

**City of Socorro Regular Scheduled City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
September 19, 2022**

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 Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez, Councilor Deborah Dean, Councilor Gordy Hicks, Councilor Damian Ocampo, Councilor Michael Olguin, Jr., and Councilor Anton Salome.

Councilor Nick Fleming and Councilor Peter Romero were absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bhasker led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2022, CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

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

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

a. September 6, 2022

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

PUBLIC FORUM

a. SCOPE

Bernadette Lopez, Drug Free Coordinator for SCOPE Health Council and assistant Veronica Espinoza, gave the Council an update on what the program is doing in the school system. Life Skills training curriculum has been implemented that covers drug and alcohol abuse at Sarracino Middle School and Cottonwood Valley Charter School seventh grade classes.

b. Socorrofest

The following citizens expressed thanks to the Mayor, Council, City Departments, and the many volunteers that made Socorrofest a success.

- Mariah Deters Carter
- Nick Chavez
- Gary Axen
- Ronna Kalish
- Amy Erickson
- Dana Chavez

Mayor Bhasker thanked Councilor Dean for her involvement in making Socorrofest happen and stated that it is a great community event and the City will continue to support it. Councilor Dean thanked Lloyd Martinez, General Services Director, and all of his departments for their hard work outside of their regular working hours. Dana Chavez, New Mexico Tech Performing Arts Coordinator presented the Council with Socorrofest T-Shirts that were designed by BJ Lesperance. Councilor Fleming thanked the Mayor and City Departments, and mentioned the event was well attended and nice to hear all

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the wonderful bands that performed. Councilor Salome announced that Oktoberfest will be held October 1, 2022 at the Hammel Museum. Councilor Chavez-Lopez stated the San Miguel Fiestas will be held September 23-24, 2022. Mayor Bhasker also announced that World Series of Roping will be held on September 24-25, 2022, the Great New Mexico Chile Taste-Off October 8, 2022 at the City's Rodeo and Sports Complex. Ronna Kalish New Mexico Tech Performing Arts Director announced the "A Midsummer Night's Dream" performed by the Socorro Community Theater will be held on Friday September 23, 2022.

ORDINANCES

a. Ordinance No. 22-09-19 – WNM (Western New Mexico) Communications Land Sale

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 22-09-19. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez. Mr. Pineda took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

a. Resolution No. 22-09-19a – EMRTC Bridge

Mayor Bhasker informed the Council that the EMRTC Bridge is no longer allowed to have any trucks more than 10,000 pounds cross the bridge. Donald Monette, City Administrator confirmed that the City received \$332,500.00 from the New Mexico Department of Transportation, with a City match of \$17,500.00, to start the engineering to reconstruct the bridge.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Resolution No. 22-09-19a as presented. Seconded by Councilor Dean, motion passed unanimously.

b. Resolution No. 22-09-19b – Manzanares Avenue

Mr. Monette stated that the City received \$579,671.00 from the New Mexico Department of Transportation, with a City match of \$30,509.00, to design, repave and ADA sidewalk replacement of Manzanares Avenue from California Street to just east of the Socorro Electric Cooperative.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Resolution No. 22-09-19b as presented. Seconded by Councilor Dean, motion passed unanimously.

c. Resolution No. 22-09-19c – Credit Card Acceptance

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Resolution No. 22-09-19c. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

d. Add 6th/Bullock Blvd. Drainage to ICIP

Mayor Bhasker informed the Council that 6th and Bullock Drainage will be added to the ICIP. The transformer that supplies power to the pump on Bullock Street where water forms a lake has been installed. The water that is pumped will need to be treated in a holding pond, or similar system, before it is pumped into the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy's ditch. The City has five years to put this plan in place.

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Councilor Hicks made a motion to add 6th /Bullock Blvd. Drainage to the ICIP. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

e. Rescind Fire Restrictions Ordinance

Mayor Bhasker stated that the County of Socorro has rescinded its Fire Restrictions ordinance and would like the Council to consider if the City also would like to rescind its ordinance.

Mr. Monette informed the Council that the ordinance that was passed says it can be rescinded by the Mayor or the Fire Chief.

f. Council Meeting Dates and Times

Mayor Bhasker informed the Council that there would be no conflict with changing the Council Meetings to Tuesday as the Socorro Consolidated School Board meets on Mondays.

Mr. Monette stated that because the City's Open Meetings Act refers to Ordinance No. 08-05-19, when the meetings were changed to 6:00 p.m., he would like to know if the Council would like to move forward because it would take an ordinance change, an update to the Open Meetings Act, and advertising for fourteen days. The Council all approved for Mr. Monette to move forward with an ordinance change.

g. Tourism/Convention Positions

Mayor Bhasker informed the Council that Tourism/Convention Center will split from Recreation/Rodeo. The Mayor asked the Council to detail all the deliverables and a salary for an Economic Development Director position. Mr. Monette stated he would have the Tourism/Convention Center job descriptions available for the next Council meeting.

h. List of Streets

Mayor Bhasker stated that in the Councilors packet is a list of streets that need to be resurfaced or reconstructed. The Mayor stated 16 speed bumps have been installed and there are 26 more request at a price of \$3,500.00 each. Councilor Chavez-Lopez asked about weed control, because the weeds on Lucero Street are growing into the street. The Mayor replied that with the current storms, weeds are out of control and the City is diligently working on it. The Mayor informed the Council that a large street project will take place in the next four years, Spring Street from California Street to the bridge on Highway 60 going to Magdalena.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Bhasker asked for a report from the following directors.

- **James McNeil** – Reported that Socorrofest was a success and thanked Lloyd Martinez, General Services Director, for his departments help. Socorrofest events included 10 3x3 basketball teams and the Cornhole tournament had approximately 35 players. Upcoming events to be held are the World Series of Team Roping, Captain Laura S. Haines M Mountain Fly-In, Oktoberfest, 5k Color Run, and the Great New Mexico Chile Taste-Off

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and parade. Councilor Hicks asked what events will occur at the Fly-In and gave Mr. McNeil suggestions of activities that happened in past Fly-Ins.

- **Chelsea Jones, Library Director** reported on the events that are happening at the library.
- **Michael Lucero, Landfill & Sanitation Director** reported that his department is still waiting for delivery of a part to repair the garbage truck.
- **Lawrence Baca, Fire Chief** reported that the Annual BBQ at the New Mexico Fire and EMS Expo went well and served approximately 300 people. The Department is still short 2 positions.
- **Mike Winders, Police Chief** informed the Council he is waiting for parts to equip the new police vehicles. Mayor Bhasker stated that he will appoint the new Chief and Assistant Chief and that he made it clear to the new chief that the City's biggest problem is people roving up and down California Street that are vandalizing and harassing people and also need to attempt to tackle the homeless problem.
- **Guadalupe Tarango, Animal Shelter Director/Dispatch Director** reported he is short on staff and the shelter is full and will be doing another transfer to Utah in late October or early November.
- **Lloyd Martinez, General Services Director** reported the pickle ball courts at Sedillo Park are near completion and starting repair of the tennis courts the following week. Mr. Martinez stated that his departments are all short on staff.
- **Ruby Lopez, Finance Director** reported that the utility bills have been increasing because of the natural gas pricing. Mayor Bhasker informed the Council that the City's natural gas bill has doubled from last year and this winter will be difficult for the people of Socorro.
- **Isaac Angel, Gas Superintendent/Airport Director** reported on the outage of the CNG pump that failed after the Socorro Electric Cooperatives power outage. Crews have been cleaning around the airport for the Fly-In and the new flooring in the airport building is getting installed.

Mayor Bhasker thanked the Directors for attending the meetings.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

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MAYOR’S REPORT

a. Job Description – Amended Job Descriptions for Payroll Adjustment

Mr. Monette explained that the Council requested administration to analyze the employee’s pay scales for the entire employee base and with the payroll adjustments the job descriptions had to be adjusted. The minimum wage after probation is \$15.00 per hour for full time permanent employees. Councilor Olguin questioned the pay scale for Fire Department employees. Ms. Lopez explained that the Fire Department is paid at a different hourly rate, as they are paid for 114.83 hours per pay period, rather than 86.67, like other City employees.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve the Job Descriptions. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

b. Appointments

i. Police Chief – Angel Garcia

ii. Assistant Police Chief – Kenneth Greenwood

Mayor Bhasker appointed Angel Garcia, Police Chief and Kenneth Greenwood, Assistant Police Chief.

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

c. Update on Grants

Mayor Bhasker and Mr. Monette informed the Council of the grants that the City has received and are applying for.

d. Reporting on Personnel Changes

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Police Chief Mike Winders’ retirement.

NAME	EFFECTIVE DATE	DEPARTMENT	REASON	SALARY
Mike Winders	09/30/2022	Police	Retirement	
See Attached List	09/19/2022			

Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve the list of employees receiving the salary adjustment. Seconded by Councilor Fleming.

Councilor Olguin again questioned Ms. Lopez about the Fire Department salaries. Ms. Lopez explained in detail how the Fire Department salaries are calculated.

Motion passed unanimously.

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e. Business Registrations

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

NAME	ZOING	ADDRESS	OWNER	TYPE
Misty's Helping Hands	C-2	308 California St.	Misty M. Romero	Massage Therapy

Seconded by Councilor Dean, motion passed unanimously.

f. Voucher Run

Councilor Fleming made a motion to approve vouchers 156801 to 157050 in the amount of \$1,027,435.98 plus Payroll Transfers \$424,398.70 for a total of \$1,451,834.68.

Seconded by Councilor Dean, motion passed unanimously.

g. Announcement – Next City Council Meeting Dates and Times

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next regular City Council meeting will be held on Monday, October 3, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers – 111 School of Mines Road.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation

/s/

Ravi Bhasker, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/

Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk