

City of Socorro
Regular City Council Meeting
February 3, 2014

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bhasker led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 3, 2014 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

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

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

a. January 21, 2014

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

PUBLIC FORUM

Colette Foard stated that she had reviewed the Socorro Electric Cooperative's board meeting minutes to see if the return of her capital credits had been discussed at an open meeting and was unable to find mention of a discussion. Ms. Foard stated that the item may have been discussed in executive session but if so, wondered why it would have not been discussed in an open meeting. Ms. Foard stated that she attended the most recent SEC board meeting and again made a request for the return of her capital credits to which she received no response. Ms. Foard stated that the SEC board is not following proper procedure and is denying her due process and for those reasons, requested that the City consider these items in their negotiations with SEC for the franchise agreement. Ms. Foard provided a letter from her attorney which requests any assistance the City may be able to provide to Ms. Foard. Mr. Salome stated that at a previous City Council meeting, it was discussed that in a denial letter to Ms. Foard from the SEC attorney, it was stated that the SEC board denied her request for the return of capital credits. Mr. Salome stated that Charlie Wagner, an SEC board member, did not recall the matter of Ms. Foard's capital credits ever being discussed at a board meeting. Mr. Salome stated this is why Ms. Foard reviewed board meeting minutes to see if there was a public discussion and ultimate action by the Board and was unable to find any discussion regarding the topic. Mayor Bhasker thanked Ms. Foard for her update and stated that he feels the City may be culpable if the City, as the franchisor, allows them to continue operating the way they are.

Councilor Hicks arrived.

Terry Tadano introduced Deb Caldwell, who is replacing Mr. Tadano as Chamber of Commerce Director. Mr. Tadano thanked everyone at the City for the time he spent working with them. Mayor Bhasker commended Terry for a job well done and wished him well in the future. Mayor Bhasker welcomed Ms. Caldwell to the position. The City Council all thanked Terry for his work.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

a. Festival of the Cranes - Update

Michael Hanauer, Festival of the Cranes Coordinator, gave a brief update of the 2013 Festival of the Cranes event. Mr. Hanauer thanked the City for supporting the event annually with Lodger's Tax funds. Mr. Hanauer stated that weather was a challenge this year and did affect the attendance at the event. Mr. Hanauer stated that there were 60 new events this year bringing the amount of events to 139. 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 he is still working on a video featuring the Bosque del Apache that will appear on YouTube. Mayor Bhasker thanked Mr. Hanauer for reporting on the event.

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b. Substance Abuse Prevention Grant Agreement

Councilor Pargas stated that on November 20, 2013, the Socorro County Juvenile Justice Board applied for substance abuse prevention funding and was awarded \$50,000 for January through June 2014 and \$100,000 for the next three fiscal years. Councilor Pargas stated that issues such as underage drinking, DWI, binge drinking and prescription drug misuse will be addressed. Councilor Pargas stated that the first phase will mainly consist of assessments. Councilor Pargas stated that the City will be the fiscal agent for the funds. Councilor Pargas stated that there will be two positions and that they will not be employees but rather contracted positions. Councilor Pargas stated that only 4 counties in the state received similar grants.

Councilor Chavez-Lopez made a motion to approve the Substance Abuse Prevention Grant Agreement. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

c. Budget Resolutions

1. No. 10 – General Fund – Library Department

Resources are State Grant in Aid, McCune Grant, Miscellaneous Library and Library Bond – Requirements are State Grant in Aid Expense, McCune Grant Expense, Subscriptions & Books and Library Bond Expense – Amount is \$12,524.00 – The increase is needed to allow for grant awards, grant carry over balance and donations.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Budget Resolution No. 10. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

2. No. 11 – Rodeo Arena/Convention Center Fund

Resources are State Appropriation – Requirements are Engineering and Construction – Amount is \$400,000.00 – The increase is needed to allow for the state appropriation.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Budget Resolution No. 11. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Bhasker stated that in regards to the rodeo arena and soccer fields, he heard some talk in the community that the facility would use too much water and compromise the City's future. Mayor Bhasker stated that the facility is intended to benefit the youth in the Socorro community for many years to come. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City's water comes from wells and that the City has an excess of water rights. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City has 2,053 acre feet of water and while the City uses 1,900 acre feet, the City gets a 50% return flow credit for the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City gets a credit because we take the water, clean it and put it back into the river (via the ditch system). Mayor Bhasker stated that the City also has Socorro Springs (which pumps approximately 600 gallons a minute) which, if not used, would flow down the arroyo. Mayor Bhasker pointed out that both Senator Morales and Representative Tripp are supporting the facility which is evidenced by the State appropriation recently received by the City. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City is considering an alternate "safe" route to the facility which would go from Raychester Road to the new facility.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Salome stated that there would be a Police Oversight Commission meeting on February 4th. Mayor Bhasker stated that with the resignation of POC member Santiago Naranjo, he would like to appoint Max Torres as the new member.

Councilor Chavez-Lopez made a motion to approve the Mayor's appointment of Max Torres (from Smith's) to the Police Oversight Commission. Seconded by Councilor Hicks, motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Hicks stated that in April, it would be the 50th anniversary of Lonnie Zamora's UFO sighting. Councilor Hicks asked if the City could do something for the event. Mayor Bhasker stated that it is something the Tourism Department could look into.

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NEW BUSINESS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

MAYOR'S REPORT

a. Appointment to Police Oversight Commission

See Committee Reports above.

b. Webcasting City Council Meetings

Mayor Bhasker stated that the "State of the City-Mayor and Council" was recently sent with the City utility bills as a way of sharing with the community current and ongoing projects in the City. Mayor Bhasker stated that he feels this is a good way to stay transparent about what is going on at the City. Mayor Bhasker stated that he would like to expand communication services to the public which allows them to see things such as Council meetings in a timely manner. Polo Pineda, the City's IT Director, stated that the City's webpage was recently updated and has had over 4,000 hits since updated. Mr. Pineda stated that City Council agendas and approved minutes are now available on the website. Mr. Pineda stated that he is looking into webcasting the City Council meetings using some of the current infrastructure in the Council Chambers. Mr. Pineda stated that as part of the interface, the person taking the minutes will be able to bookmark topics, use a drop down box to show motions, seconds and votes and have the minutes digitized, all during the meeting. Mr. Pineda stated that the public can watch the meetings live or watch them later as they will be archived on the website. Mr. Pineda stated the initial set up will cost approximately \$8,000 (equipment and training) and \$300 per month thereafter with an annual maintenance fee of \$400.

c. Update on the Soccer Fields/Rodeo Facility

Mayor Bhasker stated that he provided most of the update during 6c above. Mayor Bhasker stated that he also wanted to mention that the City worked with Socorro Schools to install the lights at the facility to be used for high school soccer.

Mayor Bhasker stated that the City also worked with Socorro Schools in 1998 to install an Auto Tech building. Mayor Bhasker stated that the City provided \$100,000 to build the building and Eastern New Mexico College paid the City to rent the building. Mayor Bhasker stated the building eventually reverted back to Socorro Schools.

d. Final Audit Approval – FY 12-13

Ms. Gonzales stated that the City has received final audit approval for FY 2012-2013 from the State of New Mexico. Ms. Gonzales stated that the report can now be released.

Councilor Jaramillo made a motion to approve the final audit report for FY 2012-2013. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

e. Reporting on Personnel Changes

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

Peter Gonzales – 2-4-14 – Police – New Hire (Police Officer) – A-35

Fernando Torres – 2-3-14 – Landfill – Transfer from Operator II to Operator I – B-36 to B-32

Damian Castillo – 1-31-14 – Fire – Resignation

Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

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f. Business Registrations

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

Apo Express – R-4 (Approved by P&Z) – 707 Bagley #4 – Monika Apodaca – Graphic Designs
Tillery Chevrolet GMC Inc. – Out of Town – Moriarty, NM (701 Hwy 85) – Corporation – Auto Sales
Josephine Comm – Out of Town – Albuquerque, NM – Oscar Somellera – Phone Cable

Seconded by Councilor Monette, motion passed unanimously.

g. Next City Council Meeting Announcement

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next City Council meeting would be held on Tuesday, February 18, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers (due to the President’s Day Holiday).

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:57 p.m., Councilor Hicks motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation

/s/ _____
Ravi Bhasker, Mayor

ATTEST:

/S/ _____
Pat Salome, City Clerk