

**City of Socorro Regular City Council Meeting**  
**City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801**  
**February 6, 2017**

Mayor Ravi Bhasker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Stephanie Saavedra, Deputy Clerk, took roll call. Members present at roll call were: Mayor Ravi Bhasker, Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez, Councilor Ernest Pargas, Councilor Anton Salome, Councilor Nick Fleming, Councilor Michael Olguin and Councilor Peter Romero. Councilor Gordy Hicks and Councilor Toby Jaramillo were absent.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Bhasker led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 6, 2017 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA**

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

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES**

**a. January 17, 2017**

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

**PUBLIC FORUM**

Mayor Bhasker congratulated Councilor Salome as being named Acting School Superintendent. Councilor Salome reminded everyone to go vote on February 7<sup>th</sup>. Councilor Salome stated that if approved, the \$5 million bond will be used over a four-year period to make improvements on the School's Facilities Master Plan such as SMS site improvements, replacement of interior doors, SHS football field turf and track improvements, technology needs and to address safety concerns. Councilor Salome read a list of polling places. Councilor Salome stated that the approval of the bond will not increase property taxes.

Councilor Hicks arrived.

**a. Concern Regarding Speeding on Sunset Drive – Wesley Cook**

Wesley Cook, a local resident, thanked the City for maintaining the City parks as he and his family visit the parks frequently. Mr. Cook stated that he is concerned because traffic on Sunset Drive has increased and drivers are traveling at a high rate of speed. Councilor Olguin suggested that a stop sign be placed at Short Street, making the intersection a three-way stop. Mayor Bhasker instructed the Street Department to begin the process of placing a stop sign at Short Street and add "Children at Play" signs in the area as well. Mayor Bhasker also asked the Police Chief to have police officers increase patrols in that area.

Sammy Padilla, a resident of Alice Road, thanked the City for approving and installing the sewer line extension on Alice Road. Mr. Padilla requested that the City extend the sewer line 450 more feet so that he, and several others, will be able to hook up to the sewer line. Mr. Padilla stated that he is willing to provide the City with a 25-foot easement for the sewer line. Mr. Padilla stated that he would be purchasing the materials if the City will install the line. Lloyd Martinez, Division Director, stated that the City has done this in the past and recommends that the City extend the sewer line. Mayor Bhasker agreed and stated that it benefits the City to have residents on City sewer rather than utilizing a septic tank.

Luisa Lopez, a member of the Tularosa Basin Downwinders Consortium, invited the Mayor and City Council to a meeting of the TBDC on February 11<sup>th</sup> at noon at the City's Youth Center. Ms. Lopez stated that the topic of discussion will be the health impact assessment that was compiled from health surveys done by residents of Socorro County who have had cancer themselves or have family members who have

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had cancer. Ms. Lopez stated that the cancer may have been a result of radiation exposure from the July 16, 1945 Trinity Test and that the goal is to have New Mexico included in the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA). Some discussion followed.

**b. Festival of the Cranes – Update – Michael Hanauer**

Michael Hanauer, Festival of the Cranes Coordinator, gave a brief update of the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Festival of the Cranes event. Mr. Hanauer thanked the City for supporting the event annually with Lodger's Tax funds. Mr. Hanauer thanked the City's Police Department, Transportation Department, Tourism Department and all of the other City staff that assisted in the event. Mr. Hanauer stated that the festival had over 5,800 attendees, over 200 volunteers and 162 events in 6 days including a wildlife zone and expo tent. Mr. Hanauer played a New Mexico True video about the Bosque del Apache. Mr. Hanauer stated that the refuge will be participating in the Photo Points Campaign. Mr. Hanauer stated that in order to participate, the refuge will need to raise \$200,000. Mr. Hanauer stated that that refuge will be asking the City of Socorro for \$20,000 in the City's next Lodger's Tax funding cycle (\$8,500 for the next Festival of the Cranes and \$11,500 for the Photo Points Campaign). Mr. Hanauer stated that this campaign will help make the refuge a "photographer stop". Mayor Bhasker suggested that Mr. Hanauer also seek funding from the Middle Rio Grande Economic Development Association. Mayor Bhasker thanked Mr. Hanauer for his update.

Bill Stone, the NM Tech liaison, stated that NM Tech students were surveyed to find out what infrastructure they would like to see in Socorro and the responses included a dog park, bowling alley, movie theater and bike trails. Mr. Stone stated that students also requested better street lighting, sidewalk improvements and a way to incorporate their meal cards at local restaurants. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City would be happy to provide transportation for students. Mayor Bhasker stated that a dog park is a possibility. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City is currently working on bike trails and that a movie theater is also "in the works".

**DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION**

**a. Resolution No. 17-02-06 – Loan Resolution – Purchase of Aerial Firefighting Apparatus**

Mayor Bhasker presented Resolution No. 17-02-06 which, if approved, authorizes a loan agreement between the City of Socorro and the New Mexico Finance Authority in the amount of \$425,567.00 for the purpose of purchasing an aerial firefighting apparatus. Joe Gonzales, Fire Chief, stated that the new truck will replace the department's oldest piece of equipment and that the current truck will be kept as a backup unit. Chief Gonzales stated that the funds will be paid back through the State Fire Fund. Some discussion followed.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Resolution No. 17-02-06. Seconded by Councilor Pargas, motion passed unanimously.

**b. Agreement for Engineering Services – Dennis Engineering – WWTP Improvements**

Mayor Bhasker presented an agreement for engineering services between the City of Socorro and Dennis Engineering. Tappan Mahoney, of Dennis Engineering, stated that Dennis Engineering will be performing various services including planning, design and construction for improvements and/or repairs to the wastewater treatment plant and sewer collection system. Mr. Mahoney stated that the NM Environment Department has reviewed the document and will give their approval after the agreement is approved by the City Council.

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Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve the agreement for engineering services between the City of Socorro and Dennis Engineering. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

**c. Bid Award – Water Parts**

Mayor Bhasker stated that bids for water parts were opened on February 2, 2017. Mayor Bhasker stated that Polo Pineda, the City's Chief Procurement Officer, is recommending that the bid be awarded to Baker Utility Supply Corp. Mr. Martinez stated that water parts go out for bid every 6 months. Mr. Martinez stated that the full dollar amounts of the bid will not be expended but rather only the parts that are actually needed will be ordered.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to award the bid for water parts to Baker Utility Supply Corp. Seconded by Councilor Olguin, motion passed unanimously.

**d. Budget Resolution No. 7 – General Fund**

Resources are Beginning Cash Balance Forward, Transfer from Community Transformation Grant Fund and TAP Grant – Requirements are TAP Grant Expense – Amount is \$54,945.00 – The increase is needed to allow for the grant award.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Budget Resolution No. 7. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Mable Gonzales, City Clerk/Treasurer, stated that the Utility Committee has prepared a proposed ordinance for utility rate changes and that it will be on the next agenda for approval for publication.

Ms. Gonzales stated that the Budget Committee will start to meet mid-March.

Jay Santillanes, Division Director, stated that the fuel tank at the airport will be installed late this week or early next week.

Mayor Bhasker stated that Dennis Engineering provided a plan to address the dip in the road on Western Hills and the cost to repair would be approximately \$60,000. Mayor Bhasker asked Mr. Santillanes to get a cost to re-asphalt the road to see if that would be less costly.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Councilor Chavez-Lopez stated that the sidewalks across the street from Torres Elementary School are in disrepair. Mayor Bhasker asked Mr. Santillanes to have the Street Department inspect and repair the sidewalks.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Councilor Olguin asked if the City was going to do a "spring clean-up" as it has in the past. Mr. Santillanes stated that the City would be doing the clean-up in May or June.

Councilor Chavez-Lopez requested that the Building Inspector attend the next City Council meeting.

Councilor Romero stated that the recent Community Arts Party was well-attended and very successful.

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Councilor Hicks asked Mr. Santillanes to have the Street Department look at the road on the east side of Socorro Electric Cooperative as the asphalt is starting to break off.

Councilor Olguin stated that Short Street is in disrepair. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City plans to reconstruct Short Street but that it has to be done properly as the current road collects water and it needs to be designed so that it does not collect water. Mayor Bhasker asked Mr. Santillanes to get an estimate for reconstruction of Short Street.

Councilor Hicks asked if the City had responded to the New Mexico Municipal League about whether or not the City of Socorro agrees with proposed legislation that the counties administer municipal elections and the municipalities pay the State a fee for having the counties run the municipal election. Mayor Bhasker stated that he had responded that the City of Socorro is not in favor of the legislation.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Councilor Chavez-Lopez made a motion to go into executive session. Seconded by Councilor Hicks, motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to go back into regular session. Seconded by Councilor Olguin, motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Gonzales reported out of executive session the discussion of one personnel matter. No action was taken.

**MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Bhasker invited the City Councilors to attend a meeting at Solaro on February 10<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 noon.

**a. Job Description Updates – Auto Maintenance Department**

Mayor Bhasker presented an updated job description for the positions of Mechanic Helper, Automotive Mechanic Apprentice and Mechanic in the Auto Maintenance Department.

Councilor Fleming made a motion to approve the updated job descriptions for the Auto Maintenance Department. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

**b. Reporting on Personnel Changes**

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

Jerome Martinez – 2-1-17 – Fire – Completed Probation – A-32 to A-33

Humberto Lucero – 2-16-17 – Fire – Promotion to Lieutenant – D-38 to D-42

Elvires Otero – 2-16-17 – Fire – Promotion to Interim Lieutenant – C-36 to C-38

Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

**c. Business Registrations**

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

Sandhill Salvage - C-2 - 203 E. Otero Avenue - William Hall - Auto & RV Salvage

A Honorable Roofing Co. LLC - Out of Town - Belen, NM - Vincent Koehl - Roofing

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Talk 4 Less Wireless Comm. LLC - C-2 - 705 N. California Street - Sergio Flores - Cell Phone & Accessory Sales

ASAA Out of Town - Lemitar, NM - Allan Sauter - Consulting

KT Homes - Out of Town - Las Cruces, NM - Kenneth & Vicki Hurston - Home Construction

Councilor Hicks asked what kind of work Sandhill Salvage would be conducting. Mayor Bhasker stated that Mr. Hall will not be doing general salvage work rather he would like to restore old air stream travel trailers as a hobby and he must be classified as a salvage business in order to do so.

Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

**d. Next City Council Meeting Announcement**

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next City Council meeting will be held on Friday, February 17, 2017 at 12:00 noon in the City Hall Council Chambers.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 7:53 p.m., Councilor Hicks motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

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

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/s/  
**Ravi Bhasker, Mayor**

**ATTEST:**

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