



City of Rio Communities Council Workshop
City Council Chambers - 360 Rio Communities Blvd
Rio Communities, NM 87002
Monday, September 12, 2022 3:00 PM
Minutes

Please silence all electronic devices.

Call to Order

- Mayor Joshua Ramsell called the workshop to order at 3:01 pm.

Attendees

- PRESENT: Mayor Joshua Ramsell, Mayor Pro-tem Margaret R. Gutjahr, Councilor Arthur Apodaca, Councilor Lawrence Gordon, Councilor Jimmie Winters.
 - Present: Manager Dr. Martin Moore, Municipal Clerk Elizabeth Adair, Deputy Clerk Trainee, Lalena Aragon, Finance Officer Stephanie Finch, Accounting Specialties/CPO Angela Valadez, Finance Renee Adams & Economic Development Consultant Ralph Mims.

Presentation: AREA (Albuquerque Reginal Economic Alliance)

- ❖ AREAs President and CEO Danielle Casey gave a little of her background and began her presentation on AREA, Albuquerque Regional Economic Alliance, Who is AREA, the mission, reorganization, why they changed their name, as well as why they changed their mission statement.
- ❖ Ms. Casey explained the AREA's core service, which included research and labor analytics, site selection, marketing, cold lead generation, existing business growth support and market intelligence, workforce strategies and talents and enhance competitiveness, among other things as well and continued with the presentation.
- ❖ Ms. Casey continued to explain what they are up against including intense competition, inadequate supplies, and sub-optimal infrastructures.
- ❖ Manager Dr. Moore asked infrastructure is subpar, do you know how the metro area is ranked as far as infrastructure investment.
- ❖ Ms. Casey said this would be a great number and would have to get that information and continued the presentation.
- ❖ Ms. Casey started to explain the laying a new foundation section by explaining creating and adopting AREA 1.0, renaming, bylaws, public/private partners, 501c3, capital campaign and continued with the discussion on explaining a national identity as a leading location for business.
- ❖ Ms. Casey said they have a good year so far and explained they have had 6 inquiries in the last week but 51 in total, 6 project announcements, 1,845 jobs with \$2.56 billion in capital investment also \$1.63 billion of new and annually recurring economic activity and continued the presentation.
- ❖ Ms. Casey explained that they are asking all government and public sector partners to come and invest at the same per capita level, which is the agreement for services rate of \$0.36 per capital annually.
- ❖ Ralph Mims asked what are some of the main challenges.

- ❖ Ms. Casey said if you don't have infrastructure or ready to go sites or even clear site development and timelines then it doesn't matter. She continued to say if they can not show they could develop or will develop or are building the labor force it doesn't matter.
- ❖ Ralph Mims asked how do they rank with the other 4 counties.
- ❖ Ms. Casey said it all depends on the numbers and levels of sites.
- ❖ Councilor Apodaca said he personally thinks AREA has a lot to offer the city for a minimal investment, it is great to be affiliated with the company.

Accounts payable report

- Finance Clerk Adams gave the accounts payable report for items over \$500.00; 2 accounts for GSD in the amount of \$10,557.80; Amazon Business in the amount of \$840.51; Tyler Technologies in the amount of \$567.98; Robles, Rael, & Anaya in the amount of \$3,860.14; PNM in the amount of \$875.06; Bank of America in the amount of \$1,261.44; Valencia County Animal Control in the amount of \$2,383.30; Village of Los Lunas in the amount of \$7,741.50; Ahern Rentals Inc. in the amount of 574.10; Tabet Lumber in the amount of \$2,135.70; Craig Tires in the amount of \$6,782.21; 2 accounts for Dova Inc in the amount of \$1,250; PNM in the amount of \$1,112.42; Bank of America in the amount of \$658.45; TLC in the amount of \$1,205.92; Bank of America in the amount of \$1,985.62; Larry Cearley in the amount of \$3,822.64.
- Councilor Winter said looks like the catch and release animal control is really working.

Resolution 2022 - XX Travel Policy

- Finance Officer Finch said that we need to update our Travel Policy due to the state per diem rates have gone up and said that we will be bringing this up yearly during budget time. She continued to break down how much it has changed and started with the \$30 a day budget for food that has went up to \$59 as well as overnight cost changes.
- Finance Officer Finch explained it has gone up substantially due to years it not changing at all and said the attorneys have looked it over and are happy with the outcome.
- Councilor Apodaca asked if this was State driven.
- Finance Officer Finch said yes it is, and we have to follow the State and when the auditors come they would like to see policies in place for certain things.

Resolution 2022 - BAR #1

- Finance Officer Finch explained the budget adjustments due to the rescinding of the property tax resolution which would bring down the revenue and bring down the expenses to match and started to explain each decrease starting with \$273,567 for property tax, a decrease for the Police Chief salary which is only for January-June, a decrease in Code Enforcement positions, and then stated they are cutting the library position.
- Finance Officer Finch continued to explain they are reducing the transfer out funds by \$159,665 as well as reducing the transfer in funds as well as expenses.
- Councilor Gordon asked if there was a way to get a part time librarian instead of cutting out completely.
- Manager Dr. Moore stated with working with the clerk's office, the library will be increasing hours from 10 to 15 a week to be eligible for state funding and the Assistant Clerk will be utilizing a portion of her time to help take care of the library.

Continuation of Services - Valencia County - Animal Control

- Manager Dr. Moore explained that Valencia Animal control is the only game in town and one of the challenges is that once the animals go, they disappear and with that happening we are not seeing much revenue. He continued to explain the animals are either just left for adoption or left to be put down but hasn't been in increase in cost.
- Councilor Apodaca said this is just something that is necessary to continue with as we do not have a lot of other choices as a city.
- Mayor Ramsell asked if they bill quarterly or monthly.
- Finance Officer Finch said monthly and sometimes they run a little behind.
- Councilor Winters said not long ago this was the number one complaint we had from citizens and haven't heard this being the case in quite some time now.

Renewal of Membership to MRCOG

- Manager Dr. Moore said this one is on him and with talking to the Finance Officer, this renewal of membership with cost and fees for Council of Governments this includes these various committees.
- Manager Dr. Moore said one question that is asked from the Council of Governments is what do they do. He continued to say they have provided a number of different maps to move forward on the economic development issues that we've been having meetings with.
- Mr. Mims said they have also provided great economic development data as well.
- Councilor Gordon asked what is the difference between them and AREA.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained COG is a quasi governmental agency and have several in different parts of the state and continued to explain everything they do that is different then AREA. He then explained AREA is about bringing big economic based businesses to the state.

Adding Chief Tabet to VRECC board - replacing Mayor Pro Tem Gutjahr

- Mayor Ramsell explained the board to VRECC is the 911 call center and there is representatives from the county who sit on the board who are mainly for the law enforcement community and now also looking to have representatives from the fire department as well. He continued to say this is not replacing our Mayor Pro tem which has to be an elected official on the city council. He finished by saying they are just looking into adding Chief Tabet to the VRECC board representing the City of Rio Communities.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained that as a point of information comes from the county fire chief asking for additional voice as there is a strong law enforcement voice on the board but not quite as strong on the fire side. He continues to say he also occupies the other seat on the board.

Resolution 2022 - XX Dangerous property (407 Horner)

- Fire Chief Tabet explained the property is the little purple building at the corner of Horner and 47 has been a place where 911 calls have been placed from migrants, overdoses and other things as well. He continues to explain they deem it as a dangerous property because it has a high potential for fire as well as a high potential for death.
- Councilor Apodaca asked if the city does the demolition.

- Fire Chief Tabet said yes, they would attempt to locate the owners, which have been to no avail as of now, and the city will take on the demolition by a third-party company and bill the owners or put a lien on the property.
- Mr. Mims said this property is zoned for C-1 and is a potential for economic development as well as potential for retail. He continues to say we do know where the owners are.

Authorizing payment of Wildland Fire Deployment

- Fire Chief Tabet said as they know they sent out Andrew Good to Washington and Greg Gallegos to Cape Cod for two weeks. Mr. Good was gone for 18 days and paid for his rooms upfront with a P card and will be getting back 100% of the money as well as getting paid hourly there which we will have a reimbursement and is asking if the city would pay them for the job they have done and the representation of the city. Mr. Gallegos was instrumental working and helping them in every way they asked. He said both have been asked back, but we have said no but would send other when and if we could.
- Councilor Apodaca asked if this will be reimbursement by the State.
- Fire Chief Tabet said yes, it will be.

Building of Parks

- Manager Dr. Moore started a discussion by saying we have had discussions with architects, on cost as well as efforts it will take in order to get a park larger or small in the city. He continued to say the answers are related to what kind of infrastructure, what kind of water is available, is there any kind of sewer for a restroom, as well as how good is the access into and out of the park.
- Councilor Winters said what he has noticed was the price has doubled/tripled and his suggestion is not to spend our money on developing a small park because you would tie up everything, we have available and wouldn't have anything really to show for it. He continued to explain that they are better off picking bigger park that has some infrastructure and try to do a trail and continue to develop as the funds come in.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained a \$50k park 5 years ago is now \$200k for that same park and continued with the discussion.
- Councilor Winters explained they had talked about putting in gravel instead of adding anything else and he had said gravel is almost the same amount as putting in concrete after grading and compacting you have to do as well as the erosion problem is significantly.
- Councilor Apodaca asked is the major expense across the board or real estate or playground equipment.
- Manager Dr. Moore said it is cross the board and have been increases in price that were starting before he became city manager in 2021 and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Apodaca asked if we have a site that we can do minimal development to start to let the residents know we have started working on a park with intention of adding to it.
- Manager Dr. Moore said yes there are.
- Councilor Gutjahr said we were supposed to meet with someone and has been trying to reach out but would like the Mayor and City Manager to express dates to arrange the meeting.
- Manager Dr. Moore and Mayor Ramsell both said yes and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Apodaca ask if we are going to take the same approach we are with our Police Department as in start small and add as we go.

- Councilor Gordon asked how long is the grant agreement we received last year last.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained in June 2024 but highly recommended that there be some type of an expenditure and continued with the discussion.

Schedule of Council Retreat & topics – Discussion

- Manager Dr. Moore said we have some issues that we felt are important to discuss generally with all of the city council members. He explained that all four members of council have expressed to him that they need to have a form where all members know what is going on with each committee for everyone to be on the same communication page.
- Manager Dr. Moore continued explaining there will be two things coming up, the public safety taskforce and the Economic Development taskforce as well and will be coming to council with more information soon. He continued to give examples of the taskforces and what they should be looking forward to. He finished by saying himself and the finance office will be making a COVID free budget for next year and what important infrastructures are they going to be focusing on and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Apodaca asked are they looking at consecutive days or split days.
- Manager Dr. Moore said both formats are fine with him.
- Councilor Gordon asked what times would they be having the meetings?
- Councilor Gutjahr said she does think it will be more than one day and she is fine with both as well but does believe this is important and needs to be discussed and continued the discussion.
- Clerk Adair said the city hall calendar has from the 17th to the 20th of October is free.
- Manager Dr. Moore said planning and zoning do have a meeting on the 20th and if council did want to discuss things with them, they can combine meetings to discuss matters as well.

Public Comment

- Manager Dr. Moore read an email from Dick Irvin “I wish to speak on 3 matters, code enforcement seems to be lacking. Two purpose police department with first a chief and one officer and possibly another 2 to 3 months later, how can you give 24/7 protection? How can you respond to multiple calls of crime being committed at or within minutes of each other? Number 3, you, the fire chief, Mr. Tabet to Mayor Pro tem doesn’t he have to resign as fire chief? And if not, how can he be impartial in matters concerned the fire department come before the council?”
- Manager Dr. Moore said he did send a response email and made sure council was in the email as well.

Manager Report

- Manager Dr. Moore stated that code enforcement has issued 60 door knocks, and out of the 60, 20 are in compliance, 40 are receiving 10-day letters and then said they are working systematically through the city and still encourage help from residents. He continued to state they have officially done their first initial drive through the city end to end and now are doing their follow-ups with, as a city, about 6 condemned as unsafe properties, two properties have been taken care of and the third was voluntary. He finished by explaining they are in the process of getting a title search for a property and it isn’t cheap but trying to get as much information as possible before moving forward.
- Councilor Gordon asked with the title search would that cost be on the property owner as well.

- Manager Dr. Moore said any search that we have, to his understanding, can be passed to the property owner.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained that the Police Chief announcement and description is ready to go and will be posted this week.
- Councilor Gordon asked if this is a New Mexico search or nationwide.
- Manager Dr. Moore said they are not limiting it to just New Mexico but understanding of the local laws and regulations are highly important.
- Councilor Apodaca asked if they are going to require the chief and officers be a resident of the city.
- Manager Dr. Moore said he would not recommend that but highly recommend it, because the ability to recruit will be difficult and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked if she missed the update on RFP-Legal Services.
- Manager Dr. Moore said no she didn't and started talking about it.

a) Update on RFP - Legal Services

- Manager Dr. Moore explained himself, Finance Officer Finch and Former member Robert Chavez will be on the committee and can not have any members of council on the committee due to decision making and will be having an evaluation review and there will be a few opinions that will be discussed. He continued to say there are two sealed responses to the RFP.
- Finance Officer Finch said they are not public record until they have been rewarded.
- Manager Dr. Moore said the committee will be getting together tomorrow and the committee can only have a recommendation as the council will be able to deliberate and have a decision.

b) City wide cleanup

c) Pothole update

Council General Discussion & Future Agenda Items

- Councilor Apodaca said in relations to the triangle piece of land, the caretaker agreed to paint the wall and fix the flagpole in order for a flag to be hung as well as fix the light to light up the pole.
- Councilor Gordon had nothing to report.
- Councilor Winters had nothing to report.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked about the agenda for the executive session, where they supposed to have a position under 'limited personal matters'.
- Manager Dr. Moore said they do not have any personal matters to discuss tonight.
- Mayor Ramsell mentioned that the 10th is recognized as Indigenous Peoples Day, so city hall will be closed where this would be the first meeting of the month of October.
- Clerk Adair said she did have that for the next meeting but to keep it in mind for next meeting to make a decision on the day they would like to reschedule.

Adjourn

- The workshop was adjourned at 4:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth (Lisa) Adair, Municipal Clerk
(Transcribed by Cheyenne Sullivan, Assistant Clerk)

Date: _____

Approved:

Joshua Ramsell,
Mayor

Margaret R. Gutjahr,
Mayor Pro-tem/Councilor

Arthur Apodaca,
Councilor

Lawrence R. Gordon,
Councilor

Jimmie Winters,
Councilor