

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

June 2, 2014

6:00 P.M.

Mayor Jerah Cordova called the Regular Meeting of the Belen City Council to order at 6:00 P.M. Roll call taken by Leona Vigil, City Clerk.

PRESENT: Councilor Frank Ortega
Mayor Pro-Tem David Carter
Mayor Jerah Cordova
Councilor Darleen Aragon
Councilor Wayne Gallegos

ACTING CITY MANAGER:
CITY CLERK, CMC: Leona Vigil

CITY STAFF: See Attached Sign-In Sheet

REPORTER: Clara Garcia, VC News Bulletin

OTHERS: See Attached sign-In sheet

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:
Mayor Jerah Cordova led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA
Mayor Cordova asked for an approval of the agenda. Councilor Frank Ortega asked to modify the Agenda to include a discussion on the annual water rate increase. Mayor Cordova added the discussion between 7b and 8a; Mayor Cordova then asked to entertain a motion. Councilor Frank Ortega moved approval. Councilor Wayne Gallegos seconds the motion. Roll Call Vote:

Councilor Wayne Gallegos	Yes	
Councilor Darleen Aragon	Yes	
Councilor David Carter	Yes	
Councilor Frank Ortega	Yes	Motion carried

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 19, 2014: Jerah Cordova, Mayor
Mayor Cordova asked for a motion to approve the minutes dated May 19, 2014. Councilor Wayne Gallegos motioned to approve the Minutes dated May 19th. Councilor Darleen Cordova seconds the motion. Roll Call Vote:

Councilor Wayne Gallegos	Yes	
Councilor Darleen Aragon	Yes	
Councilor David Carter	Yes	
Councilor Frank Ortega	Yes	Motion carried

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 21, 2014: Jerah Cordova, Mayor
Mayor Cordova asked for a motion to approve the minutes dated May 21, 2014. Councilor Wayne Gallegos motioned to approve the minutes. Mayor Cordova asks for a second. Councilor Frank Ortega seconds the motion. Roll Call Vote:

Councilor Wayne Gallegos	Yes	
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Councilor Darleen Aragon	Yes	
Councilor David Carter	Yes	
Councilor Frank Ortega	Yes	Motion carried

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Gilbert Garcia: He had concerns with the road construction striping that recently occurred on Main Street. He reported that individuals coming south from the north of Belen can make a left hand turn into his shop. He stated that it is a safety issue, a traffic issue and a liability for everyone.

Richard Hoel: He resides on Santa Anita. He stressed his concerns with individuals speeding down his road and running stop signs. He would like for the City to approve and place speed bumps on Santa Anita near his house. The Mayor advised Mr. Hoel that he can pick up a packet that includes the process to install speed bumps from Leona Vigil.

Anthony Mirabel: He informed the Council that he is having problems with his neighbors. He reported that neighbors keep calling the cops on him regarding his dogs; however there are other dogs in the neighborhood that are barking. He resides on Al Seery. He mentioned that he is mentally disabled, has a lot of issues and he just wants to be left alone. Mayor Cordova informed Mr. Mirabel that when a call is made to dispatch, the Police Department has to respond to the call. Mayor Cordova advised Mr. Mirabel that he would meet with the Chief and discuss the issue to try to come up with a solution.

PRESENTATIONS

FIRE WORKS PRESENTATION: MANNY GARCIA, FIRE CHIEF

Chief Garcia gave his Fire Works Presentation to the Council; a copy of which is attached hereto and made an integral part of these minutes by reference. Councilor Aragon asked Chief Garcia where a person calls to report illegal fireworks. Chief Garcia answered that individuals need to call dispatch at 865-2039. Chief Garcia informed the public that fireworks can be sold starting June 20th.

THE PROPOSED ACQUISITION OF NM GAS CO. BY TECO ENERGY: FRITZ HIRST

Mr. Hirst is the Director of Federal Affairs with TECO Energy. Joining Mr. Hirst was Michael Montoya from NM Gas Company. Mr. Hirst wanted to give a summary of Teco Energy and their interest in investing in the State of New Mexico. Teco Energy is based in Tampa Fl. Teco is the utility operators, and they have been operating electric and gas utilities in Florida for 115 years. Mr. Hirst informed the Council, that about a year ago, Teco was one of the competitors to purchase NM Gas. Teco has agreed to purchase NM Gas for 950 million dollars which includes 200 million of an assumption of debt. Teco has been very engaged with the PRC which is kind of the final regulatory step in the process before the transaction can conclude. Mr. Hirst summarized some of the key features of the transition which includes freezing rates through 2017, an immediate rebate of 2 million dollars within the first year and two executive years of rebates, with direct credit on the customer's bill of 4 million dollars and capped at 10 million dollars. Some of the issues that were brought up with PRC were job impact and head quarters. The company's name will stay the same and the headquarters will remain in Albuquerque. Teco has agreed to hold the whole company and keep it part of the Teco family for at least ten years. They are looking forward to being long term stake holders in NM. They are looking forward to economic development opportunities in NM. The next step is that the Hearing Examiner of PRC will make a recommendation to the Commission, and they are certainly hopeful for a positive recommendation. Councilor Gallegos asked if the operations will stay the same. Michael Montoya replied that the operations will stay the same, and will be a blind transition to the customers.

DISCUSSION

ANNUAL WATER BILL INCREASE: FRANK ORTEGA, COUNCILOR

Councilor Frank Ortega advised the public that the utility rate increase will go on the June 27th water bill. He stated that there are approximately 3,000 water bills, and after doing the math, you would be saving \$3.25 per bill. The City would save the constituents approximately \$9,750.00 for the month or \$117,000 for the year. He would like to propose a resolution, to give back to the constituents, not to increase the water bill in June. Councilor Gallegos stressed a couple of points; first, can we do it, is there enough time, and can the budget handle this. Councilor Darleen Aragon also asked if the City can afford it. Councilor Carter asked Roseann Peralta, Finance Clerk if she had budgeted for the 5% increase in the budget that was just approved. Roseann answered that she did, and it is already counted as collected funds. Roseann mentioned the reason the utility rates were increased was to provide for the water tanks and infrastructure. She informed the Council that the City owes 2.5 million dollars in debt that is paid from these water and wastewater funds. The loans were for the asbestos line on Mesa and a Water State Revolving Loan. Councilor Carter asked if there was any money set off to the side. Roseann replied that there is money set aside for emergencies and to cover match amounts on a utility project. She claims that the City hasn't done a utility project in a while, and she has been asking for one to be done. Councilor Gallegos stated that it is frustrating because we are charging these rates, and they expect to see something for it. Mayor Cordova asked Roseann to coordinate a meeting with key staff that would be affected with the change and come up with a fact sheet.

DISCUSSION WITH POSSIBLE ACTION

APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION REVIEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS: JERAH CORDOVA, MAYOR

Mayor Cordova reminded the Council that the City has an Economic Development Plan Ordinance which is in accordance with State Law. The ordinance allows the City to provide property and/or money for economic development projects. As part of the process, an application must be submitted for an economic development project that is interested in coming into Belen. The application must be reviewed internally by a committee. The recommendation for this committee is to include the City's economic development councilors who were recently appointed to economic development as well as Steve Tomita, as the City's P & Z Director and the possibility of finance staff. He would stand for any recommendations from the Council. Councilor Gallegos asked the Mayor what the intent of this process. Mayor Cordova replied that they would like to put together a committee who would look over the applications and qualify the applicants. Mayor Cordova reminded the Council that Councilor Carter and Councilor Aragon are already on the Economic Development Board. Mayor Cordova asked if there were any recommendations for a fifth member. Mayor Cordova informed the Council that there was an Economic committee that was formed about 2 years ago which included Joaquin Sisneros and Robert Noblin and of course there are P & Z commissioners that may want to sit on committee. Councilor Ortega stated that Joaquin Sisneros would be good. Mayor Cordova stated that he would reach out to him.

Mayor Cordova asked if there was a motion. Councilor Frank Ortega motioned to move. Mayor Cordova stated that there is a motion to accept the list as proposed by Councilor Ortega and asked for a second. Councilor Wayne Gallegos seconds the motion. Roll Call Vote:

Councilor Wayne Gallegos	Yes	
Councilor Darleen Aragon	Yes	
Councilor David Carter	Yes	
Councilor Frank Ortega	Yes	Motion Carried

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS
City Manager's Report

Leona Vigil mentioned that she didn't get a chance to comment on the elimination of the utility rate increase. She informed the Council that she was part of the rates committee and the committee went off a \$50,000 rate study that was prepared for the City of Belen. The study looked at the City's infrastructure and set rates accordingly to what was needed to be safe for the City's future. She asked the Council to consider the "big picture" and to make for a secure future. Leona reported that she received a complaint from a constituent on the Bugg Lights coming to Belen. The gentlemen that complained stated that he moved from Albuquerque because of the lights and now they are in his community again. The gentlemen asked if there was going to be citizen input on the lights. Leona asked the Council if anyone was interested in going to D.C. with Molzen & Corbin to lobby for funding. Councilor Carter will be in D.C. and has agreed to meet Molzen & Corbin out there. She reminded everyone that tomorrow is Election Day. She will be out tomorrow helping with the election. She reported that the Adopt a Park Application for Anna Becker has been submitted and approved; Noblin Funeral Home has now formally adopted Anna Becker. The Street Sweeper is down again. Leona informed the Council that the port a potties at Anna Becker Park have been moved; she is hoping that they can enclose the potties soon. She reported that there was a Department Head Meeting this morning, a copy of those minutes are attached hereto and made an integral part of these minutes by reference. Leona advised the Council that the employees have requested a meeting with the Council. It was concluded that Mayor Cordova and Councilor Carter will meet with the Department Heads next Monday. Councilor Ortega asked about the roof at the old city hall building; Mayor Cordova will look into this. Councilor Carter stated that wheelchairs are getting stuck behind the Food Pantry and asked if the City could help with that. Mayor Cordova will follow up with Mary Lucy Baca.

The Council attended the BHS graduation. Mr. Silva graduated with the Class of 2014; he had to quit school early to join and fight World War II. The Council also attended the Special Council Meeting on May 21st. Members of the Council attended the Magistrate Court Open House.

City Council's Report

Councilor Aragon: She attended the Chamber Board Meeting, the MainStreet Project Meeting and the Film & Media Conference with Steve Tomita; together they made a lot of contacts. She listened to the TECO presentation at the Chamber this morning.

Councilor Carter: He announced that Election Day is tomorrow. He had a Business Expo Meeting. A lady from Chicago complimented the Belen Community; she stated that everyone in this town is so nice.

Councilor Ortega: He stressed how amazing it was to see Mr. Silva, World War II Veteran receive his high school diploma. He informed the Council that the Municipal Court had to hire a Bee Keeper to get rid of a honey bee infestation; he mentioned that the honey was really sweet. The Christopher Rd project will begin July 7, 2014 and completion should take place on October 24, 2014. He would like an update on the Eagle Park Project, the Eagle Tank Project, the City owned properties on Aragon, the Waste Management Contract and proposed demolitions. He mentioned that the carnival and music fest was nice, and the only complaint he received was on the parking for constituents to come into City Hall.

Councilor Gallegos: On the 22nd he met with DOT; they discussed the Mesa Rd and Aragon project, the installation of a preemption device at the intersection of Reinken and Wisconsin. DOT is looking to compile an agreement in reference to the City's assistance with sweeping the State part of Reinken and Main Street. They were reminded that there is \$100,000 pending for the interchange design mile marker 195; the City of Belen is the fiscal agent for that project. The DOT is requesting a copy of the City's Engine Brake Ordinance so that they can start placing signs up accordingly. There is some flooding going on at the south Belen Interchange with the farming that is taking place there. They also discussed street lights, curbs and sidewalks. Councilor reported that the Right of Way (ROW) on the overpass that is over the railroad on north main is in the design phase; there will need to be another street to decelerate traffic to go into Impala for safety. He mentioned that Dollar Tree is meeting their specs. NMDOT has been providing training on construction projects. They

discussed Christopher Rd; the MAP and COOP monies. The City just got approved for HSIP funding which will be used for sidewalks. He received a complaint because no flag was hung at Anna Becker Park on Memorial Day. Capital Outlay Projects are getting approved for the next legislative year already. He reported that the Music Fest at City Hall was very nice this past weekend. He met with Wilson & Co to go over the Christopher Rd Plans; there have been a few changes made to the plans.

Mayor Jerah Cordova: He reported that last week the compliments from the citizens outnumbered the complaints. He wants the Council to understand that the staff is working hard. The city manager interviews continue, and he should have two to three names to bring to the Council after Friday. He met with individuals who are trying to bring YDI back to Belen; particularly to provide food pantry services. He will be moving forward with the appointed employee's contracts this week. He met with the new president, CeCe, of the Art League, she is willing to help with anything she can to improve that area. The movie Blood Father was filming in town last Tuesday; rumor has it that Mel Gibson was shopping at Walmart. There was a "Get on and Vote" Event held at the Holiday Inn; it was a nice event. He attended the GBEDC update and Economic Development meeting along with Councilor Carter.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Jerah Cordova asked for a motion to adjourn tonight's meeting. Councilor David Carter motioned to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Wayne Gallegos seconds the motion.

Councilor Wayne Gallegos	Yes	
Councilor Darleen Aragon	Yes	
Councilor David Carter	Yes	
Councilor Frank Ortega	Yes	Motion Carried

/s/ _____
Jerah R. Cordova, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/ _____
Leona Vigil, City Clerk, CMC