

City of Socorro Regular Scheduled City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
August 20, 2024

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 Deborah Dean
- Councilor Damien Ocampo
- Councilor Nick Fleming
- Councilor Michael Olguin, Jr.
- Councilor Peter Romero
- Councilor Anton Salome

Council members absent at roll call:

- Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez
- Councilor Joel D. Partridge, Jr.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bhasker led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilor Joel D. Partridge, Jr. arrived at 6:01 p.m.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approval of August 20, 2024, City Council Agenda
- b. Consideration of Minutes
 - i. July 23, 2024
- c. Voucher Run

The Voucher Run included vouchers 162137 to 162373 in the amount of \$953,089.94 plus Payroll Transfers \$558,166.27 for a total of \$1,511,256.21.

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

PUBLIC FORUM

None

FIRST READING OF ORDINANCES

- a. Ordinance No. 24-10-01 – Amending the Rate Schedule for Solid Waste Refuse Collection, Water, Sewer, Gas, Gas Meter and Other Utility Related Charges

Councilor Olguin made a motion to postpone the first reading of Ordinance No. 24-10-01. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

- a. Socorro Stingrays & Chile Harvest Triathlon and Youth Triathlon

Cody Johnston, Head Coach and Pool Manager, thanked the City for its support, a place to swim, and paying for the coaches and lifeguards. Mr. Johnston recognized members of the

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Stingrays Swim Team that were able to be present. Mr. Johnston provided the Council with the following information:

- Total Summer Attendance 3,334
- 68 kids attended swim lessons ages 3-11
- 30 New Stingray Swimmers
- 81 Total Stingray Athletes from 5-17
- Home Meet 1: 74 Athletes
- Home Meet 2: 180 Athletes
- 7 Regular Season Meets plus District & Finals
- 50 Athletes Competed at District
- 34 Athletes Qualified for Finals

Members of the team presented the Mayor and Council with a thank you card and a photo of the team.

Beth Cadol reported that 49 youth participated in the youth triathlon and stated it takes an entire community effort involving the City of Socorro, New Mexico Tech, NRAO, local businesses, and over 60 volunteers to hold a successful event. Ms. Cadol thanked the City of Socorro Police Department, Captain Chavez, Lt. Gonzales, Cpl. Brennan, and officers Vergara, Romero, and Gomez for a fantastic job policing the bicycle course.

Luis Contreras-Vidal reported on the adult triathlon and thanked the City for the use of the pool, tent, EMS, and police officers. 215 athletes participated from Socorro, New Mexico, and out of state. Mr. Contreras-Vidal praised the City of Socorro and the community for all the support.

b. Socorro County Prevention Coalition

Chris Rottman, Socorro County Prevention Coalition (SCPC) Program Coordinator, presented the highlights, outcomes, and findings from the 2024 Socorro County NMCS Survey and Strategies for Success Student Survey. Councilor Partridge, speaking as a SCPC Coordinator, presented the Catch My Breath program which provides students with information about the harmful effects of E-Cigarette and Vaping.

c. Resolution No. 24-08-20a – Gas Department Longevity Pay

Isaac Angel, Gas Department Director presented Resolution No. 24-08-20a and if approved would provide an incentive for Gas Department employees to remain employed with the City of Socorro.

Councilor Olguin made a motion to approve Resolution No. 24-08-20a. Seconded by Councilor Romeo, motion passed unanimously.

d. Resolution No. 24-08-20b – DFA Firefighter Recruitment Fund Grant

Ruby Lopez, Finance Director, presented Resolution No. 24-08-20b and, if approved, the grant would pay 100% for the first year, 50% second year, and 25% for the third year for one recruit. The city requested funds for three recruits in the grant but was approved for one.

Mayor Bhasker stated the city is having problems staffing a full crew and with such a large region sometimes the city is left unattended at times. The mayor would like to discuss this

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with the Socorro County Manager to help fund additional recruits and meet with the New Mexico Public Regulations Commission to ask if the City's Ambulance Service could decrease its service region. Administrator Monette added that understaffing influences the city's ISO rating.

Councilor Salome made a motion to approve Resolution No. 24-08-20b. Seconded by Councilor Ocampo, motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilor Olguin recognized the city's grant writer Gwen Valentino's daughter Ixchel Valentino aka "The Nerdy Ninja" on her accomplishments earning her way to the finals of American Ninja Warrior in Las Vegas, NV.

Councilor Olguin reported that he attended the New Mexico Municipal League's conference in Clovis, New Mexico. At the conference the NMML awarded the City of Socorro with Audit of the Year and the council recognized Ms. Lopez and staff for a job well done.

Mayor Bhasker informed the Council that General Manager Joseph Herrera has resigned his position at Socorro Electric Cooperative effective September 5, 2024. The mayor added that a meeting with Attorney Nann Winter will occur this Thursday morning to discuss the notice of claim under the New Mexico Civil Rights Act by the Socorro Electric Cooperative which claims the city will violate their civil rights by forming a municipal electric utility.

DIRECTOR REPORTS

- Senior Center – Linda Mares, Senior Center Director, stated the flooring is being replaced at the Veguita Senior Center and will open Monday. The detention center will help with the clean up of the City of Socorro Senior Center's parking lot. Councilor Salome thanked Ms. Mares for allowing Kirstin Keller, Coordinator of the Juvenile Justice Board Grant and MRGEDA, to have her office located at the Senior Center.
- Convention Center – Dezirae Armijo, Convention Center Director, informed the Council the County Fair Parade will be held Saturday August 31st, the Pro Rodeo (PRCA) will be August 30th and 31st at the Rodeo Complex, and the Fiber Arts Guild show will be at the Convention Center. Ms. Armijo added the Convention Center is booked almost every weekend until the end of October.
- Recreation Department – Michael Padilla, Recreation Director, informed the Council the installation of the new weight room equipment is almost complete and once complete will issue memberships between \$10 to \$20 a month.
- General Services – Lloyd Martinez, General Services Director, reported that construction will resume next week with walls going up at Finley Gym. Bids for Sedillo Park lighting will be out soon. Administrator Monette added the enclosure at the Rodeo Complex is in construction and soon work at the welcome center at the RV Park will begin. Mr. Martinez stated that meetings will be held on updating the control boxes for the traffic lights on California Street. Administrator Monette stated that work has begun on obtaining the clearances to start landscaping on the I-25 exits and staff also met with a vendor to analyze our streetlights and save the city money on converting to LED. Mayor Bhasker stated that a meeting with Gregg Reiche, the artist that created the El Camino Real Heritage monument, will take place to discuss how to disassemble and move the

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Jason Romero	08/20/2024	Police	Completed Probation	A-44 to A-46
Antonio Gonzales	08/20/2024	Police	Completed Probation	A-59 to A-61
Julio Carrasco	08/20/2024	Street	Competitive Pay	B-39 to B-44
Sergio Cuevas	08/20/2024	Street	Competitive Pay	I-42 to I-46
Lefty Wallace	08/20/2024	Street	Competitive Pay	D-52 to D-54
Chris Sedillo	08/20/2024	Street	Competitive Pay	D-39 to D-44
James Beasley	08/20/2024	Street	Competitive Pay	A-37 to A-41
John Silva	08/20/2024	Parks	Competitive Pay	W-44 to W-48
Kevin Chavez	08/20/2024	Parks	Competitive Pay	C-39 to C-41
Alvaro Alvarado	08/20/2024	Parks	Competitive Pay	D-39 to D-41
Kevin Gonzales	08/20/2024	Parks	Competitive Pay	I-42 to I-46
Adam Lopez	08/20/2024	Parks	Competitive Pay	C-39 to C-41
Abdenago Lucero	08/20/2024	Parks	Competitive Pay	B-39 to B-41
Oscar Acosta	08/20/2024	Water	Competitive Pay	EZ-69 to EZ-73
Ruben Amaro	08/20/2024	Water	Competitive Pay	U-58 to U-60
Rena Benavidez	08/20/2024	Water	Competitive Pay	F-45 to F-47
Placido Chavez	08/20/2024	Water	Competitive Pay	G-45 to G-47
Jeremiah Gonzales	08/20/2024	Water	Competitive Pay	D-43 to D-45
Corey Sanchez	08/20/2024	Water	Competitive Pay	M-49 to M-51
Pat Silva, Jr.	08/20/2024	Water	Competitive Pay	G-41 to G-43
Brian Standefer	08/20/2024	Water	Competitive Pay	O-58 to O-60
Joe Melendrez	08/20/2024	Production	Competitive Pay	X-65 to X-67
Felix Saavedra	08/20/2024	Production	Competitive Pay	U-52 to U-54
Chris Vega	08/20/2024	Production	Operator II	P-39 to P-43
Jorge Gallegos	08/20/2024	Production	Competitive Pay	A-39 to A-41
Richie Chavez	08/20/2024	WW	Competitive Pay	M-43 to M-45
Henry Jojola	08/20/2024	WW	Competitive Pay	EZ-55 to EZ-58
Cody Polston	08/20/2024	WW	Competitive Pay	V-59 to V-65
Linda Mares	08/20/2024	Senior Center	Promotion to Director	B-51 to B-55
Ashley Lower	08/20/2024	Senior Center	Part Time to Full Time	A-41 to A-43
Desiree Smith	08/20/2024	Senior Center	Part Time to Full Time	A-41 to A-43
Carlos SAVEDRA	08/20/2024	Transportation	Acting Director to Director	L-58 to L-60
Cassandra Benjamin	08/20/2024	Transportation	Multiple Duties/Lead Driver	S-46 to S-48
Reyna Seifert	08/20/2024	Transportation	Temp to Full Time	A-37
Enrique D. Trujillo	06/14/2024	Gas	Resignation	
Autumn Martinez	08/07/2024	Dispatch	Resignation	
Antwoine Johnson	08/01/2024	Police	Resignation	

Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

Motion passed unanimously.

c. Business Registrations

Councilor Salome motioned to approve the Business Registrations as presented by Mayor Bhasker.

NAME	ZONING	ADDRESS	OWNER	TYPE
DN Fusion Paint & Maintenance LLC	Out of Town	17 Montoya Rd.	Dyle Deckard-Phillips	Painting and Basic House Maintenance
2-J's Skid Steere	Out of Town	Magdalena, NM	Julian Lopez	Construction & Demolition
Socorro Local Dismantling	C-2	1311 State Rd. 1	James Esquibel	Metal Dismantling

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Ignacio Amaya	Out of Town	Polvadera, NM	Ignacio Amaya	Construction
2V Corner Store	C-2	401 Grant St.	Andres Vallejos	Convenience Store

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, September 3, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers (111 School of Mines Rd.).

Mayor Bhasker added that we are now back to conducting two meetings a month in September and would like the Council to consider having just one meeting a month.

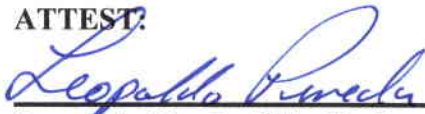
ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation

Ravi Bhasker, Mayor

ATTEST:



Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk