

**City of Socorro Regular Scheduled City Council Meeting**  
**City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801**  
**May 16, 2023**

Mayor Bhasker called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk, took roll call.

Council members present at roll call:

- Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez
- Councilor Deborah Dean
- Councilor Nick Fleming
- Councilor Gordy Hicks
- Councilor Damian Ocampo
- Councilor Michael Olguin, Jr.

Councilor members present remotely:

- Councilor Peter Romero
- Councilor Anton Salome

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Bhasker led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Donald Monette, City Administrator requests item f. Resolution No. 23-05-16c - Authorizing the Assignment of Authorized Officer(s) and Agent(s) be added to the agenda. The Belt Filter Press is a separate project and requires a separate resolution.

- a. Approval of May 16, 2023 City Council Agenda
- b. Consideration of Minutes
  - i. May 2, 2023
- c. Voucher Run

The Voucher Run included vouchers 158544 to 158763 in the amount of \$1,576,425.77 plus Payroll Transfers \$405,418.39 for a total of \$1,981,844.16.

Councilor Fleming made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

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

**PUBLIC FORUM**

- a. Conner Johnston

Conner Johnston reported on Conner's Cause 5k and thanked the City of Socorro for its support on the annual event. Conner explained the event helps raise money for Cystic Fibrosis research and had approximately 200 participants.

- b. Mary Ann Keller

Mary Ann Keller, a volunteer for the Eagle Picher Carefree Battery Superfund Site Committee, encouraged the Council to come to its monthly meetings. The next meeting is to

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be held on June 8, 2023, at the Socorro Public Library. Mayor Bhasker stated the City has a meeting with the Environmental Protection Agency on May 25, 2023 to look at solutions on resolving the contamination and would have a report at the next City Council meeting.

**DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION**

**a. State Representative Tara Jaramillo**

Tara Jaramillo, State Representative District 38 representing Dona Ana, Sierra, and Socorro Counties reported on the 56<sup>th</sup> Legislature Session. Representative Jaramillo stated that the City of Socorro received the following State Appropriations:

- Finley Complex - \$1,000,000.00
- Sedillo Park - \$100,000.00
- Streets – \$600,000.00
- Police Vehicles - \$75,000.00

Mayor Bhasker and the Council thanked Representative Jaramillo for her hard work and a job well done.

**b. Resolution No. 001A – Preliminary Budget 2023-2024**

Councilor Olguin made a motion to approve Resolution No. 001A. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

**c. Resolution No. 01C-001 – Ambulance Write Off FY23**

Councilor Olguin made a motion to approve Resolution No. 01C-001. Seconded by Councilor Dean, motion passed unanimously.

**d. Resolution No. 23-05-16a – Utility Billing Charge Off FY23**

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Resolution No. 23-05-16a. Seconded by Councilor Olguin, motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Bhasker asked Ruby Lopez, Finance Director what the percentage of charge offs to Utility Billing is. Ms. Lopez replied less than 1%.

**e. Resolution No. 23-05-16b – Adopting City of Socorro Aging Services Program Policy Manual**

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Resolution No. 23-05-16b. Seconded by Councilor Olguin, motion passed unanimously.

**f. Resolution No. 23-05-16c – Authorizing the Assignment of Authorized Officer(s) and Agent(s)**

Councilor Olguin made a motion to approve Resolution No. 23-05-16c. Seconded by Councilor Hicks, motion passed unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Mayor Bhasker informed the Council the City has had meetings with representatives from Socorro Electric Cooperative discussing the future of the franchise agreement and the City's Municipal Utility. A meeting with Guzman Energy will take place on May 17, 2023 to move ahead with the Municipal Electric Utility with Guzman Energy as the electric wholesale provider. The Mayor stated that the City will move on a parallel course trying to come to terms with

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Socorro Electric Cooperative but also trying to come to terms with rates, service, and economic development issues for the public. Councilor Ocampo asked if a solar project was brought up with the discussions. Mayor Bhasker replied that Tri-State G & T dictates policy to Socorro Electric Cooperative. Mr. Pineda stated that due to the wholesale contract Socorro Electric Cooperative has with Tri-State they are only allowed to produce 5% of their electric needs from solar. Councilor Ocampo stated he has spoken with residents and business owners that have decided to install solar panels and the biggest concern is the lack of reimbursement from Socorro Electric Cooperative on the energy produced by their solar panels. Councilor Ocampo also stated that maybe something can be written into the franchise agreement on solar reimbursement with input from the public.

Councilor Fleming asked if there is any information on the internet outage. Mayor Bhasker replied that there was a fiber cut north of Socorro. Kelly Cable, a contractor for Lumen (CenturyLink), cut the fiber, which was a medical, emergency, personal, and public nightmare. Mr. Pineda stated that the second outage that lasted more than 24 hours was in Belen, and the third one-hour outage was the result of a computer card failure at a data center in Las Cruces.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Dezirae Armijo, Tourism/Convention Center Director reported on the following past and future events at the Convention Center.

- Walt Disney Productions movie being shot in Socorro
- High School Prom at the Convention Center went well
- Head Start Graduation at the Convention Center and soccer complex
- 3 Graduation Parties scheduled for the Convention Center

Events at the Rodeo Complex

- New Mexico Tech Graduation
- Socorro High School Graduation
- RMA Wrestling Tournament
- More rodeos this summer

Mayor Bhasker reported that the soccer fields look fabulous and thanked Steve Mathieu and his crew for their work on the fields.

Councilor Dean asked if the City is selling alcohol at the events. Ms. Armijo replied it is at the request of the event organizer.

Mayor Bhasker reported that soon there will be an app where the public will be able to report different issues to the City from their cell phones, tables, and PC's.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

### **MAYOR'S REPORT**

#### **a. Personnel Changes**

Councilor Olguin motioned to approve the Personnel Changes as read by Mayor Bhasker.

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NAME	EFFECTIVE DATE	DEPARTMENT	REASON	SALARY
Russell Rackey	05/16/2023	Police	Position Change	E-59 to E-44
Juan Vergara	05/01/2023	Police	Completed Probation	A-58 to A-59
Simon Ramirez	05/01/2023	Police	Completed Probation	A-58 to A-59
Antwoine Johnson	05/01/2023	Police	Completed Probation	A-58 to A-59
Jeanette Archibeque	05/16/2023	Dispatch	Completed Probation	A-42
Serferina Ortiz	05/16/2023	Dispatch	Transfer from Police Officer	A-60 to A-42
Camryn Sager	05/16/2023	Dispatch	Completed State 911 Academy	C-42 to C-44

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, June 6, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

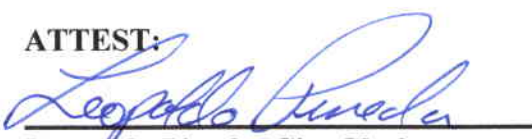
**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m.

**THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Ravi Bhasker, Mayor**

ATTEST:

  
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**Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk**