



**City of Rio Communities Council Workshop**  
**City Council Chambers - 360 Rio Communities Blvd**  
**Rio Communities, NM 87002**  
**Monday, February 13, 2023 3:00 PM**  
**Minutes**

*Please silence all electronic devices.*

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**Call to Order**

- Mayor Joshua Ramsell called the regular workshop to order at 3:09 pm.

**Attendees**

- PRESENT: Mayor Joshua Ramsell, Mayor Pro-tem Margaret R. Gutjahr, Councilor Arthur Apodaca, Councilor Lawrence Gordon, Councilor Jimmie Winters.
  - Manager Dr. Martin Moore, Municipal Clerk Elizabeth, Deputy Clerk Lalena Aragon, Finance Officer Stephanie Finch, Accounting Specialist/CPO Angela Valadez, Fire Chief Andrew Tabet, City Attorney Randy Van Vleck.

**Presentations : Economic Development Taskforce**

- ❖ Manager Dr. Moore gave a presentation on the economic development task force findings and explained with working with the Economic Development Taskforce, they have come up with a plan as to what we would like to see here in the community. (See packet for presentation). He stated they broke everything into categories starting with Housing, Parks/Recreation Amenities, Supermarket, Pharmacy, Bank/Credit Union, Fiber, Landscaping, Shipping, Insurance/Professional Office Space, Fitness/Wellness, Hardware Store, Electronic Sales and Repair, Windshield Replacement/Auto Body/ Detailing, and Auto Parts/Equipment Parts Store, as well as broke them down into Actions, Strength, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats.
- ❖ Mr. Mims asked if the report is just in house or can it be commercial realtor or developer as well.
- ❖ Manager Dr. Moore said having this on the board it is now public information, but as far as packaging we are anticipating it will be packaged to different plans as well. He continued to say we have a solid presentation to seek grants, mainly infrastructure grants and continued the presentation. He stated there are different tools for retail, medical, temporary lodging, truck stop, attractions, and RV parks and gave a detail for each of the categories.
- ❖ Mr. Mims said when talking about dilapidated buildings they need to get taken care of and is a very high priority right now.
- ❖ Manager Dr. Moore said yes, it is and we have 2 tracks which one being the incentive track and the other being a civil track and continued with the presentation stating what the partnership with the VCBI is all about as well as the fiber/high technology.
- ❖ Mr. Mims said the business incubator has currently 8 clients and would like more space for clients and look to expand within the next few years.
- ❖ Manager Dr. Moore continued with the presentation with explaining what we can do as a city for a medical facility come to the city.
- ❖ Councilor Gutjahr asked regarding sending a letter out for the medical portion, looking at a broader spectrum, we have an advantage since we have a really skilled crew that work at the fire department and you could have a mini-ER or urgent care to start with as well as have a helicopter pad, but we can possibly think broader of what we can do.

- ❖ Manager Dr. Moore said thank you for bringing that up because we are in a lack of facilities in this area is a critical thing.
- ❖ Fire Chief Tabet said we had a total of 105 calls in the last month within the city with a majority being medical as well as 3 being mental evaluations, 2 suicide attempts, so this would be much needed.
- ❖ Manager Dr. Moore said this is not a presentation to ask you to say ok, but the beginning of an outlook on what the city can use and what the citizens have asked for. He then continued with the presentation starting aback up with Temporary Lodging which Airbnb's fall into this category as well as Allow Mother-in-law quarters, Accessory Dwelling units, and Riverside or Mountain view properties. He explained Rio Communities needs to be on tourism maps and with this there has to be different attractions or special events.
- ❖ Manager Dr. Moore continued to explain Truck Stops and what types of positive outcomes can come out of these as well as adding different attractions like, bicycle racing, dog shows, food/music festival, and parades amongst other things for the city. He continued to talk about RV parks and how this will help when people want to stop for an event and then be able to be on their way again.
- ❖ Councilor Gutjahr said going back to the grocery stores and the letters we have sent out; how do we follow up with this.
- ❖ Manager Dr. Moore explained we do follow up if we get feedback, and part of Mr. Mims contract allows him to go to trade shows now since we are post-COVID.
- ❖ Mr. Mims said we need to get the letters out to other entities as well.
- ❖ Councilor Gutjahr said going back to the temporary lodging, with working with someone and having a conversation about where she is living she mentioned she is a traveling contractor and is here for 6 months to help. She continued to say the lady explained some of the workers bring camper trailers and park for the derivation of time.
- ❖ Manager Dr. Moore said for physical therapy they have an individual that comes down for a few months at a time and there is a network that allows individuals to be able to do this.
- ❖ Councilor Gutjahr said there is a lot of untapped situations.
- ❖ Councilor Winters said there is currently only 4 to 5 spaces in the senior park that would fit the criteria.
- ❖ Manager Dr. Moore said we are stating we have our own brand as a city and have an amazing number of things for the city in our comprehensive plan. He then continued the presentation and explained there are somethings we need to update on the economic development plan ordinance and if council liked the presentation we will definitely forward this to the planning and zoning commission as well as if the taskforce would like to continue that we start as soon as possible to get things moving forward.
- ❖ Councilor Apodaca said once we get the first big hit, whether it be a supermarket or doctors office, he thinks it will definitely get the ball going.
- ❖ Councilor Winters said one thing that wasn't mentioned was we have approximately 200 home based businesses in town, and we should encourage them to utilize the incubator or whatever is necessary for them to grow.

#### **Accounts payable report**

- Accounting specialist CPO Valadez went over accounts payable items over \$500.00; H&E Equipment in the amount of \$2,905.34; NM Local Government Law in the amount of \$3,962.79; Tyler Technologies in the amount of \$1,168.43; NM Gas in the amount of \$2,260.77; Palmetto

in the amount of \$2,174.94; Albuquerque Publishing in the amount of \$1,181.04; 2 accounts for Animal Control in the amount of \$2,048.45; Village of Los Lunas in the amount of \$8,176.75; WEX Bank in the amount of \$971.28; Tabet Luber in the amount of \$1,193.85; Ortega and Sons in the amount of \$504.63; ABC Door Company in the amount of \$991.88; WEX Bank in the amount of \$1,038.57; Sharp Electronics in the amount of \$1,301; NM Gas in the amount of \$1,615.35; PNM in the amount of \$01.55; EMS eSchedule in the amount of \$2,268; Penguin Management in the amount of \$1,679.63; Boundtree in the amount of \$508.92; 3 accounts for Playcore Wisconsin in the amount of \$38,991.13; HEI in the amount of \$2,809.38; Total Glass in the amount of \$3,000; 2 accounts for APIC in the amount of \$14,443.02; 5 accounts for Construction Coordinators in the amount of \$21,913.95.

- Councilor Gordon asked regarding the ABC doors, what happened to the bay door.
- Fire Chief Tabet explained all of the doors are heavy and with the bay door in question the continuous use made the wood on the top gave way as well as the roller part collapsed and shattered a window and was deemed unusable and had them come in as an emergency request. He continued to say they went out and repaired the damages as well as reinforced them for future use.

#### **Moving forward with Construction of Phase 1 of the City Hall Multi-use complex**

- Finance Officer Finch said they sent you a letter in the packet and received a quote from HDI with a total cost of \$604,719.15 and went over the grants starting with grant #E2798 for \$284,005.21, grant #F2947 for \$271,046.15 as well as city funds for \$49,667.79 to obligate these funds for the construction and requesting an additional \$60,000 after the construction is complete for furnishings. She continued to explain the breakdown as to what everything will cost and stated they had HDI add a contingency of 8% just in case nothing has to be modified.
- Councilor Gutjahr said she is grateful this is getting completed as well as the outlays have been sitting for a few years now.
- Finance Officer Finch said this project will close both of these accounts out completely.
- Councilor Winters asked if this would complete phase 1.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained the roofers will be starting that project tomorrow.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked if the columns will stay.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained they are in the plans for phase II.
- Mayor Ramsell said it is required to spend a certain amount of money on art for the city, which is a state law and then said this is pretty aggressive timeline permitting materials show up in time which looks like end of May beginning of June for it to be completed.

#### **Approval for (2) two Limited Term Code Enforcement Positions**

- Manager Dr. Moore explained at the end of last year we started a pilot effort for code enforcement, which was appointed to the fire department, under the direction of the fire chief, to have several individuals to hire to go around the city and help. He said a limited term position can run past 6 months and the discretion of Council. He would personally recommend that it would be approved for the rest of 2023 fiscal year and then we will come back at the 2023-2024 fiscal year to extend the positions as well as go over budget.

### **Resolution 2023- XX Disposition of Obsolete, Worn-out or Unusable Tangible Personal Property**

- Fire Chief Tabet explained they have 300ft, 3-inch fire hose, 100ft, 1 ¾ inch fire hose, 100ft, 5-inch hose, 6 bunker jacks and 1 pair of bunker bottoms. He continued to explain that usually we have given our used equipment to Mexico but with this unique case we made an appointment to look at what we had and what was not going to mess with our day to day use but that are still feasible for others to use. He explained the reason they are not in use by the fire department is due to month and year on the equipment and with that being said he would like to donate the items.
- Mr. Mims said as you know his family is from the eastern Caribbean country of Antigua and Barbuda which only have a population of 100k people. He explained he has friend from the Embassy of Antigua who expressed they are struggling with fire equipment needs. He thanked council for considering donating the fire equipment. He finally stated that he would like to set up a zoom call with the priminister and council for them to express their gratitude.

### **Resolution 2023 - XX Change of Fire Department Name**

- Fire Chief Tabet explained that the initiative was to change the name slowly within these last few years, with the trucks already saying the City of Rio Communities we would like both stations as well as the rest of the trucks to say it as well. He continued to say when he first started the station was called Rio Grande fire and rescue and with this the fire department started to feel like an island as to where we were just having the city backing us up, and as a solidarity we all work together.
- Councilor Winters said we fought hard to get the fire department and very happy you are hear as well as he thinks this solidifies the transition.
- Councilor Apodaca asked what is the process for states approval.
- Fire Chief Tabet said he talked to a state fires office and said as soon as the resolution is passed, they will update everything on their side automatically.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked if we are the only fire department that services larger then our district.
- Fire Chief Tabet explained no and gave an example as to how Belen services parts of the county.
- Councilor Gutjahr said the only question that I have is that how we would word it that this would encompassing district 1.
- Fire Chief Tabet said we can have things say servicing Terra Grande Estates.
- Councilor Gordon said he's glad to see this happen and showing them, this is Rio Communities and its shows we are a growing community.
- Mayor Ramsell said what everyone has said is true and this has been a lot of work moving forward.

### **Economic Development Taskforce plan**

- Councilor Winters said he would like to thank everyone that has helped work up this plan.
- Councilor Gordon said he would also like to thank the City Manager for putting this together.
- Mayor Ramsell said he was unable to get to every meeting but did get the either listen or get a report back and for the amount of time this was in the works this was straight to the point as well as can always go back to add what needs to be added.

## **Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) Valencia County Fire Department and Rio Communities Fire Department**

- Fire Chief Tabet explained this is a tender that is a 2k gallon truck and will be eventually donated from county but with this agreement this will have us share the truck for now. He continued to say this is one of two that we will be getting from the county, and due to fire season coming up and now having to obtain 6k gallons of water for each district but now this has changed. He explained both trucks are older but are in great shape as well as being serviced by the county before they turn around to donate the trucks to us.
- Councilor Gordon asked how long do they last.
- Fire Chief Tabet said it depends on how you maintain them, they should last 10-20 years.

## **Governmental Services Agreement between the State of NM, Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department and the City of Rio Communities - for a Wildland Fire Coordinator**

- Fire Chief Tabet explained himself as well as the Wildland Coordinator applied for a grant for the city for \$25k for a coordinator. He continued to say he was recommended to put in this grant and the City of Rio Communities fire department is the number 1 department who helps with mutual aid. He explained with 44 statewide fire departments, the grant was awarded to 10 fire departments with Rio Communities being one of them. He stated the money can be used to hire a wildland coordinator or working with Rob Barr.
- Councilor Winters said it was a fairly long document but are we safe to do this.
- Fire Chief Tabet said yes, we are.
- Councilor Apodaca asked would this be a new hire.
- Fire Chief Tabet said this would be a question to ask the City Manager because this person would be strictly in charge of wildland.
- Manager Dr. Moore said most likely this would be a contract hire since it is a grant and wouldn't be recommending, at this point in time, any type of full-time position.
- Councilor Gutjahr said she didn't realize this was a separate document then asked could this be syphoned.
- Fire Chief explained this would have to be term work and isn't sure the exact verbiage.
- Councilor Gutjahr congratulated the chief.
- Mayor Ramsell said this is a good thing to have someone who has the background and experience as well as who can gather the right individuals that are needed for certain areas plus the possibility of sending our own individuals for the fires elsewhere.

## **Public Comment**

- Mr. Westmoreland of Goddard Ct., He started off by telling the Chief hopefully they get the 6k gallon tankers due to the last fire as it was claimed it took that much to put out the fire. He mentioned the Tillery building is a never-ending story that is coming down from the back and that property is the key for everything Dr. Moore has talked about and if they tare it all down it would be a waste to leave the trees and rubbish which would make a mess, he would like to see a Whataburger, bowling ally and a small strip mall in that area. He then said we do not have signage saying welcome to Rio Communities coming from the south and this would be great for us to have. He then said he had 2 guys break into a house next to him which was vacant and he does clean the yards as well as cut a few trees. He continued to say had a car stolen from the same residents place that was broken into where they took a towed it, so if you see someone

driving with a car on the back might want to make sure it isn't yours. He then said when he was mayor before they had a rule to require him to make so many contacts per day as a police chief. He further went to talk about code enforcement and understands the legal part of this on reporting junk cars, but a neighbor just ripped off the tag he had and just throw it on the ground. He is pro business and pro-development and isn't sure if he will be speaking at the next meeting, but he thinks the city is doing it right as well as the people and is very excited about getting the police department for the city.

## **Manager Report**

### **Budget Calendar for FY 2023**

- Manager Dr. Moore said the first request is the budget sheets done and the first task is to get the department heads and make sure they have everything they need so work on the budgets. He continued to say where are revenues are and pushing ourselves in getting the budgets done thoroughly, correctly and in a timely manner. He stated there are a few issues that are not on the budget calendar due to specific tasks with one dealing with fees, and the second is weight scale. He said there is a third issue concerning infrastructure but would like to have that discussion during the budget as well.

### **Administrative Calendar**

- Clerk Adair explained everything on the calendar in blue is for the upcoming election but has not received the calendar from the county clerk as of yet so she has not received the exact dates as to when everything is required, but nothing has to be done till June. She continued to say there will be early voting the city but with talking with Dr. Moore, we wouldn't know where to place any ballots due to the building renovations.
- Mayor Ramsell asked if we can still request the senior center.
- Clerk Adair said the senior center will be an automatic place on election day, but they senior center will not be taking early voting.

## **Council General Discussion & Future Agenda Items**

- Councilor Apodaca nothing to report.
- Councilor Gutjahr said she contacted Senator Stefanics and Representative Armstrong to see if we can have a memorial drafted to honor us for our 10 years as a city and Senator Stefanics said yes, and we need to figure out if we want it presented and the verbiage on the presentation as well but haven't heard from Representative Armstrong as of yet.
- Manager Dr. Moore asked if there was a deadline.
- Councilor Gutjahr said no but does know they present them during session.
- Attorney Van Vleck said the introduction deadline is in about a week.
- Councilor Gordon asked if we received the results from the audit.
- Manager Dr. Moore said yes, and the information will be presented possibly on the February 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- Councilor Winters said there a 6 people and possibly more that are interested in priorities and if it would be possible for the 4th quarter for a review or to make adjustments if necessary.
- Mayor Ramsell nothing to report.

## **Adjourn**

- The City Council regular workshop was adjourned at 5:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Elizabeth F. Adair, Municipal Clerk

(Transcribed by Cheyenne Sullivan, Assistant to the Municipal Clerk)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved:

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Joshua Ramsell,  
Mayor

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Margaret R. Gutjahr,  
Mayor Pro-tem/Councilor

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Arthur Apodaca,  
Councilor

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Lawrence R. Gordon,  
Councilor

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Jimmie Winters,  
Councilor