

**City of Socorro Regular City Council Meeting**  
**City Hall, 111 School of Mines Road, Socorro, NM 87801**  
**July 7, 2014**

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

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Bhasker led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF JULY 7, 2014 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA**

Councilor Romero stated that he would like to amend the agenda to move Item 9a (Swearing In of Police Chief) to fall after Item 5 (Proclamations and Awards). Councilor Romero stated that he would also like to add Item 9k as "City of Socorro & Chamber of Commerce Contract".

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

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES**

**a. June 16, 2014**

Councilor Monette stated that he would like to make a change to the third paragraph under Discussion & Deliberation, Item "c". Councilor Monette stated that the paragraph starts with "Councilor Hicks stated..." and it should start with "Councilor Monette stated...".

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

Mr. Salome stated that in regards to the resolution that was approved under Discussion & Deliberation, Item "c" at the June 16, 2014 City Council meeting, the language requested was listed as Number 4 on the resolution.

**PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS**

**a. Proclamation – Pretrial, Probation and parole Supervision Week**

Mayor Bhasker presented a proclamation declaring July 13-19, 2014 as Pretrial, Probation and Parole Supervision Week. The proclamation recognizes the work of community corrections professionals.

Mayor Bhasker stated that people on probation and parole have a responsibility to comply with the items set forth by their probation and parole officer. Mayor Bhasker reminded the public that there is a sex offender registry available to the public that shows where an offender is living in their community. Mayor Bhasker asked the public to report any abnormal behavior by a sex offender to the appropriate office.

**DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION**

**a. Swearing In of Police Chief**

Frances Cases, Municipal Court Judge, swore Mike Winders in to the position of Police Chief. The family of Chief Winders was present for the swearing in, including Mr. Winder's mother. Mayor Bhasker and the City Council congratulated Chief Winders on his new position.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

None.

**FIRST READING OF ORDINANCES – APPROVAL FOR PUBLICATION**

**a. Ordinance No. 14-07-07 – Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements Loan**

Mayor Bhasker presented Ordinance No. 14-07-17 which, if approved, will authorize the City of Socorro to enter into a loan agreement with the New Mexico Environment Department for the purpose of obtaining wastewater construction loan funds in the amount of \$583,700. Mayor Bhasker stated that it has been 20 years since the plant was rehabilitated and the changes are necessary. Mr. Salome stated that the ordinance is on the agenda for approval for publication only.

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Councilor Monette made a motion to approve Ordinance 14-07-07 for publication only. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously

**SECOND READING OF ORDINANCES – CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL**

**a. Ordinance No. 14-05-19 – Code Adoption Ordinance**

Mayor Bhasker presented Ordinance No. 14-05-19 which, if approved, will approve the 2014 version of codified ordinances of the City of Socorro. Mr. Salome stated that the proposed ordinance was advertised longer than required by State law in order to allow the public a chance to review the changes. Mr. Salome stated that once approved, the codified ordinances will become the laws of the City of Socorro. Mr. Salome stated that there were a lot of items that had to be reviewed and the Administration tried to narrow the items down to what is most current. Mr. Salome read a list of some of the changes as well as items that did not change including:

**Codification Changes:**

- Liquor License Dispenser Fee from \$10 to \$25
  - Penalty for a misdemeanor changed from \$200 to \$500
  - Penalty for non-traffic violations changed from \$99 to \$329
  - Added language regarding the three appointed offices to coincide with State Statute
  - Made the NM State Gross receipts Tax Chart part of the code
  - Section 238 should be identified as a per unit charge
  - Allowed utility user fees to be modified by resolution
  - Updated Uniform Traffic Code to the State of NM 2013 version
- 

**This codification process did not:**

- Change property taxes
- Change gross receipts taxes
- Change user fees for water, sewer, gas, sanitation or landfill
- Change connection fees or methods of calculating rates for any utilities
- Change any fees pertaining to building or zoning
- Change Municipal correction fee, judicial education fee or court automation fee
- Change business registration fee
- Change animal control fees

Mr. Salome stated that there is a reference to the fact that franchise agreements exist but the actual agreements are not included. Mr. Salome stated that in the future when the City passes an ordinance, the City will send the ordinance to General Code who will update the City's code online and send supplemental pages of the update to the City for the books.

Councilor Monette made a motion to go into public hearing. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

Municipal Judge Frances Cases asked Mr. Salome to review the changes for misdemeanor fines and non-traffic violations once more. Mr. Salome reviewed the changes once more and stated that it gives the court more discretion in assessing fines.

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

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve Ordinance 14-05-19. The motion was seconded by Councilor Jaramillo. After a roll call vote, motion passed unanimously.  
Councilor Hicks arrived.

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**DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION**

**b. Contract Services Agreement – City of Socorro & NM Mortgage Finance Authority**

Mayor Bhasker presented a contract between the City of Socorro and the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority. Nicole Sanchez, a Program Manager with NM Mortgage Finance Authority, stated that a \$20,000 grant has been awarded for the completion of an Affordable Housing Plan for the City of Socorro. Ms. Sanchez stated that the plan will include a complete assessment of all housing needs in the City of Socorro. Ms. Sanchez stated that there is a match required. Councilor Chavez-Lopez stated that the City will provide \$10,000 for the match and Socorro County will provide \$10,000 for the match. Mable Gonzales, City Treasurer, stated that the City will be the fiscal agent for the funds and once the contract is approved, a Memorandum of Agreement will be done with Socorro County for their portion of the match.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve the contract between the City of Socorro and the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

**c. Resolution No. 14-07-07a – WWTP Upgrades – Authorizing Representatives & Signatories**

Mayor Bhasker presented Resolution No. 14-07-07a which, if approved, designates Bobbi Gonzales as the Borrower Representative and Ravi Bhasker as the Signatory Authority for the wastewater treatment plant upgrade project.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Resolution No. 14-07-07a. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

**d. Water Rights Research and Water Plan Discussion**

Mayor Bhasker stated that the Administration has been researching the City's water rights and would like to create a 40 year water plan. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City has spoken with Suzanne Smith who provided a rough cost estimate of \$18,619.29 for the research and the creation of the plan along with water rights research. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City may be able to lease some of its water rights that are not being used in order to bring in revenue and provide water to local residents. Mr. Salome stated that it would be up to the City Council to decide who the water rights are leased to and under what terms. Mr. Salome stated that the City Council could develop a set policy to use in each case or review each request lease by lease. Ms. Gonzales stated that payment of the \$18,619.29 would be spread out over the course of one year and that the City had a special water rights fund. Mr. Salome stated that an itemization of the City's different water sources was included in the City Council packets. Mayor Bhasker stated that some of the water sources still need to be declared. Some discussion followed.

Councilor Monette made a motion to approve the research of the City's water rights and the creation of a 40 year water plan at the cost of \$18,619.29. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

**e. Resolution No. 14-07-07b – Surplus Property – Police Department K-9**

Mayor Bhasker presented Resolution No. 14-07-07b which, if approved, deems the Socorro Police Department K-9 as surplus property and transfers ownership of the K-9 to the canine handler, Roque Fernandez. Mr. Salome stated that once deemed surplus, State Statute allows the City to release the K-9 to the handler free of charge and that the City's attorney has reviewed the statute and agrees with the transfer of ownership to the handler. Mr. Salome stated that the Police Chief feels there is no longer a need for the K-9 at the Police Department. Some discussion followed.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Resolution No. 14-07-07b. The motion was seconded by Councilor Romero. Councilor Donald Monette, Councilor Toby Jaramillo, Councilor Michael Olguin, Councilor Ernest Pargas, Councilor Peter Romero and Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez voted in favor of approval of the resolution. Councilor Hicks voted against the approval of the resolution. Motion passed on a 6 to 1 vote.

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**f. Resolution No. 14-07-07c – Ambulance Billing Write-Offs**

Mable Gonzales, Finance Director, presented Resolution No. 14-07-07c which, if approved, removes uncollectible ambulance accounts from 2008, in the amount of \$220,480.88, from the City's list of accounts. Ms. Gonzales stated that the Finance Department still attempts to collect these funds through a credit agency.

Councilor Monette made a motion to approve Resolution No. 14-07-07c. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

**g. Resolution No. 14-07-07d – NMDOT MAP Grant Acceptance**

Jay Santillanes, Division Director, presented Resolution No. 14-07-07d which, if approved, allows the City to enter into a MAP Agreement with the New Mexico Department of Transportation for the planning, design, drainage improvement, construction, reconstruction, placement of curb and gutter, placement of bicycle lanes, Placement of sidewalks and miscellaneous other items on various City streets. Mayor Bhasker stated that the total project cost is \$133,333.00 with the NMDOT funding 75% and the City funding 25%.

Councilor Monette made a motion to approve Resolution No. 14-07-07d. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

**h. Resolution No. 14-07-07e – NMDOT COOP Grant Acceptance**

Mr. Santillanes presented Resolution No. 14-07-07e which, if approved, allows the City to enter into a Cooperative Agreement with the New Mexico Department of Transportation for the reconstruction of two intersections (Otero Avenue and 6<sup>th</sup> Street/Bullock Avenue and El Camino Real) and crack/fog seal on El Camino Real (Bullock Avenue to Mariposa Street) and Neel Avenue (Grant Street to Leroy Avenue). Mayor Bhasker stated that the total project cost is \$76,903.00 with the NMDOT funding 75% and the City funding 25%.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Resolution No. 14-07-07e. Seconded by Councilor Monette, motion passed unanimously.

**i. Task Order 14-01 – Wastewater Treatment Facility Improvements**

Tappan Mahoney, of Dennis Engineering, presented Task Order 14-01 for Dennis Engineering for professional consulting services on the Wastewater Treatment Facility Improvements Project. Mr. Mahoney stated that the improvements consist of the installation of a new mechanical bar screen and the installation of new influent pumps and a pump control panel.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Task Order 14-01 for Dennis Engineering for professional consulting services on the Wastewater Treatment Facility Improvements Project. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

**j. Budget Resolutions**

**1. No. 16 – Municipal Street Fund**

Resources are Transfer from General Fund – Requirements are Vehicle Fuel & Vehicle Maintenance – Amount is \$15,000.00 – The increase is needed to allow for expenditures to June 30, 2014.

**2. No. 17 – Recreation Fund**

Resources are Transfer from General Fund – Requirements are Salaries-OT and Building Maintenance – Amount is \$20,000.00 – The increase is needed to allow for expenditures to June 30, 2014.

**3. No. 18 – Juvenile Justice Grant Fund**

Resources are Juvenile Justice Grant and Transfer from General Fund – Requirements are Youth Center Program – Amount is \$21,000.00 – The increase is needed to allow for a grant amendment.

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve Budget Resolutions 16, 17 and 18. Seconded by Councilor Monette, motion passed unanimously.

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**k. City of Socorro & Chamber of Commerce Contract**

Deb Caldwell, Chamber of Commerce Director, presented a contract for services between the City of Socorro and the Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Caldwell stated that the contract is in the same amount as the prior year (\$60,000). Ms. Caldwell briefly reviewed the contract which includes economic development items (meeting with City's Economic Development Committee, placing information regarding the City's rodeo/soccer fields/industrial park on their website, assisting new business owners) as well as items related to the City's Recreation and Tourism Departments. Ms. Caldwell stated that the Chamber will start giving an activity report to the Socorro City Council. Ms. Caldwell stated that the Chamber will be talking to people who work at NM Tech but do not live in Socorro to determine what can be done to attract new homeowners. Ms. Caldwell stated that the Chamber will do project management for Socorrofest, the Festival of the Cranes Arts and Crafts Fair and the Luminaria Stroll. Ms. Caldwell stated that the Chamber will solicit discounts, advertise events and update the Visit Socorro Facebook page. Ms. Caldwell also provided a list of fees for service items that the Chamber can offer. Mayor Bhasker stated that the Chamber could contact Valencia County to see which events can be worked on together.

Councilor Olguin stated that he met with the Chamber and would like to look for grants to develop a new economic development strategic plan (as the last plan is dated 2003 and he feels the plan "sat on the shelf"). Councilor Olguin stated that he feels it would be good to have an incentive package for new businesses. Mayor Bhasker asked Councilor Olguin what items from the 2003 plan the City had not completed. Councilor Olguin read some of the items listed in the 2003 plan (establish quick response committee, develop incentive package, develop small business incubator, certified community program, economic development website and strategic housing study). Mayor Bhasker stated that he feels the 2003 plan was developed for the entire County and all aspects may not apply. Mayor Bhasker stated that at that time, the State was trying to certify communities by using certain criteria. Mayor Bhasker stated that some of the criteria had to do with increasing gross receipts tax. Mr. Salome stated that the certification was to sidestep the anti-donation clause so that the City could generate taxes to give to private corporations. Mr. Salome stated that there was not a majority of five City Councilors who wanted to collect the tax and use it as an incentive for setting businesses up in Socorro.

Councilor Monette made a motion to approve the contract for services between the City of Socorro and the Chamber of Commerce. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Ms. Gonzales stated that she would like to have a Utility Committee meeting on July 30<sup>th</sup> at noon. Mayor Bhasker stated that the meeting is needed to review solid waste rates as the solid waste department is in need of new trucks.

Councilor Monette stated that the Economic Development Committee met on July 3<sup>rd</sup>. Councilor Monette stated that the committee would like to develop a plan outlining short and long term economic development goals for the City. Councilor Olguin stated that once the plan is developed, the committee would like to recruit people to the committee so that they can help give recommendations on how to move forward with the strategies.

Mayor Bhasker stated that the rodeo arena cover is currently being erected. Mayor Bhasker stated that the soccer fields may be used in the fall by the high school. Mayor Bhasker stated that the swimming pool will be open until the end of July.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Councilor Olguin stated that he would like to commend the Fire Department for their quick response to a brush fire on College Avenue.

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Councilor Olguin stated that he was approached by a new homeowner who would like a sidewalk placed in front of their house. Mayor Bhasker stated that it is hard to decide who gets a new sidewalk in front of their house. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City will fix the existing sidewalk where it is broken. Mayor Bhasker stated that when funds are available, a decision has to be made as to whether the current infrastructure is maintained or if a new project should be completed. Mr. Salome stated that if you do sidewalk in front of one person's home, it should either be to replace existing sidewalk or to create a pathway which leads to some location not solely for the improvement of the property.

Councilor Chavez-Lopez stated that residents on Ortega Road are requesting a "Children at Play" sign. Mr. Santillanes stated that he would let the Street Department know to go place the sign in that area.

Councilor Romero asked about the status of a speed bump on Fisher Street. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City receives many requests for speed bumps. Mayor Bhasker stated that the street may need a sign and additional patrols. Mr. Salome stated that the City is trying to get more information about the traffic patterns on that street before making a decision.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Ms. Gonzales stated that she would like to request approval for 2 hand checks that are needed: a check for \$117,795.00 for the new ambulance and a check for \$78,931.18 for the first installment of the City's liability insurance.

Councilor Romero made a motion to approve the issuance of the 2 hand checks. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

**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 Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Salome reported out of executive session the discussion of one personnel matter and the personnel change list. No action was taken.

**MAYOR'S REPORT**

**a. Property Trade**

Mayor Bhasker stated that developing the holding pond on A Street has created a problem on the property next to it. Mayor Bhasker stated that the property next to the holding pond, which is approximately 4 acres, has been appraised at \$39,000. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City can purchase the property for cash or trade a piece of City property (a dollar for dollar trade) for the property in question. Mr. Salome stated that the property next to the holding pond has more value to the City as it can be used for drainage purposes in the future. Mayor Bhasker requested that the City Administration be allowed to contact DFA to find out how to start the process of a property trade. Mr. Salome stated that an ordinance may have to be passed to finalize the trade.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to allow the Administration to contact DFA to find out how to start the process of a property trade. Seconded by Councilor Monette, motion passed unanimously.

**b. Reporting on Personnel Changes**

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

Humberto Lucero – 5-16-14 – Fire – FFI Certification – B-27 to B-28

Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

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**c. Business Registrations**

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

B & J Auto Tags – Out of Town – Cerrillos, NM – Ray Riley – Auto Tags  
PVT Networks Inc. – Out of Town – Artesia, NM – Corporation – Alarm & Security System Sales  
Fuego Wireless LLC – Out of Town – Artesia, NM – Partnership – Wireless Service Provider  
Hustled Construction – Out of Town – Belen, NM – Partnership – Construction  
B Jar Construction Inc. – Out of Town – Los Lunas, NM – Corporation – Construction  
Lyratron – R-4 (Approved by P&Z) – 101 Aspen Road – Peter DeSimone – Engineering/Design

Seconded by Councilor Hicks, motion passed unanimously.

**d. Next City Council Meeting Announcement**

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next City Council meeting would be held on Monday, July 21, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 7:47 p.m., Councilor Hicks motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Monette, motion passed unanimously.

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

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*/s/*  
**Ravi Bhasker, Mayor**

**ATTEST:**

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*/s/*  
**Pat Salome, City Clerk**