

City of Socorro Special City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
July 13, 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 Damian Ocampo, Councilor Michael Olguin, Jr., Councilor Peter Romero, and Councilor Anton Salome. Councilor Nick Fleming 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 New Mexico Attorney General's Office for teleconference meetings held during the COVID-19 pandemic.

APPROVAL OF JULY 13, 2021 SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

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

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

a. Broadband Progress Update

Mayor Bhasker informed the Council the City has been trying to bring broadband to Socorro for at least fifteen years.

The Mayor introduced the committee involved in the project.
City of Socorro – Ravi Bhasker, Donald Monette, and Leopoldo Pineda
NRAO – James Robnett and Heather Cochran
New Mexico Tech – Daniel Lunceford and Joe Franklin
Socorro County – Michael Hawkes
Socorro Consolidated Schools – Jeffrey Tull
Finley engineering – Andy Heins and Dan Carter
CCG Consulting – Doug Dawson

The Mayor stated the Broadband Feasibility Study completed by Finley Engineering and CCG Consulting was the first step in applying for funding, the next step would enable the committee to select an ISP from the group interested in providing internet. During this process TDS came forward and expressed their company would roll out a complete broadband build in the City of Socorro. The Mayor introduced Mark Barber, Senior VP of Network Operations for TDS.

City of Socorro Special City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
July 13, 2021

Mr. Barber stated TDS is committed and will provide up to 1 Gig internet speeds, State of the art Television, and a VoIP telephone service to City residents using their own capital investment.

The Mayor informed the Council with their approval the City would disengage from pursuing grant funding and allow TDS to continue with their plans.

Councilor Chavez-Lopez asked if the service would be available to all City of Socorro residents and also County residents. Mr. Barber replied that the home count according to the design is at 5,317 homes within the current TDS service area.

Doug Dawson, CCG Consulting informed the Council that an ongoing effort to fund the entire County of Socorro will continue.

Councilor Salome stressed that TDS's is investing in Socorro with providing their services.

Councilor Ocampo asked who will own the fiber? Mayor Bhasker replied that TDS will own the fiber.

Andy Heins, Finley Engineering advised the Council the approach was to find partners to provide internet service, although this was not the original process the outcome is the same and with TDS doing the project with their own capital is outstanding.

Mayor Bhasker thanked Mr. Barber and TDS and would await the press release.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Romero motioned to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 12:41 p.m.

THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation

/s/
Ravi Bhasker, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/
Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk