

City of Socorro Regular Scheduled City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
May 18, 2015

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

Mayor Bhasker stated that Councilor Monette was attending a budget meeting at Socorro Schools which is where Councilor Monette is employed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bhasker led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MAY 18, 2015 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

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

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

a. May 4, 2015

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

PUBLIC FORUM

Camille Scielzi stated that the first distribution for the Senior Hunger Initiative Program will be May 19th from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Youth Center. Ms. Scielzi stated that the Police and Fire departments will assist in the distribution of 3,800 pounds of food to 80 individuals. Ms. Scielzi stated that all of the available slots were filled and that there is a waiting list for individuals interested in the program. Ms. Scielzi stated that the freezer and cooler for the program were donated by the Masonic Lodge and are housed at the City's Youth Center. Ms. Scielzi thanked Susie Welch, the City and all of the other volunteers for their help with the program.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

a. Juvenile Justice Diversion Program – Teen Court - Presentation

Judge Bobbi Sanders provided a handout to the Mayor and Council. Judge Sanders stated that during the 2013-2014 Juvenile Justice grant cycle, policies and procedures were created, youth attorneys, the judge and the bailiff were trained and workshops and curricula were implemented. Judge Sanders stated that the four young students who initially served in teen court were Tyler Crespin, Joe Armijo, Dushan Gacanich and Joseph Cutchall. Judge Sanders stated that during the 2014-2015 Juvenile Justice grant cycle, the truancy reduction program was created, the program processed school referrals and the teen court became a member of the NM Teen Court Association. Judge Sanders provided data regarding the types of referrals including 15 shoplifting offenses, 225 truancy referrals, 1 larceny, etc. Judge Sanders stated that only 2 of the truancy referrals re-offended. Judge Sanders stated that in regards to the truancy referrals, there have been 800 hours of community service performed and there are weekly classes based on the needs of the student. Judge Sanders stated that the goals of the teen court program are to continue to empower youth, divert youth from committing crimes and continue to provide services to the youth and their families. Judge Sanders thanked all of the entities that have supported the program including the City of Socorro, Socorro Schools Seventh Judicial District Court, JPPO, SCJJB, Kirsten Kellar and Councilor Pargas. Judge Sanders stated that she has been involved with teen court programs since 1991 and she finds the programs to be essential to a community. Councilor Pargas also thanked Judge Sanders and further stated that the idea of the teen court program is to keep kids out of the justice system. Mayor Bhasker thanked Judge Sanders for her presentation.

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b. Contract between City of Socorro & Socorro County – For Sale of Soil Drum Compactor

Mayor Bhasker presented a contract between the City of Socorro and Socorro County for the purchase of a soil drum compactor. Jay Santillanes, Division Director, stated that Socorro County had a lease for the compactor but they have chosen not to purchase the compactor. Mr. Santillanes stated that the City has a need for the compactor and would like to purchase the compactor from the County. Mr. Santillanes stated that the purchase price is \$31,500.00 which would be paid to the County and the County would pay off the compactor and turn the compactor over to the City. Mr. Santillanes stated that the rental price of a compactor of this size is approximately \$1,900.00 per week and the purchase of the compactor would benefit the City. Mayor Bhasker stated that the contract still needs to be approved by the Department of Finance and Administration.

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve the contract between the City of Socorro and Socorro County for the purchase of a soil drum compactor. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

c. Resolution No. 15-05-18 – Utility Billing Write-Offs

Mable Gonzales, Treasurer, presented Resolution No. 15-05-18 which, if approved, removes uncollectible utility billing accounts from 2010, in the amount of \$49,207.91, from the City's list of accounts. Ms. Gonzales stated that the amount billed for 2010 was \$5,871,750.00 and the uncollected amount is less than 1% of the billed amount. Mr. Salome stated that the Finance Department still attempts to collect these funds through a credit agency.

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve Resolution No. 15-05-18. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

d. Budget Resolutions

1. No. 6 – Sedillo Park Renovation Fund

Resources are Transfer from General Fund – Requirements are Rep & Sys Maintenance – Amount is \$30,000.00 – The increase is needed to allow for expenditures to June 30, 2015.

2. No. 7 – Substance Abuse Prevention Grant Fund

Resources are Behavioral Health Services Grant – Requirements are School & Per Diem, Office Expense, Other Admin. Expense, Contractual Services & Professional Services – Amount is \$57,933.00 – The increase is needed to allow for the second phase of the grant award to June 30, 2015.

3. No. 8 – Special Utility Replacement Fund

Resources are Beginning Cash Balance Available – Requirements are Other Admin. Expense – Amount is \$75,000.00 – The increase is needed to allow for expenditures to June 30, 2015.

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve Budget Resolutions 6, 7 and 8. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Gonzales stated that there would be a Budget Committee meeting on May 19th at 9:00 a.m.

Mayor Bhasker stated that the preliminary budget has to be in by 5:00 p.m. on June 1st and he would be asking that the next City Council meeting be held at noon on that day rather than 6:00 p.m.

Councilor Chavez-Lopez stated that the Southwest Area Development Board met last week. Councilor Chavez-Lopez stated that the Board has expended \$98,027.00 of the \$168,103.00 budget and has been able to assist 22 dislocated workers.

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Councilor Pargas stated that the Socorro Health Council hosted a meeting for all of the NM health councils and provided tours to the teen court center, community kitchen, Socorro Storehouse and the rodeo/soccer facility. Councilor Pargas thanked the Tourism Department for providing gift bags and the Transportation Department for providing the transportation for the tours.

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR REPORTS

Lloyd Martinez, Division Director, stated that the Water Department has finished water and sewer line replacement on 6th Street and Otero Street. Mr. Martinez stated that the intersection will be reconstructed in mid-June. Mr. Martinez stated that the Special Projects crew has been planting trees in the rodeo arena RV park, and on Hwy 60. Mr. Martinez stated that a bubbler system was installed at Sedillo Park for the trees and shrubs. Mr. Martinez stated that bids for upgrades to the wastewater treatment plant will be opened at the end of May. Mr. Martinez stated that the swimming pool will be inspected this week and should open June 1st. Mr. Martinez stated that there was several pieces of old equipment replaced at the swimming pool. Mr. Martinez stated that Parks Department crews have been busy cleaning weeds and preparing the cemetery for Memorial Day weekend.

Joe Gonzales, Fire Chief, provided a handout to the Mayor and Council of Fire Department stats from April 2015 (162 ambulance runs, 16 fire calls, etc.). Chief Gonzales stated that all departmental equipment and vehicles are running properly. Chief Gonzales stated that employee training is ongoing. Chief Gonzales stated that the department had the annual PRC inspection and received an A+ rating. Mr. Salome stated that the matter of fireworks sales should be placed on the next agenda. Mr. Salome stated that if the area is not identified as a severe drought area, he believes the City is limited as to what it can ban as far as fireworks sales.

Mike Czosnek, Building Inspector, provided a copy of a letter he sent to FEMA regarding the diversion channel levee accreditation. Mr. Czosnek stated that he should hear from FEMA in the next 60 days regarding the levee accreditation. Mr. Czosnek stated that after the accreditation is received, it will take approximately one year to receive the final maps. Mr. Czosnek stated that when the Rio Grande levee reconstruction is complete, the City will go through the same accreditation process with that levee. Mr. Czosnek stated that there has been an increase in both residential and commercial building plans.

Donald Padilla, Library Director, provided a handout to the Mayor and Council. Mr. Padilla stated that in regards to the structural concerns of the south wall at the library, the City had a structural evaluation done on May 14th and a report and recommendations should be received in the next 2 weeks. Mr. Padilla stated that he is getting estimates for new carpeting and painting services. Mr. Padilla stated that he had a student worker through the Jump Start for Juniors Program and the student was an excellent worker. Mr. Padilla stated that the RIF Program continues to distribute books with the recent distribution providing 880 books to 844 students. Mr. Padilla briefly discussed the status of the library's 2012 GO Bond, 2014 GO Bond and the State Grant in Aid.

Mike Winders, Police Chief, provided a handout to the Mayor and Council of Police Department stats from April 2015 (89 arrests, 172 citations, 2 DWI arrests, 205 police reports filed, 17 traffic accidents, etc.). Chief Winders stated that one of the items the City Council requested when he was appointed was to see the creation of a traffic safety plan. Chief Winders stated that he has started working on a plan and will present it to the City Council when completed. Chief Winders stated that the approved plan will become part of the department's SOP. Chief Winders urged the public to be safe as it is Memorial Day weekend as well as graduation.

Lupe Tarango, Dispatch Director, provided a handout to the Mayor and Council of Dispatch Department stats from April 2015 (total calls were 2,091). Mr. Tarango stated that the new 911 system has been delivered and once installed, staff will be trained on the new system. Mr. Tarango stated that a new dispatcher previously hired started last week and would attend the academy for certification in October. Mr. Tarango stated that he also had a new hire on the agenda later in the meeting.

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Jay Santillanes, Division Director, stated that he is getting prices for the grandstand, sound and lighting for the rodeo arena. Mr. Santillanes stated that concrete footings for the grandstand will be poured this week. Mr. Santillanes stated that Street Department crews have been working at the rodeo grounds and completing work orders. Mr. Santillanes stated that Gas Department crews continue with line replacement on College Avenue and School of Mines Road. Mr. Santillanes stated that upcoming projects include the reconstruction of the intersection at 6th Street and Otero and the Fairgrounds Road intersection that is at the entrance of the rodeo/soccer facility.

Mable Gonzales, City Treasurer, stated that the City's IT Director, Polo Pineda, has been working on getting the fiber from the utility poles and placing it in the buildings. Ms. Gonzales stated that now that the fiber is in the buildings, the City has been able to start to install a new telephone system at City Hall and several other locations. Ms. Gonzales stated that work on the fiber system is 90% complete. Ms. Gonzales stated that the server in City Hall that was installed in 2007 is outdated and has been replaced with a new server. Ms. Gonzales stated that there has been an issue with the new server pertaining to "EPay" when customers pay their utility bill online. Ms. Gonzales stated that there is a short delay when customer submit their payments which has caused customers to hit submit several more times with each submit causing an additional payment. Ms. Gonzales stated that the City is working on resolving the issue.

Mayor Bhasker asked Stephanie Saavedra, Payroll/Deputy Clerk, about the summer youth program. Ms. Saavedra stated that the City is currently accepting applications for the program from youth ages 16 to 19. Ms. Saavedra stated that the schools have applications and they are also available at City Hall or on the City's website. Ms. Saavedra stated that the deadline for applications is May 22nd.

Deb Caldwell, Chamber of Commerce Director, handed out a poster for the Camino Real Run Car Show and Auto Rally. Ms. Caldwell stated that registration for the event is open through the event's website:
www.caminorealrun.com

NEW BUSINESS

Councilor Romero asked about the status of the armory. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City passed an ordinance for a convention center fee (\$1.50 per room rented out by local hotels) and that the fees are being placed into an account specifically for the convention center. Mayor Bhasker stated that the fees must be paid by the hotels separate from the lodger's tax fee. Mayor Bhasker stated that each hotel was given detailed information regarding the ordinance and payment of the fee. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City is approximately one and a half years away from utilizing the money in the convention center fee account.

OLD BUSINESS

Mayor Bhasker stated that he and Mr. Salome met with Nann Winter who is the City's attorney for the City's franchise agreements and more specifically, the Socorro Electric Cooperative's franchise agreement. Mayor Bhasker stated that the attorney will be drafting three items that will be presented to the City Council in the future:

1. A franchise agreement with SEC that contains those things that the City feels need to be addressed.
2. An ordinance that would allow the City to be an electric utility (SEC would not be the sole source).
3. An ordinance that would set up a board (similar to that of the Police Oversight Commission) of independent citizens to look at the practices of the SEC to see if they are satisfying PRC rules, the City's franchise and good business practices.

Mayor Bhasker stated that the City is serious about these items as the City is not only a member but also the franchiser. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City has a responsibility in making sure that franchised businesses run in accordance with what the City feels is appropriate.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

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MAYOR'S REPORT

a. Personnel Changes

Councilor Romero motioned to approve the personnel changes as read by Mayor Bhasker:

Margaret Gonzales – 5-19-15 – Dispatch – New Hire (Dispatcher) – A-20

Temporary New Hires: Brent Gallagher

Temporary Renewals: Tony Montoya, Paul Marquez, Elias Jacquez, Tony Silva, Regina Valencia, Sergio Cuevas, Angelica Vega, Michael Padilla, Jeremy Chavez, Kevin Gonzales, Felipe Romero, John Ferguson, Billy Romero, Brad Winton, Cindy Saiz, Loretta Tolliver, Angelica Rael, Jenny Crespín

Student Workers: Giovanna Rosas, Samantha Maldonado, Mariah Jaramillo, Jeremy Gallegos, Ben Bohling
Referees (7), Zumba (1)

Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

b. Business Registrations

Councilor Romero motioned to approve the business registrations as read by Mayor Bhasker:

Parker & Parker Dynasty – Out of Town – Long Beach, CA – Corporation – Door to Door Sales

Universal Systems Inc. – Out of Town – Denver, CO – Michael Licata – Door to Door Kirby Vacuums

Honest Dollar Enterprises LLC – Out of Town – La Joya, NM – Jerry Esquivel – Mobile

Homes/Construction/Internet Provider

Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

c. Voucher Run

Councilor Fleming made a motion to approve vouchers 133625 to 133907 in the amount of \$711,084.52, plus Payroll Transfers (\$148,117.64), for a total of \$859,202.16. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

d. Announcement – PROPOSED Next City Council Meeting Date and Time – June 1, 2015 @ 12:00

p.m.

Mayor Bhasker stated that the preliminary budget has to be in by 5:00 p.m. on June 1st and he would like to request that the next regular City Council meeting be held at noon on that day rather than 6:00 p.m. Mr. Salome stated that this would still be a regular first of the month meeting but would be held at noon instead of 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next regular City Council meeting would be held on June 1, 2015 at 12:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:06 p.m., Councilor Fleming motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation

/s/
Ravi Bhasker, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/
Pat Salome, City Clerk

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