

TOWN OF SILVER CITY
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
GRANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATION CENTER, 1400 HWY. 180 E., SILVER CITY, NM
June 28, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

Members Present:

Ken Ladner, Mayor
Lucian Farmer, Councilor, District 1
Nicholas Prince, Councilor, District 2
Jose A. Ray, Jr., Councilor District 3
Guadalupe E. Cano, Councilor, District 4

Others present:

Alex C. Brown, Town Manager
Alfred Sedillo, Town Clerk
Melinda Hobbs, Police Captain
Jim Reynolds, Town Attorney
James Marshall, Assistant Town Manager
Roger Lance, Grant County Beat
Ben Beltron, Executive Director, CATS
Jordan Archunde, Silver City Daily Press
Christine Wolford, Silver City Resident
Joseph Dominguez, Silver City Resident
Christopher Perez, Silver City Resident
Elizette Dominguez, Silver City Resident
Gail Stanford, Silver City Resident
Mark McAllister, Silver City Resident
Georgianna Duarte, Silver City Resident
Karissa Andazola, Silver City Resident

1. CALL TO ORDER - Mayor Ladner called meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND SALUTE TO NEW MEXICO STATE FLAG - Mayor Ladner invited the public to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and the Salute to the New Mexico State Flag.

Mayor Ladner welcomed the Police Captain Melinda Hobbs, Fire Chief Lambert, news media, guests who will be making presentations, staff and the members of the community.

2. CHANGES TO AGENDA – NONE

3. CEREMONIES – NONE

4. PROCLAMATIONS – NONE

5. COUNCIL COMMENTS – Councilor Cano thanked Assistant Fire Chief Jeff Fell for helping her resolve an issue of a friend who lost her father. He was a retired Fire Fighter in Albuquerque and the family could not get any information from a Fire Department for services. Mr. Fell made a phone call and was able to get the information for the family. Councilor Cano appreciated him going above and beyond to help the family. Councilor Cano stated she had brought up the idea of having a Work Session before the Regular Council Meeting a few months ago stating the County Commission and other Municipalities have work sessions. Councilor Cano wanted to know what her fellow Councilors felt about having a work session. She feels there are issues that can be discussed more extensively at a work session than in a Council meeting. Councilor Cano asked for a special meeting to be held as soon as possible to address an issue instead of having to wait another two (2) weeks.

Mayor Ladner stated he would like to poll the Council members about having a work session. Councilor Prince, Councilor Farmer and Councilor Ray were in agreement with a work session. Mayor Ladner stated it would be a public meeting and all items on the agenda would be discussed. Mayor Ladner also asked about having a special meeting, all Councilors agreed on having a special meeting.

Councilor Ray thanked Demecio and his crew for picking up the brush on Cooper Street. Councilor Ray asked Captain Hobbs if she would be willing to tell the public how bad the Fentanyl is and if we have that problem here in our community. Captain Hobbs explained it is a problem and a very bad drug, even by touching it could be deadly. Councilor Ray also thanked Western New Mexico University for putting on the Fiesta Latina, it was very well attended. He also asked everyone to attend and enjoy all the Fourth (4th) of July festivities.

Councilor Prince commended the new Superintendent of Cobre Schools, Dr. Spalleta for having an open house at the Bayard Community Center, his weekly video updates and transparency. Councilor Prince also commended Chief of Police Freddie Portillo and Captain Hobbs for their commitment to transparency and communication in all the challenges they face and he feels fortunate in the city's choice of leadership. Councilor Prince was thoroughly impressed with the volume of assistance being provided by the Supporting People In Need (SPIN) to those that are less fortunate.

Councilor Farmer extended his personal condolences to the Bascom estate as well as on behalf of District One (1). He was saddened it was front page news and hoped the settlement would bring peace and closure. To his constituents he felt it was necessary for the Council and himself to vote for the Gross Receipt Tax increase and Ten Million Dollar (10,000,000) Bond to fully address the lawsuit. He hoped the necessary discretion and confidentiality in concluding the settlement and to anyone offended by those actions he apologized.

Mayor Ladner expressed his appreciation to the Town Staff for cleaning the debris that washes on to the streets after the hard rains we have been having. He thanked Mr. Brown for his leadership.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 14, 2022 Regular Meeting. Councilor Ray moved to approve the June 14, 2022 Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of the Town of Silver City. Councilor Farmer seconded. Motion carried.

7. PUBLIC INPUT – Joseph Dominguez spoke on behalf of the Supporting People in Need (SPIN) homeless shelter. Mr. Dominguez said before working for SPIN he was a resident. He gives his thanks to Christine Wolford director of SPIN for helping him beat his drug addiction and giving him a place to live. He expressed his support for the shelter and Ms. Wolford.

Christopher Perez also expressed his support for the shelter and Ms. Wolford. He understands there are some homeless people that do cause issues in the community, but all are not bad people. Mr. Perez commended Ms. Wolford and her staff for all the work they do. As an employee of the shelter, he helps individuals with different things they need help with like medication and insurance.

Elizette Dominguez stated she works at SPIN at different hours of the night and wanted to express her gratitude. Ms. Dominguez advised “Whenever coming in contact with an individual (s) to pause before approaching the situation with fear and unknowingness because they may be in search of understanding”.

Mark McAllister an employee of SPIN stated he read the article in the paper in regards to the shelter and wanted the public to know that SPIN takes it very seriously being a good neighbor in the community and the neighborhood. Mr. McAllister advised he lives in the neighborhood and is always around either walking or on his bike, to please stop him and let him know of any concerns. He will report those concerns to the director Christine Wolford.

Georgianna Duarte thanked Councilor Cano, Councilor Prince and City Manager Alex Brown for their service and patience. Ms. Duarte spoke about the integration of a high-quality park system one that includes a diversity of people with different abilities and needs, also the animals we call best friends. An integration of a Dog Park System. Ms. Duarte said she is ready and willing and has found people for committees she is ready to visit with Alex Brown. Ms. Duarte stated she would like to have a Dog Park system and a Park system that reflects the incredible talents of the community and have purpose so everyone feels welcome.

Gail Stanford stated she was present at the meeting to point out that no City Official except Councilor Farmer apologized for the laps of duty that in regards to the Bascom case and their role in the Nine Million Dollar (9,000,000) debt. Ms. Stanford stated the suit would not have been settled the way it was if the city had not been found negligent in the handling of the warnings of the Bascom family. Ms. Stanford stated that neither retired Police Chief Ed Reynolds and Alex Brown have issued any apologies and that it is not too late for them acknowledge their guiltiness and hopefully add their contrition.

Karissa Andazola stated she was a peer support for SPIN and was heart broken when she read the article in the newspaper. She is grateful to Ms. Wilford for her help and giving her the opportunity to work for SPIN to provide assistance to the residence. Ms. Andazola asked if anyone knows of anyone needed help to please call and let them know.

Christine Wolford stated she was excited about the article in the paper showing there are people in the community that care about what we can do different with the homeless population. Ms. Wolford stated they are doing their best they can working with the most difficult people and trying to make a difference in people's lives. She is always open to anyone that would like to visit or have questions and she appreciates the support of the Town.

8. REPORTS – Staff Reports: Fire Chief Lambert reported the lifting of the Stage one (1) fire restrictions effective Friday July 1st, but does not affect the Resolution to restrict the sales of fireworks. The Resolution is in effect until July 14th. Also beginning July 1st the open burning of yard waste will be allowed only if a permit has been obtained which are free.

A. Recreation Center – Alex Brown stated there was Eight point Seven Five Million Dollars (8,750,000) allocated to the project and in the next month he would be going to do bond ratings to secure the remaining Four Million Dollars (4,000,000). Mr. Brown stated that the Recreation Center was put on the ICIP in 2019 and it wasn't until 2020 there was an opportunity to start generating large amounts of funds for the project making the Recreation Center as the number one project.

B. Current and Proposed Swimming Pool – Mr. Brown advised the current pool has been on its last leg for the last twenty-five years (25). Every year there is something that needs to be fixed or replace, but has been certified by the Environmental Department. As far as the proposed pool, hopefully there may be the opportunity for early funding so there would have to speed up in the design process for the funding.

C. Gough Park – Mr. Brown stated as he did last meeting of having the UNM architectural design and discussion trying to get people on board.

D. City Hall – Mr. Brown stated that he does have preliminary designs but is not going to release them until they actually start doing some work. There has been some structural work on the roof and the HVAC units need to be replaced costing One Million Dollars (1,000,000).

E. Scott Park Golf Course – Mr. Brown stated that there has been a lot of one-time funding in the last year. There have been some upgrades done such as tearing down the old Club House, the parking lot is being paved all the way to the number one T. All of the wells are being maintained by the Well Division and a new grounds superintendent has been hired and has done an excellent job bringing the course back. A new General Manager has been hired and this will be our first full year running the Golf Course since 1996 so there are not any true numbers in golf rounds and revenue it will generate. Revenues have been better than what was thought to be and new (lightly used) golf carts are going to be purchased.

F. Ridge Road – Mr. Brown advised Ridge Road should have been done, but rain has delayed the paving. Little Walnut Road should start as soon as Ridge Road is complete.

9. PUBLIC HEARINGS – Approval/Disapproval of a Restaurant Beer and Wine Liquor License

with On Premises Consumption Only with Sunday Sales by the Drink. License Application No. 1227413, Applicant Name: Empire Buffet of Silver City, DBA W & Z Asian Bistro and Sushi Bar, Silver City, NM. Proposed Location: 1740 Highway 180 East, Silver City, NM 88061.

– Mayor Ladner asked if any Councilor has had any ex parte discussions with any person regarding the subject matter. Mayor Ladner polled each Councilor. Hearing none Mayor Ladner stated for the record there is no Council members having any ex parte discussion. Mayor Ladner asks the applicant Cai You He to the podium to be sworn in. Mr. He advise the Council he was there to ask for approval of the Beer and Wine License for his restaurant. Mayor Ladner stated the only reason the Hearing Board would not be approved the application is if the location of sales of alcohol is prohibited by the laws of the State of New Mexico, the issuance or transfer would be in violation of a zoning or ordinance of the governing body or the issuance or transfer would be detrimental to the public health, safety or morals of the residents of the local option district. Mayor Ladner asked Mr. Brown if any of the conditions are relevant? Mayor Ladner asked if there were any questions for the applicant from the Hearing Board? Hearing none Mayor Ladner asked if the Hearing Board if they were ready to consider the application and render its decision? Mayor Ladner asked for a Motion. **Councilor Ray moved to approve**

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Councilor Farmer seconded the motion. Mayor Ladner asked for a roll call vote. Town Clerk Alfred Sedillo did a roll call vote. Councilor Farmer voted aye; Councilor Prince voted aye; Councilor Ray voted aye; and Councilor Cano voted aye. **Motion carried.**

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – NONE

11. NEW BUSINESS

A. Approval / Disapproval of an Agreement between the Town of Silver City and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council No. 18, Local No. 3370, from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2025. The Council may go into Closed Session pursuant to

NMSA 1978 Section 10-15-1(H)(5) for the discussion of bargaining strategy preliminary to collective bargaining negotiations. - Alex Brown stated the negotiations with the AFSME Union have been complete and the agreement has been approved and just needs the Councils approval and commencing on the first payday in July. The main issues are this year is all employees making less than thirteen dollars (13.00) an hour will be brought up to thirteen dollars (13.00) an hour, there after each employee will get a one dollar and twenty-five cent (1.25) raise across the board. The starting wage for any AFSME position will increase to thirteen dollars (13.00) an hour. Year two (2) it will go from thirteen dollars (13.00) an hour top fourteen dollars (14.00) an hour. In 2024 a one dollar (1.00) increase and the base pay will be fifteen dollars (15.00) an hour. The agreement is a three (3) year agreement.

Mayor Ladner asked if there were any questions for Mr. Brown, hearing none Mayor Ladner asked if any Councilor wanted to go into closed session. Hearing none Mayor Ladner entertained a motion. Councilor Cano moved to approve **an Agreement between the Town of Silver City and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council No. 18, Local No. 3370, from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2025.** Councilor Prince seconded the motion. Mayor Ladner asked for a roll call vote. Town Clerk Alfred Sedillo did a roll call vote. Councilor Farmer voted aye; Councilor Prince voted aye; Councilor Ray voted aye; and Councilor Cano voted aye. **Motion carried.**

B. Approval / Disapproval of an Agreement between the Town of Silver City and Local 2430, International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) AFL-CIO, from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2025. The Council may go into Closed Session pursuant to NMSA 1978 Section 10-15-1(H)(5) for the discussion of bargaining strategy preliminary to collective bargaining negotiations. Mr. Brown advised Mayor and Council the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) contract ends this year and a new three (3) year contract changing the schedule from an eighteen (18) day schedule to a fourteen (14) day schedule because the state Public Employee Retirement Association (PERA) requirements changed for overtime it was very hard to calculate on an eighteen (18) day schedule because it never corresponded to the fourteen (14) day schedule. Mr. Brown stated there was a pay scale for the different positions and each year will increase by two (2) percent. The minimum pay of eleven dollars and fifty cents (11.50) will go up to twelve dollars (12.00). Every position has gone up fifty cents (.50) as a firefighter's base salary is based on a two thousand eight hundred ninety-two (2,892) hours a year. Year two (2) the annual salary will go up to twelve dollars and seventy-five cents (12.75) and year three (3) it will go up to thirteen dollars and fifty cents (13.50). Councilor Cano stated she has had serious issues with the pay for someone who wants to put their life at risk to protect the community for twelve dollars and fifty cents (12.50) an hour. Councilor Prince stated he has spoken to some firefighters and they are satisfied with the negotiations. Councilor Ray stated if Police and Fire Department agree on the negotiations they should go for it especially for the benefits, they come out better in the long run. Mayor Ladner asked if anyone wanted to go into closed session. Seeing none, Mayor Ladner entertained a motion. Councilor Cano moved to approve **an Agreement between the Town of Silver City and Local 2430, International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) AFL-CIO, from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2025.** Councilor Prince seconded the motion. Mayor Ladner asked for a roll call vote. Town Clerk Alfred Sedillo did a roll call vote. Councilor Farmer voted aye; Councilor Prince voted aye; Councilor Ray voted aye; and Councilor Cano voted nae. Motion carried. Mayor Ladner stated there are three (3) votes aye and one (1) vote nae. Motion carried.

12. ADJOURNMENT - Mayor Ladner stated this concluded the business of the Town of Silver City Town Council. Meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

/s/ _____
Ken Ladner, Mayor

Attest:

/s/ _____
Alfred Sedillo, Town Clerk