

**City of Socorro Regular Scheduled City Council Meeting**  
**City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801**  
**December 15, 2014**

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

Mr. Salome stated that Councilor Jaramillo could not attend the meeting but wanted to remind everyone that the annual food drive would be held December 20<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 a.m. at Finley Gym.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Bhasker led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 15, 2014 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA**

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

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES**

**a. December 1, 2014**

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

**PUBLIC FORUM**

**a. Animal Shelter Advisory Board – Presentation – Loose Dogs/Dog Bites**

Jane Love, on behalf of the Animal Shelter Advisory Board, stated that the board meets once a month and residents occasionally attend the meeting to address concerns regarding loose dogs and dog bites. Ms. Love stated that the board would like to recommend that the City appoint another committee to review the ordinance to better address customer complaints. Ms. Love stated that the new committee could consist of representatives from the police department, municipal court, animal shelter, local veterinarian offices, etc. Mayor Bhasker stated that he was unable to do anything under Public Forum but that the item could be placed on a future agenda. Mayor Bhasker stated, however, that he feels the Animal Shelter Advisory Board could create a sub-committee, if needed. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City has been working with local resident Catherine Stewart-Roache on these same issues. Mayor Bhasker stated that he feels the matters are being addressed as there are already procedures that have been put into place by the City's Animal Shelter and Police Department. Ms. Love stated that the most recent complainant stated she would be placing a letter to the editor in the local newspaper. Mayor Bhasker stated that the complainant has not contacted either himself or the Police Chief with any concerns. Mayor Bhasker stated that he does not feel an additional committee is needed to review the ordinance but rather the current Animal Shelter Advisory Board can review the ordinance and provide suggested changes to the City. Mayor Bhasker stated that he would be happy to meet with the board to discuss what the City has in place to address loose dogs and dog bites.

Deb Caldwell, Chamber of Commerce Director, stated that there would be a capital outlay legislative session on December 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m. at City Hall. Ms. Caldwell stated that the Jump Start Jobs for Juniors program is moving forward. Ms. Caldwell stated that the program will provide career service training to high school juniors and that each student will have a mentor.

Councilor Monette arrived.

Ms. Caldwell stated that the Festival of the Cranes event had a \$2,100 profit this year. Ms. Caldwell stated that approximately 1,000 people attended the event and a survey provided an average score of 9 (1 being the worst and 10 being the best). Ms. Caldwell reminded the public that there is a Keep Socorro beautiful Campaign and participants can make up to \$300 for fundraising.

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Duane Baker, Puerto Seguro Director, provided a handout regarding services provided by the day shelter and what funding will be needed to keep the shelter open. Mr. Baker asked if it would be possible for the City to include an area on the City utility bill (similar to that for the animal shelter) where people could provide donations to the shelter. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City may be able to assist with funding to keep the shelter open the rest of its fiscal year. Mayor Bhasker stated that the Administration will look into how to utilize the donation area on the City utility bills.

Mayor Bhasker stated that the animal shelter had two resignations and that the City will be hiring for those positions. Mr. Salome stated that one of the positions has been advertised in its current form. Mr. Salome stated that later in the Council meeting, the Council will consider two updated job descriptions for the shelter and if approved, the two new jobs will be advertised.

**DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION**

**a. Change Order #2 – NM Underground Contractors Inc. – Hope Farms Wastewater System Expansion**

Steve Williams, from Dennis Engineering, presented Change Order #2 for the Hope Farms Wastewater System Expansion Project. Mr. Williams stated that the change order is needed to adjust contract quantities and pay items to final quantities and pay items and to add a sewer tap to the project. Mr. Williams stated that the change order is in the amount of -\$6,361.93. Mr. Williams stated that the project is 90% complete. Mr. Williams stated that in the past, Socorro Electric Cooperative has worked alongside the contractors during a project and this time, the SEC stated they are waiting for the work to finish before starting their portion of the work. Mr. Williams also stated that SEC said they do not do extensions in December and if so, the work may be pushed back into January.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Change Order #2 for the Hope Farms Wastewater System Expansion Project. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

**b. Preliminary Agreement – Land Sale – Socorro Industrial Park – Dialysis Center**

Mayor Bhasker presented a preliminary agreement for the sale of land at the City's Industrial Park. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City Administration has been working with a company who is interested in placing a dialysis center on the property. Mayor Bhasker stated that the center would be an asset to the residents of Socorro and that people from Magdalena and T or C could also benefit from the center. Mr. Salome stated that the information will be sent to DFA but if the sale is under \$25,000, their approval may not be required. Councilor Monette asked what their tax rate might be since they are in the Industrial Park which has a lower tax rate than the rest of the City. Mr. Salome stated that the tax rate would more than likely be the lower Industrial Park rate (which is lower as an economic development tool) but that the City can, by ordinance, change the rates if they so choose. Mr. Salome stated that the agreement is the first step in the process which will be followed by the ordinance process.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve the preliminary agreement for the sale of land at the City's Industrial Park. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Mable Gonzales, City Treasurer, stated that the Utility Committee has met to review utility rates and she will draft an ordinance with the recommended changes to present to the City Council. Mayor Bhasker stated that City utility rates will be increasing and explained that a survey was done of water, wastewater and sanitation rates for Socorro, T or C, Los Lunas, Belen, Las Vegas and Grants and Socorro has the lowest rates. Mayor Bhasker stated that a survey was done for the same cities for electricity rates and Socorro Electric Cooperative has the highest rates. Mayor Bhasker suggested that the City place the information in the utility bills so that the public can view the information.

Councilor Monette stated that there was an economic development meeting with the Chamber of Commerce and other local businesses/residents where the "definition of economic development and what it means" was discussed. Councilor Monette stated that there will be more economic development meetings in the future.

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**DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR REPORTS**

Donald Padilla, Library Director, stated that the library received a \$2,500 grant from the McCune Foundation which will be used for the summer reading program. Mr. Padilla stated that the library is short-staffed and has been relying heavily on volunteers. Mr. Padilla stated that the holiday open house will be on December 17<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. and that Doug Figgs will be performing. Mayor Bhasker stated that the Library Board has provided an updated job description for Library Director. Mr. Padilla stated that he would like to meet with Mayor Bhasker regarding the proposed job description and what the State requires for a library director position.

Lloyd Martinez, Division Director, stated that Water Department crews are currently placing water lines in the Evergreen Drive/Cottonwood Drive area. Mr. Martinez stated that Parks Department crews are working on the playgrounds and Clarke Field. Mr. Martinez stated that there have been some production problems near the Western mercantile store and that a new sewer main is needed in that area. Mr. Martinez stated that a new bar screen is needed at the wastewater treatment plant. Mayor Bhasker stated that Kirkland Construction will be using dirt from an area near the soccer fields and in return, they will assist the City by leveling the area so the City can build 4 new soccer fields and 2 baseball fields in the future.

Joe Gonzales, Fire Chief, stated that all vehicles and equipment are running properly. Chief Gonzales stated that employee training for EMT basic and intermediate classes are ongoing. Chief Gonzales stated that the number of calls has been steady. Chief Gonzales stated that he is still working on getting the northern part of Socorro County covered by another agency. Chief Gonzales invited everyone to the first annual Fire Department matanza which is being held to raise money for less-fortunate children during the Christmas holiday. Chief Gonzales stated that the matanza will be held December 20<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. at Fire Station 3. Chief Gonzales stated that an EMT intermediate requires, among other things, 120 hours of classes, 30 patient assessments, 15 IV's, 5 drug pushes and 120 hours of volunteer clinical work.

Michael Lucero, Sanitation/Landfill/Recycling Director, stated that the landfill currently has 5 certified landfill employees. Mr. Lucero stated that operations are normal in the sanitation, landfill and recycling departments. Mr. Lucero stated that sanitation pick up days will be on the normal schedule through the holidays.

Mike Winders, Police Chief, provided a handout to the Mayor and Council of Police Department stats from November 2014 (88 arrests, 127 citations, 4 DWI arrests, 332 police reports filed, 23 traffic accidents, etc.). Chief Winders stated that Police Department officers were able to recover a stolen 4 wheeler and a stolen trailer. Chief Winders stated that officers are collecting toys for the Toys from Cops to Tots program. Chief Winders stated that Officer Peter Gonzales will graduate from the police academy on December 19<sup>th</sup> and two more employees will start the academy in February.

Jay Santillanes, Utilities Division Director, stated that natural gas odorizer has been installed and is working. Mr. Santillanes stated that a new compressor has been ordered for the CNG station. Mr. Santillanes stated that Street Department crews have been doing storm drain maintenance and repairing pot holes. Mr. Santillanes stated that crews have been grading at the rodeo facility and will start welding the arena itself soon.

Mable Gonzales, City Treasurer, provided a handout showing information regarding lodger's tax, property tax and other miscellaneous financial information. Ms. Gonzales stated that the reports are used to help track revenue and assist the Budget Committee with new budgets. Ms. Gonzales stated that the Shoretel phone system has been purchased and the new phones are gradually being installed at each City location. Ms. Gonzales stated that she recently assisted the Juvenile Justice Coordinator with a grant application.

Lupe Tarango, Dispatch Director, provided a handout to the Mayor and Council of Dispatch Department stats from November 2014 (total calls were 2,137). Mr. Tarango stated that he is currently getting quotes to upgrade the 911 recorder and 911 system. Mr. Tarango stated that the 911 center receives a lot of "hang up" calls and most of them are attributed to kids using inactive cell phones. Mr. Tarango stated that 911 service still works on inactive cell phones. In regards to loose dogs/dog bites, Mr. Tarango stated that the Animal Control Officer is notified when there is a loose dog and both the Animal Control Officer and police officers are notified if someone is bitten by a dog.

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**NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Councilor Monette asked about the status of the name change for Middle Road becoming El Camino Real. Mr. Salome stated that there are various items that need to be changed in addition to simply replacing the street sign. Mr. Tarango stated that the dispatch mapping system still identifies the road as Middle Road and that Socorro County would have to make the change to the mapping system through their GIS system.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None.

**MAYOR'S REPORT**

**a. Job Descriptions – Animal Shelter**

Mayor Bhasker presented two job descriptions for the Animal Shelter (Animal Shelter Kennel/Office Assistant and Animal Shelter Director/Manager). Mr. Salome stated that after the resignation of two employees at the shelter, the Animal Shelter Advisory Board felt that the job descriptions for the two positions should be updated. Mr. Salome stated that the updates take two full time and one part time position and make them into two full time positions. Mr. Salome stated that this was done in order to create funds so that a veterinarian could be utilized more at the shelter. Mr. Salome stated that if approved, the two new positions would be advertised.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve the Animal Shelter Kennel/Office Assistant and Animal Shelter Director/Manager job descriptions. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

**b. Personnel Changes**

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

Eric Sewell – 12-15-14 – Library – Resignation

Matt Lyon – 12-19-14 – Police – Resignation

Maribel Tarango – 12-29-14 – Library – New Hire (Circulation Assistant) – A-17

Temporary New Hires: None

Temporary Renewals: Emena Gonzales, Rick Griego, Tony Montoya, Paul Marquez, Albert Hernandez, Rick Silva, Elias Jacquez, Tony Silva, Regina Valencia, Sergio Cuevas, Angelica Vega, Michael Padilla, Jeremy Chavez, Kevin Gonzales, Shaina Lopez, Felipe Romero, Cindy Saiz, Billy Romero, Brad Winton, John Ferguson

Student Workers: Giovanna Rosas, Samantha Maldonado, Adrianna Griego, Jeremy Gallegos, Kendrick Gonzales

Referees (3), Zumba (2)

Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

**c. Business Registrations**

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

Southwest Spray Foam LLC – Out of Town – Santa Fe, NM – Corporation – Roofing & Insulation

Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

**d. Voucher Run**

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve vouchers 132134 to 132426 in the amount of \$1,283,681.96, plus Payroll Transfers (\$309,074.82), for a total of \$1,592,756.78. Seconded by Councilor Monette, motion passed unanimously.

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**e. Announcement – Next City Council Meeting Date and Time – January 5, 2015 @ 6:00 p.m.**

The City Council discussed cancelling the next City Council meeting which would be held January 5, 2015. Councilor Hicks made a motion to hold the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting on Tuesday, January 20, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. Seconded by Councilor Monette, motion passed unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 7:26 p.m., Councilor Hicks motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Monette, 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**