

City of Socorro
Regular Scheduled City Council Meeting
March 17, 2014

The City of Socorro held a regular municipal election on March 4, 2014. The newly elected, or re-elected, officials were sworn in prior to the start of the City Council meeting. Mayor Ravi Bhasker and City Councilors Nick Fleming, Donald Monette, Gordy Hicks and Ernest Pargas were sworn in by Municipal Judge Frances Cases.

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 Donald Monette, Councilor Peter D. Romero, Councilor Toby Jaramillo, Councilor Gordy Hicks, Councilor Ernest Pargas, Councilor Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez, Councilor Nick Fleming and Councilor Michael Olguin Jr.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bhasker led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 17, 2014 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

Councilor Romero made a motion to move Item 5a (Retirement – Chris Padilla) up on the agenda to fall immediately after approval of the agenda. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

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

PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS

a. Retirement – Chris Padilla

Mayor Bhasker presented a plaque to Chris Padilla, who retired from the Socorro Fire Department as a Captain on February 28, 2014 with 20 years of service. Joe Gonzales, Fire Chief, presented Mr. Padilla with several items from the Fire Department including a signed picture, plaque and his service helmet. Mr. Padilla thanked the Mayor, City Council and Fire Department for the recognition. There were several employees from the Socorro Fire Department at the meeting.

RE-ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING – 2014 MAYOR/CITY COUNCIL

a. Open Meetings Resolution

Mayor Bhasker read Resolution No. 14-03-17a which, if approved, determines what constitutes reasonable public notice of City Council meetings. Mayor Bhasker stated that the Open Meetings Resolution is re-adopted at the beginning of each year and right after each election. Mayor Bhasker stated that transparency is important and that the agenda will be posted on the City's website by the end of the day on the Thursday prior to the City Council meeting. Councilor Monette stated that he thinks the law states the agenda must be on the City's website 72 hours prior to the meeting. Mr. Salome stated that if needed, the resolution could be amended to include the language stated in State Statute.

Councilor Monette made a motion to approve Resolution No. 14-03-17a with the understanding that the resolution may be amended to include language stated in State Statute with regard to the agenda being posted on the City's website. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

b. Governing Body Rules of Procedure Resolution

Mayor Bhasker read Resolution No. 14-03-17b which, if approved, reaffirms the Governing Body Rules of Procedure adopted May 6, 2013 and recognizes those rules as the method by which the Socorro City Council meetings are conducted. Mayor Bhasker stated that the Governing Body Rules of Procedure are re-adopted at the beginning of each year and right after each election. Mr. Salome stated that if State Statute requires the posting of the agenda on the City's website 72 hours prior to the meeting, the language could also be included in the Governing Body Rules of Procedure.

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Mayor Bhasker stated that he would like to include language in the Governing Body Rules of Procedure regarding out of state travel. Mayor Bhasker stated that he feels elected officials should state, prior to attending an event, that they are going to attend an event and then provide a report to the City Council after the event describing the benefit of attending the event. Councilor Monette stated that there may be a State Statute regarding out of state travel.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Resolution No. 14-03-17b. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

c. Appointment of Officials by State Statute – City Clerk, City Treasurer and Chief of Police

Mayor Bhasker stated that he would like to re-appoint Pat Salome as the City Clerk. Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Mayor Bhasker's appointment of Pat Salome as City Clerk. Seconded by councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Bhasker stated that he would like to re-appoint Mable Gonzales as the City Treasurer. Councilor Romero made a motion to approve Mayor Bhasker's appointment of Mable Gonzales as the City Treasurer. Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Bhasker stated that he would like to re-appoint George Van Winkle as the Police Chief. Councilor Monette made a motion to approve Mayor Bhasker's appointment of George Van Winkle as the Police Chief. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Bhasker stated that he feels that Mr. Salome, Ms. Gonzales and Chief Van Winkle have been performing greatly in their positions.

Chief Van Winkle thanked the Mayor and City Council for his appointment and stated that he would be retiring in June. Mayor Bhasker stated that he would like the City Council to put together a list of items that they would like to see the next Chief of Police address.

Mr. Salome thanked the Mayor and City Council and stated that after 26 years, the appointment is not taken lightly. Mayor Bhasker stated that the three appointees have brought stability to City government.

d. Committee Assignments

Mayor Bhasker read a list of active committee which includes:

Ad Hoc Committees

Airport Committee: Gordy Hicks, Jerry Griego, Laura Haines, Dennis Hunter

Municipal League: Gordy Hicks

WIA-CEO Board: Ravi Bhasker

South Central Council of Governments: Gordy Hicks

Budget Committee: Nick Fleming (Chair), Toby Jaramillo, Ernest Pargas

Utility Committee: Toby Jaramillo (Chair), Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez, Peter Romero

Senior Center: Toby Jaramillo

Economic Development/Job Creation/Industrial Park Committee: Michael Olguin, Donald Monette

Safety Committee: Toby Jaramillo, Stephanie Saavedra, George Van Winkle, Roy Baca, Mike Czosnek

WIA Appointments: Anton Salome, Alonzo Gonzales, Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez, Gordy Hicks

Mayor's Drug Task Force: Ernest Pargas (Chair), Nadine Ulibarri-Kellar (Secretary), Bruce Burwell, Susan Comiskey, Yvonne Melone, Police Department Personnel, Pauline Jaramillo

Juvenile Justice Board: Ernest Pargas (Co-Chair), Don Tripp (Co-Chair), Elizabeth Beers, Hilario Bernal, Susan Comiskey, Lee Deschamps, David McDaniel, Michelle Herron, John Gordon, Matthew Reynolds, Pat Salome, Nadine Ulibarri-Kellar, Dennis Walsh, Clint Wellborn, Chuck Zimmerly, Kirsten Kellar (Coordinator)

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Committees Established by Ordinance

Lodger's Tax Committee: Eileen Comstock, Joe Ruiz, Emmy Stanzione, Brian Hurtgen

Planning and Zoning Commission: Alonzo Gonzales (Chairman), Christa Hockensmith (Vice-Chairman), Marcos Gonzales Jr., Jean Fraissinet, Sefie Anaya, Jeanene Hall, Cathy Martin

Library Board: Patrick Sylvester (President), William Stone (Vice-President), Gilbert Apps (Treasurer), Barbara DuBois (Secretary), Barbara Oravec, Kay Krehbiel, Zeke Armijo, Jamie Fassett, Ruth White

Personnel Board: Bobbi Gonzales (Employee Representative), Mike Czosnek (Superintendent Representative), Rinaldo Chavez, Mark Nolan, Judith Gorman

Police Oversight Commission: Chuck Zimmerly (Chairman), Gilbert Apps (Vice-Chairman), Betty Salazar, Max Torres, Joe Daniel Saavedra

Mayor Bhasker stated that he would like to re-appoint Marcos Gonzales (P&Z), Jean Fraissinet (P&Z), Cathy Martin (P&Z), Bobbi Gonzales (Personnel), Mike Czosnek (Personnel), Rinaldo Chavez (Personnel), Mark Nolan (Personnel), Chuck Zimmerly (POC) and Max Torres (POC) to their respective committees (not all committee members required re-appointment). Mayor Bhasker stated that he would like to appoint Judith Gorman to the Personnel Board. Councilor Monette made a motion to approve the Mayor's appointments /re-appointments. Seconded by Councilor Fleming, motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Bhasker stated that during the election, he felt the public may have expressed a desire to have more attention focused on economic development and job opportunities. Mayor Bhasker stated for that reason, he created the Economic Development/Job Creation Committee.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

a. March 3, 2014

Mr. Salome stated that the minutes from the March 3, 2014 City Council meeting need to be reviewed one more time prior to submitting them for approval. Mr. Salome stated that he would submit the minutes for approval at the April 7, 2014 City Council meeting.

PUBLIC FORUM

None.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

a. Transportation Department – Feasibility Study for Fixed Route

Mayor Bhasker stated that City staff met with the New Mexico Department of Transportation regarding a fixed route within the City. Mayor Bhasker stated that the NMDOT recommended the completion of a feasibility study. Mayor Bhasker stated that the NMDOT awarded the City \$16,000 (with a local match of \$4,000) to complete the feasibility study. Mayor Bhasker stated that the study will evaluate where the stops would be, which neighborhoods would have bus stops, etc.

Councilor Chavez-Lopez made a motion to approve the feasibility study for a fixed transportation route in the City. Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

b. Budget Resolution No. 12 – Substance Abuse Prevention Grant Fund

Resources are Behavioral Health Service Grant – Requirements are Per Diem 7 Mileage, Supplies, Other Administrative Expense, Advertising, Contractual Services and Professional Planning – Amount is \$50,000.00 – The increase is needed to allow for the new grant award.

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve Budget Resolution No. 12. Seconded by Councilor Jaramillo, motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Gonzales stated that she would like the Budget Committee to start meeting weekly to begin working on the budget.

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DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR REPORTS

Mable Gonzales, City Treasurer, stated that she has started the budget process and described the methods she uses when creating a new budget.

Paula Mertz, Library Director, stated that the Governor Martinez will visit the library for the Tax Help New Mexico Program on March 19th at noon. Ms. Mertz stated that the program is funded and certified by the IRS and is available through April 9th. Ms. Mertz stated that the program assists with simple federal and state tax returns. Ms. Mertz stated that library staff is already working on the summer reading program which serves Socorro, La Joya, Magdalena and Alamo. Ms. Mertz stated the theme for the summer reading program will be "Science". Ms. Mertz stated that the library is trying to join the Brindle Foundation out of Santa Fe which supports early childhood programs. Ms. Mertz stated that the library recently had a Makerspace Program which showcased science experiments and was attended by over 50 people. Ms. Mertz stated that the library is putting together a teen advisory group to be involved in library activities.

George Van Winkle, Police Chief, provided a handout to the Mayor and Council of Police Department stats from February 2014 (109 arrests, 191 citations, 2 DWI arrests, 243 police reports filed, 19 traffic accidents, 7,630 calls received by dispatch, etc.). Chief Van Winkle and the City Council discussed parking issues, mainly by a construction project at NM Tech.

Joe Gonzales, Fire Chief, stated that in addition to Mr. Padilla retiring, Everett Binger has expressed a desire to retire late this year. Chief Gonzales stated that two FF/EMT Recruit positions have been advertised and testing and interviews will begin soon. Chief Gonzales stated that training and testing for current employees is ongoing. Chief Gonzales stated that one of the ambulances is permanently out of order and that the City should hear about a grant award for a new ambulance in April. Chief Gonzales stated that Fire Department crews will begin flushing hydrants with the Water Department in late March.

Lloyd Martinez, Parks/Production/Water/Special Projects Superintendent, stated that City crews are working on several projects at the rodeo grounds/soccer facility including constructing the restrooms, moving in the modular building, installing sewer lines at the RV park and working on landscaping at the soccer fields. Mr. Martinez stated that City crews installed fence at the Industrial Park to protect against illegal dumping. Mr. Martinez stated that upgrades to the wastewater treatment plant are ongoing. Mr. Martinez stated that City crews will upgrade the Hefner Street lift station. Mr. Martinez stated that City crews are getting the parks ready for AYSO soccer and getting the swimming pool ready for summer swim.

Michael Lucero, Sanitation/Landfill/Recycling Director, stated that Landfill crews are placing rip rap on the slope, grinding tree limbs, hauling rock from the rodeo grounds and moving the tire area from the bottom of the hill to the top. Mr. Lucero stated that Elephant Butte continues to bring their sanitation and sludge to the Landfill. Mr. Lucero stated that daily operations are normal in the Sanitation and Recycling departments.

Jay Santillanes, Utilities Division Director, stated that the Street Department finished clearing the Industrial Park area of debris and continues to clean debris from the flood control. Mr. Santillanes stated that the Street Department will be building up Tornillo Street in order to maintain the drainage and that it will be chip sealed in the future. Mr. Santillanes stated that the Gas Department is replacing natural gas lines in the Halstead Street/Tyler Street area. Mr. Santillanes stated that the preliminary drawings for the rodeo cover are being reviewed and that construction on the cover will start in May.

Mike Czosnek, Building Inspector, stated that he continues to work on the levy certification. Mr. Czosnek stated that building has slowed down.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilor Fleming stated that street lighting in the NM Tech area had been turned off since the start of their new construction but that a new street light was placed and has helped tremendously.

Councilor Jaramillo asked about City crews cutting tree limbs on Otero Street. Mr. Santillanes stated that City crews do cut tree limbs occasionally to keep the sidewalks and rights-of-way clear.

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OLD BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

MAYOR'S REPORT

a. Per Diem Discussion

See Item 4b above.

b. Personnel Changes

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

Ray Aragon – 3-5-14 – Street – Resignation

Josh Gonzales – 3-1-14 – Fire – Promotion to Lieutenant – I-36 to I-40

Everett Binger – 3-1-14 – Fire – Promotion to Captain – O-40 to O-44

Temporary New Hires: Ryan Romero

Temporary Renewals: Emena Gonzales, Rick Griego, Daniel Chavez, Paul Marquez, Carlos Alvarado, Ramiro Garza, Albert Hernandez, George Romero, Mike Jojola, Elias Jacquez, Tony Silva, Regina Valencia, Sergio Cuevas, Angelica Vega, Michael Padilla, Jeremy Chavez, Brittany McDaniel, Peter Maldonado
Student Workers: Matthew Jojola, Tamera Chavez, Maria Alderete, Giovanna Rosas, Angelica Lopez, Deanna Blair, Samantha Maldonado, Geir Hareland

Referees (8), Zumba (2)

Seconded by Councilor Romero, motion passed unanimously.

c. Business Registrations

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

Little Caesars – C-2 – 1001 California Street – Corporation – Pizza Take-Out

Twisted Chile Brewing Co. – C-2 – 115 Abeyta – Kacey & Stephanie McFadden – Food Services/Brewery
Regina E. Dello Russo, Consultant – Out of Town – Escondida, NM – Regina E. Dello Russo – Biological Sciences Consulting

Seconded by Councilor Chavez-Lopez, motion passed unanimously.

d. Voucher Run

Councilor Hicks made a motion to approve vouchers 129300 to 129621 in the amount of \$748,499.15, plus Payroll Transfers (\$298,095.23), for a total of \$1,046,594.38. Seconded by Councilor Monette, motion passed unanimously.

e. Announcement – Next City Council Meeting Date and Time – April 5, 2014 @ 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Bhasker stated that the next City Council meeting would be held on April 7, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:29 p.m., Councilor Hicks motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Monette, motion passed unanimously.

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THE CITY OF SOCORRO – a municipal corporation

/s/ _____
Ravi Bhasker, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/ _____
Pat Salome, City Clerk