

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

April 3, 2017

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 Roseann Peralta, Finance Department Director.

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

CITY MANAGER: Absent

CITY CLERK:

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 with the revision to move Item 7a, the Citizen Award of Valor, to Item 7 c. Items 7b and 7c would become Items 7a and 7b respectively. Councilor Ortega made a motion to approve the agenda with the revision. Mayor Cordova asked for a second. Councilor Gallegos seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Cordova asked for an approval of the minutes dated March 13, 2017. Councilor Ortega made a motion to approve the minutes. Mayor Cordova asked for a second. Councilor Gallegos seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

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

Mayor Cordova asked for an approval of the minutes dated March 20, 2017. Councilor Aragon made a motion to approve the minutes. Mayor Cordova asked for a second. Councilor Gallegos seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Cordova asked if there was anyone with a public comment.

Steve Ethridge asked the Council to consider installing a four-way stop at Castillo and 9th Street. There have been a lot of people going eastbound on Castillo and heading straight through the one-way in the wrong direction. Mr. Ethridge stated if there was a four-way stop, it would give drivers a second to think about and notice the signs that state Do Not Enter. He stated it may also slow drivers down. Councilor Carter reinforced the suggestion with a personal experience at that intersection.

Sherrick Roanhorse from Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) introduced himself to the Council. He stated he was the PNM point of contact for local government. Mr. Roanhorse stated, if there was anything he could do to assist the Council or the community, to contact him by telephone or email. He distributed business cards to the council. A copy of his business card is attached hereto and made an integral part of these minutes by reference. Mr. Roanhorse stated he spoke with the City Manager a few weeks ago and found there were some items that needed his follow up. He would like to come before the Council again to give a presentation on what PNM is doing for the community and overall.

PRESENTATIONS

Swearing in of new police officers, Marcos Hernandez and Trace Peperas: *Mayor Jerah Cordova*

Mayor Cordova swore in new police officers, Marcos Hernandez and Trace Pereras. The officers were presented with their certificates and badges by Chief Scott Connor. Mayor Cordova advised that there were refreshments provided and during the executive session would be a perfect time to celebrate. Chief Connor congratulated the two new officers, advised the Council that one more officer will be sworn in about three weeks from now and the Belen Police Department will be fully staffed.

Sandoval County Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Program: *Jude Quintana*

Ginny Thomas advised that the Sandoval County CASA Program has combined with Valencia County and changed the name of the organization to CASA Partners for New Mexico Kids. She explained that CASA is a court-appointed special advocate who reports directly to judges for children who are abused or neglected and in the Child Welfare System. Ms. Thomas gave a typical scenario of what it feels like to be a child coming into the system and how CASA volunteers step in to assist the children. The CASA volunteer becomes the one constant in a child's life during a traumatic event, staying with the child from adjudication to resolution of the case. CASA volunteers advocate for the child in the legal process and give the child a voice.

Jude Quintana thanked the Council. She shared that she has been a CASA volunteer for seven years and, in the last few years, there has been a breakdown of the leadership in Valencia County. Sandoval County sent over their stewards of the program to recover and repair Valencia County CASA. Ms. Quintana stated she knows there are competent people in Valencia County and is glad for the leadership from Sandoval County. CASA has hired locally, is providing professional training and is supporting Valencia County CASA recovery so it can be a program on its own. Ms. Quintana asked for assistance in informing the community about CASA and the work they do.

Mayor Cordova asked Ms. Quintana how to contact the CASA program and asked if there was a brochure. Maureen Nunez distributed some CASA Brochures. A copy of the brochure is attached hereto and made an integral part of these minutes by reference. She stated Valencia County is in dire need of volunteers to assist children onto the right path to becoming successful.

Mayor Cordova thanked the CASA representatives for all they do for the community.

Citizen Award of Valor: *Fire Chief Manny Garcia*

Chief Garcia advised the Council of the events of February 28, 2017. At approximately 11 a.m., the Fire Department was dispatched to Marquez Street for a possible structure fire. The engine crew arrived within four minutes of the initial dispatch and found that three citizens came to the aid of a neighbor. Chief Garcia stated he was proud to know that these three citizens would come to the aid of a stranger and stated this was a great example of normal, day-to-day people who care for their neighbors, strangers and fellow human beings. The fire was spotted by a neighbor of the residence along with two city employees who were in the area at the onset of the fire. Chief Garcia advised it appeared the fire started at the power pole of the home which pulled away from the breaker box causing sparks from the electrical source to fall onto bushes and leaf litter on the ground. Due to high winds on that day, the fire quickly spread onto the side of the home, reaching the soffits and roof. With the help of the three citizens and the rapid response of the Fire Department, the fire was quickly confined to the exterior of the home, saving the interior from any damage. The citizens used a garden hose to

control the flames before the arrival of the Fire Department. Chief Garcia presented the Citizen Award of Valor to citizen Luke Westfall and Belen employees, Paul Dominguez and Bruce Swearingin. All the councilors and the mayor personally thanked the recipients for their efforts and actions.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT – *Leona Vigil*

A copy of the report is attached hereto and made an integral part of these minutes by reference.

Roseann advised the Council that a Department Head meeting was held on 3/29/2017 where a Budget Training Workshop was done. She stated they were "getting a handle" on the budget for the new fiscal year. A Budget Hearing will be held on 4/19/2017; however, no time has been set. On 3/30/2017, Roseann attended a Valencia Regional Dispatch Meeting to approve their budget for the new fiscal year. Belen's payment increased approximately \$4000 but the charges for services will be reduced because another community is also paying into it. She stated there was a Fire Station Meeting on 4/2/2017 to discuss some of the items involved with the construction of the new fire station. The issue of the ground contamination was discussed in the meeting. The question arose if it was a Contamination Fuel Management plan or a remediation plan. Councilor Gallegos stated he also attended the meeting and recommended a workshop for this issue. He stated there is funding but it is going to fall short because the projected site has been found to be contaminated. Councilor Gallegos advised there are a couple of things that can be done to remediate which will cost extra money or the site can be lined and cleaned up somewhat. Either of these options will cost approximately \$300,000 to \$500,000. The engineer advised building cannot be done with the budget on hand. Councilor Aragon asked if another location could be sought out for the new fire station. Councilor Gallegos advised that would be an issue for the workshop. Roseann advised the Council of the District 8 Meeting being held in Belen on Friday, 4/7/2017 and stated a Notice of Quorum has been released. Councilor Ortega stated he wanted to see if the Lawrence Drive Resolution could be expedited. Roseann advised the Council that the Lawrence Drive Resolution was on the Agenda for the next Council Meeting to be held on 4/17/2017. Councilor Ortega also stated he was concerned about the Fire Mutual Aid Agreement because Living Cross is no longer in service. He is concerned for the citizens of Belen and would like to know what will be done to ensure that the city can comply with state laws.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CITY COUNCIL

Councilor Gallegos advised that he attended a meeting in Socorro on 3/28/2017. He represents Belen/Valencia County with the El Camino Real Section 8 and HUD Housing. They are moving along and restructuring how individuals/families qualify for housing. Sites for more homes are being sought to participate in the program to help more people afford housing. He also attended the RSVP meeting on 03/28/2017. Most of the meeting involved planning for the Volunteer Luncheon to be held in April. On 4/1/2017, Councilor Gallegos attended the dedication of some musical instruments donated by the Pilot Club of Belen to Eagle Park. He stated the Pilot Club invested several thousands of dollars in these instruments and stated he appreciates what the club is doing.

Councilor Aragon had a Belen Main Street Meeting which included a Webinar and a meeting to discuss how to keep the trains here on Saturdays. She stated, when people take the train to Belen, the Harvey House, the downtown district and several other areas are attractions to see. Councilor Aragon stated the American Planning Association (APA) New Mexico came to Belen and toured the Harvey House, Becker and Dalies. She thanked Steve Tomita who helped with some of the tours. She also attended the Eagle Park musical instruments dedication. Councilor Aragon again stated that the police, fire department and any public safety need volunteers but the citizens of Belen need to look out for each other.

Councilor Carter stated he found an article in the Desert Dispatch from Barstow, California on the internet which mentioned the 13th Annual Chili Cook-off and Belen Fiestas held the last weekend. He stated he will request advance notice of next year's event. Councilor Carter and Mr. Ethridge will be visiting Whitfield Valencia Soil and Water Conservation District. Councilor Carter stated he was sent an application for some funding for Willie Chavez Park.

Mayor Cordova advised he met with NM DOT on 3/23/2017 for their quarterly in Belen. He stated he was advised there are a lot of projects NM DOT cannot accomplish because they do not have the funding. There was some information about grant difficulties Belen has been having that is being looked into at the state level. The state has to write a letter for Belen to clear up an issue. Mayor Cordova also advised he had a meeting with an investor out of San Francisco on 3/29/2017 looking at buying large swaths of local land. The investor is interested in a couple of sites, one in Los Lunas and one in Belen, and wanted to get a feel for what our community was all about.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE DISCUSSION OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING NEGOTIATION REGARDING AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE, COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES (AFSME) COUNCIL 18 AS ALLOWED PER THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT SECTION 10-15-1 (H-5) AND FOR THE DISCUSSION OF ONGOING LITIGATION, IN REFERENCE TO THE HOSPITAL, AS ALLOWED PER THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT SECTION 10-15-1(H-7)

Mayor Cordova asked for a motion to enter into executive session. Councilor Gallegos made a motion. Mayor Cordova asked for a second. Councilor Ortega seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote:

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

Mayor Cordova asked for a motion to re-enter an open meeting from a closed meeting. Councilor Ortega made a motion. Mayor Cordova asked for a second. Councilor Aragon seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote:

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

Mayor Cordova asked for an attestation that discussion was limited to collective bargaining as allowed per the Open Meetings Act Section 10-15-1 (H-5) and the ongoing litigation in reference to the hospital as allowed per the Open Meetings Act Section 10-15-1(H-7). Councilor Gallegos made a motion. Mayor Cordova asked for a second. Councilor Aragon seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote:

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

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Cordova asked for a motion to adjourn tonight's Regular Council Meeting. Councilor Aragon made a motion to adjourn. Councilor Gallegos seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote:

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



Jerah Cordova, Mayor



Leona Vigil, City Manager, CMC