

**City of Socorro Regular Scheduled City Council Meeting  
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801  
November 19, 2024**

Mayor Pro Tem Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk took roll call.

Mayor Ravi Bhasker was absent.

Council members present at roll call:

- Mayor Pro Tem Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez
- Councilor Deborah Dean
- Councilor Damien Ocampo
- Councilor Michael Olguin, Jr.
- Councilor Joel D. Partridge, Jr.
- Councilor Anton Salome

Council members absent at roll call:

- Councilor Nick Fleming
- Councilor Peter Romero

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Pro Tem Chavez-Lopez led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. Approval of November 19, 2024, City Council Agenda
- b. Consideration of Minutes
  - i. November 5, 2024
- c. Voucher Run

The Voucher Run included vouchers 162841 to 163141 in the amount of \$1,717,397.62 plus Payroll Transfers \$513,686.05 for a total of \$2,231,083.67.

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

**PUBLIC FORUM**

Leah Tevis representing a group of citizens attending the meeting read the following statement.

*Good evening, Mr. Mayor and members of the City Council,  
Thank you for giving us the opportunity to speak about the Socorro Animal Shelter and the vital role it plays in our community.  
I'd like to begin by expressing our appreciation for your leadership. We know that community members respect and look to you for guidance, and tonight we hope to begin a conversation about how we can strengthen this critical resource.  
As you may already know, almost all of the dogs at the Socorro shelter were suddenly euthanized about a month ago. This decision has sent a clear signal that not all is well at the shelter.  
We are not here to antagonize or to be adversarial, but to express a desire to support a well-staffed, well-trained, and well-resourced shelter that reflects and fully supports the needs of the*

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*community and the values of care and responsibility we all share.*

*The shelter is not just a resource for animals; it is a lifeline for the entire community. Municipal shelters are typically the agencies of record for reducing the number of stray animals on the streets, protecting public safety, and supporting pet owners in times of crisis. When a shelter is not operating at its best, the impacts ripple outward. Numbers of stray animals increase, leading to public safety issues, and critically, the shelter loses its role as a place of hope for both animals and residents.*

*We understand that city-run shelters cannot be no-kill due to the overwhelming number of stray and unwanted animals across the nation. Ideally, a city shelter can prioritize humane solutions like forming partnerships nation-wide with rescue groups and fosters, work on community outreach for local fostering and adoptions, and spend time to train and socialize animals to enhance their adoptability. These efforts require investments of time and resources and will ultimately save lives and strengthen trust between shelters and the communities.*

*Successful municipal shelters have full-time shelter directors. They provide consistent leadership, short and long-term planning, fostering communication with the community, and ensuring the shelter operates effectively through on-going staff training. Without full-time leadership, the shelter will continue to face unnecessary challenges and miss opportunities for improvement. In a recent conversation with a city council member, we were asked whether the community is supporting animal welfare work. We want to assure you that we do. Behind the scenes, many volunteers are already working hard. We foster homeless animals, we run spay and neuter programs, we are managing trap-neuter-return initiatives for feral cats, providing emergency financial support for treatment of gravely injured pets, and we regularly field phone calls from community members when they are faced with needing to surrender an animal.*

*These efforts demonstrate the community's dedication, but we need the shelter to provide transparency and engagement so we can work together effectively. The shelter provides the professional care and infrastructure that volunteers alone cannot. We want the city to see us as partners and to prioritize the shelter as the essential resource it is.*

*By investing in its success, we can improve outcomes for animals and strengthen the shelters relationship with the community.*

*Thank you.*

Guadalupe Tarango, Animal Shelter/911 Dispatch Director, gave the Council an overview of the operation of the shelter.

Councilor Ocampo asked if there was a volunteer program in place. Mr. Tarango replied that New Mexico Tech students, Socorro High School students and members from the public volunteer their time.

Mary Franklin, 512 ½ School of Mines Rd. asked, because the entire County of Socorro brings their animals to the City of Socorro Animal Shelter, does the County contribute any funds. Mr. Tarango stated the County of Socorro is billed \$210.00 per animal. Ms. Franklin responded that the city should think about increasing the amount.

The Councilors requested that a committee be formed to meet with Mr. Tarango and the public.

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**ORDINANCES**

a. **Ordinance No. 24-12-17 Revitalize Socorro Vacant Commercial Building and Lot Ordinance – For Publication Only**

Councilor Olguin made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 24-12-17 for publication only. Seconded by Councilor Ocampo.

Councilor Salome stated he was opposed to the ordinance and believed the city should find ways to incentivize businesses rather than penalize them.

Councilor Olguin made a motion to rescind his motion to approve Ordinance No. 24-12-17 for publication only. Seconded by Councilor Ocampo, motion passed unanimously.

Chris Carrillo, Code Enforcement Officer, spoke on the thought process that was behind the ordinance, and he was having problems enforcing the current ordinance, primarily with property owners that reside outside of Socorro.

Ron Lopez, owner of a closed business at 102 College Avenue, spoke in opposition to the ordinance.

The Councilors stated they would like to form a committee to meet with property owners to get their feedback, prior to advertising and possibly approving a new ordinance.

Councilor Olguin made a motion to postpone Ordinance No. 24-12-17 for publication only until 2025. Seconded by Councilor Partridge, motion passed unanimously.

**DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

Councilor Olguin informed the Council that Kip Carrico and Liz Gipson, 109 Grant Street, have been experiencing gunfire in the area of their residence. Councilor Olguin asked if Angel Garcia, Chief of Police, could meet with Mr. Carrico and Ms. Gipson after the Council meeting to discuss their concerns.

Councilor Salome asked Chief Garcia if the city has experienced any problems with undocumented immigrants. Chief Garcia replied that there have been no problems at all.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Councilor Dean requested a third committee be formed to review the current Zoning Code and suggest possible changes and possibly set up a working session for all Councilors to go over the current Code. A committee was formed.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

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**MAYOR'S REPORT**

**a. Personnel Changes**

Councilor Partridge motioned to approve the Personnel Changes as presented by Mayor Pro Tem Chavez-Lopez.

NAME	EFFECTIVE	DEPARTMENT	REASON	SALARY
Josh Armijo	11/19/2024	Animal Control	New Hire	A-42
Daryl Ross	11/19/2024	Tourism	Additional Job Duties	C-39 to C-41

Seconded by Councilor Dean, motion passed unanimously, motion passed unanimously.

**b. Business Registrations**

Councilor Olguin motioned to approve the Business Registrations as presented by Mayor Pro Tem Chavez-Lopez.

NAME	ZONING	ADDRESS	OWNER	TYPE
JV Professional Automotive LLC	C-2	500 North 6 <sup>th</sup> St.	Johnny Valenzuela	Auto Repair
Flawless Finish Permanent Makeup by Alysia	C-2	316 California St.	Alysia Torres	Permanent Makeup Tattoo
Sierra Cleaners	C-2	115 Faulkner St.	Haven M. Law	Dry Cleaners
Badger Daylighting	Out of Town	Albuquerque, NM	Jamie Taylor	Hydrovas
On the Go Mobile Notary & Process Service	Out of Town	547 Harold Dr.	Darryn Chavez	Notary & Process Service
Arbor E & T LLC	C-1	198 Neel Ave.	Griselle Palomares	Employment Agency/Services

Seconded by Councilor Partridge, motion passed unanimously.

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

Mayor Pro Tem Chavez-Lopez stated that the next regular City Council meeting will be held Tuesday, December 3, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers (111 School of Mines Rd.).

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

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

  
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**Ravi Bhasker, Mayor**

**ATTEST:**

  
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**Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk**