

City of Socorro Regular City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
January 20, 2015

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 Donald Monette, Councilor Nick Fleming, Councilor Peter Romero and Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez. Councilor Ernest Pargas and Councilor Gordy Hicks were absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bhasker led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 20, 2015 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

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

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

a. December 15, 2014

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

b. January 9, 2015

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

PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS

a. Retirement – Everett Binger – Socorro Fire Department

Mayor Bhasker presented a plaque to Everett Binger, who retired from the Socorro Fire Department as a Captain on December 31, 2014 with 15 years of service. Mayor Bhasker also recognized Mr. Binger for his military service. Joe Gonzales, Fire Chief, presented Mr. Binger with several items from the Fire Department including a signed picture, plaque and a mug. There were several employees from the Socorro Fire Department at the meeting.

PUBLIC FORUM

a. Frances Deters – Request for Left-Hand Turn Lane onto Michigan Avenue

Frances Deters, a local resident, stated that she thought it would be a good idea to install a left turn lane on Highway 60 as it goes into Michigan Avenue. Ms. Deters stated that she feels it could be dangerous to let the traffic back up on Highway 60 while waiting to turn onto Michigan Avenue. Mayor Bhasker stated that the suggestion is a good one and that Highway 60 is maintained by the NM Department of Transportation. Mayor Bhasker stated that the NM Department of Transportation will be in Socorro on February 5th at 10:00 a.m. and invited Ms. Deters to meet with them to present her suggestion.

Councilor Hicks arrived.

JR Seeger stated that he has been working with the Chamber of Commerce on the Economic Development Council and that he would like to create a car rally/show for Socorro County to bring in car clubs from all over the State. Mr. Seeger stated that there are currently 60 car clubs in New Mexico with 3,000 members that could potentially attend the event. Mr. Seeger stated that he would present a letter of interest with detailed information to the City. Mayor Bhasker stated that Josh Kerns, the City's Recreation/Tourism Director, would be able to work with Mr. Seeger to look into creating the event.

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Marie Watkins provided a handout to the Mayor and City Council with information regarding how she feels the SEC makes it difficult or impossible to vote on items. Ms. Watkins stated that the SEC attorney considers the word “consideration” to mean only discussion and not to “vote on” which, in her opinion, means members will never vote on anything. Mayor Bhasker stated that Mr. Christensen will present his findings at Macey Center on January 28th at 10:30 a.m. and January 29th at 9:00 a.m. Mayor Bhasker stated that after the findings, the City Council will have to consider how the City should proceed with regards to the SEC. Mayor Bhasker stated that he read in the newspaper about the SEC having trouble with their insurance. Mayor Bhasker stated in actuality, the SEC’s insurance company is having problems with the SEC Board not meeting their responsibility as Trustees.

Gerri Klinglesmith stated there would be a School Board Candidates Forum sponsored by AAUW on January 22nd at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall. Ms. Klinglesmith stated that on December 13th there was a qualifying tournament for FIRST Lego League Robotics Competition held at Sarracino Middle School. Ms. Klinglesmith stated that there were 17 teams of which 7 will advance to the State level. Ms. Klinglesmith stated that two of the teams were from Socorro and one of the Socorro teams advanced to the State level. Ms. Klinglesmith stated that 375 people attended the event which included 45 volunteers.

FIRST READING OF ORDINANCES – APPROVAL FOR PUBLICATION ONLY

a. Ordinance No. 15-01-20 – Utility Rate Increase

Mayor Bhasker presented Ordinance No. 15-01-20 which, if approved, changes the per unit charges and the basis for charges for gas, water, wastewater and residential sanitation. Mr. Salome stated that the legal publication for the ordinance in the newspaper will have a summary and the proposed ordinance in its entirety will be available at City Hall. Ms. Gonzales stated that she provided in the packets a rate comparison of other municipalities, a summary of the proposed rate increases and an estimate of revenues.

Mayor Bhasker stated that the ordinance is on the agenda for approval for publication only.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 15-01-20 for publication only. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

a. Resolution No. 15-01-20a – Open Meetings Resolution

Mayor Bhasker presented Resolution No. 15-01-20a. Mayor Bhasker stated that the Open Meetings Resolution is passed several times a year including the beginning of each calendar year and after an election. Mr. Salome stated that the resolution follows requirements made by New Mexico State Statute for open meetings.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Resolution No. 15-01-20a. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

b. Resolution No. 15-01-20b – Governing Body Rules of Procedure Resolution

Mayor Bhasker presented Resolution No. 15-01-20b which, if approved, reaffirms the Governing Body Rules of Procedure adopted April 7, 2014 and recognizes those rules as the method by which the Socorro City Council meetings are conducted. Mayor Bhasker stated that the Governing Body Rules of Procedure are re-adopted at the beginning of each calendar year and right after an election.

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve resolution No. 15-01-20b. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

c. Public Hearing – Liquor License Application – Restaurant (Beer & Wine) License for On-Premise Consumption – ATM Chavez, LLC dba Armijo’s Family Restaurant

Councilor Hicks made a motion to go into public hearing. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

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Mayor Bhasker stated that ATM Chavez, LLC dba Armijo's Family Restaurant has requested a Restaurant (Beer & Wine) License for On-Premise Consumption which has to be approved by the local Governing Body. There were no comments from the public. A representative from ATM Chavez, LLC dba Armijo's Family Restaurant was not present at the meeting.

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

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve the Restaurant (Beer & Wine) License for On-Premise Consumption for ATM Chavez, LLC dba Armijo's Family Restaurant. Seconded by Councilor Monette, motion passed unanimously.

d. Resolution No. 15-01-20c – Transportation Alternatives Program Application

Mayor Bhasker presented Resolution No. 15-01-20c, which, if approved, allows the submittal of an application to the NM Department of Transportation for Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Transportation Alternatives Program Funds. Isaac Burleigh stated that if awarded, the City would have a required local match of \$8,000. Mr. Burleigh stated that the funds would be used to create a bicycle and multi-use trail plan for Socorro. Mr. Burleigh stated that the plan is supported in the City's 2003 Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Burleigh stated that the trail would connect residential and commercial areas and be an attractive place to promote healthy activity.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Resolution No. 15-01-20c. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Hicks stated that the City's airport flag will fly in Santa Fe for Airport Day.

Councilor Olguin stated that the Economic Development Committee has been meeting and has decided to break into five different subcommittees which will consist of Agriculture, Commerce, Education, Tourism and Technology. Councilor Olguin stated that e-mails have been sent with individual committee information. Councilor Olguin stated that he feels the committees are making progress and thanked everyone for their support.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

Lloyd Martinez, Division Director, stated that progress is being made in repairing the collapsed sewer line across California Street. Mr. Martinez stated that the project should be finished by January 27th.

Mayor Bhasker stated that on the south side of the soccer fields, a subcontractor is using the area as a source of rock for the levy project. Mayor Bhasker stated the subcontractor will replace the area where rock is being removed from which the City will develop into more fields in the future.

Mayor Bhasker stated the City is meeting with the NM Department of Transportation on February 5th to discuss the use of the entrance and exit at the armory. Mayor Bhasker stated that he has a conceptual design for the armory/convention center which he will bring to the City Council for approval at a future meeting. Mayor Bhasker stated that an ordinance for a convention fee will also be proposed at a future meeting which would provide revenue for the convention center.

Mayor Bhasker stated that due to the passing of Library Board member Zeke Armijo, he would like to appoint Lisa Beinhof, the Library Director at NM Tech, to fill the position. Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve the Mayor's appointment of Lisa Beinhof to the Library Board. Seconded by Councilor Monette, motion passed unanimously.

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Mayor Bhasker stated that the City Administration is still reviewing applications for the Animal Shelter Director/Manager position.

Councilor Olguin stated that Aerojet, who planned to close their Socorro location, has decided to stay in Socorro which is good for Socorro's economy. Mayor Bhasker stated that, in regards to businesses closing, it was his understanding that Denny's, Taco Bell and KFC all closed due to remodeling requirements which can be costly. Mayor Bhasker stated that businesses have closed but have been replaced by other businesses. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City's share of gross receipts is ahead of the amount from the same time last year. Some discussion followed.

Councilor Monette asked if the next CDBG project will address ongoing drainage issues particularly the backup under the railroad tracks that run along Hope Farms Road. Jay Santillanes, Division Director, stated that there will be a CDBG hearing so that people can present their proposed projects and at the Special City Council meeting on January 23rd, the City Council will select a project. Some discussion regarding drainage followed.

Mayor Bhasker commended officers at the Socorro Police Department for an incident which recently took place with a man yielding a knife. Mayor Bhasker stated that the officers had control of the situation and chose to tase the man rather than use lethal force. Mayor Bhasker recognized Officers Victor Chavez, Peter Gonzales and Alfredo Garza for their work.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

MAYOR'S REPORT

a. Assignment of Lease – Grefco, Inc. to RRP Judaica Holdings, LLC

Mayor Bhasker presented an Assignment of Lease which will assign Grefco, Inc.'s lease with the City of Socorro to RRP Judaica Holdings, LLC. Mayor Bhasker stated that the business is a successful perlite mining company with 35 employees. Mr. Salome stated that the minutes will reflect a permanent record of the change.

b. Job Description – Library Director

Mayor Bhasker presented an updated job description for Library Director. Mr. Salome stated that the Library Board reviewed the job description after Paula Mertz retired and made some minor changes.

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve the updated job description for Library Director. Seconded by Councilor Hicks, motion passed unanimously.

c. Final Audit Approval – FY 2013-2014

Mayor Bhasker stated that the City has received final audit approval for FY 2013-2014 from the State of New Mexico. Ms. Gonzales stated that the report can now be released. Ms. Gonzales stated that there were 2 findings during the audit and both findings were related to the CDBG project.

Councilor Monette made a motion to approve the final audit report for FY 2013-2014. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

d. Reporting on Personnel Changes

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

Justin Gonzales – 1-17-15 – Police – Resignation

Adonica Armijo – 1-28-15 – Fire – Resignation

Brittany McDaniel – 12-2-14 – Municipal Court – Completed Probation – 5% Increase

Peter Gonzales – 12-20-14 – Police – Certification – A-37 to A-40

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Lisa Simpson – 1-20-15 – Animal Shelter – Transfer to Animal Shelter Kennel/Office Assistant Position – C-17 to C-24

Jesus Gonzalez – 12-31-14 – Transportation – Resignation

Kevin Vega – 1-20-15 – Police – New Hire (Police Officer) – A-35

Joseph Reichenbach – 1-20-15 – Police – New Hire (Police Officer) – A-37

Matt Brannan – 1-1-15 – Fire – Promotion to Captain – N-40 to N-44

Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

e. Business Registrations

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

Dollar Tree #5641 – C-2 – 516 S Hwy 85 – Corporation – Retail Variety

Major League Barbershop – C-2 – 317 California Street – Byrum Rico – Barber Shop

Source Refrigeration & HVAC Inc. – Out of Town – Anaheim, CA – Corporation – Commercial Contractor

Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

f. Next City Council Meeting Announcement

Mayor Bhasker stated that there would be a special City Council meeting on Friday, January 23, 2015 at 12:00 Noon in the City Hall Council Chambers to select the next CDBG project. Mayor Bhasker stated that the next regular City Council meeting would be held on Monday, February 2, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to add “Voucher Run” under the Mayor’s Report on the agenda. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

g. Voucher Run

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve vouchers 132427 to 132757 in the amount of \$985,099.36, plus Payroll Transfers (\$315,805.14), for a total of \$1,300,904.50. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:14 p.m., Councilor Hicks motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Monette, motion passed unanimously.

THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation

/s/
Ravi Bhasker, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/
Pat Salome, City Clerk