

**City of Socorro Regular City Council Meeting**  
**City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801**  
**December 1, 2014**

Mayor Ravi Bhasker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Pat Salome, City Clerk, took roll call. Members present at roll call were: Mayor Ravi Bhasker, Councilor Toby Jaramillo, Councilor Michael Olguin, Councilor Gordy Hicks, Councilor Nick Fleming, Councilor Peter Romero and Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez. Councilor Ernest Pargas and Councilor Donald Monette were absent.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Bhasker led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 1, 2014 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA**

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES**

**a. November 17, 2014**

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

**PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS**

**a. Proclamation – A Purple Heart City**

Mayor Bhasker read a proclamation which, on December 3, 2014, proclaims Socorro as A Purple Heart City. The proclamation recognizes The Purple Heart service award which is awarded to members of the Armed Forces who have been wounded or paid the ultimate sacrifice in combat.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

Marie Watkins read information regarding quorums which Socorro Electric Cooperative published in the recent Enchantment Magazine. Ms. Watkins stated that she feels the SEC discourages member/owners to vote and to attend meetings. Ms. Watkins stated that the SEC's system has evolved into a system where no one is accountable. Ms. Watkins stated she believes SEC management will not place the items (from the most recent district meetings) on the next agenda for a vote. Mayor Bhasker thanked Baja Broadband for assisting the City with putting up the Christmas decorations. Mayor Bhasker stated that SEC used to assist years ago but that current management no longer offers assistance to the City.

Russ Moore thanked the City of Socorro for supporting the Turkey Tune-Up soccer tournament. Mr. Moore stated that there were 21 teams in the tournament. Mr. Moore also thanked the volunteers and City employees that helped. Mr. Moore stated that there were positive comments about the City's new recreation facility.

**DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION**

**a. Decision to Support Resolution Presented at November 15, 2014 SEC District 3 Meeting**

Mayor Bhasker stated that the City Administration would like to see the Socorro Electric Cooperative once again work as a cooperative. Mayor Bhasker stated that the resolution which was presented by him (as a member/owner) at the November 15, 2014 SEC District 3 meeting is on the agenda so that the City Council can decide if they would like to support the content of the resolution. Mayor Bhasker stated that he believes the information placed in the Enchantment Magazine (and brought up by Ms. Watkins) by the SEC is designed to somehow delay a vote on the resolution.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to support the resolution presented at the November 15, 2014 SEC District 3 meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Jaramillo.

Councilor Olguin stated that he feels the SEC can accomplish the nine items listed on the resolution. Councilor Olguin stated that he would have a hard time supporting two sections of the resolution without what he called "proof". Councilor Olguin stated that the two sections were "The current SEC Board and management have done little, if anything, to address the multitude of concerns brought forth by the member/owners as well as those concerns brought forth in the 2012 Touchstone Energy survey" and "The

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SEC Board and management has failed to comply with Public Regulation Commission regulations regarding customer service issues, have implemented policies that are contrary to co-op principles and have chosen a path that discourages owner involvement". Mayor Bhasker stated that in regards to the first item, City staff has compiled a list of complaints from customers brought forth to the City that Councilor Olguin is welcome to review. Mayor Bhasker also stated that the Touchstone survey was done in 2012 and he has not seen an effort from the SEC Board or management to address the concerns in the survey. Mayor Bhasker stated that in regards to the second item, the SEC had been asking for property titles and leases in order to turn on services and this practice was implemented prior to having a policy in place. Mayor Bhasker also stated that the PRC regulations do not allow a utility company to turn off services from November 1<sup>st</sup> to mid-March and the SEC, in previous years has done that. Mayor Bhasker also stated that the SEC recently changed a City meter without providing engineering data and that the PRC stated the data should have been provided. Councilor Olguin asked if the SEC has been fined. Mayor Bhasker stated that Ben Hall, the current PRC representative, was defeated in the recent election and once the new PRC Commission is seated, the City will present information to the newly-elected official. Councilor Olguin asked if the resolution could be amended to strike the words "have done little or nothing" and add the words "submitted to the City of Socorro" as he does not want to vote on something that is not specific. Councilor Olguin stated that he is in favor of the nine items at the end of the resolution. Mr. Salome explained that the resolution was presented and accepted by the SEC members in its present form at the District 3 meeting. Mr. Salome stated there would be no place for the resolution to go if amended subsequent to passage. Mr. Salome stated that it could be modified if it was a City of Socorro resolution for City purposes but that the resolution was presented by a member/owner for SEC purposes and contained a specific message. After much discussion, Councilor Hicks stated that he is in favor of the resolution as written and would like to see the SEC function as a cooperative should.

Mayor Bhasker asked for a roll call vote. All members present voted in favor of supporting the resolution. Motion passed unanimously.

**b. MOU – City of Socorro & Socorro Consolidated Schools (Joint Facility Development)**

Mayor Bhasker presented a memorandum of understanding between the City of Socorro and Socorro Consolidated Schools. Mayor Bhasker stated that the MOU pertains to the development of public facilities which are used for activities by the City and the Schools. Mayor Bhasker stated that the MOU is an agreement between the entities to continue to work together and share resources. Mr. Salome stated that the entities currently share, among other things, the soccer fields, school gyms and the youth center. Mayor Bhasker stated that City staff is working on getting signs that have directions to the new recreation area.

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve the memorandum of understanding between the City of Socorro and Socorro Consolidated Schools. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

**c. Dennis Engineering – Task Order – MAP Fairgrounds Road Improvements**

Mayor Bhasker presented Task Order 14-03 for the Fairgrounds Road Improvement Project. Mayor Bhasker stated that the task order is for improvement to the intersection of Fairgrounds Road and the entrance to the Rodeo and Recreation facility and to install a storm drain along Fairgrounds Road. Jay Santillanes, Division Director, stated that the City was able to procure \$100,000 from the NMDOT MAP program with a City match of \$33,333. Mr. Santillanes stated that the \$33,333 will be used for design services (with Dennis Engineering through a general services contract) and \$100,000 will be used for construction. Mayor Bhasker stated that the project may take more than one phase. Mr. Salome stated that there have been proposed drainage projects in the same area prior to the City constructing the recreation facility.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve the Task Order 14-03 for the Fairgrounds Road Improvement Project. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

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**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Mayor Bhasker stated that Mable Gonzales, City Treasurer, has a new grandbaby and could not attend the meeting but will present a report from the Utility Committee at the next meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Councilor Chavez-Lopez stated that the Turkey Bingo event at Finley Gym was a great event. Councilor Chavez-Lopez thanked the City for allowing local residents to use the concession stand as a fundraising tool. Mayor Bhasker also thanked the family who donated the bicycles for the raffle. Councilor Jaramillo thanked the City for the donation of canned goods from Turkey Bingo to his food drive.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Councilor Chavez-Lopez made a motion to go into executive session. Seconded by Councilor Olguin, motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to go back into regular session. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Salome reported out of executive session the discussion of one personnel matter. No action was taken.

**MAYOR'S REPORT**

**a. Reporting on Personnel Changes**

Councilor Hicks motioned to approve the personnel changes as read by Mayor Bhasker:

Everett Binger – 12-31-14 – Fire – Retirement

Charles Contreras – 11-19-14 – Police – Completed Probation – A-35 to A-37

Victor Savedra – 11-5-14 – Police – Completed Probation – A-35 to A-37

Jeremy Montano – 12-1-14 – Water to Production – Change from Water Dept. to Production Dept./New Job Title is Technician I – D-25 (no change)

Lorenzo Benavidez – 12-1-14 – Production to Water – Change from Production Dept. to Water Dept./New Job Title is Water Crewman – D-20 (no change)

Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next personnel change was a new hire at the Fire Department and the new hire is the Chief's son in law. Mayor Bhasker stated that as there was recently an article in the newspaper about nepotism, he wanted to read the section of the City's personnel manual that discusses nepotism. Mayor Bhasker read "No person shall be hired or transferred to a position which stands in a supervisory relationship to a relative. For purposes of this rule, relative includes: spouse, child, parent, brother, brother-in-law and sister-in-law. Supervisory relationship includes immediate and intermediate supervisor or Department Head". Mayor Bhasker stated that son in law is not referenced in the section. Mayor Bhasker stated that new hires in the Fire Department report to a lieutenant and captain.

Councilor Hicks motioned to approve the personnel changes as read by Mayor Bhasker:

Elvires Otero – 1-1-15 – Fire- New Hire (FF/EMT Recruit) – A-25

Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

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**b. Business Registrations**

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

Vaquero Kettle Korn & Snacks LLC – Out of Town – Los Lunas, NM – Jesus Orozco & Glenda Chavez –  
Mobile Kettle Corn & Snack Sales

Cornwell Counseling – R-1 (Approved by P&Z) – 607 Western – Zoe Cornwell – Independent Consultant

Dos Casitas en Socorro Bed & Breakfast – R-2 (Approved by P&Z) – 317 Eaton – Judy Kurtz – Lodging

Today Technologies LLC – R-1 (Approved by P&Z) – 517 Western – Edwin Chavez – Data Networking

Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

**c. Next City Council Meeting Announcement**

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next City Council meeting would be held on Monday, December 15, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 7:03 p.m., Councilor Hicks motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

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

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/s/

**Ravi Bhasker, Mayor**

**ATTEST:**

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/s/

**Pat Salome, City Clerk**