

City of Socorro Regular Scheduled City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
July 5, 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 Deborah Dean
- Councilor Gordy Hicks
- Councilor Michael Olguin, Jr.
- Councilor Peter Romero
- Councilor Anton Salome

Council members remotely present:

- Councilor Nick Fleming
- Councilor Damien Ocampo

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bhasker led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approval of July 5, 2023 City Council Agenda
- b. Consideration of Minutes
 - i. June 20, 2023

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

PUBLIC FORUM

None

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

- a. Socorro Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Mayor Bhasker introduced Socorro Electric Cooperative representatives Joseph Herrera, General Manager, Leroy Anaya, SEC Board President, Jared Williams, SEC Public Relations Director, and City of Socorro guests Nann Winter, Stelzner, Winter, Warburton, Flores & Dawes, P.A., and Ed Reyes, Enchantment Energy Consulting, LLC.

Mayor Bhasker stated that there was a problem with the definition of interconnect and the Council wanted an estimated price for completing the interconnect and requested Mr. Reyes to explain. Mr. Reyes explained there is an application process for the interconnect that goes to Tri-State G & T and if the application is complete the application gets approved. There will be a minimal cost for the application, then a cost for a system impact study. Tri-State will look at what the interconnection will do to the integrity and reliability of the system and all of the adjoining and adjacent systems. The cost will be between forty to fifty thousand dollars not hundreds of thousands. Then move to the actual interconnect which is the

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physical construction of getting a line tap or a switch yard built and then taking those lines to the City's substation, then from the substation, distribution lines will emanate out and serve different loads. That will be the \$10 million project.

Mr. Herrera addressed the Council and stated that SEC just became aware of a grant for community solar to benefit low-income communities and is provided by the Department of Clean Energy. Mr. Herrera asked if the City of Socorro would like to put their name on the application as a sponsor and have received support from the Village of Magdalena and Alamo Chapter House. Mayor Bhasker stated the City has access to those grants and is already in the process of applying and as Mayor is not willing to sign unless the Council wants to change his decision. Mayor Bhasker inquired about an RFP for Solar that was issued by the SEC. Mr. Herrera replied they were looking at a 2MW system and it came back at \$55.00 a MWh. Mr. Herrera requested the City put a franchise agreement that was presented to each Councilor and Mayor on its next agenda for approval. He continued, SEC has had discussions with administration and with individual Council members pertaining to the franchise agreement to allow SEC to continue to service the City until the City builds out its system. This would allow a path to move forward so SEC does not put the community in limbo. Mayor Bhasker asked if the City does not start supplying the City by 2024 that SEC would stop service to the City of Socorro. Mr. Herrera replied no, but knows the franchise agreement is going to expire and then the agreement would be month to month. Mr. Herrera then commented, in order to have stability in the rates SEC needs to know what the franchise agreement would look like and month to month does not give much stability to the SEC or the citizens.

Mayor Bhasker shared a letter that was presented to the SEC Board in 2017 and asked at that time the SEC Trustees look at the requests and respond to the City within six months.

1. Consumer complaint about customer relations of the quality of electrical service.
2. The lack of participation of the Socorro Electric Co-op in alternative energies that all others electrical suppliers are participating in.
3. The lack of initiative in economic development with resistance to proposals by outside companies to improve and benefit the well-being of our community.
4. Non-competitive rates for residential, commercial and industrial users.

The Mayor stated SEC never responded and why would it change now that the City is nine months from the termination of the franchise agreement. Mr. Herrera responded back in 2017 there was more in that letter that stated the City would like to negotiate a price for the purchase of SEC. It is not in the fiduciary duty of the board to sell and would take two thirds of the entire membership to make that decision. SEC was not for sale in 2017 and is not for sale today. Mayor Bhasker replied that SEC nor any Trustee has ever approached the City with any type of negotiations.

After discussion concerning the franchise agreement, rates, and operations of SEC, Mayor Bhasker thanked Manager Herrera, Board Chairman Anaya and Mr. Williams for addressing the Council.

b. ICIP Public Input

Councilor Olguin made a motion to go into public hearing. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-

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Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

Donald Monette, City Administrator stated in the construction meeting about Manzanares Project, Mr. Jim Burleson requested sidewalks on 6th Street be included in the ICIP.

After hearing no comment from the public, Councilor Hicks made a motion to go back into regular session. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

c. City of Socorro Senior Center FY 23-24 Contracts with NCNMEDD and Non-Metro AAA

- i. Nutrition Service Incentive Program (NSIP)**
- ii. Senior Employment Program Host Agency Sub Award**
- iii. Title III Federal and State Sub-Award**

Councilor Olguin made a motion to approve the three contracts for the City of Socorro's Senior Center. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Bhasker informed the Council the program is doing well and thanked Linda Mares, Senior Center Manager, for doing a good job.

d. Resolution No. 23-07-05 – Directing Administration to Identify Right-of-Way to Serve the Industrial Park Corridor

Mayor presented Resolution No. 23-07-05 and if approved would identify the right-of-way to serve the Industrial Park Corridor.

Councilor Chavez-Lopez made a motion to approve Resolution No. 23-07-05. Seconded by Councilor Hicks.

Councilor's voting in favor:

- Councilor Chavez-Lopez
- Councilor Dean
- Councilor Fleming
- Councilor Hicks
- Councilor Ocampo
- Councilor Romero
- Councilor Salome

Motion Passed.

NEW BUSINESS

None

OLD BUSINESS

Councilor Olguin asked if there is any more information concerning Councilors in person attendance for meeting. Administrator Monette stated he put a highlighted copy of the Open Meeting Act in all of the Councilor's boxes. According to the Open Meetings Act, it's allowable

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or permissible to be on a cell phone as long as you can recognize the person's voice and they can be heard. The Rules of Procedure could be amended to address in person meetings. Councilor Olguin replied that he would like the Rules of Procedure sent to the Councilors to study.

Councilor Salome spoke regarding the proclamation of Immigrant Heritage Month in June. In the proclamation Mr. Juan Escalante presented five bullet points and one item that Councilor Salome wanted to be addressed. Councilor Salome stated Mr. Escalante mentioned that it was a template proclamation that he sent out. Councilor Salome along with Councilor Romero will contact Mr. Escalante for further information and bring back the results of the conversation to the Council.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilor Hicks made a motion to go into executive session for legal matters, seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez. Mr. Pineda took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to go back into regular session. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

Donald Monette, City Administrator, stated the Council discussed one potential legal matter. No action was taken.

MAYOR'S REPORT

a. Personnel Changes

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

NAME	EFFECTIVE DATE	DEPARTMENT	REASON	SALARY
Juan Vegara	06/01/2023	Police	Certification	A-59 to A-61
Peter James Gonzales	06/01/2023	Police	Certification	A-59 to A-61
Linda Mares	07/01/2023	Senior Center	Temp to Permanent	A-47
Dick Pargas	07/01/2023	Senior Center	Temp to Permanent	A-37
Danny Hill	07/01/2023	Senior Center	Temp to Permanent	A-37
Donald Woodard	06/23/2023	Senior Center	Resignation	
Taylor Saavedra	06/27/2023	Police	Resignation	

Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

b. Business Registrations

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

NAME	ZONING	ADDRESS	OWNER	TYPE
Techie Innovation Solutions, LLC	R-1	1006 Cassity St.	Michaelann Tartis	Computer Modeling and Simulation
Casa Arboles	R-1	605 Miller Ave.	Omar Qureshi	Airbnb Rental
Muddy Cistern Chits and Tokens, LLC	R-1	505 Neel Ave.	John Cameron Mooney	Selling hobby tokens and parts in online storefronts

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Seconded by Councilor Dean, motion passed unanimously.

c. Announcement – Next City Council Meeting Dates and Times

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next regular City Council meeting will be held Tuesday, July 18, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation



Ravi Bhasker, Mayor

ATTEST:



Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk