



City of Rio Communities Council Workshop
City Council Chambers - 360 Rio Communities Blvd
Rio Communities, NM 87002
Monday, August 22, 2022 3:00 PM
Minutes

Please silence all electronic devices.

Call to Order

- Mayor Ramsell called the regular Workshop to order at 3:01 pm.

Attendees

- PRESENT: Mayor Joshua Ramsell, Mayor Pro-tem Margaret R. Gutjahr, Councilor Arthur Apodaca, Councilor Lawrence Gordon, Councilor Jimmie Winters.
 - Manager Dr. Martin Moore, Assistant to the City Manager Amy Lopez, Finance Clerk Renee Adams, Finance Procurement Officer Angela Valadez, Fire Chief/Code Enforcer Andrew Tabet., Economic Consultant Ralph Mims.

Accounts payable report

- Finance Clerk Adams went over the accounts payable over \$500.00; Wells Fargo in the amount of \$2,497.73; Sharp in the amount of 518.37; Robles, Rael & Anaya in the amount of \$3,827.82; HDR in the amount of \$774.99; Ralph T. Barnes in the amount of \$960; Home Depot in the amount of \$529.71; Bixby Electric in the amount of \$1,860; 4 accounts for UniqueFleet LLC in the amount of \$8,676.21; Hub Furniture in the amount of \$2,038.74; WAC Upfitters in the amount of \$11,603.83; TLC Uniforms in the amount of \$1,244.69; 5 accounts for Sharp in the amount of \$52,486.42.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked if the Sharp Electronics charges were for installing or servicing.
- Finance Clerk Adams said this was everything continuing from the last fiscal year. She continued to say they had seen part of the payment/installment back in June and now have seen the rest of the payment/installment now, due to the microchips updating.
- Manager Dr. Moore said they will be seeing something similar for the police department.

Resolution 2022-XX NMFA Loan Agreement (Police Vehicles)

- Manager Dr. Moore started off by saying approximately \$186k was priced out turnkey for three police vehicles if they went through an agency as the New Mexico State Finance Authority which are state contract prices and takes everything from the vehicle to the stripping to the light etc. He continued saying he would like to let council know there was a visit with the governor's public safety representative, Jeremy, and he indicated there is a possibility for approaching the state police for gently used vehicles that would have all but 2 or 3 components in them, that potentially be donated to the city.
- Manager Dr. Moore continued to say if this falls through with the state then he would like to move forward with the process. He stated they are tracking just about everything to do with preparing the police department so that they can have it up and running. He continued by saying this would be similar to how we gotten the tanker truck for \$300k and just like before the state would intercept the money before we receive it.
- Manager Dr. Moore said it is a very similar loan agreement like before and our Finance Director Stephanie, took the time to look this over with me and continued to breakdown the process on how the loan would be paid as well as reimbursements processed and stated a discussion.

- Councilor Apodaca asked how many vehicles we are looking at purchasing as well as is it possible to get used vehicles from the State Police Department if they are still in good shape and why are they relinquishing them.
- Manager Dr. Moore said three and explained the reason they are relinquishing the vehicles as well as having a good mechanic to look over these specific vehicles and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Apodaca said if it's saving the city money that would be great but just making sure these vehicles won't be a problem for us down the road.
- Manager Dr. Moore said if you get them in good shape then you start what they call a vehicle rotation program which would be able to switch them out every year or so.
- Councilor Gordon said we must get the new vehicles but what type of service contract are they going to have with a mechanic so they can have a quick turnaround time.
- Fire Chief Tabet said they use UniqueFleet for their vehicles and the mechanic is certified with a state contract as well as works on all vehicles as well as MHQ they are the same and have 24-hour coverage. He continued to explain a scenario that occurred to him after fighting the big hole fire and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Gordon asked the turnaround time with MHQ.
- Fire Chief Tabet said MHQ usually 2 to 3 days and UniqueFleet was called first thing in the morning and started working that afternoon at the bay.
- Councilor Gordon said the reason he asked was for instance if an officer is using and the car bogs out, we don't want the officer just stuck at the office. He continued to ask if we can get gently used vehicles from the State Police, can we get 4 vehicles just in case one is out of commission and would it be cheaper.
- Manager Dr. Moore said potentially yes, they didn't put a limit on the number that we are requesting but need to justify how many.
- Councilor Apodaca asked how long the loan period would be for the police vehicles.
- Manager Dr. Moore said it would be the same time as the fire trucks and he recommends this do to being able to buy other things the police need instead of a loan that is shorter but pay is more expensive. He continued to say the law enforcement monies that are not spent on the vehicles will be spent on guns, ammo, as well as trainings and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Apodaca said maybe we can finance them for a shorter period and won't cost as much as the fire trucks.
- Manager Dr. Moore said maybe instead of buying all 4 used see about getting 1 vehicle new but the question is 'do you want to have all used vehicles upfront or do you want to make sure you have a vehicle under warranty that you won't have to worry about.'
- Councilor Gutjahr said if we do get the vehicles used then it gives us more time to worry about other finances and asked if we are passing the resolution anyway or just keeping it for a later date.
- Manager Dr. Moore said his personal recommendation is to review it all and get more information from the finance authority and bring it back to the next meeting mainly with what Mr. Jeremy has offered. He continued by saying he has too many unanswered questions from the state level but will be having conversations with others from the state police department from now until the next council meeting.
- Manager Dr. Moore said he is unsure how long the vehicles will be available, and if council would like to have a special meeting, he would recommend it.

- Mayor Ramsell said to think about having multiple vehicles in case one is in the shop or something else happens. He continued by saying with getting vehicles from the state police at a low rate would benefit the city due to having to get graphics, reprogram radios and other equipment that is needed as well as looking at back up vehicles to supplement your new vehicles in case something was to happen. He finished by saying with what Dr. Moore has said about the vehicles having a lot of highway miles we need to consider the wear and tear of them.
- Manager Dr. Moore said he recommends getting one new vehicle and then getting a set of used ones which would give you time to stagger fleet but still have something reliable and continued the discussion.
- Mayor Ramsell said with the vehicles being on short supply, if we move forward and purchase one then that would give us time to stagger out the other two and doesn't anticipate having those by other officers in office yet.
- Manager Dr. Moore said we might recommend going ahead and getting the three from the state anyway since we would have an evidence technician brought on board and they could help bring people into custody or even doing transport's if the other officers are busy.
- Councilor Gordon asked if the Finance Department could make the loan 7 years because after 5 years you would need another vehicle.
- Manager Dr. Moore said he doesn't have that answer but will talk to them.
- Mayor Ramsell said the other thing to think about is once the department is established and then we would be able to have access to different loans and grants that could be used to purchase vehicles if that is needed in the future as well as having a meeting to discuss things of that nature.
- Manager Dr. Moore said the ICIP is already done, and the focus is on a new police station, you can always at some point go for an ICIP for replacement vehicles.
- Fire Chief Tabet said for the fire department they rely on quantity for the trucks so if an engine goes out then they have 2 more or they have 3 brush trucks or 2 command trucks, as for the police department they set up their livelihood in the car and use it day in and day out for everything. He continued to say it is key to have more than one or two cars extra, so if an officer's car goes out, he's not stuck at a desk for two weeks while the car is in the shop.
- Manager Dr. Moore said the police departments he has managed they have always had a couple of vehicles.
- Councilor Gutjahr said since we are a small municipality, there isn't going to be a lot of wear and tear on the vehicles and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Gordon said the officer is likely to get 20 miles a day as well as there are a lot of off-roading that is going to affect the car.
- Councilor Apodaca said that depends on the type of vehicle we purchase, and then asked will the state give us any type of warranty and continued the discussion.
- Manager Dr. Moore said that is a factor to consider as well as there are some that will tell us no unless we are in a financial position unable to get 3 new vehicles. He continued by saying even if we go that route to save money, we need to make sure we have a few extra will help get our chief off the ground once he comes in.
- Councilor Apodaca said that wouldn't be a bad idea to do that for the extra vehicles but starting off with 3 new vehicles and a few used as back up.
- Manger Dr. Moore said he will get the information on the quality of the vehicles.

- Councilor Gutjahr said Jeremy Romero stated his job is to work with small districts, and small police departments. She continued to say it is very helpful for somebody who is gearing himself for this because this is where we are at.
- Mayor Ramsell said Mr. Romero stated to ask the State Police to see if there is any vehicles they would like to part with as well as making sure we will not inherit someone else's problem.

City Wide Cleanup Operation

- Manager Dr. Moore said over the weekend, the Fire Chief and himself went around the city to not only look at the dead fire fuels but the weed issues as well. He continued to say what they are proposing, and requesting is for an authorization to utilize up to \$35k in available funds. He went on by saying he has spoken to the Finance Officer and budget wise there is room for this request but will have to do 4 different things such as work together with Universal Waste, public works individuals' overtime, as well as equipment rental. He continued by saying he talked to Mrs. Vaughn about donating the roll offs in addition to the ones we will be purchasing but no answer as of right now.
- Manger Dr. Moore continued to explain where the problem areas are as well as what kind of manpower is needed to assist in the cleanup. He said he is recommending council to go bold on this cleanup and with talking to the fire chief and the public works director they agree if we do our part then it will show the residents the city is not just pointing fingers.
- Councilor Apodaca asked if we have an ordinance against using weed killer because we could possibly have an attachment on the tractor that would allow them to spray the big areas.
- Manager Dr. Moore said there are 2 things there is weedkiller that anyone can buy and then there is weedkiller that you must have a license to purchase but will be asking public works to have someone get licensed for that purpose.
- Councilor Gutjahr said with her experience from the schools, they ended up with lawsuits due to people spraying and the wind blowing.
- Manager Dr. Moore said he understands and what he has been looking at is something that someone would have to be licensed, certified and would have to meet very strict criteria in order to proceed.
- Councilor Gutjahr said on some people's properties there are signs that say, 'DO NOT SPRAY', but there are a lot of people around the community that have a problem breathing as well as toxic to the animals here.
- Mayor Ramsell said there are other forms of herbicide besides spraying, but one advantage of mowing is not only removal but keeps the soil stable compared to erosion and DOT sprays right around signs and nothing grows which is great for visibility, but mowing does keep the soil stable.
- Manager Dr. Moore said the challenges we have had is flood retention where the water just stayed there until it evaporated and had to buy a non-toxic mosquito spray that didn't hurt the other animals. He continued to say that the golf course have to deal with this all the time do to having people go out and play but even if we do not get weed killer just getting the weeds taken out will be beneficial.
- Councilor Apodaca asked if the city has gone to other businesses and maybe do an adopt a highway or a portion of the highway or median.
- Manager Dr. Moore said yes, the state has those types of programs and continued the discussion.

- Councilor Gutjahr said she is hoping we are not sacrificing code enforcement and for the community to understand we are trying our best to work on getting rid of the buildings that are eye sores.
- Manager Dr. Moore said this is going to be a lot of work and speaking with our departments they recognized this and with saying they are regular employees so working overtime is going to be a factor.
- Councilor Gordon asked since we will be having the dumpsters, what happens when people are using it for regular garbage.
- Manager Dr. Moore said we will have to do it in a controlled manner and maybe tell the residents we will be having roll offs on Friday and Saturday at a certain time as well as if there are residents that cannot make it maybe have another one on Hillandale and continued the discussion.
- Mayor Ramsell said he thinks it's a good idea if it is strategically done as well as talked about renting a woodchipper.
- Manger Dr. Moore said we can always use the leftover chips as compost next to the fire department as well as have a conversation with SWCD about what we can do.

Job Description - Police Chief

- Manager Dr. Moore started the discussion with explaining the job description for the Police Chief that the consultant Larry Curly had put together. He explained the Chief will be a working Police Chief like the Fire Chief.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked if the Police Chief would report to Manager Dr. Moore but be appointed by council.
- Manager Dr. Moore said yes, the Police Chief and Fire Chief are considered executive positions.

Resolution 2022 - XX Dangerous Property (1703 Zamora)

- Fire Chief Tabet started to explain the property was brought to their attention after receiving a 911 call stating children are involved. He continued to say that the residents have left the house to where there is no electricity, water, gas, flooring which is unstable living especially with multiple kids involved. He went on by explaining the children are in CYFD custody and the parents have been arrested but the condition of the house is completely unlivable.
- Fire Chief Tabet explained that VCSO had received a welfare check from the schools due to the children's wellbeing which led VCSO to call us and inform us of what was happening.
- Councilor Apodaca asked if it was a manufactured home or a site build.
- Fire Chief Tabet explained it is a site build as far as he knows because it was put on the foundation. He continued by saying on the fire side they deemed the house unsafe and for the code side they deemed it dangerous.
- Councilor Winters asked if the resident also the owner.
- Fire Chief Tabet said with talking to CYFD as well as VCSO they are not 100% sure who owns the property.
- Mayor Ramsell said the property has had an issue before.
- Fire Chief Tabet said it is very tragic and the kids have been coached what to say but this is why I am here today due to the situation.

Ordinance 2022-XX LEDA (Local Economic Development Act)

- Manager Dr. Moore said the office has not heard any comments in any direction on the ordinance except for the attorneys who stated they are comfortable with the language and that it meets the new statutes with LEDA retail and other amendments and additions.
- Economic Consultant Ralph Mims said this is just another tool to attract retail to Rio Communities.

Public Comments

- No Public Comments

Manager Report

a) AREA Site Selection Familiarization Tour

- Manager Dr. Moore started off with Potholes saying he understands it been raining and underneath the surrounding asphalt so public works have not been able to fix them but are hoping to jump back into it within the week.
- Manager Dr. Moore said Mr. Mims did reschedule with AREA for the September 12th council meeting and he continued to explain there is an economic conference coming up on September 26th and 27th and if council would like to attend to let him know so he can have a notice of quorum set out.
- Mr. Mims said he has spoken to the members from AREA and strongly recommend the mayor and council to attend the conference.

b) Community Solar Application

- Manager Dr. Moore said he has received an application in regards to 32 acres of land next to La Merced Elementary School to set up a solar farm which we are reviewing the information internally and are bringing to councils attention.

c) Retail Cannabis Application

- Manager Dr. Moore said the cannabis application has gone in front of planning and zoning and has sent a recommendation to move forward with a public hearing for the city council and have gotten with the attorneys.

Council General Discussion & Future Agenda Items

- Councilor Apodaca said as just in update Dr. Moore and himself have had a meeting with the gentlemen who manages the triangle property, as before the owner is not interested in selling but are trying to see what they can do to try and turn it into a veteran's memorial with minimal efforts. He continued to explain they are thinking about adding a flagpole as the property has electricity to luminate the pole and then said he will approach the American Legion and another veteran organization to see what kind of donations we can receive.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked if someone donates, does it become ours or what is the process.
- Manager Dr. Moore said the way it would work is if a non-profit or the American Legion would have to become the stewards if those donations and the city would not have its hands on the money or materials and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked about moving the workshop down to one a month as talked about previously and was wondering when that can be discussed.
- Mayor Ramsell said probably toward the end of this calendar year as well as other administrative things that need to be addressed as well.
- Councilor Gordon had nothing to report.

- Councilor Winters had nothing to report.
- Mayor Ramsell had nothing to report.

Adjourn

- The regular workshop was adjourned at 4:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth F. Adair, Municipal Clerk
(Taken off of recording and also Transcribed by Cheyenne Sullivan, Assistant Clerk)

Date: _____

Approved:

Joshua Ramsell,
Mayor

Margaret R. Gutjahr,
Mayor Pro-tem/Councilor

Arthur Apodaca,
Councilor

Lawrence R. Gordon,
Councilor

Jimmie Winters,
Councilor