

City of Socorro Regular City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
March 1, 2021

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

No members were physically present.

Council members remotely present at roll call were: Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez, Councilor Deborah Dean, Councilor Nick Fleming, Councilor Gordy Hicks, Councilor Michael Olguin, Jr., Councilor Peter Romero, and Councilor Anton Salome. Councilor Damian Ocampo was 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 New Mexico Attorney General's Office for teleconference meetings held during the COVID-19 pandemic.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 1, 2021 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

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

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

a. February 16, 2021

Councilor Fleming made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 16, 2021 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Romero. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC FORUM

None.

**FIRST READING OF ORDINANCES – APPROVAL FOR PUBLICATION ONLY
(RATIFICATION)**

a. Ordinance 19-08-05 – (Amendment B) Loan Agreement for Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements & Improvements to the Wastewater Collection System

Chris Muirhead, Bond Attorney with Modrall Sperling explained Amendment B is for approval to ratify the publication since it has already been published. Consideration for adoption will be on the agenda of the March 15, 2021 Council meeting.

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve Publication of Ordinance 19-08-05 – (Amendment B) (Ratification) Loan Agreement for Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements & Improvements to the Wastewater Collection System. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dean. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

SECOND READING OF ORDINANCES – PUBLIC HEARING & CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL

a. Ordinance 19-08-05 – (Amendment A) Loan Agreement for Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements & Improvements to the Wastewater Collection System

Mr. Muirhead explained Amendment A is for Wastewater Treatment Facility to authorize the increase for interim financing (RCAC) for the construction of the project. Once bonds are issued the interim financing will be paid off and will be USDA debt moving forward.

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Councilor Salome asked if this would split the projects Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements and Wastewater Collection System. Donald Monette, City Administrator replied that the original ordinance combined both projects into one ordinance, but have always been two separate projects.

Mr. Salome stated that it is important to inform the public the need of this project and why their base rate will increase. Mayor Bhasker replied that Councilor Salome's comments are well taken and the Council needs to talk to each of their constituents, but the public has been informed of the need since the lines collapsed on California Street.

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve Publication of Ordinance 19-08-05 – (Amendment A) Loan Agreement for Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements & Improvements to the Wastewater Collection System. The motion was seconded by Councilor Fleming. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

a. **Airport Task Order 19-3 ONM Snow Removal Equipment Building (SREB)-Design, Bidding and Construction Phases Services**

Kent Freier of Molzen-Corbin & Associates informed the Council that Task Order 19-3 is for the design of a snow removal equipment building. FFA will pay for the snow removal equipment bay and with additional funds from the State it will include two additional bays for the mower and sweeper. The bidding and construction process will begin within approximately one year.

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve Airport Task Order 19-3 ONM Snow Removal Equipment Building (SREB)-Design, Bidding and Construction Phases Services as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Fleming. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

b. **Airport Task Order 19-4 Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP)**

Mr. Freier reported that permits with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have expired and the City has until the end of May 2021 to update the SWPPP. The Airport will be in compliance for the next five years once prepared and submitted.

Councilor Fleming made a motion to approve Task Order 19-4 Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dean. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

c. **Resolution No. 21-03-01 – MAP – West Spring Street**

Mayor Bhasker stated the new MAP project will make road improvements to Spring Street from US 60 to Evergreen Drive.

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve Resolution No. 21-03-01 – MAP - West Spring Street as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dean. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilor Olguin gave praise to Mike Alderete for his outstanding work at the Sports Complex.

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OLD BUSINESS

Councilor Olguin stated he has had discussions with Mr. Monette about developing a resolution to bring to the Council regarding the recently adopted increase in Gross Receipts Taxes. Councilor Olguin stated that the resolution should define how the new tax receipts are to be split between Economic Development and the City Electric Utility effort.

Mayor Bhasker reported that a mediation session was held between the Socorro Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SEC) and the City on February 25, 2021 and participants in the mediation cannot divulge any details until the outcome is presented to the SEC Trustees at a special Board Meeting to be held on or before March 12, 2021. If SEC agrees with the settlement of the mediation, it will come before the City Council for approval. The development of the resolution should proceed after mediation is settled and depending on previous actions of the Council.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

MAYOR'S REPORT

a. Letter of Appreciation – Ms. Penny Lommen

Mayor Bhasker stated that Ms. Lommen is a great volunteer in our community and thanked her for her service on the Socorro Public Library Board.

b. Update on Committees

Mayor Bhasker gave an update of committee vacancies and asked for the Council's recommendations. Recommendations will be put on a future agenda for approval.

c. Reporting on Personnel Changes

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

John Brannon – Police – Probation – A-46 – No Change

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

d. Announcement – Next City Council Meeting Date and Time

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next City Council meeting will be a on Monday March 15, 2021 at 12:00 Noon using GoToMeeting online.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:33 p.m.

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THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation

 /s/
Ravi Bhasker, Mayor

ATTEST:

 /s/
Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk