



City of Rio Communities Council Workshop
City Council Chambers - 360 Rio Communities Blvd
Rio Communities, NM 87002
Monday, September 13, 2021 3:00 PM
Minutes

Please silence all electronic devices.

Call to Order

- Mayor Pro tem Joshua Ramsell called to order the workshop at 3:05 pm.

Present

- Mayor Pro-Tem Joshua Ramsell, Councilor Peggy Gutjahr and Councilor Jim Winters.
- City Manager Dr. Martin Moore, Municipal Clerk Lisa Adair, and Finance Office Stephanie Finch.

Public Comment

- No public comments.

Accounts payable report

- Finance Officer Finch gave a report of all items over \$500.00: NM Self Insurer's Fund for Public Official Errors & Omission protection in the amount of \$1,898.14; Robles, Rael & Anaya for FY 2020 attorney fee in the amount of \$1,833.83; Mid-regional Council of Governments for MRCOG in the amount of \$2,585.00; Ralph T. Barnes for skilled labor not to exceed \$2,500.00 for help with City Hall renovations; NM Self Insurer's Fund for general liability in the amount of \$2,434.50; NM Self Insurer's Fund for property insurance in the amount of \$2,488.79; Wells Fargo Leasing for the Dell Server lease in the amount of \$2,497.73; SJT Group for FY 2020-2021 Financial Audit in the amount of \$15,102.50; NM Self Insurer's Fund for worker's compensation in the amount of \$525.00; NM Self Insurer's Fund for worker's compensation in the amount of \$525.00; Valencia Count Fiscal Office for Animal Control costs in the amount of \$1,865.00; Ralph T. Barnes for a blanket PO was actually a quote and once we cut the check we will void it, in the amount of \$2,500.00; PNM for streetlights in the amount of \$798.66; PNM for fire department in the amount of \$1,359.82; NM Self Insurer's Fund for automobile insurance in the amount of \$8,902.53; NM Self Insurer's Fund for Volunteer Firefighter insurance in the amount of 3,300.00; NM Self Insurer's Fund for property insurance for the fire department in the amount of \$8,295.21; WEX Bank for fuel for fire department in the amount of \$787.32; Universal Constructors, Inc. in the amount of \$3,697.90 for subgrade preparation; Universal Constructors, Inc. for subgrade preparation in the amount of \$4,743.60.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked if the rate of the workers comp has changed since last year.
- Finance Officer Finch said that it is the same but is being billed differently and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked if the door at the fire station has been fixed, because the electric bill is still high.
- Manager Dr. Moore said the door has been fixed but he plans on going through the building and finding the reason why the bill is so high. He explained the lights or the temperature the building is kept might be the culprit. The discussion continued.

Resolution 2021 - XX Travel Policy

- Finance Officer Finch said July 1, 2021 the travel rates for the State went up, so this reflects that as well as adding the library board, and everything else is the same.

Resignation of Councilor William "Bill" Brown

- Mayor Pro tem Ramsell read the resignation of Councilor Bill Brown into the minutes.
- Councilor Gutjahr said this is going to be really hard, he has been so good at research, pushing hard for things he feels is right, and he will sure be missed.

Appointment of City Councilor

- Mayor Pro tem Ramsell stated he sent out an email to everyone regarding the new councilor to continue Councilor Brown's term.
- Councilor Winters said the candidate has served before, he is very level-headed and made good decisions and doesn't mind taking the tough vote.
- Councilor Gutjahr explained he served with the Belen Schools for ten years, he never decided anything without first researching it, and I always appreciated his level-headedness.
- Mayor Pro tem Ramsell explained that it is necessary to have a temporary Councilor to finish out Councilor Brown's term, and we will fill the position with Robert Chavez who has served on this Council before. He then said he will be here tonight, and Council will ask him some questions and swear him in.

Enhancing Law Enforcement

- Manager Dr. Moore explained said after a rash of burglaries and other issues that have been popping up, the Sheriff's Department is going to step up patrols in the City. He then said the City is looking into the feasibility to obtain more law enforcement and explained the Sheriff's Department is already understaffed but has agreed to over time to help us with the problem times and problem areas. He continued to explain the language for the agreement to work with the County Sheriff and he would like to recommend adding \$50,000 as overtime and the money would have to come out of available cash.
- Councilor Gutjahr said having that language in there should free up \$30,000 for the contract for us and give us that extra money to use for the targeted overtime.
- Manager Dr. Moore said yes, the contract should be used for very specific things and there is language that has been drafted by our attorney.
- Mayor Pro tem Ramsell said in the past we were told we could not use the LEPF funds before and was told that we could use it as long as it is in the contract and began a discussion.
- Councilor Gutjahr said the contract will say giving them extra money beyond the contract to provide the targeted help we are asking for and continued the discussion.
- Mayor Pro tem Ramsell asked if there was a way to track the overtime.
- Manager Dr. Moore said that will be determined by a triggering mechanism and continued the discussion.
- Mayor Pro tem Ramsell said when it heats up crime increases when it cools down it slightly decreases, but crime tends to increase during the holidays season.
- Councilor Winters asked what the timeline for the agreement is.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained the original document needs to be approved by the County Commission and the Sheriff's office, so it will take a little time.
- Councilor Gutjahr said something near and dear to her heart is the cleanup of the City because research shows a correlation between an unkept community and a higher crime rate. She then said if we can get information out to the community every month to let the public know we are cleaning up trash, or unregistered vehicles or weeds, showing that when the City is clean the crime goes down.

- Mayor Pro tem Ramsell asked regarding the unwanted trash to clean up around the city boundary, would we be able to have a professional service come out and get all of it cleaned up.
- Manager Dr. Moore recommended approving at a later meeting, the hiring of 4 temporary employees for cleaning up, and using the people that are still sworn in as compliance officers, start notifying the public what we will be cleaning up in the month of October, so they can start cleaning up too. The discussion continued.
- Manager Dr. Moore said he with the Code Enforcer who has gotten together with the Sheriff department to get those areas cleaned up. He then explained our trouble properties, we have received some information on the burned houses and are talking to the attorney to deem them as dangerous structures.

Professional Service of Economic Development

- Manager Dr. Moore said he believes it is time to consider engaging with a professional economic development service with cost and scope of work and said the price range would be doable, part of the scope of work product would be actual results of GRT increase or grants to help us bolster our economic development.
- Councilor Winters asked if he was talking about a contract not a city employee.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked if this person would report to the City Manager.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained it would be a comprehensive recommendation for the new direction of Economic Development.

Use of Rescue Plan Funds

- Manager Dr. Moore explained that they have received an open invitation from the City of Albuquerque on how they are using their fund, explaining they are taking a two- or three-pronged approach, using the correct language to explain how much revenue they could have brought in without covid and have also looked at infrastructure projects they were not able to do. He then said one possibility for us would be creating incentives for fiber optic internet, and utility assistance for those who truly cannot afford trash service. The discussion continued including upgrading sound and visual equipment and Plateau service.
- Councilor Gutjahr said they had helped upgrade parks and trails because that made it easier for people to get outside and thought maybe it would be possible to increase Code Enforcement full time with the money with the idea of being able to afford that on our own by the time the grant is up. She then said that there will be a health fair in April to help the community.
- Manager Dr. Moore suggested maybe an agreement for water (Private/public partnership) that is holding us back from repaving and bringing in development and continued the discussion

Manager Report

- Manager Dr. Moore said that the lights on Hwy 304 are back on and explained a power surge caused the problem, and we have an electrician looking at the other lights now.

Council General Discussion & Future Agenda Items

- Councilor Winters said the four-wheeler complaints have dropped and it seems like there are two groups of riders, adults, and kids, and he is not sure why the complaints have lowered but maybe officers are stopping them.
Councilor Gutjahr said we were going to have a business forum and asked when it was supposed to be.

- Manager Dr. Moore said because of the break-ins we are looking at pushing it back a couple of weeks, but we intend to speak to them about security as well as promoting their businesses. He then explained by next week you should be sending out an invitation.
- Councilor Winters said we might want to get a list of the email addresses from the licenses to eblast them and began a discussion.

Councilor

Mayor Pro-Tem Joshua Ramsell asked if we received the finalized copy of the drainage study. He then said one of the things that deter criminals is turning on outdoor lights at night.

Adjourn

- The City Council workshop was adjourned at 4:09 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth (Lisa) Adair, Municipal Clerk
(Taken and Transcribed by Amy L. Lopez, Deputy Clerk)

Date: _____

Approved:

Mark Gwinn,
Mayor

Joshua Ramsell,
Mayor Pro-tem/Councilor

Robert Chavez,
Councilor

Margaret (Peggy) Gutjahr,
Councilor

Jim Winters,
Councilor