

**City of Socorro Regular Scheduled City Council Meeting**  
**City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801**  
**October 17, 2016**

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

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Bhasker led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 17, 2016 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA**

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

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES**

**a. October 3, 2016**

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

**PUBLIC FORUM**

Leslie Johnson thanked the City of Socorro for supporting the protest of the San Agustin Plains water application. Mayor Bhasker thanked Donald Monette, City Administrator, for drafting and filing the protest letter on behalf of the City.

Nick Kellar provided a handout containing information about the Socorro Farmers' Market. Mr. Kellar thanked the City for use of the Plaza for the farmers' market. Mr. Kellar stated that the farmers' market has gotten smaller both in vendors and customers. Mr. Kellar stated that he would like to encourage community members to participate in the farmers' market. Mr. Kellar stated that the farmers' market works with several organizations including the Chamber of Commerce, the hospital's Diabetes Prevention Program, the Village of Magdalena Public Library, Alamo Navajo Reservation and the NM Department of Health. Mr. Kellar stated that the Socorro Farmers' Market is a member of the NM Farmers' Market Association. Mayor Bhasker thanked Mr. Kellar for the information and stated that the City would be happy to assist in the promotion of the farmers' market to help increase the number of participants.

Bill Stone, the NM Tech liaison, stated that recent events at NM Tech included the induction of Dr. Wells as the new president, the 49<sup>ers</sup> celebration and the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual International Student Green Chili Roast. Mr. Stone stated that Dr. Wells recently appointed Nelia Dunbar as the director of the NM Bureau of Geology. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City is planning a welcome reception for Dr. and Mrs. Wells which will be held in November.

**DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION**

**a. Vacation of Portions of Smith Road - Discussion**

Mayor Bhasker stated that Sonny Baca, a landowner on Smith Road, would like to replace his aging fence and would like to move the fence outward. Mayor Bhasker stated that Mr. Baca has requested that the City vacate part of Smith Road to accommodate this request. Jay Santillanes, Division Director, stated that Smith Road is 500 feet long and 100 feet wide. Mr. Santillanes stated that should the City consider a road reconstruction project for Smith Road, the amount of space needed would be 60 feet which leaves 40 feet available to vacate to the landowners equally on both sides of the road. Mr. Monette stated that the City has recently developed a form for the vacation of City property and should the City Council allow the City Administration to move forward, this form

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would be used. Mayor Bhasker stated that the item was on the agenda for discussion only and if there were no objections, the Administration will move forward with the process. There were no objections from the City Council.

**b. Resolution No. 16-10-17 – Surplus Equipment**

Mayor Bhasker presented Resolution No. 16-10-17 which, if approved, deems a 2002 International 4900 Refuse Collection Truck (VIN 1HTSDAAR02H532341) as surplus equipment. Mr. Monette stated that there were two appraisals – one for the base price of the truck and one which includes all of the equipment currently on the truck.

Councilor Jaramillo made a motion to approve Resolution No. 16-10-17. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

**c. CDBG Project Selection**

Mr. Santillanes stated that there were three CDBG public hearings with one project presented by the public:

1. Paving, curb & gutter, sidewalks and drainage for the Texas Street area (Texas Street, B Street, Vermont Street and C Street) to include any necessary drainage work in areas affected downstream.

Mr. Santillanes stated that there was little public attendance at the meetings. Mr. Santillanes stated that this is the same project which has been requested by the public for the last three years. Mr. Santillanes stated that the City has applied for funding for this project for the last three years and has been unsuccessful. Mr. Santillanes stated that the City Council may choose the project presented by the public or a project of their own choice. Councilor Olguin asked if awarded, would the funds be enough to complete the project. Mr. Santillanes stated that amount of the project that could be completed will depend on the amount of funds that are awarded. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City has submitted three previous requests for this project which were not awarded. Mayor Bhasker stated that after meeting with the funding agency, the City now knows what the weaknesses and deficiencies the City had in the previous applications. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City Administration has met with City staff and the engineers and he feels the City can now address those issues and submit a complete application. Mr. Santillanes stated that the project is already designed and the cost estimates have been completed. Mr. Santillanes stated that the deadline for submission of the application is in March but is confident the application will be submitted in February. Mr. Monette stated that the City is on schedule for meeting the deadlines to make this a successful submission this year. Mr. Monette stated that the next item to be completed is a resolution which will be submitted at a future City Council meeting. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City has been awarded approximately 20 CDBG projects in the past. Some discussion followed.

Councilor Fleming made a motion to select the paving, curb & gutter, sidewalks and drainage for the Texas Street area as the CDBG project. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

**d. Mutual Aid Agreement – City of Socorro & Village of Magdalena – Emergency Support Services (Fire & EMS)**

Mayor Bhasker presented an agreement between the City of Socorro and the Village of Magdalena. Joe Gonzales, Fire Chief, stated that the agreement will allow the two entities to provide mutual

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**October 17, 2016**

assistance aid (Fire and EMS) to one another when needed. Chief Gonzales stated that each entity will be responsible for their own equipment and insurance liability. Chief Gonzales stated that the Village of Magdalena is trying to get their PRC certificate back and this item is one of the requirements. Mr. Monette stated that on Page 2, Number 8, the word “Counties” will need to be amended to read “Municipalities”.

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve the agreement between the City of Socorro and the Village of Magdalena and to amend Page 2, Number 8, to read “Municipalities” rather than “Counties”. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

**e. Budget Resolutions**

Mable Gonzales, City Clerk/Treasurer, presented the following:

**1. No. 3 – Gas Valve Replacement Project Fund**

Resources are Transfer from Joint Enterprise Fund (Gas Department) and Transfer to Joint Enterprise Fund (Gas Department) – Amount is \$200,000.00 – The transfer is needed to allow for cash balance available needed for the project.

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve Budget Resolution No. 3. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Ms. Gonzales stated that the Utility Committee continues to meet to review utility rate increase options.

**DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR REPORTS**

Donald Padilla, Library Director, stated that recent building projects completed at the library include new lighting in the southeast corner room, new tile in portions of the library and realignment of the brick flooring. Mr. Padilla stated that upcoming programs include Dia de Los Muertos, the winter reading program and Fall RIF distributions at Socorro Schools. Mr. Padilla stated that library employee Chelsea Lyons, received her Master of Science in Library & Information Science. Mr. Padilla stated that the library recently submitted an application for the McCune grant.

Jay Santillanes, Division Director, stated that the Natural Gas Valve Replacement Project is still underway and is approximately 10 days from completion. Mr. Santillanes stated that City staff is inspecting the valve replacements and will conduct a 38-mile gas leak survey when the project is over. Mr. Santillanes reminded the public that the Gas Department can conduct carbon monoxide testing. Mr. Santillanes stated that the Street Department has been working with the contractor to repair potholes and have also been completing work orders.

Mike Winders, Police Chief, provided a handout to the Mayor and Council of Police Department stats from September 2016. Chief Winders stated that the recent Community Policing Play Day went well and thanked Supermart and Walmart for their donations. Chief Winders stated that the event included the PHI helicopter landing, free hot dogs and jumping balloons for the kids. Chief Winders stated that he hopes to make it an annual event.

Joe Gonzales, Fire Chief, provided a handout to the Mayor and Council of Fire Department stats from September 2016. Chief Gonzales stated that the call volume is up 15% from last year. Chief Gonzales stated that employee training is ongoing. Chief Gonzales stated that the department has advertised for

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**City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801**  
**October 17, 2016**

positions and will be hiring soon. Chief Gonzales stated that an application has been submitted for the State Fire Grant. Chief Gonzales stated that he is working on the EMS Vehicle Replacement Grant application. Chief Gonzales stated that the department recently completed the annual hose, pump and ladder tests.

Lloyd Martinez, Division Director, stated that Parks Department crews have been picking up weeds and leaves and will be busy with small projects in the mini parks during the winter. Mr. Martinez stated that the Production Department has started the grease trap ordinance inspections at local businesses. Mr. Martinez stated that the Production Department is currently winterizing the swimming pool, pump stations and chlorine monitoring stations. Mr. Martinez stated that the panel for the Cuba Road lift station will be installed soon. Mr. Martinez stated that various equipment will be ordered for the wastewater treatment plant. Mr. Martinez stated that the Water Department ran 2,200 feet of water line and installed 3 new hydrants on Fairgrounds Road. Mr. Martinez stated that the Water Department also ran 1,600 feet of water line in the rodeo arena parking area and extended the water main 500 feet on Chaparral Drive. Mr. Martinez stated that the Special Projects crew has finished work on the lighting, the bleachers and the crow's nest at the rodeo arena. Mr. Martinez stated that crews will now be installing more fence and placing rock for erosion control at the rodeo arena.

Mayor Bhasker stated that the first event that will be held at the rodeo arena will be a charity roping event in honor of City employee Cassandra Benjamin's son, Clint Benjamin, who passed away. Mayor Bhasker stated that the event used to be held in T or C and he hopes it can become a larger event in Socorro.

Michael Lucero, Division Director, stated that operations are normal in the Landfill, Sanitation and Recycling departments. Mr. Lucero stated that information regarding the new cell has been completed and submitted to NMED. Mr. Lucero stated that the tub grinder has a hydraulic leak. Mr. Lucero stated that employees continue to pick up litter daily. Mr. Lucero stated that the new engine has been installed on the Volvo garbage truck and the truck will be used as a backup.

Lupe Tarango, Dispatch Director, provided a handout to the Mayor and Council of Dispatch Department stats from September 2016. Mr. Tarango also provided a handout which shows a map of the City and identifies calls related to animal control, burglaries and traffic accidents. Mr. Tarango stated that the Dispatch Department was also part of the Community Policing Play Day and he enjoyed educating the children about dispatch services. Mr. Tarango stated that dispatch employees will attend two classes in November (suicide prevention and a House Bill 93 mental impairment class).

Mayor Bhasker requested that during the evening, police officers contact dispatch to document street lights that are not operational.

Mr. Monette stated that he recently met with Chamber of Commerce staff regarding their contract with the City. Mr. Monette stated that he will be working on the 2017 legislative requests. Mr. Monette stated that he received an e-mail from Delilah Walsh, the County Manager, who stated that the County will host the 2018 Association of Counties Annual Conference which will have over 800 attendees.

Mable Gonzales, City Clerk/Treasurer, stated that Finance Department staff will be working with the Gas Department to identify and address issues with gas meters. Ms. Gonzales stated that she will be meeting with Mayor Bhasker and Mr. Martinez to review cash flow for the rodeo arena project. Ms. Gonzales stated that the auditors will be at City Hall in late October and early November. Ms. Gonzales stated that

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**October 17, 2016**

there was a State tariff increase and the ambulance billing clerk has incorporated the change into the billing system.

**NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Councilor Olguin stated that he received the updated park rules containing the new language as discussed at previous City Council meetings. Mr. Monette stated that he placed the information in the Councilors boxes.

Councilor Romero asked if the City Administration had received an update about Socorrofest. Mayor Bhasker stated that Socorrofest, in the past, has received A's and B's and this year's Socorrofest received a C-. Mayor Bhasker stated that attendance was low, there was only one beer vendor and there were no wine vendors. Mayor Bhasker stated that t-shirt and wine glass sales were also very low. Mayor Bhasker stated that the cost was extensive and the revenues were poor. Mayor Bhasker stated that City staff will be meeting in two weeks to address the issues and see how the event can be made better in the future.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None.

**MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Bhasker stated that in regards to the City providing electricity to City residents, the City Administration is moving forward and reviewing proposals (there were five proposals received). Mayor Bhasker stated that the City is also looking into changing the lights on California Street to LED lights but that the City has not received a rate from the Socorro Electric Cooperative to determine if the change will be cost effective.

**a. Personnel Changes**

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

Devrie Chavez - 10-4-16 – Dispatch - Completed Probation - A-20 to A-22

Henry Jojola - 10-3-16 – Wastewater - Certification (Level III) - W-31 to W-34

Scott Crespín - 8-15-16 – Fire - Certification (FFII) - B-32 to B-34

Jerome Martinez - 8-15-16 – Fire - Certification (I & II) - A-25 to A-32

Rosemary Rosas - 10-1-16 – Transportation - Realignment of Salary - J-32 to J-38

Jason Benavidez - 10-1-16 – Transportation - Realignment of Salary for CDL & Promotion to Lead Driver/Back-Up Program Manager - D-25 to D-33

Carlos SAVEDRA - 10-1-16 – Transportation - Realignment of Salary for CDL - D-25 to D-29

Chris Gonzales - 10-1-16 – Transportation - Realignment of Salary for CDL - A-24 to A-27

Sherylyn Padilla - 10-10-16 – Transportation - No longer CDL certified – transfer to office assistant. - H-25 to H-17

Jim Dewey Brown - 10-18-16 – Tourism - New Hire\*(Tourism Director & Event Manager) - A-40

William Brannan - 10-17-16 – Police - New Hire\*(Police Officer) - A-35

Temporary New Hires: Ashlea Steele, Justin Lopez

**City of Socorro Regular Scheduled City Council Meeting**  
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**October 17, 2016**

Temporary Renewals: Elias Jacquez, Felipe Romero, Billy Romero, Chris Carrillo, Paul Foulentfont, Jerry Griego, Pat Silva, Sebastian Alvarado, Marcella Alvarado, David Chavez, Jeriana Contreras, Zach Anaya, Mariah Jaramillo, Jasen Leviner, Tiara Jojola, Erin Melendrez  
Student Workers: Serena Perez, Maya Cordova, Chris Altamirano, Taylor Saavedra, Wesley Mauldin, Alondra Gomez, Gabe Sanchez, Emerald Goranson  
Referees (3), Zumba (2)

Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

**b. Business Registrations**

Mayor Bhasker read the business registrations:

Sandhill Salvage – C-2 – 915 A California Street – William Hall – Auto & RV Salvage & Restoration

There were some concerns from the Mayor and City Council regarding what type of work would be done at this location.

Councilor Romero made a motion to postpone the item to the next City Council meeting so that those concerns could be addressed. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

**c. Voucher Run**

Councilor Fleming made a motion to approve vouchers 139021 to 139334 in the amount of \$957,659.80, plus Payroll Transfers (\$330,817.09), for a total of \$1,288,476.89. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

**d. Announcement – Next City Council Meeting Date and Time – Monday, November 7, 2016 @ 6:00 p.m.**

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next regular City Council meeting will be held on Monday, November 7, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 7:20 p.m., Councilor Hicks motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
/s/  
**Ravi Bhasker, Mayor**

**ATTEST:**

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/s/  
**Stephanie Saavedra, Deputy Clerk**