



**City of Rio Communities Council Special Business Meeting**  
**City Council Chambers - 360 Rio Communities Blvd**  
**Rio Communities, NM 87002**  
**Wednesday, March 09, 2022 10:00 AM**  
**Minutes**

*Please silence all electronic devices.*

**Call to Order**

- Mayor Joshua Ramsell called to order the special business meeting agenda 10:00 am.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

- Councilor Gutjahr led the Pledged of Allegiance.

**Roll Call**

- PRESENT: Mayor Joshua Ramsell, Mayor Pro tem Peggy Gutjahr, (virtual) Councilor Lawrence Gordon, Councilor Jim Winters.  
ABSENT: Councilor Arthur Apodaca.  
Present: City Manager Dr. Martin Moore, Municipal Clerk Lisa Adair and Economic Development Consultant Ralph Mims.

**Approval of Agenda**

- Motion made by Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr to approve the agenda for the special business meeting. Seconded by Councilor Winters. Voting Yea: Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr, Councilor Gordon, Councilor Winters. with a 3-0 vote the agenda for the special business meeting was approved as presented.

**Infrastructure discussion with Congressional staff**

- Presentation with Lia Stefanovich, who is the grants coordinator for Representative Stansbury's office and began a presentation explaining the infrastructure bill that came from The White House which was passed last year for 1.2 trillion dollars. The bill aims at physical infrastructure builds and repairs, such as pipes, broadband access for rural communities, road care, public transit, electric vehicle charges, power infrastructure, water infrastructure, and investment in environmental remediation, but mainly focuses on roads and bridges.
- Manager Dr. Moore asked is the money for alternative transportation going to go towards the traditional grant sources as in the TAP program.
- Ms. Stefanovich said yes and said there are a few different grants that offer the program but once she emails the presentation, they can look into the other grants to see what else they offer and continued with the presentation.
- Mr. Mims asked when would the State roll out the grants.
- Ms. Stefanovich said her understanding is there has been a lot of preoccupation with distribution with funding but are expecting within the next few months.
- Mayor Ramsell said this information is available at [thewhitehouse.gov](https://www.whitehouse.gov).
- Ms. Stefanovich explained yes, and this is all public information, and will be sending this to the Municipal Clerk as well.
- Mayor Ramsell said the big one will be infrastructure on roads and in the city, as the roads we have around the city are about 30 years old, as some are about 50 to 60 years old.
- Manager Dr. Moore said for the future, fiber is a big one mainly for our businesses, water and sewer which is a private company, but private/public partnership are a possibility, and

expanding compacity for water and sewer is going to be critical for us in future growth due to us hitting a cap in about 2 to 3 years.

- Ms. Stefanovich said there are a few wastewater grants, she believes counties are the best applicants but will look up what's best for small communities as well.
- Ms. Stefanovich asked if Council had asked the county for help with road and water needs.
- Manager Dr. Moore stated not yet and hasn't really thought of that direction to go towards.
- Ms. Stefanovich said she will look over the water grants that have been introduced and see which one will fit our needs the most.
- Manager Dr. Moore asked if there will be any grants that have a direct federal application.
- Ms. Stefanovich said yes, they are competitive grant programs but mainly will go to the state but will accept applications and will not discriminate.
- Manager Dr. Moore asked is there anything for stormwater.
- Ms. Stefanovich said she hasn't seen anything yet but will be following up on such when she finds out more.
- Mr. Mims asked for the funding amount, if I'm correct 2 billion, is that for the State of New Mexico.
- Ms. Stefanovich said no, and she believes it was 1.2 trillion but will see how much is exactly coming to New Mexico and then explained why she came on board due to none of the congressional offices have a grants coordinator and then explained there is a grant coordinator for the DOT and entire delegation including Representative Parnell as well and she can help out more by looking up curtain grants to apply for and send a letter with the application for approval.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained what the 1.2 trillion amount will be going towards and continued with the discussion.
- Ms. Stefanovich asked if we had ever applied for a federal grant in the past.
- Manager Dr. Moore said we have not, but we are very new as a municipality.
- Mr. Mims explained his only experience with federal grants has been when he worked for Los Lunas, this led to a discussion.
- Ms. Stefanovich said unfortunately she can not find out the status of applications but can find out why it didn't get approved. She then went on to say she can advocate for the State.
- Mr. Mims asked when does she see the grants being released.
- Ms. Stefanovich said there are a lot of federal grants, and some are already open, but she will definitely see about a waste water grant.
- Councilor Winters said we have had several programs that are listed in the transportation guidelines that are partly combined with DOT then asked could you combine with DOT for a safety related grant.
- Ms. Stefanovich said we would definitely have that conversation with the State but from my understanding they do cost sharing. She also stated she has seen where they split the cost between state, federal and internal to achieve road projects but advised Council to have a conversation with the DOT on such plans.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked how would we know if the grants are being rolled out.
- Ms. Stefanovich said she will send a list of the agents and said she would be happy to share with us anything relevant. She then restated what our needs are for the grants and listed them off and asked us to elaborate about our stormwater needs.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained about the stormwater plan that was completed last year but would like to see a grant for the future.

- Councilor Winters said we have well over 100 wells in town and we would like to add additional waterlines to different areas.
- Mr. Mims asked Manager Dr. Moore if we needed additional lighting for residents and main roads.
- Manager Dr. Moore said yes, Mr. Mims said he is correct lighting is another concern.
- Ms. Stefanovich asked if we have cost estimates for the stormwater.
- Manager Dr. Moore said yes, we do.
- Councilor Winters said some of the stormwater areas are part DOT, so we would have cooperative with them as well.
- Ms. Stefanovich asked if we were in Representative Herrell' district.
- Councilor Gutjahr said currently yes but with changes of the map no.
- Ms. Stefanovich said it is too late to send a grant for stormwater but in the next cycle would be a great way to follow up.
- Councilor Gutjahr reminded that we are our own City, Belen is next to us, but we are our own even if we share a zip code.

**Executive Session - For the purpose of the discussion recruitment of a Fire Chief pursuant to NMSA 10-15-1(H)(2) limited personnel matters.**

- **Motion and roll call vote to go into close session**
  - Motion made by Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr with a roll call vote to go into executive session for the purpose of the discussion recruitment of a Fire Chief pursuant to NMSA 10-15-1(H)(2) limited personnel matters. Seconded by Councilor Winters. Voting Yea: Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr, Councilor Gordon, Councilor Winters. With a 3-0 vote Council went into executive session at 10:38 am.
- **Motion and roll call vote to go back into the special business meeting session**
  - Motion made by Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr with a roll call vote to go back into the special business meeting session. Seconded by Councilor Winters. Voting Yea: Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr, Councilor Gordon, Councilor Winters. With a 3-0 vote Council went back into the special business session at 11:11 am
- **Welcome everyone back and statement by the Mayor**
  - Mayor Ramsell stated: The Governing Body of the City of Rio Communities, New Mexico, hereby states that on March 9, 2022 a Closed Executive Session was held and the matters discussed were for the purpose of discussion of the recruitment of a Fire Chief pursuant to NMSA 10-15-1(H)(2) - Limited Personnel Matters.

**Action Items - Consideration & Decision – Mayor Ramsell recommendation regarding the recruitment of a Fire Chief**

- Mayor Ramsell recommends was to terminate the fire chief recruitment process.
- Motion made by Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr to terminate the fire chief recruitment process. Seconded by Councilor Winters. Voting Yea: Mayor Pro tem Gutjahr, Councilor Gordon, Councilor Winters. With a 3-0 vote the recruitment of the Fire Chief was terminated.

**Adjourn**

\* Councilor Gutjahr moved to adjourn. The motion was second by Councilor Winters. With a 3-0 vote the City Council special business meeting was adjourned at 11:13 am.

Respectfully submitted,

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Elizabeth (Lisa) Adair, Municipal Clerk  
(Transcribed by Cheyenne Sullivan, Assistant Clerk)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved:

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Joshua Ramsell,  
Mayor

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Margaret "Peggy" Gutjahr,  
Mayor Pro-tem/Councilor

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Arthur "Art" Apodaca,  
Councilor

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Lawrence R. Gordon,  
Councilor

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Jim Winters,  
Councilor