

City of Socorro Regular City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
October 6, 2021

Mayor Ravi Bhasker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk took roll call.

Council members present at roll call were: Councilor Deborah Dean, Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez, Councilor Damian Ocampo, Councilor Peter Romero, and Councilor Anton Salome.

Councilor Nick Fleming, Councilor Gordy Hicks, and Councilor Michael Olguin, Jr. were absent

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bhasker led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 6, 2021, CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

a. September 20, 2021

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 20, 2021 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC FORM

Councilor Hicks arrived at 6:12 p.m.

Savannah Morris and Chris Rottman, Socorro County Substance Abuse Grant Coordinators updated the Council on the Substance Abuse Grant.

Garret White a senior at New Mexico Tech reported he has been appointed as a liaison between New Mexico Tech Student Government and the City of Socorro.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

a. Judge Frances Cases - Retirement

Judge Frances Cases informed the Council of her retirement effective December 31, 2021. Judge Cases read a prepared letter of the history and accomplishments of her 27-year tenure.

b. City Acquiring California Street – Discussion

Mayor Bhasker informed the Council he has been in discussion with the State Department of Transportation in acquiring California Street as a City Street. The Mayor stated it would allow the City to have control of the Street without having to obtain permission from the State for its use.

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c. ARP Spending Report – Action Item

Donald Monette, City Administrator presented a breakdown of the ARP Spending for the first installment. Mr. Monette explained these amounts are estimates and that as this is only a budget, and City needs may change, some spending categories could change. Mr. Monette also informed the Council that a subsequent budget would be presented for the second allocation of ARP funding.

Propose	Amount
Incentive Pay (520*110)	\$ (57,200.00)
Premium Pay (520 x 2 x 131)	\$ (136,240.00)
Ambulance	\$ (45,000.00)
Swimming Pool	\$ (150,000.00)
Convention Center	\$ (100,000.00)
Finley and PD Air exchangers	\$ (307,690.50)
City Hall	\$ (75,000.00)
Utility Credits (4000x25)	\$ (100,000.00)
Water Truck	\$ (65,000.00)
Residential Truck	\$ (55,000.00)
	\$ (1,033,930.50)
First Installment	\$ 1,033,930.50

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve the first installment of ARP spending. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hicks, motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR REPORTS

Chelsea Jones, Library Director

- Invited everyone to come and experience the positive asset of the library
- Clinger Roofing did an excellent job on the roof, coming back to repair some small leaks
- Reported on circulation statistics and programs
- Free adult yoga every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday
- Reported on children’s programs

Brittany McDaniel, Municipal Court Chief Clerk

- Municipal Court is currently holding court telephonically
- Roof is currently being repaired

James McNeil, Recreation/Tourism Director

- Approximately 200 children ages 4 to 12 participated in baseball

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- Approximately 150 children are currently participating in flag football
- A MOU has been agreed on with Socorro Consolidated School for the use of their gyms during basketball season
- 40 Floats entered in the Socorro County Fair Parade
- Socorro County Fair Rodeo had over 1100 in attendance each night
- Chile Taste-Off was a successful event
- Healthy Kids Grant will be finalized this month for \$60,000.00
- Applied for \$25,000.00 Grant for Outdoor Recreation
- Media is online for Recreation and Tourism
- Working with NMT on a climbing class for the children
- New seven-mile trail from the Rodeo Complex to Box Canyon is now open
- Electric Light Parade is scheduled for December 4, 2021
- Blood Drive October 18th
- 3 on 3 Soccer Tournament is scheduled for November 13, 2021
- Working to bring in E-Sports

Mike Alderete, Rodeo & Sports Complex Facilities Director

- Reported on the World Series of Roping event
- Stalls and RV Park were full during County Fair and World Series Roping
- Reported on upcoming and past events
- Thanked all Departments that help with equipment

Mike Winders, Police Chief

- Chief Winders discussed his prepared report to the Council
- Applying for a grant for two police vehicles
- Currently have 12 full time officers, 10 certified, and one new officer in November

Lawrence Baca, Fire Chief

- Thanked Mayor Bhasker, Administration, and the Council for the opportunity becoming Fire Chief
- Fire Department is fully staffed, but not fully certified
- Calls have increased from last year
- Transfers have increased from one a day to four
- Still administering vaccines, including at home visits
- The 5th Annual Matanza will occur this year. The animals are purchased from kids that do not make the Jr. Livestock Sale
- Money raised from the Matanza is used to buy toys for children
- Chief Baca reminded the public, that now that winter is coming, to properly maintain their furnaces.
- COVID-19 booster shots are available for ages 65 and older
- Chief Baca thanked all the Firefighters for their hard work

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Kristy Padilla, Payroll & Personnel Administrator/Planning & Zoning Manager

- Reported on the payroll conversion to the new software
- Planning and Zoning Committee needs to have members appointed
- Reminded Department heads to make sure employees come to see her if they have any Workmen's Comp claims
- Ms. Padilla reported that employees will have the ability to access their payroll records soon by logging onto their account in the new software

Lena Chavez, Administrative Assistant/Assistant Administrator

- Reported that out of 130 City employees 112 are vaccinated

Oscar Acosta, Water, Parks, and Streets Director

- Crews have been busy filling potholes, controlling weeds, and keeping the parks clean

Ruby Lopez, Finance Director

- Payroll, Accounts Payable, and Financials have been converted to Tyler Incode Software
- Utility Billing will convert October 25, 2021, and paperless bills are now available
- Departments can now issue their own Purchase Orders
- Audit is complete with no findings and awaiting approval from the State
- Budget that was submitted in July has been approved
- Six Grants are in the process for purchasing a pump truck, ambulance, Gas trucks, Police Cars, Water Truck, and a Commercial Garbage Truck
- New street sweeper has been ordered
- City Hall employees are undergoing cross training
- The City has received approximately \$15,000 in rental/utility assistance
- Credit Card payments on the new system will have the ability to do auto pay, change of address, and many other features with the new completely automated system

Mike Lucero, Sanitation

- Fully Staffed
- Cardboard is collected on Tuesdays and Thursdays from businesses and are bailed after collection
- Tires are bailed on Wednesday and Friday's
- Two new cells are under construction
- All equipment is up and running
- Averaging approximately 80 tons of waste daily
- Reported on the condition of the Garbage Trucks

Isaac Angel, Gas/Airport Director

- 23 new gas connections, 10 relocations for the month
- Lowered lines and line extensions for the Bullock Project
- Installing a new loop from State Road 1 to the Fairgrounds with plans to extend to the Rodeo Complex

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- Will assist with lighting furnaces
- New Backhoe has arrived
- Airport has been busy with hunters coming in for their hunts and also had an emergency landing of a CB22 plane from Kirtland
- Purchased a new tractor, mower, and snow removal attachment
- Runway 15-32 has been resurfaced
- A new sign has been installed honoring Chick Griego
- A bid from Bixby Electric has been received for a new windsock

Carlos Savedra, Transportation Director

- Transportation offers In Town routes and Rail Runner service twice daily, three times on Wednesday and Fridays and the Sunday route on an on-call service only
- Completed the Department's yearly audit
- Nine people took advantage of the Trinity Site shuttle

Lloyd Martinez, Utilities Director

- Mr. Martinez recognized Ruben Amado for his work on the grants
- Received the new tractor and backhoe that were purchased through a grant
- Sewer project on Bullock was delayed by rain and traffic control was not adequate
- California Street had problems with dewatering that caused delays because of contamination
- Lights have been ordered for Bullock Street
- Working on paving College Avenue and Franklin from School of Mines to College and El Comino Real from College to Bullock
- A new lift station will be built on Otero that will cause traffic problems
- The Sewer Plant Project has been put on hold until January 2022
- Convention Center is nearly complete, working on touch ups and parking lot
- Going out for bid for Finley Gym remodel at the end of October
- Bidding out for an architect for the Swimming Pool design

Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk

- TDS is in the design stage and once complete will issue an RFP for construction of the broadband network.
- The CDBG Cuba Road Project's environmental report is complete, and design is at 30% complete
- The streetlights along California Street and US 60 West are in the process of metering, currently are billed as high sodium lights since Socorro Electric does not have a LED rate.
- Inspection of Public Records is up to date

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NEW BUSINESS

None

OLD BUSINESS

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

MAYOR'S REPORT

a. Job Description – Administrative Assistant (Tourism)

Councilor Romero motioned to approve the Job Description as read by Mayor Bhasker. The motion was seconded by Councilor Chavez Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

b. Reporting on Personnel Changes

i. Regular Employees

Councilor Romero motioned to approve the Regular Employees Personnel Changes as read by Mayor Bhasker.

Joshua Armijo – 10/16/2021 – Fire – New Hire – A-34

Jason Hatch – 10/16/2021 – Fire – New Hire – A-34

Samantha T. Hurtgen – 10/04/2021 – Dispatch – New Hire – A-27

Jared Josiah Green Padilla – 10/04/2021 – Dispatch – New Hire – A-27

Julie Hurtgen – 10/04/2021 – Animal Shelter – Completed Probation – A-24

Seconded by Councilor Salome, motion passed unanimously.

ii. Temporary Employees

Councilor Romero motioned to approve the Temporary Employees Personnel Changes as read by Mayor Bhasker.

Daryl Ross – 09/21/2021 – Recreation - \$12.50

Jordan Torres – 09/17/2021 – Rodeo - \$10.50

Austin Smythe – 06/07/2021 – Street - \$10.50

Maureen Trujillo – 07/14/2021 – Finance - \$10.50

Enrique Robles – 08/22/2021 – Landfill - \$10.50

Leroy Ganadonegro – 06/02/2021 – Landfill - \$10.50

Albert Olguin – 07/12/2021 – Landfill - \$10.50

Scott Crespín – 10/05/2021 – Fire - \$14.97

Connor McFadden – 07/19/2021 – Library - \$11.00

Steven Mathieu – 09/27/2021 – Recreation - \$12.61

Patrick Woods – 09/24/2021 – Recreation - \$10.50

Jason Padilla – 06/07/2021 – Rodeo - \$10.50

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Analyz Alderete – 06/07/2021 – finance - \$10.50
Alena Gachupin – Pending Drug Screen

Seconded by Councilor Hicks, motion passed unanimously.

c. Business Registrations

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

Black Willow Design Studio – Out of Town– Magdalena, NM. – Jaclyn Waites – Handbags, Accessories, and Crafts
Old Lemitar Hitching Post – Out of Town – Lemitar, NM – Jess & Erin Bowser – Thrift Store

Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

d. Announcement – Next City Council Meeting Date and Time

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next regular City council meeting will be held on Monday, October 18, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers (111 School of Mines Road).

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation

/s/
Ravi Bhasker, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/
Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk