

**TOWN OF SILVER CITY
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
GRANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATION CENTER, 1400 HWY. 180 E., SILVER CITY, NM
September 26, 2023, 6:00 p.m.**

Members Present:

Ken Ladner, Mayor
Rudy Bencomo, Councilor District 1
Nicholas Prince, Councilor District 2
Jose A. Ray, Jr., Councilor District 3
Guadalupe Cano, Councilor District 4

Others present:

Alex Brown, Town Manager
Alfred Sedillo, Town Clerk
Freddie Portillo, Chief of Police
Thomas Hernandez, Code Enforcement
Vickie Toney, Code Enforcement-
Animal Control
Ben Beltron, Executive Director, CATS
Juno Ogle, Silver City Daily Press

1. CALL TO ORDER - Mayor Ladner called the 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 Salute to the New Mexico State Flag.

2. CHANGES TO AGENDA – NONE

3. CEREMONIES – NONE

4. PROCLAMATIONS – NONE

5. COUNCIL COMMENTS – Councilor Bencomo stated he was approached by a resident regarding speeding vehicles crossing the Hudson Street Bridge. The resident lives on Daniel St. and has witnessed a couple of close calls would like to have more police presence in the area. Councilor Bencomo is aware there has been an officer at the Hudson Plaza parking lot as well as near Harrison Schmitt Elementary school. The resident advised Councilor Bencomo he felt nothing would be done, but Councilor Bencomo reassured him the Police Department would do their very best to resolve the issue. Councilor Bencomo has received a few phone calls regarding the uptick of activity on the east side of town. He is aware the officers cannot be everywhere, but he would like to see more patrols in that area. Councilor Bencomo also received an email regarding trash at Chihuahua Hill Chapel. He took it upon himself to go there and he picked up a black trash bag of litter. He made it aware that there are trash cans there for people to utilize.

Councilor Cano congratulated the organizers of the “Buddy Walk” and the Knights of Columbus for the Car Show, another successful event. Last week Alex Brown and her attended the School Board meeting for the Silver Consolidate School District where Superintendent Hawkins and the School Board recognized the Town of Silver City for all successful partnerships in the past few years. They had a lot of good things to say about Mr. Brown for all the work he does for them. A plaque was presented to him. Councilor Cano stated that on Friday September 29th the Silver City Museum will be opening their Chihuahua Hill exhibit that Javier Marrufo has been working on for several years. The exhibit will be

open during regular business hours. Councilor Cano was disappointed there could not be a special opening event for this exhibit, which is very special to the Chicano community, being it is the oldest neighborhood in town. The Grant County Health Council have put together a community health survey to see the needs of the community. It will be live soon and will be available on the Town of Silver City website and the Health Council website along with paper ballots throughout the community. On Wednesday September 27th from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm at the Veterans Business and Conference Center there will be a “Behavioral Health” update for anyone who is interested in knowing how behavioral health is going in the community. It will be presented by Dr. Teresa Arizaga along with other providers. Also, on Friday October 20th at the Global Resource Center from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm the Southwestern New Mexico Bar Association will be having a Law Clinic. This is an opportunity for members of our community who do not have access to Legal advice, they can get pro bono advise from lawyers that will be coming from Las Cruces for the day. Councilor Cano spoke about the upcoming election. She has received several phone calls regarding rumors from candidates being said about the Town Council specifically about her. She understands candidates can say whatever they want about whoever they want and the positions they are running for, she wants to let the community know if they hear a rumor about her, to please give her a call. She is an open book and will tell them the truth. She hopes the rumors will stop and the candidate focuses on their qualities and stops attacking the current Council members. If that does not happen, think about that when you go vote.

Councilor Ray stated, getting back to the comments from Councilor Bencomo about the Capilla, there has been a lot of activity there for the last two (2) weeks at night. He was also contacted by the museum about lending some pictures from when he was in the military along with other soldiers. Councilor Ray stated he contacted Silver City School Superintendent William Hawkings if he could locate a student or students to meet with the Council regarding ideas, they may have on what the Town Council could do.

Councilor Prince stated after the last Council Meeting, he contracted COVID and encouraged the public to do what they can to prevent getting it. There is a list of vaccines at [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) and at [covid.com](https://www.covid.com) you can order in home mail in tests. Also, the CDC has a Vaccine Bridge program if your insurance does not cover the vaccine, this program should help cover it. Councilor Prince thanked Code Enforcement for all the issues that have been brought up at the Council meetings. He also thanked the Public Relations Committee (PRC), with the high amounts the public has been paying to PNM, there will be a nine-dollar (9.00) credit on the PNM bill for the next twelve (12) months. Councilor Prince is still concerned about the high prices of residential and commercial properties. He wants to make the public aware of some oncoming financial threats, also if there is no conciliation this week there will be a Federal Government shutdown and if anyone has friends that are Federal employees to help them.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 12, 2023, Regular Meeting. Councilor Ray moved to approve the September 12, 2023, Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of the Town of Silver City. Councilor Bencomo seconded the motion as stated. Motion carried unanimously.

7. PUBLIC INPUT – Laura Schoen expressed her concern for those in the community who need Mental Health Assistance. Ms. Schoen deals with this issue at her business on Bullard Street in downtown Silver City. Ms. Schoen brought up two (2) points to the Council. If the individuals are getting the care and support they need and if they do get the care and support does that lead to their protection or are they just trying to survive on their own. Ms. Schoen stated she does her small part in Economic Development, and she must deal with these issues, she will be forced to go online.

Lydia Villegas stated she has an issue in her neighborhood on Corbin Street. On September 9th there was a house fire across the street from her home. The property still has people living there, they have bonfires every night. Ms. Villegas stated she has called Police Chief Freddie Portillo and Code Enforcement. Code Enforcement has gone by only once and feels with the Police station on Hudson Street across from her neighborhood she doesn't understand why the patrols have stopped. Ms. Villegas is a native of Silver City and loves her neighborhood and is tired of hearing people telling her she lives in a war zone. She says that she doesn't and that it is not going to happen.

8. REPORTS:

A. Manager's Report: NO REPORT

9. PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NONE

11. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Approval / Disapproval of a Public Celebration Permit: for the Octoader Fest for October 7, 2023, with alcohol served from 2:00 pm to 11:00 pm at 200 N. Bullard Street, Silver City, New Mexico. Liquor License Holder: 1) Little Toad Creek Brewery & Distillery, License #67085, 203 S. Mill Road, Silver City, NM 88061. Jamie Burke stated there will be an October Fest in front of the Little Toad Creek with a Beer Garden.

Mayor Ladner asked if there were any questions or comments.

Councilor Cano asked wherever the entrance is going to be, to please make sure it is wheelchair accessible.

Mayor Ladner asked for a motion.

Councilor Ray moved to approve **a Public Celebration Permit: for the Octoader Fest for October 7, 2023, with alcohol served from 2:00 pm to 11:00 pm at 200 N. Bullard Street, Silver City, New Mexico. Liquor License Holder: 1) Little Toad Creek Brewery & Distillery, License #67085, 203 S. Mill Road, Silver City, NM 88061.** Councilor Cano seconded the motion as stated. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Approval / Disapproval of a Public Celebration Permit: for the Southwest Print Vista and waiver of NMSA 1978 60-6B-10 for alcohol service near a church for October 7 2023, with alcohol served from 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm at 704 N. Bullard St., Silver City, New Mexico. Liquor License Holder: 1) Little Toad Creek Brewery & Distillery, License #63013, 203 S. Mill Road, Silver City, NM 88061. Jamie Burke stated it is an annual event that will be held at the Main Street Plaza with a Beer Garden set up at the parking lot.

Mayor Ladner asked if there were any questions or comments.

Mayor Ladner asked for a motion.

Councilor Bencomo moved to approve a **Public Celebration Permit: for the Southwest Print Vista and waiver of NMSA 1978 60-6B-10 for alcohol service near a church for October 7 2023, with alcohol served from 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm at 704 N. Bullard St., Silver City, New Mexico. Liquor License Holder: 1) Little Toad Creek Brewery & Distillery, License #63013, 203 S. Mill Road, Silver City, NM 88061.** Councilor Ray seconded the motion as stated. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Approval / Disapproval of Bid 23/21-2 Re-Bid 2021 Colonias Water System Improvements Chloride Flats – North Tank. Alex Brown stated the Town received three (3) bids on the referenced project. It is the staff’s recommendation that the bid be awarded to D & R Tank Company for the Base Bid, Bid Lot #1, and Bid Lot #2 in the amount of five hundred six thousand seven hundred seventy dollars (\$506,770.00) plus gross receipts taxes. The entire amount will be funded through a grant.

Mayor Ladner asked if there were any questions or comments for Mr. Brown Seeing none, Mayor Ladner asked for a motion.

Councilor Cano moved to approve **Bid 23/21-2 Re-Bid 2021 Colonias Water System Improvements Chloride Flats – North Tank.** To D & R Tank Company in the amount of five hundred six thousand seven hundred seventy dollars (\$506.770.00) plus gross receipts taxes. Councilor Prince seconded the motion as stated. Mayor Ladner asked for a roll call vote. Alfred Sedillo did a roll call vote. Councilor Bencomo voted aye; Councilor Prince voted aye; Councilor Ray voted aye; and Councilor Cano voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

12. ADJOURNMENT - Mayor Ladner stated this concluded the items on the agenda. Mayor Ladner asked for a motion to adjourn. Councilor Ray moved to adjourn. Councilor Prince seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:29 p.m.

Ken Ladner, Mayor

Attest:

Alfred Sedillo, Town Clerk