City of Socorro Special City Council Meeting
City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801
March 30, 2026

Mayor Ravi Bhasker called the meeting to order at 11:58 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 Damien Ocampo
- Councilor Joel D. Partridge, Jr.
- Councilor Peter Romero
- Councilor Anton Salome

Council members absent at roll call:
- Councilor Joe Gonzales

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
Mayor Bhasker led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 30, 2026, City Council Agenda
Councilor Romero made a motion to approve the March 30, 2026 City Council agenda. Seconded by Councilor Partridge, motion passed unanimously.

APPOINTMENT OF MUNICIPA JUDGE
Mayor Bhasker proudly requested to appoint Jason Jones as the new Municipal Judge. Mayor Bhasker stated that Jason is the appropriate person with his years of experience at the District Court.

Councilor Chavez-Lopez made a motion to appoint Jason Jones as the new Municipal Judge. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

SWEARING IN OF MUNICIPAL JUDGE
The Honorable Mercedes C. Murphy, District Court Judge recited the Oath of Office to Mr. Jones as his wife Chelse Jones and daughter held the bible.

Judge Jones addressed the Council thanking them for the opportunity and is honored to fill the position. Mayor Bhasker thanked Judge Jones for accepting the job on such short notice. The mayor explained his appointment will be until the next municipal election in November 2027.

PUBLIC HEARING
Mayor Bhasker explained that a public hearing is currently underway in the Mayor's Office and asked Ruby Lopez, Finance Director, to provide an overview of the Community Energy Efficiency Development (CEED) Block Grant.

Ms. Lopez addressed the Council and explained that the grant, totaling $1,000,000, is expected to

assist approximately 75 low-income families with energy-efficiency improvements, including appliances, windows, doors, and HVAC systems. She stated that the first step will be approval of the ordinance at the next City Council meeting, after which the city will begin accepting applications. Income eligibility will be verified through documentation such as income tax returns, EBT, or Medicaid records.

Councilor Salome asked whether the grant was competitive and how it came about. Ms. Lopez responded that she learned about the opportunity while attending a housing conference. She confirmed that it was a competitive, state-funded, three-year program, and that the city was awarded $1,000,000, with an administrative fee of 5%.

Councilor Partridge asked how the funds could be used. Ms. Lopez explained that the grant may be used for a single item, such as an appliance, or for a combination of eligible improvements.

Councilor Ocampo asked whether approved applicants would obtain estimates and submit them. Ms. Lopez explained that the City will issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a contractor. Councilor Ocampo then asked how contractors would be selected. Ms. Lopez reiterated that the city will issue an RFP and award the project to a selected contractor.

Mayor Bhasker noted that Chelsea Jones, Library Director, had received a similar grant. Ms. Jones explained that her grant was a federal loan/grant from the USDA and was used for roofing improvements for the elderly population.

Councilor Chavez-Lopez stated that the Housing Authority currently administers three similar programs: a home repair program, a veteran's program, and a rent-to-rental program.

Councilor Partridge asked whether the work could be awarded to multiple contractors. Ms. Lopez clarified that the project will be awarded to a single contractor, though that contractor may utilize multiple subcontractors.

The mayor stated that the comments will be incorporated into the CEED public hearing.

ADJOURNMENT
The meeting adjourned at 12:11 p.m. with the mayor stating the next regular City Council meeting will be held Tuesday, April 7, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers (111 School of Mines Rd.).

THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation

Ravi Bhasker, Mayor

ATTEST:

Leopoldo Pineda, City Clerk