

City of Socorro Regular Scheduled City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
July 5, 2022

Mayor Pro Tem Gordy Hicks called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk, took roll call.

Council members present at roll call were: Mayor Pro Tem Gordy Hicks, Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez, Councilor Deborah Dean, Councilor Damian Ocampo, Councilor Michael Olguin, Jr., Councilor Peter Romero, and Councilor Anton Salome.

Mayor Ravi Bhasker and Councilor Nick Fleming were absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Donald Monette, City Administrator led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF JULY 5, 2022, CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

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

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

a. June 21, 2022

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

PUBLIC FORUM

a. Hector Juarez

Mr. Juarez informed the Council of an incident that occurred between his daughter and the City Police.

b. El Camino Real Historic Trail Signage Project

Paul Harden addressed the Council with information about the El Camino Real Historic Trail Signage Project. Mr. Harden stated that the National Park Service has authorized funds to manufacture signage for Socorro County including the City. Administrator Monette informed Mr. Harden the Street Department would help in identifying locations for the six signs within the City limits. Councilor Ocampo asked if Mr. Harden has been in contact with the Tourism Department. Mr. Harden responded that he has spoken with the Mayor about the tourism aspects of the signage.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

a. City Baseball Program and Fields

Lloyd Martinez, General Services Director, informed the Council of an incident that occurred with non-city employees using 4-wheelers to drag the baseball fields after the recent rainstorms. Mr. Martinez explained that his department oversees maintaining the fields and James McNeil, Recreation/Tourism Director oversees scheduling. Mayor Pro Tem Hicks reminded the public not to do any work on City property. Councilor Chavez-Lopez asked how long it would take to get the fields ready. Mr. Martinez stated the fields were ready to play on the following day. Mr. McNeil stated that only two days of games were cancelled due to the weather and make up games have been rescheduled.

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b. Otero Street Traffic Signal Update – Added 15 Seconds

Mr. Martinez stated Paul Lopez requested an additional speed bump on San Miguel Road and after research, because of the distance between the first speed bump to the traffic light, the distance is too short. With help from the State Highway Department, an additional 15 seconds of time has been added to help with the flow of traffic.

c. Abandonment of 40' of Smith Road

Mr. Martinez informed the Council that Smith Road is currently 100' wide and the construction of a new chip sealed road will be 60' and the City would like to abate the remaining 40' to adjoining businesses and landowners. Councilor Salome said he was not against abating roads to private people if in fact the result benefits the taxpayers. The Councilor further stated that the City should go ahead and build the road before the City abates any property because additional property could be used for sidewalks and lights, and landscaping. Then the City would not have to purchase back any of the property that was abated. Mr. Martinez explained that the engineering of the road was performed by Dennis Engineering and would be the same size of Bullock that includes sidewalks and lights. Councilor Dean asked if abating the property is going to benefit the landowners. Mr. Martinez replied that it would give the businesses more land for their use. Councilor Olguin agreed with Councilor Salome 100% and asked if the land would be appraised and could be sold to the landowners with the proceeds going back to the taxpayers. Mr. Monette stated that he does not remember any land appraised before abating, but this is just for discussion and if the Councilors do want to abate the property it would have to be by ordinance. Councilor Olguin gave an example of the property that the City abated on the corner of South California and Spring with the promise of the owners bringing in a CVS pharmacy that never transpired.

d. ICIP – 3rd Public Hearing for Community Input

Councilor Salome made a motion to go into public hearing. Seconded by Councilor Dean, motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Salome had a resident of north Tech approach him and asked to include the location of Lopezville Road and Leroy Place and roads in that area.

Councilor Chavez-Lopez made a motion to go back into regular session. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Monette reminded the Council that if they would add specific roads to their sheets and he would update the ICIP. Councilors Romero and Chavez-Lopez requested an updated list of roads. Councilor Chavez-Lopez asked if water lines could be added to the ICIP because of the breaks that occur on Bagley Street. Mr. Martinez explained that the lines on Bagley Street were replaced with copper and the cause of the leaks are due the high pressure in the lines and if he reduced the pressure the high school would have no pressure at all.

e. Amend Fireworks Ordinance

Councilor Dean stated that she would like to amend the City's fireworks ordinance as follows.

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“Setting off fireworks within the City limits is prohibited except from July 1 to July 6, December 28 to January 1, May 5 (Cinco de Mayo) and three days preceding and including the Chinese New Year. No fireworks shall be set off between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., with the exception of New Year’s Eve (December 31) where fireworks shall be permissible on December 31 ending at 1:00 a.m. on January 1.”

Mr. Monette said he has asked for the City Attorney’s advice and, if approved, the City would have to amend the current ordinance and bring back to the Council.

Councilor Dean made a motion to amend the ordinance. Seconded by Councilor Salome, motion passed unanimously.

f. Special Use Permit – Visa de Socorro

Kristy Padilla, Planning & Zoning Manager stated the property that the City of Socorro deeded to Vista de Socorro is located behind 1200 Highway 60 West that is zoned C-2. A special use permit is required for this property and project due to the C-2 zoning. However, as the City of Socorro is the only property owner/Lessor of the surrounding lands within 100 feet, and because the City of Socorro is a partner in this project, the City has no objection to the issuing of a special use permit. The City of Socorro also has no objections to this project having more than ten apartment units.

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve the Special Use Permit. Seconded by Councilor Ocampo. Motion passed five votes in favor and Councilor Chavez-Lopez abstaining due to her participation in the project.

g. Resolution No. 22-07-05 – South Central Council of Governments 22-23-Participation

Councilor Hicks presented Resolution No. 22-07-05 and if approved would allow the City to participate in the South-Central Council of Governments (SCCOG) for FY22-23.

Administrator Monette stated that the SCCOG administers our current CDBG project. Councilor Salome gave an overview of the services SCCOG provides. Councilor Ocampo mentioned that New Mexico Workforce Solutions no longer administers the Youth Program, and a new provider has been awarded the contract.

Councilor Salome made a motion to approve Resolution No. 22-07-05. Seconded by Councilor Romero. Motion passed five votes in favor and Councilor Olguin voting against.

NEW BUSINESS

Administrator Monette announced that the Tularosa Basin Downwinders Consortium are having their 13th Annual Candlelight Vigil and Town Hall on Saturday, July 16th in Tularosa, New Mexico, and Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham will be in Socorro on Thursday July 7th to announce the future installation of two electric car charging stations to be located at the Plaza.

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OLD BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

MAYOR'S REPORT

a. Job Descriptions

i. Municipal Court Chief Clerk

Councilor Olguin made a motion to approve the job description. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

ii. Tourism, Marketing, Convention Center, and Economic Development Director

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve the job description. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez.

Councilor Olguin made a motion to amend the job description keeping the same salary range just eliminate Economic Development Director portion. Councilor Olguin stated if the City has an Economic Development Director that person should solely focus on Economic Development.

Councilor Salome made a motion to accept the amendment to the job description. Seconded by Councilor Dean, motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Dean stated that the original job description contained too much work for one individual.

iii. Assistant Tourism, Marketing, Convention Center, and Economic Development Director

Councilor Ocampo made a motion to approve the job description. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez.

Councilor Olguin made a motion to amend the job description eliminating Economic Development Director portion. Seconded by Councilor Dean, motion passed unanimously.

iv. Switchboard Operator

Councilor Olguin made a motion to approve the job description. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

b. Reporting on Personnel Changes

Councilor Romero motioned to approve the Personnel Changes as read by Administrator Monette.

NAME	EFFECTIVE DATE	DEPARTMENT	REASON	SALARY
Maureen Trujillo	07/01/2022	Administration/Cashier	Temporary to Fulltime	A-27

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Brittany McDaniel	07/01/2022	Municipal Court Chief Clerk	Increased Duties	I-43 to I-47
Daryl Ross	06/21/2022	Tourism/Recreation Admin Assistant	Completed Probation	A-30 to A-32
Carlos Savedra	07/01/2022	Transportation Transportation Director	Promotion to Director	I-44 to I-56
Peter James Gonzales	06/20/2022	Police/Patrolman	Completed Probation	A-48 to A-50
Seferina Ortiz	07/05/2022	Police Evidence Custodian	New Hire	A-34
Andrew Garcia-Vigil	07/05/2022	Police Patrolman	New Hire Transfer from Dispatch	B-48

Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

c. Business Registrations

Councilor Romero motioned to approve the Business Registrations as read by Mayor Bhasker.

NAME	ZOING	ADDRESS	OWNER	TYPE
Ecliptix Gaming	NM Tech	801 Leroy Pl	Damian Banks	Esports Competition, Recreation and Education
Backroad Refreshers	R-3 Transient Vendor	405 Terry St.	Aurelia Chavez	Mobile Truck/Drinks
Advanced Tower Service	Out of Town	Albuquerque, NM	Duane Baker	Communications
Over the Top Services NM	Out of Town	Polvadera, NM	Chris Scarborough	Commercial Janitorial

Seconded by Councilor Ocampo, motion passed unanimously.

d. Announcement – Next City Council Meeting Dates and Times

Mayor Pro Tem Hicks stated that the next regular City Council meeting will be held on Monday, July 25, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers – 111 School of Mines Road.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation

/s/

Gordy Hicks, Mayor Pro Tem

ATTEST:

/s/

Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk