

**City of Socorro Regular City Council Meeting**  
**City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801**  
**April 5, 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 Deborah Dean, Councilor Nick Fleming, Councilor Gordy Hicks, Councilor Damian Ocampo, Councilor Michael Olguin, Jr. Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez. Councilor Peter Romero, and Councilor Anton Salome 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 New Mexico Attorney General's Office for teleconference meetings held during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**APPROVAL OF APRIL 5, 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. March 15, 2021**

Councilor Fleming made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 15, 2021 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dean. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

Michael Pino addressed the Council for the possibility of honoring George Miller with a statue at the Veterans Park. Mr. Pino gave the Council the background of Mr. Miller's tenure with the New Mexico National Guard in Socorro. Councilor Hicks added that the veterans should have some input and if we honored one would we have to honor everyone's request. Mayor Bhasker replied that the City would look into it and see what would be appropriate.

**FIRST READING OF ORDINANCES – APPROVAL FOR PUBLICATION ONLY**

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

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Publication of Ordinance 19-08-05 – (Amendment C) 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. SEC vs. City of Socorro: Lawsuit Update**

Mayor Bhasker informed the Council two letters addressed to Anne Dorough, President of the Socorro Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SEC) Board of Trustees and to the residents and SEC members addressing the results of the mediation that occurred on February 25, 2021. The Mayor stated that the City agreed to what SEC wanted in their lawsuit and when it was presented to the SEC Board of Trustees for approval, it was denied. The Mayor stated that the City agreed to extend the Franchise Agreement to the year 2024 and after 2024 the agreement will be

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terminated. The City will be moving on with the development of its own Municipal Utility so the transition from SEC can take place at the time of termination.

The Mayor along with Donald Monette, City Administrator, Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk, a representative from New Mexico Tech, and representatives from Finley Engineering will visit Clarksville Arkansas to view their operations of Broadband and Municipal Electric Utility services at the end of April 2021. The Mayor stated a full report will be presented to the Council at the first meeting in May.

**b. Home Occupation Permit – Padilla’s Guns**

Kristy Padilla, Zoning Manager, presented a Home Occupation Permit request – Padilla’s Guns to the Council. Mayor Bhasker asked Alan Padilla of Padilla’s Guns if he will be the middleman in transfers or have an inventory of guns at his residence for sell.

Mr. Padilla stated that this will not be a store front and the business will be transfers of ownership only. Mr. Padilla will perform background checks and deliver the guns to the buyers. Mayor Bhasker asked if Mr. Padilla will be licensed and will the business inventory any guns at the business location. Mr. Padilla replied that he will possess a gun if it is purchased from a company, but not when it is purchased person to person and obtaining a City Business License is the first step in obtaining a license from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

Councilor Hicks asked if guns will be stored in a safe. Mr. Padilla replied that guns will be stored safely in a safe.

Mike Winders, Police Chief stated the latest gun laws require a background checks on person-to-person gun sales.

Ms. Kristy Padilla stated that the ATF will do a complete background check on Mr. Padilla and an inspection of his home.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve the Home Occupation Permit – Padilla’s Guns as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Olguin. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

**c. Engineers Recommendation of Award – Bullock Avenue Reconstruction**

Mr. Monette stated Engineers Recommendation of Award is based on a state contract and will be awarded to Albuquerque Asphalt, Inc. if approved.

Councilor Fleming made a motion to approve the Engineers Recommendation of Award – Bullock Avenue Reconstruction as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dean. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

**d. Land Sale Request – Sammy Vivian – Hwy 60**

Mayor Bhasker informed the Council that Sammy Vivian has lived at this location for years and is requesting to purchase the land located in the City’s Industrial Park.

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Mr. Monette stated that the current lease expired in 2013 and has not been renewed. The latest appraisal performed for the Industrial Park was on March 28, 2016 for \$18,200.00 per acre.

Mr. Monette stated the information in the Councilor's packet is for their consideration on how to proceed. Councilor Dean asked if a new appraisal will be required. After hearing no negative comments Mayor Bhasker stated that a new appraisal will be performed at Mr. Vivian's expense and the necessary documents prepared.

**e. GRT dedicated to electric utility efforts and Economic Development (Marketing/Tourism) - Discussion**

Mayor Bhasker stated, at this time, the primary use of the additional GRT will be dedicated to the Municipal Electric Utility.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Mayor Bhasker congratulated the Socorro High School (SHS) Warrior football team for winning the state title and the SHS Lady Warriors volleyball team for placing second at their state tournament. Councilor Olguin the SHS Lady Warriors soccer head coach reported they are competing in the state tournament semifinals on April 6, 2021. Councilor Ocampo, SHS head football coach congratulated his players and all SHS student athletes.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None.

**MAYOR'S REPORT**

**a. Library Board of Trustees Appointment**

Mayor Bhasker stated that he would like to appoint Jon Morrison to the Library Board of Trustees.

Councilor Fleming made a motion to approve Mayor Bhasker's appointment of Jon Morrison to the Library Board of Trustees. Seconded by Councilor Hicks, Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

**b. Job Description Updates**

- 1. Water Crewman I**
- 2. Tourism, Events, Convention and Marketing Director**
- 3. Administrative Assistant – Tourism**
- 4. Recreation Director**

Councilor Hicks motioned to approve the new Job Descriptions as read by Mayor Bhasker. The motion was seconded by Councilor Olguin. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

**c. Reporting on Personnel Changes**

**1. Regular**

Jeremiah Gonzales – 04/05/2021 – Water – Temp to Full Time – A-26

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Pete Werner – 04/05/2021 – Police – New Hire – A-42

Derrick Chavez – 03/04/2021 – Production – Failure to Complete Probation

**2. Temporary**

Jorge Rodriquez – 03/18/2021 – Landfill - \$10.50

Enrique Robles – 11/16/2020 – Landfill - \$10.50

Garrett Rodriquez – 09/22/2020 – Fire - \$14.97

Taylor Saavedra – 02/01/2021 – Animal Shelter - \$10.50

Councilor Hicks motioned to approve the Personnel Changes as read by Mayor Bhasker. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dean. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

**d. Business Registrations**

Councilor Hicks motioned to approve the business registrations as read by Mayor Bhasker.

Pretty Petals Boutique – C-2 – 915 California St. Suite D – Jenelle Partridge – Repurposed Furniture, Flower Shop

Padilla’s Guns – R-4 – 608 Mariposa – Alan Padilla – Firearms Sales & Transfers

JW Firearms – C-2 – 744 Hwy 60 – Justin Greenwood – Firearms Repair & Sales

Big Ern’s Barbecue – Transient Vendor – Paloma Garcia – BBQ Food Truck

Anaya’s Lawn & Yard, LLC – R-1 – 1501 Evergreen Dr. – Derrick Anaya – Yard Maintenance

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 City Council meeting will be a on Monday April 19, 2021 at 12:00 Noon using GoToMeeting online.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 12:52 p.m.

**THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation**

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/s/  
**Ravi Bhasker, Mayor**

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
/s/  
**Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk**