

City of Socorro Regular City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
February 2, 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 Ernest Pargas, Councilor Donald Monette, Councilor Nick Fleming, Councilor Peter Romero and Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez. Councilor Gordy Hicks was absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bhasker led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 2, 2015 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

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

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

a. January 20, 2015

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

b. January 23, 2015

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

PUBLIC FORUM

Michael Hanauer, Festival of the Cranes Coordinator, gave a brief update of the 2014 Festival of the Cranes event. Mr. Hanauer thanked the City for supporting the event annually with Lodger's Tax funds. Mr. Hanauer thanked the City's Police Department, Transportation Department, Tourism Department and all of the other City staff that assisted in the event. Mr. Hanauer stated that annually, the Bosque del Apache has 250,000 visitors and that the Festival of the Cranes brings in 5,000 visitors. Mr. Hanauer stated that the Bosque del Apache is one of the top 20 refuges in the country. Mr. Hanauer stated that in 2012, the Festival of the Cranes made \$2,000 (net), in 2013 the Festival made \$8,000 and in 2014 the Festival made \$25,000. Mr. Hanauer stated that in 2014, the Festival of the Cranes was voted number one wildlife birding festival in the country, number one wildlife photography festival in the country and Friends of the Bosque was voted best friends southwest organization. Mr. Hanauer stated that the 28th annual Festival of the Cranes will be held in 2015 with 150 events on the schedule. Mayor Bhasker thanked Mr. Hanauer for reporting on the event. Mayor Bhasker stated that it would be nice to see a similar event held during Trinity site as events surrounding the site have diminished. Mr. Hanauer stated that a fundraising photo shop night was recently done at the VLA. Mr. Hanauer stated that 69 people attended and there were great pictures taken.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

a. Fixed Route Transit Feasibility Plan – KFH Group

Ken Hosen, with the KFH Group, provided a handout to the Mayor and Council. Mr. Hosen explained that the KFH Group performed a feasibility study for a fixed transportation route in the City of Socorro. Mr. Hosen stated that items included in the study were route design, staff and vehicle needs, potential ridership and costs and funding sources. Mr. Hosen reviewed the findings of the study. Mr. Hosen answered several questions from the City Council regarding construction of bus stops, scheduling changes and route changes. Mayor Bhasker suggested coordinating with all of the other transportation services in Socorro so as not to duplicate services. Mr. Hosen stated that the KFH Group would be willing to assist the City after their contract has ended in order to help the City have a successful fixed route.

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b. Resolution No. 15-02-02 – Addition to City of Socorro ICIP

Mayor Bhasker presented Resolution No. 15-02-02 which, if approved, amends the City's Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan (ICIP) to include improvements to the City's drainage system which would include the culvert which crosses the railroad tracks at the Socorro C Drain which, in turn, would eliminate the backup of City storm water. Mr. Salome stated that if approved, the City will add the project to the ICIP in August when it is normally updated.

Councilor Monette made a motion to approve Resolution No. 15-02-02. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mayor Bhasker stated that there would be a public hearing at the next City Council meeting regarding the City's proposed utility rate increases.

Mayor Bhasker stated that he would also like to look at the implementation of a convention center tax at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

Mayor Bhasker stated that there are many large trucks traveling through City streets due to the levy reconstruction project. Mayor Bhasker stated that if any residents experience any problems, they should call City Hall to report the problem. Mayor Bhasker stated that the construction company has been responsive to requests already made by the City. Mayor Bhasker stated that the construction company will be placing a fence up between the area where they are working and the athletic fields. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City will repair the intersection of 6th Street and Otero Street when the project is finished. Jay Santillanes, Division Director, stated that the company is not fully-loading the trucks in order to help with the weight on the roads. Mr. Santillanes stated that the company will meet with the City after the project is complete to see what repairs will need to be done to City streets. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City is benefitting in three ways during this levy reconstruction project: the levy will be newly reconstructed, the \$24 million project is helping with economic development and the company is clearing an area on City property that will be used for more athletic fields in the future. Mayor Bhasker stated that the NMDOT will be in Socorro on February 5th to discuss traffic flow on Highway 60.

Councilor Jaramillo thanked the City and the contractor for quick repairs while replacing the sewer line across California Street.

Mayor Bhasker stated that Mr. Christensen recently gave his third party report regarding the Socorro Electric Cooperative. Mayor Bhasker stated that due to the significant comments made regarding the SEC, the City will need to take some sort of action if the SEC does not heed the changes proposed by Mr. Christensen. Mayor Bhasker stated that the full report is on the SEC's and the City's website for review. Mayor Bhasker stated that he is hoping the current SEC bylaws are eliminated and Mr. Christensen's recommendations are adopted. Mayor Bhasker reiterated that Mr. Christensen was hired and paid for by the SEC. Mayor Bhasker stated that he feels there are two areas of the report that are incorrect and should be corrected which include a matter involving local resident Bob Tacker and the SEC cost of power which he believes were generous on the SEC's side. Councilor Fleming stated that Mr. Christensen mentioned that the SEC is highly known (for bad reasons) by other co-ops in the country. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City trusts that the SEC Board will do the right thing and adopt the new bylaws and stated that the City will follow through on the acquisition if the changes are not made.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

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MAYOR'S REPORT

a. Reporting on Personnel Changes

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

Joseph Santillanes – 1-26-15 – Fire – Resignation

Alfredo Garcia – 1-31-15 – Police – Resignation

Richie Chavez – 2-2-15 – Wastewater – Additional Job Duties – D-19 to D-22

Daniel Chavez – 1-1-15 – Parks – Completed Probation – A-19 to A-21

Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

b. Business Registrations

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

Superior Contracting Corporation dba American National Insulation & Sealants – Out of Town – Albuquerque, NM – Corporation – General Contractor

Be Fruit Full – C-2 – 315 N California Street – Chris Olguin – Carry Out Smoothie Service

Wells Fargo Bank NA – C-2 – 501 N California Street – Corporation – Federally Chartered Bank

Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

c. Next City Council Meeting Announcement

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next City Council meeting would be held on Tuesday, February 17, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:00 p.m., Councilor Monette motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation

/s/
Ravi Bhasker, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/
Pat Salome, City Clerk