

**BELEN CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**April 20, 2020**

**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 Dorothy Flores, City Clerk.

**PRESENT:**

Mayor Pro-Ronnie Torres  
Mayor Jerah R. Cordova  
Councilor Frank F. Ortega  
Councilor Robert Noblin  
Councilor Danny Bernal Jr.

**NOT PRESENT:**

Andrew DiCamillo

**CITY MANAGER:**

**CITY CLERK:**

Dorothy Flores

**REPORTER:**

Clara Garcia, VC News Bulletin

**OTHERS:**

See attached Sign-in Sheet

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Cordova led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mayor Cordova asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

Councilor Ronnie Torres made a motion.

Mayor Cordova asked for a second.

Councilor Robert Noblin seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilor Danny Bernal Jr.	Yes	
Councilor Robert Noblin	Yes	
Councilor Ronnie Torres	Yes	
Councilor Frank F. Ortega	Yes	Motion Carried

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mayor Cordova asked for a motion to approve the minutes dated 04.06.20 as presented.

Councilor Danny Bernal Jr. made a motion.

Mayor Cordova asked for a second.

Councilor Robert Noblin seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilor Danny Bernal Jr.	Yes	
Councilor Robert Noblin	Yes	
Councilor Ronnie Torres	Yes	
Councilor Frank F. Ortega	Yes	Motion Carried

## PUBIC COMMENTS

Mayor Cordova asked if there was anyone with a public comment.  
No one present for public comment

## DISCUSSION WITH POSSIBLE ACTION

### **APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL of an Emergency Declaration, declaring the City of Belen to be an Economic Emergency area as a Result of COVID-19.**

Mayor Jerah Cordova presented this declaration.

He mentioned that this is what the City of Farmington, and he has been in conversation with other Mayors across the state regarding this. What the declaration does is that it outlines what is going on around the world, concerns about business being essential and non-essential. This would allow for some business opening up based on the requirements. It recommends the use of face coverings. Please keep in mind, this week is considered the peak week for the COVID-19 and should be seeing some of our highest numbers. Another issue is a letter from 17 mayors across the state and how the Governors done a great job and so forth, however I was not a signatory on that letter. Mayor opened it up to councilors for discussion.

**Councilor Frank F. Ortega** he feels that we need to take care of our health, and would like more testing available for individuals. I feel for our small businesses in our city as well.

**Councilor Ronnie Torres** asked if we were, approve this does this go against the Governor or when she opens up and gives a plan to we continue to that?

The Mayor advised that the Resolution is mostly just a statement of position of the city council it does not have any authority under the law, and only defers to the Governor. This also addresses requirements how to do that and does not over-ride what the Governor is doing. What is important to know is that the Governor is not in favor of this Resolution.

**Councilor Danny Bernal Jr.** feels that the Governor has a good idea of how she wants to go moving forward. He sees this as an act of going against her and what she wants for the state of New Mexico.

**Council Robert Noblin**, notes on page 2, section b, requires all businesses too, "when safety permits". We are simply saying to the Governor "please give small business and the public some indication of a plan" as to when things are going to happen. Small business are in the dark, they do not have any straws to grasp at and many of us do not. We appreciate what you are doing but at some point "can we expect a plan"?

**Councilor Danny Bernal Jr** addressed Councilor Noblin I think if we want to stand with the Governor we don't have to do it so publically and not to seem that we are defying her or standing up to her. If we want to say we appreciate what she is doing please provide a plan we can ask her that without providing a Resolution.

**Councilor Frank F. Ortega**, states he does not feel that we are defying the Governor. We are simply trying to just put a plan in place. We want to know what all the officials are doing, where are we at, who is testing, numbers, etc. We need that plan in place. The businesses here are suffering as well as possibly the City here in the next few weeks.

**Mayor Jerah Cordova** advised he has had many conversations with the Governor's office as well as the Department of Health. In every conversation, they have been fantastic in their support of Belen with adequate testing in Belen. We have had a high number of successes in Belen. It is important to us that we have the conversation as to when we are going to open back up as a City. There are lot of good models out there and I am looking at these right now

**Councilor Frank F. Ortega**, we need to make sure Valencia understands that we need to take precautions necessary. I think the Governor is doing what she has to do.

**Councilor Danny Bernal Jr.** The reason I said this is an act of defiance on my part is that you said that the Governors' office did not agree with the Declaration print. The Mayor agreed yes because of the language within the declaration. He

also asked the Mayor if he asked about this particular declaration regarding our city. The Mayor advised that “no” he did not as the specific question due to the platform at the times of conversation as these were based more on the economy more than individual City requests.

**Councilor Danny Bernal Jr.** asked if would be able to do this. The Mayor said that he is sure that he can speak directly.

**Councilor Danny Bernal Jr.** feels that would be a more diplomatic approach. I am of the opinion that our business are struggling, and promoting the support to small business. He feels this Declaration is taking a big grand stand against the Governor and does not feel it is necessary.

**Councilor Ronnie Torres** has a small business and feel that the Governor is doing what is best. He would rather that we all go in the same direction as the Governor. We should not re-invent the wheel.

**Councilor Frank F. Ortega** states that he is taking the position that he is fighting with anybody. He just feels that we need safety guards in place. We just need to figure out and make sure we are just take the right precautions for the City.

**Councilor Danny Bernal Jr.** would not a motion to table this, but he does recommend that we (you Mayor) to ask these questions and if they do not provide adequate answers, and if they do not give us that then we can come back to this.

**Councilor Ronnie Torres** table to observe our numbers and allow two more weeks for the Governor

Mayor Cordova asked for a motion to table this item.

Councilor Ronnie Torres made a motion to approve.

Mayor Cordova asked for a second.

Councilor Frank F. Ortega seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilor Danny Bernal Jr.	Yes	
Councilor Robert Noblin	Yes	
Councilor Ronnie Torres	Yes	
Councilor Frank F. Ortega	Yes	Motion Carried

**APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL of a Resolution to Adopt City of Belen’s Continuity of Operation Plan (COOP).**

Steven Gonzales, Risk and Safety Director presented this resolution.

**Councilor Frank F. Ortega** did you bring this up to the County or was this in place?

Steven Gonzales advised that this was a document this was originally built by the county and fit within our city and the Fire Chief approved.

**Councilor Frank F. Ortega** mentioned that we still have pending projects and that these need to be addressed.

Mayor Cordova asked for a motion.

Councilor Frank F. Ortega made a motion to approve.

Mayor Cordova asked for a second.

Councilor Ronnie Torres seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilor Danny Bernal Jr.	Yes	
Councilor Robert Noblin	Yes	
Councilor Ronnie Torres	Yes	
Councilor Frank F. Ortega	Yes	Motion Carried

**APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL of a Resolution for a Declaration of the City of Belen to implement a Utility Relief Resolution because of COVID-19.**

Mayor Jerah Cordova presented the Resolution

**Roseann Peralta, Finance Director** provided information regarding how this resolution would affect the City of Belen financially.

**Councilor Frank F. Ortega** advised some of the language needs to be omitted him does not want to hurt the city financially. He feels this would help the citizens get by.

**Councilor Ronnie Torres** commented about the balances, late fee's, and charges to possibly make it easier for citizens to pay over a period of time during the months we are set back due to COVID19.

**Roseann Peralta, Finance Director** advised yes this would have to happen and explained how this can possibly work. We will not be shutting anyone off.

**Councilor Frank F. Ortega** wants to make sure that citizens do pay their bills; this is not a time to stop paying. Thanked Roseann for working on this. In addition, just wants that one bullet to be removed from the Resolution.

**Roseann Peralta, Finance Director** Spoke regarding possibly putting some dumpsters in the parking lot for a while to assist with the overflow of resident's trash.

**Councilor Frank F. Ortega** mentioned that he thought this was already in place.

**Mayor Jerah Cordova** said yes we do for a couple of times a year; however, we pulled this option back as to not allow for abuse to the dumpsters.

**Councilor Frank Ortega** advised that the land fields are available for overflow of trash as well.

**Councilor Robert Noblin** regarding the "additional" container is the City of Belen billed for that "additional fee". Are we just absorbing that fee?

**Mayor Jerah Cordova** advised that him and Andrew DiCamillo, City Manager did have a discussion about this and that AC Disposal, the idea behind it is to shut down the recycling center when all of this started and talked about a fee of \$2700 a month. We are able to absorb that cost for an extra container up to the \$2700.

**Mayor Jerah Cordova** requests to remove #5 per **Councilor Frank F. Ortega** request. In addition, **Roseann Peralta, Finance Director** was able to speak to that.

Mayor Cordova asked for a motion.

Councilor Ronnie Torres made a motion to approve.

Mayor Cordova asked for a second.

Councilor Robert Noblin seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilor Danny Bernal Jr.	Yes	
Councilor Robert Noblin	Yes	
Councilor Ronnie Torres	Yes	
Councilor Frank F. Ortega	Yes	Motion Carried

**APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL to enter into a Land Lease Agreement between Belen Regional Airport and Joshua Sanchez to build an aircraft hangar.**

John Thompson, Airport Director as well as Joshua Sanchez presented this.

Mayor Cordova asked for a motion.  
Councilor Frank F. Ortega made a motion to approve.  
Mayor Cordova asked for a second.  
Councilor Ronnie Torres seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Councilor Danny Bernal Jr.     Yes  
Councilor Robert Noblin        Yes  
Councilor Ronnie Torres        Yes  
Councilor Frank F. Ortega     Yes     Motion Carried

**CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

Roseann Peralta reported on behalf of Andrew DiCamillo, we had a directors meeting via virtual.

- 1. Dorothy has requested that all documents should submitted in final form for all agenda items.
- 2. Angela sent out HR posters for all departments to display in their areas
- 3. Steve working on all the projects. We are waiting on Homeland Security for approval.
- 4. Discussion about early voting at Rec Center.

**COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CITY COUNCIL**

Councilor Danny Bernal Jr. stated:

Nothing to report

Councilor Robert Noblin stated:

Thanked all the front line workers. Feels a sense of ease during this time because we have some direction. He has been trying to support local businesses and encourage others to do so. Gave credit to Councilor Bernal for the "Believe in Belen". Recognized the Mayor, as he appreciate the manner has he has convened the current information via social media.

Councilor Ronnie Torres stated:

Nothing to report

Councilor Frank F.Ortega stated:

Gave a shout out to Aero Tec they came and put out several shields in some of the areas within City Hall. Gave a shout out to all front line workers. He wants to find a solution for the City of Belen.

Mayor Cordova stated:

His focus is on the COVID19 issues. We are taking steps to re-open on May 1, 2020. We are in a holding pattern. People are struggling right now and it is devastating, and try to help people

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Mayor Cordova asked for a motion to close Regular Council Meeting and enter Executive Session?

Councilor Robert Noblin made a motion.

Mayor Cordova asked for a second.

Councilor Frank F. Ortega seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Councilor Danny Bernal Jr.     Yes

Councilor Robert Noblin      Yes  
Councilor Ronnie Torres      Yes  
Councilor Frank F. Ortega      Yes      Motion Carried

Mayor Cordova asked for a motion to enter back into Regular Council Meeting from Executive Session?  
Councilor Robert Noblin made a motion.  
Mayor Cordova asked for a second.  
Councilor Frank F. Ortega seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:  
Councilor Danny Bernal Jr.      Yes  
Councilor Robert Noblin      Yes  
Councilor Ronnie Torres      Yes  
Councilor Frank F. Ortega      Yes      Motion Carried

**EXECUTIVE SESSION ACTION ITEM**

Mayor Jerah advised that no action be taken in Executive Session.

Mayor Cordova asked for a motion to enter back into Regular Council Meeting from Executive Session.  
Councilor Frank F. Ortega made a motion.  
Mayor Cordova asked for a second.  
Councilor Ronnie Torres seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:  
Councilor Danny Bernal Jr.      Yes  
Councilor Robert Noblin      Yes  
Councilor Ronnie Torres      Yes  
Councilor Frank F. Ortega      Yes      Motion Carried

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Mayor Cordova asked for a motion to adjourn tonight's Regular Council Meeting.  
Councilor Frank F. Ortega made a motion to adjourn.  
Mayor Cordova asked for a second.  
Councilor Ronnie Torres seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:  
Councilor Danny Bernal Jr.      Yes  
Councilor Robert Noblin      Yes  
Councilor Ronnie Torres      Yes  
Councilor Frank F. Ortega      Yes      Motion Carried



  
Dorothy Flores, City Clerk

  
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Jerah Cordova, Mayor

CITY OF BELEN  
City Council Regular Meeting

April 20, 2020

PLEASE PRINT  
SIGN IN SHEET

PRINT NAME	REPRESENTING
<i>Joshua A Sanchez</i>	