

City of Socorro Regular Scheduled City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
October 19, 2020

Mayor Ravi Bhasker called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. Mayor Bhasker took roll call.

No Members were physically present

Members remotely present at roll call were: Mayor Bhasker, Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez, Councilor Deborah Dean, Councilor Nick Fleming, Councilor Michael Olguin, Jr., and Councilor Anton Salome. Councilor Gordy Hicks and Councilor Peter Romero 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 OCTOBER 19, 2020 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

Councilor Fleming 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. September 21, 2020

Councilor Fleming made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 21, 2020 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Salome. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC FORUM

None.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

a. Proclamation – Housing America Month 2020

City Administrator Donald Monette read the Housing America Month 2020 Proclamation.

b. Council Meetings in Person

Mayor Bhasker asked for input from the Council to hold meetings in person. Councilor Dean and Chavez-Lopez both agreed that there is a need to meet in person. Mr. Monette would research into having a meeting in person next month.

c. Broadband Feasibility Study – Finley Engineering

Mayor Bhasker advised the Council that together the City, County, NRAO, and New Mexico Tech have the funds to perform a Broadband Feasibility Study. This study will include the entire County.

Andy Heins informed the Council that Finley Engineering will perform the same process that was used in the Sierra County study. The study will include a review of the existing broadband providers in the area, a market analysis, a broadband network design to include fiber and fixed wireless, and a financial analysis.

Councilor Salome asked if they would find funding sources, Mr. Heins replied yes and they do offer this service and with helping submit applications.

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Councilor Olguin made a motion to approve the Broadband Feasibility Study. The motion was seconded by Councilor Salome. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

d. Resolution No. 20-10-19 – MAP CN L100486 (Bullock Avenue)

Mayor Bhasker informed the Council this is a \$457,309.00 road project on Bullock Avenue.

Councilor Fleming made a motion to approve Resolution No. 20-10-19. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dean. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

e. Resolution No. 20-10-19a – COVID-19 Leave Reimbursement

Mayor Bhasker informed the Council that the City has been able to obtain funds from the State to replenish the COVID-19 leave that was taken by 32 employees.

Councilor Fleming made a motion to approve Resolution No. 20-10-19a.

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

f. Resolution No. 20-10-19b – Short-Term Salary Adjustment Included in Salary Schedule

Mayor Bhasker informed the Council that this would make the Short-Term Salary Adjustment irrevocable and rolled into the hourly wage.

Councilor Dean asked why make this change and not leave as is. Mayor Bhasker stated that this change will increase employee salaries and not be revocable by future Councilor or Administrations. Mayor Bhasker also mention that the change would help keep the City in compliance with State mandated minimum wages laws, while not adversely affecting the City budget. This change also would minimize administrative efforts as not all job descriptions would be required to be changed, rather, the new salary schedule would increase, keeping the salary ranges the same.

Councilor Dean asked when this would go into effect. Finance Director Ruby Lopez replied November 1, 2020 if adopted.

Mr. Monette stated that this was causing salary compression in the salary schedule. This step helps when a newly hired employee from making more than an employee that has been here for a year or two.

Councilor Olguin asked how the numbers came about. Ms. Lopez explained how short-term salary adjustment was created and that this came into effect in 1988 and has been increased over the years. Ms. Lopez also discussed how this would make the City compliant with minimum wage laws in 2021.

Councilor Fleming made a motion to approve Resolution No. 20-10-19b. The motion was seconded by Councilor Salome.

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Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

g. Budget Resolutions

Mayor Bhasker asked the Council if they would like to approve the Budget Resolutions individually or as a group.

Councilor Salome asked for an explanation of each resolution and would like more detail on future resolutions.

Ruby Lopez, Finance Director, presented and explained Budget Resolutions:

1. Budget Resolution No. 2 – Lodgers Tax Promo Fund
2. Budget Resolution No. 3 – General Fund
3. Budget Resolution No. 4 – Sedillo Park Renovation
4. Budget Resolution No. 5 – Lodgers Tax Fund
5. Budget Resolution No. 6 – USDA Wastewater Collection System Improvement Project
6. Budget Resolution No. 7 – USDA Wastewater System Improvement Project
7. Budget Resolution No. 8 – Jt. Enterprise/Wastewater Department
8. Budget Resolution No. 9 – Street Improvement
9. Budget Resolution No. 10 – Convention Center Fund
10. Budget Resolution No. 11 – Rodeo Arena Fund
11. Budget Resolution No. 12 – Jt. Enterprise/Solid Waste Department
12. Budget Resolution No. 13 – Special Utility Replacement
13. Budget Resolution No. 14 – Cares Act Reimbursement
14. Budget Resolution No. 15 – Cares Act Funding and Reimbursements
15. Budget Resolution No. 16 – Special Utility Replacement Fund

Councilor Olguin made a motion to approve Budget Resolution No. 2 through No. 16. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dean. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

h. Home Occupation Permit – Inner Evolution Counseling LLC

The Home Occupation Permit with Inner Evolution Counseling LLC was postponed to the next Council Meeting.

i. Industrial Park Lease Agreement – Socorro Soil & Water Conservation District

Will Kolbenshlog gave an overview of Socorro Soil & Water Conservation District's (SSWCD) plans to build a new building that will be used for office space and storage. The SSWCD would like to lease land in the City Industrial Park to be the home of the new building.

Councilor Fleming made a motion to approve Industrial Park Lease Agreement with the Socorro Soil & Water Conservation District. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dean. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

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MAYOR'S REPORT

At the request from Councilor Olguin, Mayor Bhasker gave a lengthy report on COVID-19.

Councilor Dean mentioned the nice article about Finley Complex in the newspaper and what is the future plan of the building. Mayor Bhasker responded that the current upgrade of HVAC will make the building useable and with future grants, enable the City to continue with its plans that were developed a year ago.

Councilor Dean asked about after school programs and activities. Mayor Bhasker reported that the City has to be very careful about what would be acceptable. The Mayor reported at this time there is no staff at Recreation, Rodeo, and Convention Center.

a. Appointment for Vacant City Council Position

Mayor Bhasker informed the Council that he would like to fill the vacant City Council Position with Damian Ocampo. The Jaramillo family was notified and were in complete agreement of the appointment.

Councilor Chavez-Lopez made a motion to approve the appointment of Damian Ocampo. The motion was seconded by Councilor Salome. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

b. Reporting on Personnel Changes

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

Wallace Gonzales – 10-19-20 – Street – Temp to New Hire
Chris Sedillo – 10-19-20 – Street – Temp to New Hire
Sergio Cuevas – 10-19-20 - Street – Promotion Light Equipment Operator I
Derrick Chavez – 10-19-20 - Production – Temp to New Hire
Dylan Coslin – 10-1-20 – Police – Completed Probation
Gonzolo Lopez – 11-14-20 – Police – Completed Probation
Alfredo Garza – 10-14-20 – Police – Resignation

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

c. Business Registrations

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

Environmental Works, Inc. – Out of Town – Springfield, MO – Jason Smith – Environmental Services and Drilling
On the Break Entertainments, LLC – C-2 – 107 E. Manzanares Ave. – Melissa Hurtgen – Movie Theatre
MX Customs, LLC – C-2 – 411 Spring St. – Hanna Cooper – Customization Shop
Compass Group USA, Inc. – NMT – 801 Leroy Pl. – Joe Fischioni – Higher Education Dining Services

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

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d. Voucher Run

Councilor Olguin made a motion to approve vouchers 151623 to 151876 in the amount of \$653,649.51, plus Payroll Transfers (\$306,091.92), for a total of \$959,741.43. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dean. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

e. Announcement – Next City Council Meeting Date and Time

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next regular City Council meeting will be held on Monday, November 16, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.in person and online using GoToMeeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:09 p.m.

THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation

/s/
Ravi Bhasker, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/
Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk