo Pineda, IT Director, stated that the City has used the notification system a lot during the pandemic to distribute information to the public. Mayor Bhasker suggested everyone sign up for the notification system.

Ms. Lopez stated that the City's preliminary budget has been approved by the State of NM. Ms. Lopez stated that City staff continues to collect on delinquent accounts. Ms. Lopez stated that the radio-read software is being updated. Ms. Lopez stated that she is now working on final budget.

Carlos Savedra, Transportation Director, stated that the staff is giving about 15-20 rides a day locally. Mr. Savedra stated that the department is waiting for the Railrunner to reopen which will restart Socorro's Belen route.

Lloyd Martinez, Utilities Director, stated that the swimming pool and recreation department will remain closed for the time being. Mr. Martinez stated that staff is busy cutting weeds and repairing water leaks. Mr. Martinez stated that the playgrounds and walking paths are open for use but will be closed for the 4th of July. Mr. Martinez stated that staff is getting ready for a large sewer project.

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Councilor Romero asked about the status of code enforcement. Mayor Bhasker stated that the Administration is considering using a police officer in that position. Councilor Olguin asked if the City Council could get an update regarding the levee from Jay Santillanes. Mayor Bhasker stated that he would request an update.

Councilor Hicks stated that the NM Municipal League is discussing the possibility of offering police departments additional training. Mayor Bhasker stated that he feels the Socorro Police Department does an exceptional job but the City is willing to see what they have to offer. Mayor Bhasker stated that people from CYFD as well as mental health providers need to step up and assist the police department on some of the calls that may require their assistance.

c. Voucher Run

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve vouchers 150995 to 151177 in the amount of \$476,556.76, plus Payroll Transfers (\$235,895.14), for a total of \$712,451.90. The motion was seconded by Councilor Romero. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

d. Announcement – Next City Council Meeting Date and Time

Mayor Bhasker suggested the next regular meeting be held July 20, 2020. The City Council agreed.

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next regular City Council meeting will be held on Monday, July 20, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. online using GoToMeeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation

/s/
Ravi Bhasker, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/
Stephanie Saavedra, City Clerk