

**City of Socorro Regular City Council Meeting**  
**City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801**  
**August 30, 2021**

Mayor Ravi Bhasker called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk took roll call.

Council members present at roll call were: Councilor Deborah Dean, Councilor Nick Fleming, Councilor Damian Ocampo, and Councilor Peter Romero.

Council members remotely present at roll call were: Councilor Anton Salome.

Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez, Councilor Gordy Hicks, and Councilor Michael Olguin, Jr. were absent

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Bhasker led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilor Hicks entered at 12:04 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF AUGUST 30, 2021, CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA**

Councilor Fleming made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dean, motion passed unanimously.

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES**

**a. August 16, 2021**

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2021 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Olguin entered at 12:09 p.m.

**PUBLIC FORM**

Kristin Keller, Juvenile Justice Grant, Youth Suicide Prevention Grant Coordinator gave an overview of the programs.

Linda Wilson, Socorro Chamber of Commerce President gave a detailed three-part presentation to the Council. Where's the Chamber, what are we doing, and what is happening to the Community Kitchen?

Mayor Bhasker pointed out that the City's electrical use for the Community Kitchen is high and no rent has been received since 2017. The Mayor stated that the support for the kitchen has been from the City in paying the utilities, furnishing the facilities, and yet the City is not receiving any rent. The Mayor recommended the Chamber apply for assistance through the County of Socorro.

Nick Keller, Chamber Board Member reported on the financial condition of the Chamber.

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Jon Morrison spoke on the importance of the Community Kitchen. Mr. Morrison introduced users of the Kitchen, Al Smoke, Fred Berger, and Eddie Mersta, to voice their concerns if the Kitchen were to close.

Mayor Bhasker advised Ms. Wilson to develop a plan and present to City Administration.

**SECOND READING OF ORDINANCES – PUBLIC HEARING & CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL**

**a. Ordinance 21-08-30 – Regulating the Proximity of Cannabis Establishments to Established School and Daycare Centers**

Councilor Hicks made a motion to go into public hearing. The motion was seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

Jerry Armijo, City Attorney presented Ordinance 21-08-30. Mr. Armijo discussed the Cannabis Regulation Act in detail with the Council.

Mayor Bhasker informed the Council that the Smith's building has been sold to Ultra Health, the largest medical marijuana distributor in the State of New Mexico.

Councilor Hicks made a motion with, no further input from the public, to go back into regular session. The motion was seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve Ordinance 21-08-30 – Regulating the Proximity of Cannabis Establishments to Established School and Daycare Centers. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dean. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

**DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION**

**a. Resolution No. 21-08-30a – FY23 Funding of a Public Transportation System**

Carlos Savedra, Transportation Director, presented Resolution No. 21-08-30a. Resolution No. 21-08-30a dedicates the City to participate in funding the transportation department, should the application be approved.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to pass Resolution No. 21-08-30a. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dean, motion passed unanimously.

**b. Resolution No. 21-08-30b – LGRF – Bullock Avenue**

Donald Monette, City Administrator presented Resolution No. 21-08-30b. Mr. Monette stated the New Mexico Department of Transportation has agreed to increase funding by \$500,000.00 for Bullock Avenue.

Councilor Romero made a motion to pass Resolution No. 21-08-30b. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dean, motion passed unanimously.

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**c. American Recovery Plan Spending Priorities - Discussion**

Councilor Salome discussed his recommendations with the Council.

1. Fund a position whose main purpose is to promote organize and facilitate mental and behavioral health services for all residents of Socorro. The primary function of this position would be to promote and support the various organizations to work together to make progress in accomplishing measurable goals. Additionally, under number one, funding could be used to partially or fully support the 100 percent community project described by Sharon and Samantha, the SCOPE coordinator, if the council chooses to do so.
2. Provide Essential Worker Premium wage support for those who have not received funding under this section.  
Essential City employees received this amount, as should Essential Workers in our community.
3. Incentivizing Covid vaccination through compensation, for the members of our community. Some have received the 100 dollars the state has offered, but they should receive an amount equal to the amount our City employees received, as long as the city is not fully or partially liable for any adverse health issues associated with taking the shot.
  - a. Fund a position whose main purpose is to address questions from the community that may arise during the process of deciding to take the Covid vaccine.
4. Installation of hand washing stations in high traffic areas where people have a tendency to touch product. Make disposable gloves available at locations where individuals are using equipment that are frequently touched. e.g., ATM machines, gas pumps, playgrounds etc.
5. Possibly provide small business grants.

Mayor Bhasker presented the City Administrations Proposed budget for ARP. The Mayor stated the City's intent is to have hard, clear cut programs that improve the City's facilities to become COVID safe and not to duplicate incentives provided by other entities.

A lengthy discussion followed.

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| <b>Propose</b>  |  |  |  | Approximately     |
|---|--|--|--|-------------------|
| Premium Pay and Incentive Pay (520 x 3 x 135)                     |  |  |  | \$ (210,600.00)   |
| Ambulance   |  |  |  | \$ (45,000.00)    |
| Swimming Pool   |  |  |  | \$ (150,000.00)   |
| Convention Center   |  |  |  | \$ (100,000.00)   |
| Finley and PD Air exchangers                                      |  |  |  | \$ (350,000.00)   |
| City Hall   |  |  |  | \$ (75,000.00)    |
| Other Finley Upgrades   |  |  |  | \$ (103,330.50)   |
|   |  |  |  |                   |
|   |  |  |  | \$ (1,033,930.50) |
| First Installment   |  |  |  | \$ 1,033,930.50   |
|   |  |  |  |                   |
| Budget remaining  |  |  |  | \$ -              |
| *We have also already purchased 2 stormwater pumps from this tran |  |  |  |                   |
|   |  |  |  |                   |
| <b>Other Priorities</b>   |  |  |  |                   |
| Premium Pay and Incentive Pay (520 x 2 x 135)                     |  |  |  | \$ (140,400.00)   |
| Landfill Equipment  |  |  |  | \$ (150,000.00)   |
| Staffing Recreation   |  |  |  | \$ (100,000.00)   |
| Staffing Tourism  |  |  |  | \$ (50,000.00)    |
| Staffing Rodeo  |  |  |  | \$ (75,000.00)    |
|   |  |  |  |                   |
|   |  |  |  | \$ (515,400.00)   |
| Second Installment  |  |  |  | \$ 1,033,930.50   |
|   |  |  |  |                   |
| Budget remaining  |  |  |  | \$ 518,530.50     |

Mayor Bhasker advised the Council when submitting suggestions to assign a dollar amount to each request and provide details on how any new programs will be managed.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Mayor Bhasker presented the Council with a list of projects the City is dealing with. The Mayor will ask Department Heads to give an update on each project.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Councilor Dean made a motion to go into executive session. Seconded by Councilor Olguin. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Olguin made a motion to go back into regular session. Seconded by Councilor Romero. Mayor Bhasker took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

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Mayor Bhasker reported out of executive session the discussion of one personnel matter. No action was taken.

**MAYOR'S REPORT**

**a. Reporting on Personnel Changes**

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

Jedi Angel – 09/01/2021 – Fire – Promotion to Lieutenant – E-47 to E-51  
Humberto Lucero – 09/01/2021 – Fire – Promotion to Captain – I-51 to I-55  
Jenelle Partridge – 09/03/2021 – Water/Wastewater – Resignation  
Zach Anaya – 08/12/2021 – Water – Resignation

Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

**b. Announcement – Next City Council Meeting Date and Time**

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next regular City council meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 7, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers (111 School of Mines Road).

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 1:27 p.m.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
/s/  
**Ravi Bhasker, Mayor**

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
/s/  
**Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk**