

City of Socorro Regular Scheduled City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
January 20, 2026

Mayor Ravi 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 Nick Fleming
- Councilor Joe Gonzales
- Councilor Damien Ocampo
- Councilor Joel D. Partridge, Jr.
- Councilor Peter Romero
- Councilor Anton Salome

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bhasker led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

a. Approval of January 20, 2026, City Council Agenda

b. Consideration of Minutes

i. January 6, 2026

c. Voucher Run

The Voucher Run included vouchers 166052 to 166279 in the amount of \$2,250,085.57 plus Payroll Transfers \$592,021.45 for a total of \$2,842,107.02.

d. Budget Resolution No. 13 – General Fund

e. Budget Resolution No. 14 – Senior Center

f. Budget Resolution No. 15 – Airport

g. Budget Resolution No. 16 – State Appropriation Evergreen.

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

PUBLIC FORUM

Shay Kelly, Board President of Puerto Seguro Safe Harbor, thanked Mayor Bhasker and the City Council for their support of the overnight emergency shelter.

Ms. Kelly stated that the shelter had been open for 34 nights when temperatures dropped below 32 degrees. The shelter has been full every night and recorded a high of 33 people, including nine women, on January 19. For fire safety, the shelter has 12 cots and operates on a rotation system: individuals come in to get warm and sleep for three to four hours, then rotate out to allow others a turn. Nightly attendance averages between 20 and 27 people. Ms. Kelly said the service is hopefully making a positive difference for police and firefighters.

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Mayor Bhasker asked where attendees are from. Ms. Kelly responded that they are local residents. The shelter tracks demographic data, including whether individuals are unsheltered or housed but lacking utilities. Data from one night showed that, of 27 people served, nine had no heat in their homes.

Mayor Bhasker asked how the city could help keep people in their homes. Ms. Kelly explained that they had received an annual \$22,500.00 utility assistance grant from the Catholic Foundation for many years, but the grant expired in September and was not renewed. The program refers people to other assistance resources and is actively seeking new grant funding. She added that they are nearing the end of their current funding, having already operated 33 of the allotted 40 nights.

Mayor Bhasker stated that utility assistance could be discussed at the next budget meeting. Councilor Ocampo asked whether the public could donate or if the city could share that information on social media. Councilor Chavez-Lopez recommended looking into Housing New Mexico. Ms. Kelly said they have been added to a listserv for future funding opportunities for warming and cooling centers. Councilor Chavez-Lopez added that she would speak with MFA to explore possible assistance for rent and utilities.

Councilor Gonzales asked why they are encouraging the use of propane. Ms. Kelly clarified that they are not encouraging propane use, but it has come up as a need. Councilor Chavez-Lopez noted that the Housing Authority is in discussions about donating sleeping bags and other supplies.

Ms. Kelly also distributed the 2025 Annual Impact Statement to the councilors.

PROCLAMATIONS & AWARDS

a. Coach Charles “Chuck” Zimmerly

Councilor Ocampo presented Coach Charles “Chuck” Zimmerly with a plaque that read:

“The City of Socorro would like to recognize Coach Z. The New Mexico High School Track and Cross-Country Coaches Association is inducting him into the Hall of Fame. As a Hall of Fame inductee, Charles ‘Coach’ Zimmerly has our sincere gratitude for his many years of service, dedication, and tireless commitment to the youth of Socorro. His invaluable impact has touched many generations of athletes, students, and families in our community. From Mayor Bhasker, the City Council—past and present—and all the residents of the City of Socorro, we are proud to present you with this plaque.”

Mr. Zimmerly addressed the Council, sharing that when he returned to Socorro to attend New Mexico Tech and earned a degree in Petroleum Engineering, he had planned to move to Texas to begin his career. Instead, he started working as a substitute teacher and never left the profession, dedicating his life to teaching and coaching.

Each councilor and the mayor spoke, praising Coach Zimmerly for his service to the community, his commitment, and his friendship.

Coach Zimmerly will be inducted into the New Mexico Hall of Fame on Saturday, January 24,

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2026, at 11:00 a.m.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

a. RFQ Award – Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) Facility Upgrade

Mr. Pineda presented Request for Qualifications (RFQ) No. 010726 for the Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) Facility Upgrade. He stated that proposals were received on January 7, 2026, at 3:00 p.m., and that one proposal was received from Clean Energy. He noted that Clean Energy is familiar with the City's CNG operations. Staff recommend awarding the contract to Clean Energy.

Councilor Romero made a motion to award RFQ No. 010726 to Clean Energy. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

b. Resolution No. 26-01-20 – CDBG Federal Requirements

Mr. Pineda stated Resolution No. 26-01-20 is an annual resolution required by the CDBG program.

Councilor Gonzales made a motion to approve Resolution No. 26-01-20. Seconded by Councilor Ocampo, motion passed unanimously.

c. Committee Appointments

Donald Monette, City Administrator, distributed a list of committees and highlighted the vacancies. Mayor Bhasker made the following appointments:

- **Municipal League** – Councilor Chavez-Lopez
- **Economic Development/Job Creation/Industrial Park Committee** – Councilor Gonzales
- **WIOA Appointments** – Michael Olguin, Jr. and Councilor Romero
- **Planning and Zoning Commission** – Mayor Bhasker stated there are three vacancies asking councilors for recommendations. He requested the councilors give Kristy Padilla, P & Z Manager, recommendations.
- **Animal Shelter** – Councilor Romero
- **Revitalize Socorro/Code Enforcement** – Councilor Partridge

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve the committee appointees. Seconded by Councilor Partridge, motion passed unanimously.

d. City of Socorro Projects Overview

Mayor Bhasker stated that, at the request of Councilor Partridge, Administrator Monette provided a list and explanation of all current city projects.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilor Salome expressed appreciation to the Defensor Chieftain for its article regarding the library and adult education program and thanked the Socorro Public Library for providing the program.

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Mayor Bhasker announced that Tax Help New Mexico will provide services at the Socorro Public Library on Wednesdays from February 4 through April 8, 2026. The program will offer free tax preparation assistance to individuals 65 years of age and older and to households with incomes of \$67,000 or less. He also noted that the IRS will not be accepting or issuing paper checks this year.

Chelsea Jones, Library Director, stated that the library is working with local banks to help individuals who do not currently have bank accounts establish them.

OLD BUSINESS

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilor Chavez-Lopez made a motion to go into executive session. Seconded by Councilor Romero. Mr. Pineda took a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Ocampo made a motion to return to regular session. Seconded by Councilor Dean, motion passed unanimously.

Administrator Monette stated the Council discussed three possible legal matters and one personnel matter. No action was taken.

MAYOR'S REPORT

a. Personnel Changes

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

NAME	EFFECTIVE	DEPARTMENT	REASON	SALARY
Kristy Padilla	01/20/2026	Administration	Job Performance	U-62 to U-64
Marcella Alvarado	01/20/2026	Administration	Recycling Certification	H-52 to H-54
Michael Lucero	01/20/2026	Landfill	Recycling Facility Operator Certification	R-72 to R-74
Chris Carrillo	01/20/2026	Code Enforcement	Landfill Operator Certification	H-47 to H-49
Daryl Ross	01/20/2026	Tourism	Recycling Certification	F-43 to F-45
Juan Vergara	01/16/2026	Police	Resignation	

Seconded by Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

b. Business Registrations

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

NAME	ZONING	ADDRESS	OWNER	TYPE
AMT Title Services, Inc.	C-2	207 Fisher Ave.	Robert Callaghan	Title Insurance Agency

Seconded by councilor Fleming, 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, February 3, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers (111 School of Mines Rd.).

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ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation



Ravi Bhasker, Mayor

ATTEST:



Donald Monette, City Administrator