

**City of Socorro Regular City Council Meeting**  
**City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801**  
**March 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 Toby Jaramillo, Councilor Anton Salome, Councilor Nick Fleming, Councilor Michael Olguin and Councilor Peter Romero. Councilor Gordy Hicks and Councilor Ernest Pargas were absent.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Bhasker led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

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

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES**

**a. February 17, 2017**

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

**PUBLIC FORUM**

**a. SHS Interact Club Fundraiser Presentation – Matthew Frail**

Autumn Goranson, Teghann Gonzales and Matthew Frail, of the Socorro High School Rotary Interact Club, stated that the club would be starting their annual “purple toilet” fundraiser. Ms. Goranson stated that the Interact Club is a branch of the Rotary Club and they raise money for various organizations. Ms. Goranson stated that last year, the club raised \$2,000 for Doctors Without Borders. Ms. Goranson stated that a resident could purchase placement of a toilet for \$15 and place it on someone’s lawn. That resident, in turn, would pay \$5 to have the toilet removed, \$10 to have the toilet removed and sent somewhere else or \$20 to have the toilet removed, sent somewhere else and have immunity from the toilet coming back to their lawn. In addition, a resident could pay \$20 beforehand to buy immunity from having the toilet placed on their lawn. Ms. Goranson stated that the fundraiser will last 3 weeks.

**b. Inventors & Entrepreneurs Workshop at NM Tech – Dr. Peter Anselmo**

Peter Anselmo, from NM Tech, stated that the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Inventors & Entrepreneurs Workshop: A Business Start-up Conference will be held on April 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> at New Mexico Tech. Mr. Anselmo stated that the event will have something similar to the TV show “Shark Tank” called the “Wolves Den” which will give students and local residents the opportunity to find out how to start a business (there will be an \$75 fee to participate). Mayor Bhasker stated that the City would like to sponsor \$1,000 in scholarships for students/residents who would like to participate in the event. Mr. Anselmo stated that there will be many quality speakers at the event and that the Governor is scheduled to attend the event. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City will put a link to the event registration website on the City’s website.

Lillian Armijo, the NM Tech liaison, stated that next week is Spring Break for NM Tech students. Ms. Armijo invited everyone to the Shall We Dance, Socorro event (which is similar to the TV show Dancing with the Stars) on March 24<sup>th</sup> at Macey Center. Ms. Armijo stated that Mayor Bhasker will be one of the participants in the event.

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Lisa Baca, of the South Central Council of Governments, stated that she attended the meeting in the event the City of Socorro had any questions or needed assistance with anything. Mayor Bhasker thanked Ms. Baca for attending. Mayor Bhasker asked Ms. Baca if she had any information regarding CDBG. Ms. Baca stated that she did not have any current information. Jay Santillanes, one of the City's Division Directors, stated that the CDBG application workshop is March 15<sup>th</sup> in Albuquerque. Mr. Santillanes stated that the City's survey had already been approved and Dennis Engineering is currently working on the application. Donald Monette, City Administrator, stated that Dennis Engineering is waiting for six more agency letters regarding environmental matters related to the project.

**DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION**

**a. Condemnation of Abandoned Buildings**

Mayor Bhasker stated that he is concerned about vacant commercial buildings that have been unoccupied for years. Mayor Bhasker stated that issues with overgrown weeds, broken windows, graffiti and trash have become more of a problem with these vacant buildings. Mayor Bhasker stated that he would like to have a resolution or ordinance that outlines progressive action for property owners to ensure that these properties remain in acceptable condition. Mayor Bhasker stated that currently, City staff attempts to talk to property owners and ask them to maintain their property but he feels more aggressive enforcement is needed. Councilor Olguin stated that other municipalities will fine property owners on a daily basis and place a lien on the property if needed. Mayor Bhasker stated that he would like this matter to move forward within the next 6 months.

**b. Resolution No. 17-03-06 – Submittal of Application for MAP Funds for Street & Drainage Improvements**

Mr. Santillanes presented Resolution No. 17-03-06 which, if approved, authorizes the submittal of an application for the 2017-2018 NMDOT Municipal Arterial Program (MAP) funds for street and drainage improvements to Fairgrounds Road from State Road 1 to Rodeo Road. Mr. Santillanes stated that project will include sidewalk, gutters and bicycle lanes.

Mayor Bhasker apologized to the residents on Fairgrounds Road for the condition of the road and asked the residents to be patient as once the project is complete, the infrastructure will be excellent.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Resolution No. 17-03-06. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

**c. Budget Resolution No. 8 – Fire Protection Fund**

Resources are Beginning Cash Balance Available & Fire Protection Grant Apparatus – Requirements are Capital Outlay – Amount is \$128,417.00 – The increase is needed to allow for the adjustment of the Fire Protection Grant, roll over from prior year and to allow for expenditures.

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve Budget Resolution No. 8. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

**d. Budget Resolution No. 9 – Landfill Improvement Fund**

Resources are Beginning Cash Balance Available – Requirements are Other Administrative Fee – Amount is \$2,000.00 – The increase is needed to allow for excess transfer.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Budget Resolution No. 9. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

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**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Mable Gonzales, City Clerk/Treasurer, stated that budgets are due from the Department Heads on March 17<sup>th</sup> and that the first Budget Committee meeting will be held March 22<sup>nd</sup> and every Wednesday thereafter.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Councilor Olguin requested that Josh Kerns, the City's Recreation Director, attend the next City Council meeting. Mayor Bhasker stated that he would ask Mr. Kerns to attend. Councilor Olguin stated that there are concerns regarding the City's youth baseball program starting early which would interfere with AYSO soccer. Mayor Bhasker stated that as far as he knew, the Recreation Department was taking baseball registrations early but that the season was not starting early. Lloyd Martinez, Division Director, stated that Mr. Kerns had requested that the fields be ready early and that the season would be held sooner as there were complaints about the weather being too hot in the summer. Mayor Bhasker stated that he would speak to Mr. Kerns regarding the matter.

Mayor Bhasker asked Mike Winders, Police Chief, to explain how new police officers are trained. Chief Winders stated that new hires undergo two days of firearms training and six weeks of field training with another officer. Chief Winders stated that there is a gradual process of releasing a new officer to work on their own. Chief Winders stated that the field training officer will assist new officers with their reports and that all reports are reviewed by either the Assistant Chief or the Captain. Chief Winders stated that a new police officer has a one-year commission which allows the employee to decide if the job is right for them and for the entity to decide if the employee is right for the agency. Mayor Bhasker stated that an issue facing the Police Department is that the City hires new officers, they attend the academy, get certified and then leave to other agencies. Councilor Chavez-Lopez stated that the City needs to find incentives to help maintain police officers.

Councilor Salome stated that Chief Winders facilitated a very successful active shooter training course on February 4<sup>th</sup>. Councilor Salome stated that he participated in the training.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Mayor Bhasker stated that at a recent City Council meeting, there was a complaint about vehicles traveling at a high rate of speed on Sunset Drive. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City created a 3-way stop at Sunset Drive and Short Street to help deter speeding. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City conducted a traffic study of the area and found that the average speed on Sunset Drive is 12 mph with only one person driving over 30 mph.

Councilor Romero asked about the status of the traffic study for California Street/Spring Street/Highway 60. Mr. Santillanes stated that the study was forwarded to the NM Department of Transportation who will now apply for federal funds for the project.

Mr. Santillanes stated that the NMDOT will allow the City to place a permanent entrance on Highway 60 into the armory but not until the building has been designated as a convention center. Mr. Monette stated that the NMDOT is requesting that the City provide a traffic flow chart and signage for all events held at the rodeo arena.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None.

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**MAYOR'S REPORT**

**a. Trinity Site – Letter to Delegates**

Mayor Bhasker stated that there is not a National Parks designation in Socorro for Trinity Site at White Sands Missile Range (where the nation's first atomic bomb was detonated). Mayor Bhasker presented a letter that he would like to send to New Mexico's Congressional Delegation requesting that the Trinity Site at White Sands Missile Range be designated as a National Park, that the site is open year-round and that an informational center is developed for visitors.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve the Mayor's letter. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

**b. Reporting on Personnel Changes**

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

Jonathan Harmon – 2-24-17 – Police – Resignation

Lucario Vincent Mirabal – 3-1-17 – Fire to Police – Transfer from Fire Department to Police Department (Police Officer) – A-25 to A-35

Jerome Martinez – 2-17-17 – Fire – Certification (EMT-I License) – A-33 to A-36

Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

**c. Business Registrations**

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

LevelOps, Inc. - Out of Town - Oklahoma City, OK - Sid Helms - Electrical Contractor

777 Auto Sales - C-2 - 701 Hwy 85 - Ronnie Huizar - Auto Sales

Desert Valley Hemp - C-2 - 705-C California St. - Monika & Melanie Apodaca - CBD Oils, Lotions, Balms

Centimark Corporation - Out of Town - Albuquerque, NM - Timothy Dunlap - Commercial/Industrial Roof/Floor Contractor

W.R. Newman & Associates, Inc. - Out of Town - Nashville, Tennessee - Pat Duncan - Construction

Socorro General Hospital – Heritage/CBP - C-2 - 1202 Hwy 60 West - Presbyterian Healthcare Services - Healthcare/Community Programs

Bar J Plumbing - Out of Town - 607 Farm Market Rd. - Jeff Jones - Plumbing – Commercial & Residential

Fresenius Kidney Care/Sandhill Dialysis Center - M-1 - 1306 Enterprise Rd. - Fresenius Kidney Care/Sandhill Dialysis Center

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 Monday, March 20, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 7:00 p.m., Councilor Hicks motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

