

City of Socorro Regular Scheduled City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
April 18, 2023

Mayor Bhasker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk, took roll call.

Council members present at roll call:

- Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez
- Councilor Nick Fleming
- Councilor Michael Olguin, Jr.
- Councilor Peter Romero
- Councilor Anton Salome

Councilor members absent:

- Councilor Deborah Dean
- Councilor Gordy Hicks
- Councilor Damian Ocampo

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bhasker led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilor Gordy Hicks arrived at 6:03 p.m.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

- a. **Approval of March 21, 2023 City Council Agenda**
- b. **Consideration of Minutes**
 - i. **March 7, 2023**
- c. **Voucher Run**

The Voucher Run included vouchers 158315 to 158543 in the amount of \$1,273,365.80 plus Payroll Transfers \$415,873.38 for a total of \$1,689,239.18.
- d. **Budget Resolution No. 20 – Recreation Outdoor Grant**
- e. **Budget Resolution No. 21 – Wastewater Collection Payment**
- f. **Budget Resolution No. 22 – Convention Outdoor Grant**
- g. **Budget Resolution No. 23 – Street Department**
- h. **Budget Resolution No. 24 - CDBG**
- i. **Budget Resolution No. 25 – Fire Department**
- j. **Budget Resolution No. 26 – Senior Center**
- k. **Budget Resolution No. 27 – Jt. Enterprise Gas**
- l. **Budget Resolution No. 28 – Landfill Cell**
- m. **Budget Resolution No. 29 – Wastewater Collection Facility USDA Transfer**
- n. **In-House Budget Resolution #103**
- o. **In-House Budget Resolution #104**

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

Councilor Hicks arrived at 6:02 p.m.

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Councilor Salome asked Ruby Lopez, Finance Director to give a brief explanation of each Budget Resolution.

PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS

a. Motorcycle Awareness Month

Mayor Bhasker read a proclamation to encourage all New Mexicans to renew their commitment to safe driving practices, to watch for motorcyclists, and to be aware of all who share the road. In the proclamation, Mayor Bhasker proclaimed May 2023 as Motorcycle Awareness Month.

PUBLIC FORUM

a. Richard Chavez

Richard Chavez, the crew leader for the teen dances that is called the Club, addressed concerns and gave an overview to the Council of the dances that are provided at the City's Teen Center. Mayor Bhasker informed the Council that no future dances are allowed until there is a meeting with Mr. Chavez and City administration to discuss liability issues.

ORDINANCES

a. Ordinance No. 23-04-18 – Loan Agreement NMED Clean Water State Revolving Fund

Councilor Olguin made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 23-04-18. Seconded by Councilor Hicks.

Donald Monette, City Administrator informed the Council that initially the City applied and was awarded \$8.5 Million for expansion at Evergreen, then Lloyd Martinez, General Service Director stated that Spring Street needed to be included before it is repaved, an additional \$1.82 million was awarded. Since then, one Belt Press has failed at the Wastewater Treatment Plant and needs to be replaced and that would need reallocation of \$1.3 million and has been approved by the State. The Mayor stated that rates may have to be increased to insure the payback of the \$10.32 million loan. Administrator Monette stated the ordinance allows the Mayor to enter into the loan agreement and, because of the Federal guidelines, a RFP for engineering was issued. Depending on a meeting on the following day with the State, the RFP may need to be amended to include the Belt Press or to issue an independent RFP.

Mr. Pineda took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

a. Cottonwood Valley Charter School - Request for Funding

Kristin Scarborough, representing Cottonwood Valley Charter School (CVCS), informed the Council that 12 students and 5 adults will travel to Washington D.C. May 30 through June 3, 2023 and are requesting funds to purchase t-shirts that would include the City of Socorro's logo. The shirts would match so that participants would be easily recognizable.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve a \$581.89 sponsorship. Seconded by Councilor

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Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

b. Public Hearing – Transfer of Location of dispenser Liquor License – Circle K

Mr. Pineda stated the public hearing is postponed to the May 2, 2023, Council Meeting due to an error by the New Mexico Regulation and Licensing Department that read “The Applicant is seeking a Transfer of Location of Dispenser Liquor License No. 0275 with on Premise Consumption Only’ that should read “The Applicant is seeking a Transfer of Location of Dispenser Liquor License No. 0275 with Package Sales Only”.

c. Resolution No. 23-04-18 – Authorizing the Assignment of Authorized Officer(s) and Agent(s)

Administrator Monette presented Resolution No. 23-04-18 and if approved would allow the Mayor to enter into the loan agreement and promissory note (Ordinance 23-04-18), for himself to sign all other documents, Budget Forms, Project Description, and Disbursement Request, and Mr. Pineda to sign Disbursement Request Only.

Councilor Salome made a motion to approve Resolution No. 23-04-18. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

d. Water Rights Lease - Kyle Duggins

e. Water Rights Lease - Jesus Carrete

Mayor Bhasker stated the City owns 180 acre feet of water rights. One acre of land has 2 and one third acre feet of water attached to it. The City leased out 160 acre feet of water rights that is coming due next year and will not be renewed. Kyle Duggins is requesting leasing 15.771 acre feet and Jesus Carrete 12.663 at an annual sum of Eighty Dollars per acre-foot. If approved a public hearing will be held by the New Mexico State Engineers Office along with advertisements of the proposed lease(s). Administrator Monette stated the process would take a minimum six months.

Councilor Olguin questioned how the public knew of the availability of the water rights and when the rates could be renegotiated.

After a lengthy discussion Councilor Hicks made a motion to postpone the Water Rights Lease to Kyle Duggins and Jesus Carrete until the Council received more information. Seconded by Councilor Olguin, motion passed unanimously.

Administrator Monette requested what specific information was being requested so he could compile answers. He suggested he invite the City’s water rights consultant, Suzanne Smith, to a future meeting. Mr. Monette also let the Council know they could send questions to him, or visit him at City Hall, to get answers to their questions.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilor Chavez-Lopez stated the Council has received two complaints. One about vehicles creating a blind spot and a streetlight removed on Liles Street.

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Mayor Bhasker stated he has an answer to the light. It has to do with the differences between public and private lighting.

Mr. Pineda reported that the light in question is located on private property at 708 Liles Street. The light in question was never requested by the City and somehow was billed to the City. The light was disconnected over two years ago and the pole should have been retired by Socorro Electric at that time. A tree's growth has covered the pole and the secondary power line crosses the top of the home, which would be a huge liability if it were to fall.

Councilor Romero stated that Police and Code Enforcement have responded to the vehicles on Liles Street. Chris Carrillo, Code Enforcement Officer, informed the Council that he and Lawrence Montano, Code Enforcement Officer, responded. The person has been sent a letter of the violation and he is currently out of town. Mr. Carrillo stated that initially there were two camper trailers and one has now been moved. The owner was given 15 days to remove the trailer which expires tomorrow and then can be towed.

Councilor Romero reported that a vendor at the Smith's parking lot had flags, and some were very offensive and wanted to know if the landowner would put up signs indicating no vending allowed on the property. Mayor Bhasker stated he has personally contacted the owner about the vendors and has not received any correspondence stating that vendors may have use of the property. Mayor Bhasker stated a letter will be sent to the owners referring to allowing vendors to occupy the property or to have signs put up state no vendors allowed.

Administrator Monette mentioned that the same contractor that remodeled the Council Chambers is giving quotes for broken windows, carpet, and electrical plates at the Senior Center and the State Agency is trying to obtain Capitol Outlay funds to pay for the repairs.

Councilor Salome asked if the advisory committee for the Senior Center would remain the same. Administrator Monette stated that Linda Mares, Senior Center Manager, is contacting the members of the committee to see if they would like to continue. Mayor Bhasker stated he would like the Council to be the advisory board, but Administrator Monette stated the advisory board is in the statement of work. The Mayor pointed out that some members do not live in the City. Administrator Monette stated that members would be from the City and the Veguita because home delivery will continue in that area. Councilor Salome stated that maybe someone from Socorro County can be appointed to the advisory board since they will be contributing funds. The Mayor asked Administrator Monette to check the by-laws and if an advisory board is not required he recommends that the City Council be the advisory board.

OLD BUSINESS

Councilor Olguin asked what services will be provided by TDS. Mr. Pineda replied, TDS services include internet, television, and phone. Councilor Olguin asked if the franchise with CenturyLink would be terminated. Mayor Bhasker stated that legal recommended not to terminate the franchise because it is good to have competition and some citizens will continue to use CenturyLink for internet services. Councilor Olguin asked if the CenturyLink franchise allowed other providers to come in and provide services. Mayor Bhasker and Administrator Monette stated that all franchise agreements are non-exclusive.

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

MAYOR'S REPORT

a. Business Registrations

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

NAME	ZOING	ADDRESS	OWNER	TYPE
3 Clubs, LLC	Out of Town	Veguita, NM	Paul Marengo	Cannabis Production Farm
Chili Peppers Boutique	C-2	705 N. California St.	Jessi Staton	Women's Clothing
Circle K #2706998	C-2	1006 N. California St.	Kathy Cunnington	Convenience Store with Fuel
Mira Enterprises, Inc.	Out of Town	Eastland, TX	William M. Batleas	Commercial General Contractor
Sequoia Landscaping, Inc.	Out of Town	Albuquerque, NM	Ralph Martinez	Landscape & Irrigation
Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP	C-2	1015 N. California	Jacelyn Sexsmith	Law Firm

Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.


b. Announcement – Next City Council Meeting Dates and Times

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next regular City Council meeting will be held Tuesday, May 2, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT


The meeting adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation



Gordon Hicks, Mayor Pro Tem

ATTEST:



Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk