

City of Socorro Regular City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
March 2, 2015

Mayor Pro-Tem Gordy Hicks called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Pat Salome, City Clerk, took roll call. Members present at roll call were: Mayor Pro-Tem Gordy Hicks, Councilor Toby Jaramillo, Councilor Michael Olguin, Councilor Ernest Pargas, Councilor Nick Fleming, Councilor Peter Romero and Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez. Mayor Ravi Bhasker and Councilor Donald Monette were absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

APPROVAL OF MARCH 2, 2015 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

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

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

a. February 17, 2015

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

Councilor Monette arrived.

PUBLIC FORUM

Marie Watkins provided two handouts to the Mayor and Council regarding the proposed bylaws for the Socorro Electric Cooperative. Ms. Watkins expressed her concerns over a section of the proposed bylaws that pertains to easements. Ms. Watkins stated that she feels the section reads as if the SEC can “take your land”. Ms. Watkins also expressed her concerns over a section of the proposed bylaws that pertains to member participation. Ms. Watkins stated that she feels the section requires 10% member participation (signatures) to hold a meeting which will, in her opinion, guarantee you will never get enough signatures. There was some discussion regarding the proposed bylaws.

Bob Tacker stated that in regards to the SEC’s proposed bylaws, he feels the upcoming meeting to pass the bylaws is rushed and that there should be public meetings prior to considering the bylaws so that the public can have questions answered. Mr. Tacker stated that he has several questions regarding the proposed bylaws and that if he is unable to have them answered, he does not feel that he can vote to approve them. Mr. Tacker stated that he feels the high rates charged by the SEC have affected economic development in our community. Mr. Tacker stated that there is a section that discusses a resident “having to buy all their power from the SEC”. Mr. Tacker stated that this raises concerns about people using solar as a source of electricity. Mr. Salome stated that he feels the goal of Smith & Christensen LLP in getting the proposed bylaws passed quickly was to effect change as soon as possible but that this does not leave room for people with questions. Mr. Salome stated that this might prevent people from voting as they don’t fully understand the proposed bylaws. Some discussion followed.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

a. Resolution No. 15-03-02 – NMDOT Cooperative Agreement

Mayor Pro-Tem Hicks presented Resolution No. 15-03-02 which, if approved, allows the City to enter into an agreement with NMDOT for the reconstruction of two intersections (Otero Avenue & 6th Street and Bullock Avenue & El Camino Real). Jay Santillanes Division Director, stated that the resolution was previously passed by the City Council (July 2014) and this version has been amended to add the 6th Street and Otero intersection. Mr. Santillanes stated that the heavy trucks using the intersection (during the levy reconstruction project) have caused damage to the roadway. Mr. Santillanes stated that the resolution still includes the Bullock Avenue & El Camino Real intersection as the main project but the Administration wanted to add the Otero Avenue & 6th Street in case funds are needed for repairs. Mr. Santillanes stated that the contractor that currently has the heavy trucks on the road has agreed to repair the failed areas but the City Administration would like to have funds available for the repairs in case they are needed. Councilor Olguin asked if the funds could be used for other areas not listed in the resolution or if the City could state “other areas as needed”. Mr. Santillanes stated that the resolution has to list specific projects.

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Councilor Romero made a motion to approve Resolution No. 15-03-02. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Pargas stated that SCOPE recently met and has selected fitness and nutrition as well as substance use and misuse as the priorities for their strategic plan. Councilor Pargas stated that the Juvenile Justice Board will meet March 5th at noon.

Councilor Chavez-Lopez stated that Socorro was represented well at the recent New Mexico Municipal League annual meeting. Councilor Chavez-Lopez stated that the executive director explained each proposed bill in layman's terms so that everyone could relate. Councilor Chavez-Lopez stated that she was impressed with the Law Enforcement Return to Work Bill. Councilor Monette stated that there were also a lot of "taxing" bills presented and that one of the bills is working towards questions the City has had in the past regarding gross receipts reporting. Councilor Monette stated that Mr. Fulginitti recognized Socorro for the new rodeo arena/sports complex which is being built. Councilor Olguin stated that there was a lengthy conversation regarding the hold harmless agreement. Councilor Olguin stated that our municipality would not be affected as our population is under 10,000 but that he feels the City should start planning for the change in the future as the hold harmless may be phased out.

Councilor Monette stated that he would like to thank Shanon Crespín, Street Superintendent, for the monthly road report. Councilor Monette stated that the new police cars look nice.

Mayor Pro-Tem Hicks stated that the sign at the airport has been painted and looks nice.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

MAYOR'S REPORT

a. Radio Antenna Structure – Socorro County

Mr. Salome stated that the City owns an old antenna and Socorro County would like to use it as their antenna is no longer operational. Mr. Salome stated that if the City gives the antenna to the County, the County still has to follow any laws that pertain to erecting and using the antenna.

Councilor Monette made a motion to give the antenna to Socorro County. Seconded by Councilor Olguin, motion passed unanimously.

b. Reporting on Personnel Changes

Councilor Romero motioned to approve the personnel changes as read by Mayor Pro-Tem Hicks:

Rebecca Gonzales – 2-15-15 – Police – Resignation

Mark Vega – 2-28-15 – Production – Resignation

David Montoya – 2-18-15 – Landfill – Completed Probation – A-32 to A-34

Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

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c. Business Registrations

Councilor Romero motioned to approve the business registrations as read by Mayor Pro-Tem Hicks:

Consolidated Solar Technologies LLC – Out of Town – Albuquerque, NM – James Mosher – Solar Panel Installation

Heads Up Landscape Contractors Inc. – Out of Town – Albuquerque, NM – Corporation – Landscape Contractor

Lucero Vergara – C-2 – 204 S California Street – Lucero Vergara - Housekeeping

Seconded by Councilor Monette, motion passed unanimously.

d. Next City Council Meeting Announcement

Mayor Pro-Tem Hicks stated that the next City Council meeting would be held on Monday, March 16, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:38 p.m., Councilor Romero motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Monette, motion passed unanimously.

THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation

/s/
Ravi Bhasker, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/
Pat Salome, City Clerk