

**City of Socorro Regular Scheduled City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
January 17, 2023**

Mayor Pro Tem 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: Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez, Councilor Deborah Dean, Councilor Nick Fleming, Mayor Pro Tem Gordy Hicks, Councilor Damian Ocampo, and Councilor Peter Romero.

Councilor Anton Salome was present remotely.

Mayor Ravi Bhasker and Councilor Michael Olguin, Jr. were absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilor Chavez-Lopez led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

- a. **Approval of January 17, 2023 City Council Agenda**
- b. **Consideration of Minutes**
 - i. **January 3, 2023**
- c. **Voucher Run**

The Voucher Run included vouchers 157687 to 157874 in the amount of \$1,271,730.19 plus Payroll Transfers \$429,202.64 for a total of \$1,700,932.83.

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

PUBLIC FORUM

- a. **Amy Kimball**

Amy Kimball stated that she has been a resident for approximately seven years and is interested in becoming more involved in City government and how it works and plans on attending more Council meetings. Ms. Kimball inquired as to where to find the agenda prior to the meetings. Mr. Pineda stated that the meeting is posted on the Friday before the meeting on the webpage.

- b. **Luis Romero**

Luis Romero stated he moved to Socorro a year ago from Albuquerque and has decided to attend City Council meeting and get more involved in city government.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

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OLD BUSINESS

Ruby Lopez, Finance Director informed the Council that the cost of gas has increased and therefore will increase City gas bills to be higher than usual and a robo call and a bill insert will help inform the residents.

Councilor Ocampo asked about the Samsung Solar Project. Mr. Pineda stated that Samsung has contacted him and they have just received their Phase 1 interconnect report from Tri-State G&T and has asked for a full status report. Administrator Monette stated that Samsung originally approached the City about locating at the Industrial Park and had a 30 day window to get their interconnection application into Tri-State so they are also working with a land owner just outside of the Industrial Park.

Councilor Dean asked for an update on the offroad vehicles. Administrator Monette replied that he had sent out the ordinances from other communities to the Councilors and has not received any feedback and further asked if the Councilors would like to form a committee with the Municipal Judge. Mayor Pro Tem Hicks appointed Councilor Chavez-Lopez as chairwoman of the committee.

Councilor Salome discussed funding for the Senior Centers and encouraged the Council to support legislation for the Senior Centers. Council Chavez-Lopez stated that on January 26, 2023 Lobby Day will occur during the legislative session and some Councilors should attend and speak with the City's representatives. Councilor Romero said that would be beneficial for the Councilors to attend. Mayor Pro Tem Hicks encouraged the Councilors to attend and speak on behalf of the City and Senior Center. Administrator Monette announced that February 17th is Municipal Day at the legislative session if the Councilors would like to attend and gave an update on the meeting with the city legislators where Administrator Monette gave a presentation of the City's Capital Outlay request and also mentioned that the County's number 1 priority was the Senior Center.

Councilor Dean brought up the Firework issue again and stated the Council has stalled on it.

Administrator Monette requested the Council help comply with the Open Meeting Act, if Councilors would let Administration know what they would like to have listed under New and Old Business by Thursday prior to the meeting.

Councilor Ocampo thanked the City, Councilors, and Administration for the support of the Jaramillo Food Drive that Toby and his family established fifty plus years ago and now run by the Ocampo family. The drive fed over 250 families and all the children received a stocking. Mayor Pro Tem Hicks thanked Councilor Ocampo and his family for continuing the food drive after Mr. Jaramillo's passing.

Councilor Romero and Mayor Pro Tem Hicks commended City crews on their hard work on the water outage that occurred on the evening of January 16, 2023.

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

MAYOR'S REPORT

a. Reporting on Personnel Changes

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

NAME	EFFECTIVE DATE	DEPARTMENT	REASON	SALARY
Alena Gachupin	01/17/2023	Administration	Temporary to Full Time	A-35
Jose Ruiz, Jr.	01/21/2023	Library	Completed Probation	A-35 to A-37

Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

b. Business Registrations

Councilor Romero motioned to approve the Business Registrations as read by Administrator Monette.

NAME	ZOING	ADDRESS	OWNER	TYPE
Sanchez Tacos	Transient Vendor	722 California St. (South of Radio Shack)	Carlos Sanchez	Yard and Landscaping Service
AA Savedra Construction LLC	C-1	1220 Lemitar Lane	Aaron Savedra	General Contractor

Seconded by Councilor Dean, motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Fleming asked if all the businesses working on the new service station has obtained a business license. Administrator Monette replied that the general contractor does have a business license.

c. Director Reports

• **Angel Garcia Police Chief**

Mr. Garcia stated the Police Department has been focusing on training and is up to date with state credentials. Two officers will be attending the academy and will be selecting two more recruits from eight applicants.

• **Lawrence Baca, Fire Chief**

Mr. Baca reported the department is understaffed by three positions and is in the process of interviewing two applicants and working on getting the department fully certified. Mr. Baca announced the department is sponsoring a cornhole tournament on February 11, 2023.

• **James McNeil, Recreation Director**

Mr. McNeil stated that youth basketball will start soon and reported on upcoming events at the Rodeo Arena. Councilor Chavez-Lopez stated she was happy that the Mounted Shooters Association are once again holding events at the Sports

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Complex.

- **Guadalupe Tarango, Dispatch/Animal Control Director**
Mr. Tarango stated the Dispatch Department has one employee in training, two that will attend the academy, and one position open. The Animal Control Department is in the process of setting up a transport of animals to Utah.
- **Michael Lucero, Landfill/Sanitation Director**
Mr. Lucero stated the contractor has arrived to start work on Cells 3 and 4 and all equipment is up and running. Mayor Pro Tem Hicks informed the Council he visited the landfill and was very impressed and invited all the Councilors to visit and take a look at the construction of the new cells.
- **Isaac Angel, Gas Superintendent/Airport Director**
Mr. Angel stated the Gas Department is busy with spots for the TDS fiber installation and reported the quotes for the new CNG pumps will be approximately \$330,000.00 but no more than \$500,000.00. The Airport was visited for a possible location for a movie shoot.
- **Ruby Lopez, Finance Director**
Ms. Lopez reported that 1099's and W-2's have been processed, she has applied for as many grants as possible, and has applied for loans for equipment and the landfill cells. Ms. Lopez discussed the high prices of natural gas and how it would affect the customer's bill.
- **Cheyenne Cortez, Tourism/Convention Services Assistant Director**
Ms. Cortez informed the Council the kitchen at the convention center is in the process of getting set up as a fully working kitchen. Working on upcoming events and the land lease for Box Canyon. The welding shop at Socorro High School will be making signage for the 5k and Blue Canyon trails. Councilor Dean asked if a fee structure has been established for the convention center and has it been posted on the website. Ms. Cortez replied it is not on the website until it has been finalized. Councilor Romero asked what kind of events can take place at the convention center. Ms. Cortez replied it is a full-service convention center. Administrator Monette stated that anyone that uses the convention center will be held responsible for damages.
- **Chris Carrillo, Code Enforcement Officer**
Mr. Carrillo stated that he and Lawrence Montano, Code Enforcement Officers, have 10 ongoing cases in court. They hauled off two tons of weeds and trash in December.

Mayor Pro Tem thanked the Council, Administration, Administrator Monette, and Mr. Pineda for their help during the time he has spent filling in for Mayor Bhasker in his absence.

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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 Tuesday, February 7, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers – 111 School of Mines Road.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:39 p.m.

THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation

/s/
Gordon Hicks, Mayor Pro Tem

ATTEST:

/s/
Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk