

City of Socorro Regular City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
May 17, 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 Damian Ocampo, Councilor Michael Olguin, Jr., Councilor Peter Romero, and Councilor Anton Salome.

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 MAY 17, 2021 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

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

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

a. May 4, 2021

Councilor Olguin made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 4, 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

a. Ordinance 21-06-07 – LEDA Grant – Capitol Bar & Brewery

Louise Marquez, New Mexico Economic Development Department Region 5 Representative gave the Council an overview of the LEDA process.

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve Ordinance 21-06-07 – LEDA Grant – Capitol Bar & Brewery for Publication Only. The motion was seconded by Councilor Fleming. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

a. Approval of Broadband Feasibility Study

Andy Heins, Finley Engineering presented a synopsis of the Feasibility Study. Mr. Heins reported that the general findings indicate the City of Socorro and County of Socorro broadband is very poor. A network design was developed projecting an estimated cost of 70 million dollars for a complete fiber network.

Mayor Bhasker stated he was very appreciative of Finley Engineering and CCG Consulting, they are very experienced and have the expertise in obtaining funding.

Councilor Fleming asked what is the realistic likelihood in obtaining funds for the project? Mr. Heins replied the key is the need for Broadband and since broadband is so bad in the City and

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Socorro County and since Socorro is the worst county in the State of New Mexico the likelihood of obtaining funds is high.

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

b. Resolution No. 001A - Preliminary Budget

Councilor Fleming, Budget Committee Chair praised Ruby Lopez, Finance Director for the hard work on preparing the Budget. Mayor Bhasker pointed out the city did not deliver many services for the youth during the pandemic. The Mayor stated that with cash reserves and with the Council's approval and suggestions he would like to expand on the programs the City provides for the coming year.

Ruby Lopez presented an extensive overview of the Budget to the Council.

Mayor Bhasker voiced his concerns his concern over bills passed in the 2021 New Mexico State Legislature.

Councilor Hicks motioned to approve Resolution No. 001A – Preliminary Budget as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Romero. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

c. Resolution No. 21-05-17 – Utility Billing Charge Off

Ruby Lopez reported to the Council the Charge Off amount of \$33,285.65 in individual utility accounts incurred during the calendar year 2016 are now considered as uncollectable. Ms. Lopez stated that it is less than 1% of the total 2016 Utility Billing.

Councilor Hicks motioned to approve Resolution No. 21-05-17 – Utility Billing Charge Off as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Romero. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

d. Application for Federal Assistance (FAA) – Snow Removal Equipment Building Design

Kent Freier, Vice President Molzen Corbin stated the application is for the design of a snow removal building at the City of Socorro Municipal Airport. The building is to protect equipment from weather elements. The design is 100% funded by FAA, next year advertisement for bids to construct the building will be issued. FAA's funds will include the snow removal equipment and funds from the State of New Mexico will cover the cost of the building to include other equipment.

Councilor Hicks motioned to approve Application for Federal Assistance (FAA) – Snow Removal Equipment Building Design as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Salome. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

e. Memorandum of Agreement – County of Socorro – Shared Use of Fiber Optic Cables

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Councilor Fleming motioned to approve Memorandum of Agreement – County of Socorro – Shared Use of Fiber Optic Cables as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Salome. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

f. Transfer of Land to Socorro County

Donald Monette, City Administrator informed the Council the County would use the property to train and certify their operators. The land is located south of land currently occupied by the County.

Councilor Salome asked if the City considered leasing the property to the County. Mayor Bhasker concerns with having a lease was, if an environmental hazard would occur, the responsibility falls on the City of Socorro as the land owner.

Councilor Hicks motioned to approve Transfer of Land to Socorro as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Romero. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

g. Discussion – Changing Council of Governments

Mayor Bhasker reported his concerns with the South-Central Council of Governments (SCCOG) and if the city is not being represented as well as it should be, perhaps the City should join another Council of Governments.

Jay Armijo, Director SCCOG addressed the Mayor's concerns and gave an overview of the SCCOG services.

Councilor Salome informed the Council of the entities that are members of the Mid Region Council of Governments (MRCOG) and stated that many are large entities and would garnish much of the time and effort of the MRCOG.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Bhasker reported on the mask mandate set by the CDC and the State of New Mexico. Mr. Monette read the baseline directive on the public health order set by the State of New Mexico.

OLD BUSINESS

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

MAYOR'S REPORT

a. Library Board of Trustees Appointment – Edna Comstock

Mayor Bhasker stated that he would like to appoint Edna Comstock to the Library Board of Trustees.

Councilor Salome made a motion to approve Mayor Bhasker's appointment of Edna Comstock to the Library Board of Trustees. Seconded by Councilor Romero, Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

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b. Job Description – Rodeo & Sports Complex Facilities Director

Councilor Hicks motioned to approve the new Job Description as presented by Mayor Bhasker. The motion was seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

c. Extended Salary Schedule

Councilor Hicks motioned to approve the Extended Salary Schedule as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Romero. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

d. Reporting on Personnel Changes

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

Mike Alderete – 05/16/2021 – Rodeo – Promotion to Rodeo & Sports Complex Facilities Director – N-39 to N-44

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

e. Business Registrations

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

Shamrock Auto Shop, LLC – C-2 – 1203 Frontage Rd. NE – John McGovern – Auto Repair
Oriental Foot and Body Massage – C-2 – 113 Faulkner - Marvin Jamon – Massage
DeeCee’s Boutique – C-2 - 103 Plaza – Denise Contreras – Retail
Aydens Burgers n More – Transient Vendor – Mobile – Derek Chavez – Food Truck

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

f. Voucher Run

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve vouchers 153296 to 153477 in the amount of \$621,554.03 plus Payroll Transfers \$316,203.32, for a total of \$937,757.35. The motion was seconded by Councilor Romero. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

g. Announcement – Next City council Meeting Date and Time

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next City Council meeting will be a on Monday June 7, 2021, at 12:00 Noon using GoToMeeting online.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:11 p.m.

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THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation

 /s/
Ravi Bhasker, Mayor

ATTEST:

 /s/
Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk