

**City of Socorro Regular Scheduled City Council Meeting**  
**City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801**  
**June 18, 2024**

Mayor Bhasker called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk took roll call.

Council members present at roll call:

- Councilor Deborah Dean
- Councilor Damien Ocampo
- Councilor Joel D. Partridge, Jr.
- Councilor Anton Salome

Council members absent at roll call:

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

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Bhasker led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. Approval of June 18, 2024, City Council Agenda
- b. Consideration of Minutes
  - i. May 28, 2024
- c. Voucher Run

The Voucher Run included vouchers 161649 to 161855 in the amount of \$1,346,232.77 plus Payroll Transfers \$529,678.69 for a total of \$1,875,911.46.
- d. Budget Resolution No. 34 – Law Enforcement Grant FY 24
- e. Budget Resolution No. 35 – Law Enforcement Grant FY 24
- f. Budget Resolution No. 36 – General Fund
- g. Budget Resolution No. 37 – Sedillo Park Renovation
- h. Budget Resolution No. 38 – Lodger Tax Fund
- i. In-House Budget Resolution No. 104

Councilor Salome made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Seconded by Councilor Ocampo, motion passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

None

**ORDINANCES**

- a. **Ordinance No. 24-06-18 – Updating Penalty Assessments**

Donald Monette, City Administrator, stated that the Office of the Courts removed some of the penalties which totaled \$29.00. The wording was taken out of the ordinance showing how the \$29.00 was calculated and put into the penalty assessment.

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Councilor Chavez-Lopez arrived at 6:07 p.m.

Councilor Salome made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 24-06-18. Seconded by Councilor Ocampo. Mr. Pineda took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

**DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION**

**a. ICIP Public Hearing #3**

Councilor Chavez-Lopez made a motion to go into public hearing. Seconded by Councilor Salome, motion passed unanimously.

After hearing no comment from the public, Councilor Salome made a motion to go back into regular session. Seconded by Councilor Dean, motion passed unanimously.

**b. Resolution No. 24-06-18a – ICIP FY 2026-2030**

Councilor Chavez made a motion to approve Resolution No.24-06-18a. Seconded by Councilor Dean, motion passed unanimously.

**c. Resolution No. 24-06-18b – NMDOT MAP – Otero Avenue**

Councilor Dean made a motion to approve Resolution No. 24-06-18b. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

**d. Resolution No. 24-06-18c – NMDOT LGRF – Courthouse Streets**

Councilor Dean made a motion to approve Resolution No. 24-06-18c. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

**e. Resolution No. 24-06-18d – Capital Outlay Signatory Responsibilities**

Administrator Monette presented Resolution No. 24-06-18d and if approved would allow Mayor Bhasker the authority to sign Capital Outlay agreements.

Councilor Dean made a motion to approve Resolution No. 24-06-18d. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

**f. Resolution No. 24-06-18e – Ambulatory Supplemental Payment Program (ASPP)**

Mayor Bhasker presented Resolution No. 24-06-18e and if approved would allow the city to issue a check to the State of New Mexico for all cities and counties to apply for ASPP. The city's estimated amount is \$218,000.00 and in return would receive the \$218,000.00 plus approximately an additional \$550,000.00. The systems currently receive between 30 to 40% from Medicaid and this would make up the shortage.

Councilor Ocampo made a motion to approve Resolution No. 24-06-18e. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

**g. Lease Agreement – Daymen and Pat Castagnetto**

Mayor Bhasker stated that Daymen and Pat Castagnetto want to renew their lease at the Industrial Park where they have their home and a body shop business. The lease specifies that no vehicles will be stored on the land for an extended period and the lease will be increased from \$100 to \$345 per month for 5 years.

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Councilor Salome made a motion to approve the Lease Agreement. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

**h. Supreme Court Ruling – Socorro Electric Cooperative vs. New Mexico Public Regulation Commission**

Mayor Bhasker informed the Council that on June 10, 2024, the New Mexico Supreme Court ruled in favor of the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (PRC). They concluded that the PRC properly exercised its authority to resolve the issues identified in the proceedings and to fix just and reasonable rates for Socorro Electric Cooperative (SEC) and SEC did not show that the PRC's order is unlawful or unreasonable. When the SEC rejected the PRC's ruling, the PRC fined the board \$1,000 a day for not complying with the rule and has accumulated more than \$866,000 while awaiting the Supreme Court's decision. Mayor Bhasker felt that by SEC overstepping their governing body and taking the case to the Supreme Court only cost SEC's members in lawyer fees and fines. In an article published June 11, 2024 KUNM interviewed SEC CEO Joseph Herrera and the article stated that SEC is again looking to increase its rates in the next year once it completes a cost of service study and this time the co-op estimates its proposal could be three to four times the original \$1.25 million. Mayor Bhasker reminded the Council that he is not in favor of the PRC fines as they would you be passed down to the users.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Mayor Bhasker stated the city is moving along with the Municipal Electric and has applied for a grant for solar. Mr. Pineda explained the city has applied for a \$4 million grant through the IRS's 20% ITC Bonus Program for qualified solar facilities in low-income communities for the city's 5 MW Solar and Energy Storage Project. Mayor Bhasker stated that he is in hopes the SEC could buy the excess power to decrease their rates to their members and is open to talks to see if this could be accomplished. Councilor Ocampo asked if the city went into the open market, would the city be locked into a rate for a certain amount of time. Mayor Bhasker responded that it would be a fixed rate for seven years exclusive for power but not for alternative power.

Dezair Armijo, Tourism and Convention Center Director informed the Council that the city is sponsoring a concert featuring Neil McCoy starting at 7:00 p.m. at the Rodeo and Sports Complex on July 3rd. On July 4<sup>th</sup> the traditional annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July Event will be held free to the public featuring headliners Al Hurricane, Jr., the Nathaniel Krantz Band and Suavecito.

Councilor Ocampo thanked Steve Mathieu, Rodeo Director, for his help in lining the fields with the new robot in preparation for the 7 on 7 football event to be held Thursday June 20<sup>th</sup> featuring 25 high school teams from throughout New Mexico.

Councilor Partridge announced a free wrestling camp for the youth will be held at Finley Gym July 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup>.

Mayor Bhasker announced that approximately 130 kids are participating in the youth summer employment program.

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**OLD BUSINESS**

Chris Carrillo, Code Enforcement Officer, stated he has a few cases in court for violations and have removed three trailers from Wagon Wheel trailer park and one on Western. He is also working on a house on South California Street to get cleaned up and one that has been demolished. Liens on properties will have to be enforced on some of the clean ups.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

**MAYOR'S REPORT**

**a. Job Descriptions**

**i. Senior Center - Director**

Councilor Chavez-Lopez made a motion to approve the Job Description as read by Administrator Monette. Seconded by Councilor Partridge, motion passed unanimously.

**b. Personnel Changes**

Councilor Salome motioned to approve the Personnel Changes as presented by Mayor Bhasker.

NAME	EFFECTIVE	DEPARTMENT	REASON	SALARY
Jason Padilla	06/18/2024	Animal Control	New Hire	A-40
John Brannan	06/18/2024	Police	Promotion to Corporal	D-63 to D-65
Dylan Coslin	06/18/2024	Police	Promotion to Corporal	E-63 to E-65
William Brannan	06/18/2024	Police	Promotion to Corporal	H-63 to H-65
Jorge Gallegos	06/18/2024	Production	Completed Probation	A-37
Michael Padilla	07/01/2024	Recreation	Completed Probation	F-57 to F-59
Albert Olguin, Jr.	06/06/2024	Gas	Resignation	

Seconded by Councilor Ocampo.

Motion passed unanimously.

**c. Business Registrations**

Councilor Chavez-Lopez motioned to approve the Business Registrations as presented by Mayor Bhasker.

NAME	ZONING	ADDRESS	OWNER	TYPE
Caca Pasa LLC	Out of Town	Caballo, NM	Laurie Chavez	Porta Pott & Septic Services

Seconded by Councilor Dean, motion passed unanimously.

**d. Announcement – Next City Council Meeting Dates and Times**

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next regular City Council meeting will be held Tuesday, July 23, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers (111 School of Mines Rd.).

Mayor Bhasker shared the Socorro General Hospital Community Report with the Council he received from Veronica Pound, SGH Administrator.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

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



**Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez, Mayor Pro Tem**

**ATTEST:**



**Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk**