



City of Rio Communities Council Workshop
City Council Chambers - 360 Rio Communities Blvd
Rio Communities, NM 87002
Monday, March 28, 2022 3:00 PM
Minutes

Please silence all electronic devices.

Call to Order

- Mayor Joshua Ramsell called to order the City Council Workshop at 3:01 pm.

Attendees

- PRESENT: Mayor Joshua Ramsell, Mayor Pro-tem Margaret R. Gutjahr, Councilor Arthur Apodaca, Councilor Jimmie Winters.
ABSENT: Councilor Lawrence Gordon
Present: City Manager Dr. Martin Moore, Municipal Clerk Elizabeth Adair, Finance Officer Stephanie Finch, Accounting Specialist Angela Valadez, Finance Clerk Renee Adams.

Presentations

Homewise

- Mrs. Cooper, who is the Community Engagement Manager, is with Mrs. Gonzalez, who is the Senior Director of Policy Development, presenting Homewise a homeownership organization.
- Mrs. Cooper continued with the presentation on the Homewise mission as to help educate and help customers find affordable low-cost homes as well as give them knowledge of the process. She also stated all the benefits Homewise has to offer such as finance coaching, non-commissioned realtors, and affordable fixed-rate mortgages. She then had Mrs. Gonzalez explain how they get involved with the community and try to make the community grow. Mrs. Gonzalez continued with the presentation and how they help the small businesses with personal loans and then started to talk about the upcoming projects in Albuquerque. Mrs. Gonzalez stated during the pandemic they went out and asked the State for help to pay for mortgages for the community.
- Councilor Apodaca said you did answer one of my questions that you are a nonprofit.
- Mrs. Gonzalez said Fannie Mae pays us a service fee and we do get lending fees or commission fees that go into the programs.
- Mr. Mims said the surrounding areas in Valencia County I can see affordability issues mainly our municipalities, when it comes to young people wanting to purchase a home, its expensive but do see a great opportunity for Rio Communities.
- Mrs. Gonzalez said she is going to start working with residents and potential borrowers, but the next phase will maybe be looking at infill development with the city.
- Councilor Winters explained we do have the data and then said Rio Communities started out as a retirement community, then we started seeing an influx of young families about 3 years ago. He continued to say the bad things is they are priced out now and that's why we are interested in getting some help.
- Mr. Mims said the Hakes Brothers homes are starting around 300k per home, so we need to have some type of affordability for young people or older people in Valencia County. Then asked how do they price these homes in Santa Fe, with prices being at 600k.
- Mrs. Gonzalez said they step back and look at a few things at a strategic standpoint with financing packaging, and deferred loans.

- Councilor Gutjahr complemented Homewise for having a multi-faceted program.
- Councilor Apodaca said take the City like Santa Fe were over the years calling it home being pushed out due to property tax, but say you help someone get into a house, does property tax have an impact on your clients.
- Mrs. Gonzalez said they have investigated this situation and about the age of 62 years old you can have your property tax frozen, being as said we have initiative in the counties with their tax bill. She then stated it is a concern and are constantly making sure they are taking care of.
- Councilor Apodaca said it is very impressive they are covering all the bases.
- Mayor Ramsell thanked the ladies and told them this is very good for the community to have their financial literacy due to people having no idea when it comes to purchasing a home.

Accounts payable report

- Finance Clerk Adams began going over the amounts over \$500; Wells Fargo in the amount of \$2,497.73; Card Services for Adobe Pro Subscription in the amount of \$1,980.57; HDR in the amount of \$4,180.50; Palmetto LLC in the amount of \$1,824.14, Village of Los Lunas in the amount of \$7,741.50; 3 accounts to Tabet Lumber in the amount of \$2,724.55; Home Depot in the amount of \$800.36; NM Self Insurers' in the amount of \$3,268.96; 3 accounts for HDR in the amount of 23,542.15; 3 accounts for Amazon in the amount of \$9,538.82; Quill in the amount of 2,927.77; 2 accounts for Card Service in the amount of \$2,963.68, Carpet Warehouse in the amount of \$1,826; HDR in the amount of \$1,853.94; American Fence in the amount of \$16,053.15; Chalmers Ford in the amount of \$34,318.
- Councilor Apodaca asked what HDR was for,
- Finance Clerk Adams said we have the HDR engineering for economic development tech, and Palmetto LLC for the economic development developer.
- Manager Dr. Moore the HDR was for an on-call services for time and materials contract, we just asked for help on some economic development help where Mr. Pofahl is looking at developing, plus retail commercial areas we had him look at as well.

Employee Stipend(s)

- Manager Dr. Moore said we have been watching internally the issues we have been having of rising prices from the grocery stores to the gas stations and he has been looking into finding some short of short-term relief for staff. He said one of the things we talked with legal council, recommending a stipend of \$75 a payroll for the months of April, May, and June only and start April 15th. He then said he wouldn't bring this to Council if he knew staff weren't working so hard. He continued the discussion with Council regarding talking to the Finance Director there are plenty of funds available and it would be approximately \$300k revenue in the general fund. He did remind Council we are getting good GRT with our 3 stores here in the community.
- Councilor Gutjahr said she thinks this is hurting everybody, but she does agree.
- Mayor Ramsell said we ran it through with legal and seen if its something we could do and they told us this is the way to go.

Resolution 2022 - xx Valencia County Mitigation Plan of 2022

- Manager Dr. Moore said this was taken in front of the County in September of 2021 and sent to FEMA but one of the requirements is for this to go final is for each of the communities who are included to do a sign off, they did a good job with this plan. He continued by saying one of the

very important pieces of having this in place, is it opens the door for us for the federal litigation plan that can come our way.

- Councilor Winters asked about in his packet it had mentioned the town of Peralta.
- Manager Dr. Moore said it will be fixed they were trying to stay uniform with the other communities.

Court Clerk Position - Hours & Wage rate

- Manager Dr. Moore explained with talking to the Municipal Judge and our Municipal Clerk/Court Clerk we decided to separate the Municipal and Court Clerks positions. He continued with telling Council we are growing and need to make this change. He then said with talking to the Judge she's looking up to 15 hours per pay period and the wage was staying \$15-\$20 an hour.
- Mayor Ramsell said we had a really good discussion and with our growth we really need to separate these positions.
- Manager Dr. Moore said we have our files that are being reviewed, multiple potential violations and are working on how to structure those. The challenge is we are starting to see more traffic and since our deputy was off, we saw someone else on duty.
- Court Clerk Adair said the person will be fully trained and with talking to the Judge, Mayor, and Manager, this has been in discussion in the past and this makes it easier if she must take something to court this will be a big separation of powers.
- Councilor Apodaca asked the salary for this position would come out of which fund and how will this work after adding the position.
- Court Clerk Adair explained the money comes out of the court department fund and we already have this position funded and all we are doing is getting a new employee.

Public Works Position - Wage rate

- Manager Dr. Moore explained we have been wrestling with getting someone here with stills and we have a few individuals with CDL licenses that have not been interviewed yet, salary normally runs anywhere from \$18 - \$22 an hour. He further explained we have our position to not exceed \$15 an hour and we will not be able to hire someone with this pay. He said he is requesting to move the wage range to \$18-\$22 an hour which will be consistent with other cities.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked would the job description change in anyway.
- Manager Dr. Moore said no.
- Mayor Ramsell said we have struggled mainly when people look at our wage range for the position.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked what he meant about the skill levels change.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained it allows people to use the equipment.

Grant Writer(s)

- Manager Dr. Moore said he had a long discussion with the Finance Officer, then said you got to spend a little money to get money and stated there are about little over \$2million in grants and expressed his concerns about needing a grant writer for the city. He further explained the cost for a grant writer is \$50k to contract someone.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked if this would be advertised contract or in-house contract.

- Manager Dr. Moore said we would go through the procurement process for contract on this.
- Councilor Apodaca said since grants are very important to our city, we need to be on top of the grant opportunities. Then asked if they will charge by the hour or charge by the project.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained it all depends on the individual, typically they charge by the hour, time and materials.

Economic Development 501c6 organization

- Manager Dr. Moore said this request came from Council and Mayor and talking to our attorney he will be filling you in on everything later and answering your questions. He then explained the advantage of it that it moves a lot faster than government, but is not under government control and further explained the city would be working with private businesses and asking them for help, if we really want to start promoting businesses, we need to figure out what we want to and began a discussion.
- Councilor Gutjahr said there exists a small 501c3 and then said it would be very helpful if we had a grid and said economic on the header and it said 501c3s, EDC and what could happen, as well as 501c6. Her point of view she would have a hard time deciphering where everything goes and continued with the discussion.
- Manager Dr. Moore began to explain what we have been doing in the Economic development task force as in dealing with priorities and the next step is doing some swat analysis stuff because we are looking into some specific actions, and things that will be coming to town and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Winters said the annexation may cause rearrangement for a lot of these.
- Mr. Mims said he is putting together a retail survey in May and feedback on what type of businesses we want in the city.
- Councilor Apodaca asked if the city would help create and develop the 501c3 or 501c6. Then continued with once it's developed and a viable organization with staff its going to be ran separated from the city.
- Manager Dr. Moore said we could not be the spearhead on the development of it, we can assist.
- Councilor Gutjahr said another good point to have in the grid, so people will understand the process.
- Councilor Apodaca asked who the spearhead would be initially, this continued the discussion.
- Mr. Mims asked what his role business would be.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained what Mr. Mims role would be is helping to assist and provide guidance to them or explanations of possible leads also issues with meetings.
- Councilor Apodaca said as a city, we would plant the seed in the business community and continued with the discussion.

Public Comment

- No public comments

Manager Report

a) Dangerous Property

- Manager Dr. Moore said there are at least 2 dangerous properties that we are anticipating bringing to Council in April. He explained he is working with the attorney to get all the information together and have resolutions pulled together soon.

b) Personnel Policy update

- Manager Dr. Moore said we should be ready for the next meeting with a good discussion on the personnel policy.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked about the timeline and how will/when would council read the draft.
- Municipal Clerk Adair explained the way it would be is Council has the first draft, the give to the public for a 14-day review and then send to the attorney and after they fix it up, we get the final.

Council General Discussion & Future Agenda Items

- Councilor Apodaca had no report.
- Councilor Gutjahr said she had a conversation with the Mayor and City Manager that if we meet with developers, we need to have a representative with a member of the golf course because we talk a lot about benefits. She then stated that come April we need to meet with the school system because they need to be aware of the developments that are moving forward with the development into their area. She further explained regarding the zip code and said that she has been talking with Crystal Romero. She then asked Councilor Winters if a list was put together.
- Councilor Winters said he does remember but does not recall it ever happening.
- Mayor Ramsell said that is a good suggestion to get things together and with doing some research found out there are about 377 zip codes in the state and then began a discussion
- Councilor Winters said when they had a presentation last week it made him remember a solution that needed to be discussed and it was them as a company did automatic speed checks and began a discussion.
- Mayor Ramsell agreed that there is no cost to the City, his understanding that they do insurance, registration checks, but I think having this on the workshop would be a good idea.
- Councilor Winters said he feels we need to send a formal request, letter to NM water, the future plans for the max out for water and sewer. He further said we explore with them private/public format they may have used that will work for the sewer that's not expensive.
- Mayor Ramsell had no report.

Adjourn

- The City Council workshop was adjourned at 4:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth F. 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