



**City of Rio Communities Council Retreat**  
**Conference Room A - 360 Rio Communities Blvd**  
**Rio Communities, NM 87002**  
**Monday, October 17, 2022 10:00 AM**  
**Minutes**

*Please silence all electronic devices.*

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### **Call to Order**

- Mayor Ramsell called the council retreat at 10:15 am.

### **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, Assistant to the City Manager Amy Lopez.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained that what is on the screen is also in the binders as well.
- Councilors Winters said there is a surveying company who are doing sewer surveys in the community.
- Councilors Apodaca announced he won't be here for the 2nd meeting in November as he will be undergoing back surgery.

### **Roles & Responsibilities**

- Manager Dr. Moore began a discussion on the roles straight from the state code "minimum responsibilities of any municipality." He further explained the general powers of any municipality as well as budgets, funds, quarterly reports, and since they are over 1000 citizens, they are allowed to have a municipal court as well as statutory offices.
- Manager Dr. Moore went over the additional powers of any municipality and explained the city can set up community service by the judge as well as stated they have the dangerous property agreements.
- Councilor Gutjahr said we need to talk about artwork due to funding over \$100k.
- Manager Dr. Moore continued to explain the personnel responsibilities of municipal elected officials who are the mayor-council with manager form of government. He continued to explain the mayor is like the Vice President of the United States and for a community over 1500 they are allowed to have a municipal judge who is an independent. He finished explaining the Mayor and Councils responsibilities.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained that the City Manager is the human service director. He then explained the responsibilities of the municipal judge.
- Councilor Gutjahr said she does know that the judge does understand things should be under the personal policy.
- Clerk Adair explained that when she was hired as a Court Clerk she was told the judge was the one who made the decision to hire nor was appointed by council or mayor.
- Manager Dr. Moore started a discussion on meeting etiquette.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained what a consent agenda which have minutes as well as accounts payable in them. He further stated formal rules to obtain the floor as when someone would like to speak during the council meeting, instead of them addressing Dr. Moore they look at the Mayor or Mayor Por-tem and continued the discussion.

- Councilor Gutjahr asked what would the mayor like to have done at each meeting i.e hand raising or such, and continued to ask the Mayor how he would like council to address themselves in meetings.
- Mayor Ramsell explained he's not looked for much formality but does try his best to look at each individual member to make sure they don't have anything to add to the discussion. He then asked if the council members would like him to continue to call them councilors at the meetings or by their last names instead.
- Councilor Gordon stated the mayor does formally address the council.
- Manager Dr. Moore continued with the discussion on the six steps in handling a motion and asked if they would like to change the way the meetings or would they like to keep it the same.
- Councilor Apodaca said the way the meetings are right now are going good but said in the future they had been discussing only having one workshop a month.
- Councilor Winters said they had done this in the past but ended up having 4-to-5-hour workshop meetings.
- Mayor Ramsell said we have been talking about the consent agenda starting at the beginning of the new year and said if we did do the consent agendas then it would reduce the hours of the meetings as well as when we get the agendas, we will be getting them early enough to call and ask the finance office any questions we might have.
- Councilor Gordon asked when would the public comment section take place if we get rid of the workshop.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained that with the consent agenda the public will have it early as well and then there could be a section where it says if you have a question on an agenda item, please sign up to discuss the issue at the meeting and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Gutjahr suggested if we were going to one workshop a month then they need to make the public understand what they are deciding what to do and how it will go forward and how they will be able to voice their opinions.
- Councilor Apodaca said that some of our workshops do take a long time due to discussions, but likes the current format do to everything is fresh in their minds and
- Clerk Adair explained that in the past there was a section behind each agenda item except the ones that were up for 14-day review. She continued to say when Bill Brown was here he liked the fact on the agenda items it had discussion, then public comments, then consideration and decision.
- Councilor Winters said this could be a mechanism as to if the public is interested in what is going on and it doesn't have to be 3 minutes maybe just a short question for us to answer.
- Mayor Ramsell said moving to one workshop a month we would have more of the pressing issues or something that will take more then 2 meetings and started to give an example how the monthly meetings will take place starting by saying the first meeting of the month where presentations and such and then for the next meeting would be for discussions.
- Councilor Apodaca said when we decide what format we need make sure to let the citizens know as well get involved and be a part of the discussion.
- Mayor Ramsell explained that some people had asked why they have a workshop the examples they give are from a municipality that has been incorporated for quite some time as well as have the supporting staff and explaining to the public eventually we will change things but as of right now we are having our meetings this way.

- Clerk Adair explained that when we had a workshop every week as well as regular meetings and special workshops on top of those and we have reduced a lot of the meetings since we have been incorporated.
- Councilor Apodaca said he would like to see how we can get the public more involved and welcome.
- Councilor Winters said at the beginning there was more citizen involvement, but the agenda items usually were the same issues, and the meetings were more of the lines of discussion.
- Mayor Ramsell explained that the participation has dropped off in more municipalities and for us the online views go up about a week later and being able to have that available for the citizens is a great thing as well as if they have a comment or a question about the meeting, they call Dr. Moore or the clerks office for the information.
- Councilor Gutjahr said the big thing that has changed is that we now have a priority list and the other issue that has changed is once it became available online no one wants to come in and see the meetings.
- Mayor Ramsell explained the issue of public input has been a big problem and when we do have a few meetings on one subject and have multiple meetings about such once it gets approved, we have citizens asking why we didn't notify them about the issue when we have but no one had paid attention to the postings.
- Councilor Apodaca said he reads a lot on Next Door and knocking council down and don't understand that we are doing a lot, but they do not attend the meetings or get involved.
- Councilor Winters said we used to do public forums every other month.
- Councilor Gutjahr explained that she at one time had a list of everything we have accomplished and when she gave it to people they were stunned.
- Mayor Ramsell continued to discuss a list or handout to show what we have been working on.
- Councilor Gutjahr said we need to advertise this and then said we should let them know each month as to what we have added to the list and what we plan on doing next.
- Manager Dr. Moore continued with the discussion and started to talk about making the most out of our time and said we are doing what is on the list, but we might adjust somethings accordingly and then started to talk about common concerns they need to look out for.
- Manager Dr. Moore started a discussion about the open meetings act and read the verbiage from the attorney generals office. He explained the rolling quorums are the biggest thing the news bulletin love to pick on and gave an example of how they could be violating the rolling quorum.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked if she sends a blind copy of information from previous meetings how does that turn into a rolling quorum.
- Manager Dr. Moore said if anyone sends information on any documentation, they have blind copy this to everyone then it can easily become a rolling quorum without right knowledge not to reply.
- Council finished with the discussion about the rolling quorums and started a discussion about public meetings and remote participation.
- Manager Dr. Moore started to talk about how there is a 72-hour posting deadline for public to know about a meeting and how council may change meeting dates or times on special occasions.
- Councilor Gordon asked in the case of someone disrupting a meeting may it be switched to virtual if possible.

- Mayor Ramsell said himself and Dr. Moore have discussed this for future possibilities and they both agreed since it will still be available to the public as well as not violating the open meetings act.
- Council continued with the discussion on plans for recessing a meeting in case of emergency
- Clerk Adair asked if in an emergency do we move the meeting straight to virtual or do we make the meeting a different date.
- Manager Dr. Moore said council would have to choose a different time and date for a virtual meeting.
- Councilor Gutjahr said in previous meetings they had stated they need to redeem and finish it at a later time and continued the discussion.
- Mayor Ramsell stated there has been times when information cannot go out to the at the time the agenda has been out due to mishaps, but it came in say a day or two later this is a good time to recess until all the agenda items are together.
- Clerk Adair explained about the posting of agendas is due to the newspaper and with talking with the Clara from the newspaper, we have found ways where we can have a draft and then our original 72-hour notice for main agendas with all the information and continued with the discussion.
- Councilor Gutjahr said some commissions are only give the public 72-hours of notice when it does not give the public enough time for commissioners to look at what's going on and continued with the discussion.
- Manager Dr. Moore continued with closed meetings and give an example of what they are allowed to do.
- Councilor Gutjahr gave an example of what use to happen when they incorporated and how they are supposed to have detailed agendas.
- Manager Dr. Moore continued with major takeaways that can affect the agenda items, and then began to talk about the minutes on the agenda and how it should be written as well as explained how to follow in the event an employee has to be laid off.
- Assistant to the Manager Lopez said for the posting, employees use their own vehicle and did not appreciate having to posts numerous times.
- Mayor Ramsell said in cases like this he thinks employees show be paid mileage and until now the city never had an administrative vehicle.
- Clerk Adair said that is something to look into in the future as employees not only post but go to the post office as well as needing to get supplies for the office and explained employees are going during off hours.
- Councilor Gutjahr said it would be good to have a vehicle to do these tasks but maybe temporary someone have an account where at the end of each month the employee gets reimbursed for running errands because they should be compensated.

### **c) Priorities**

- Manager Dr. Moore began the discussion on setting priorities by explaining with the new system they will be able to decide what is a major priority at that moment of time and if a non-emergency priority happens to become a major priority, he can face it head on. He continued with the 80/20 rule on priorities and explained this would have to be talked about in the next budget meeting and talked with staff to determine priorities and possibly getting new priorities as well. He continued to explain past experiences on how priorities had taken place.

- Councilor Apodaca said it seems Dr. Moore is the one who has to make the decisions on priorities.
- Manager Dr. Moore said it's not just him it's the whole governing body as well making the decisions as well and continued the discussion.
- Mayor Ramsell said it may be an issue where council gets a priority and notifies the Mayor or Dr. Moore about the situation and then we all discuss the issue later or even having to amend the agenda.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained that if an issue comes forward and the mayor is unreachable and needed to talk to someone about the situation, he will come to Mayor Pro-tem and discuss the matters at hand. He continued to explain the best method for is open communication and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Winters said this could aid us in communications with the public since they do not know we have a full plate and they can understand everything we do.
- Councilor Gutjahr said what comes down to it is about asking the community what they want and how do we honor the citizens who have helped since the beginning with the city. She continued to say there needs to be a committee for when someone had experienced a loss or a hard ship here in the city for employees and/or committee members.
- Councilor Apodaca said he believes the growth is coming and better off having a plan on how we would like the city to look like instead of dictated and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Winters said what he remembers the most was starting at \$21.00 when the city became official and continued the discussion.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained that the Als Mini Mart building has been bought and they are about a month away from opening a new business, as well as there is a reconsideration of a small grocery store. He continued to explain the annexation and which businesses are keeping the city afloat.
- Councilor Apodaca said the problem we are facing still is the zip code and this is why we are losing out on businesses, and it needs to be addressed.
- Councilor Winters said the one that has the biggest problem with the zip code is Airnov due to them making the 'do not eat' packets in medications and continued with the discussion.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained the last item in the packet is grants that we have signed and then said we are creating a pipeline to grants and explained where we are color coated wise on all the grants we have. He continued to explain the road grants and how the projects are moving forward.
- Council Winters said when we started our road programs with the paser system, he is wondering where things are at.
- Manager Dr. Moore said the term is preliminary report from the NM Finance Authority might be able to help us apply for those funds, but council must figure out what they would like to apply for the funds to go towards and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Winters said we need to have a discussion about our other infrastructure issues we have and continued with the discussion.
- Manager Dr. Moore said the one thing that is a good project to look into is ARPA (federal funds) and we are going to have to apply for it but they will not be able to look at anything until after the elections.
- Councilor Gordon asked what it is used for.

- Manager Dr. Moore said it can be used for public water, public sewer, and anything tied to economic development.
- Councilor Winters said it is interesting in the West Mesa area they did not have the economic development and is thinking we can take planned development and use it for PNM and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Gordon asked can we use it for private/public partnership with the water company.
- Manager Dr. Moore said yes, we can and continued with the discussion.
- Councilor Winters said there are other companies in New Mexico that can supply power for housing developments as well as battery backup that's tied into the grid and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Gutjahr said we need to have a possible plan to understand the status of everything getting worked on.
- Manager Dr. Moore said we need to have more of a plan instead of having documentation stating TBD. He then asked if they would like to go for a planning grant and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Apodaca said we need to look into the bigger cities and see what type of planning they have since they have growth coming in all the time and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Winters said the main thing the other cities have is staff to be able to get things they need done.
- Councilor Gordon asked if Horizon had plans for the whole city when it first established.
- Councilor Winters said it is in our county use plan and subdivisions and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Gutjahr said we have to make sure what we want as a community and not lose sight of this.
- Manager Dr. Moore said he has two top priorities for the city and explained he can knock them out quick. He then started to explain the other priorities and asked where they should be placed.
- Councilor Gutjahr said when Senator Stefanics was here, she explained there will be changes to the whole capital outlay and continued the discussion.
- Manager Dr. Moore said the annexation, zip code and police department are the three top priorities as of right now.
- Councilor Winters said normally planning and zoning would be doing all this, so we need to figure out what to do.
- Councilor Gordon asked if there were grants for these.
- Manager Dr. Moore said yes, he believes so, and continued the discussion.
- Mayor Ramsell said the easiest priority would be to adopt a city speed limit.
- Clerk Adair suggested as a priority to get Google searches updated with addresses. She continued to explain Facebook does not recognize Rio Communities as a city and asked if this should be a top or internal priority.
- Councilor Winters said in the past someone had suggested they get a group together to do web paging.
- Councilor Apodaca asked if this would be the same situation as when the gentlemen came in and did a presentation on street addresses for emergency personal.
- Councilor Winters said they had done this for the county assessor's office and had everything written correctly but then later down the road 10 to 15 had changed and so on.

- Clerk Adair said this is the same thing that happens with PNM and the gas company.
- Councilor Winters said the gas service company has a different data base from the service and sales.
- Mayor Ramsell said he had talked to the company and asked what would happen if someone did not pay their bill and they had told him they would shut off the gas and when he explained he doesn't live in Belen but Rio Communities the gas company said they do not have Rio Communities on their map.
- Councilor Gutjahr said a long time ago there was going to be a fee for people who wanted to put signs on the lawns for realtor's and with talking to one they stated there is a drop-down button for people to choose Rio Communities and continued the discussion.
- Clerk Adair stated this is an issue with not only the realtors but also other companies.
- Manager Dr. Moore said what are we and who are we internally because we have been outing ourselves out there for people to see us and continued to ask ourselves what we fully identify as a city and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Apodaca said we can not fully answer that question but say what we want our dream city to be like and make it happen.
- Manager Dr. Moore said we are defining our city if planning and zoning agree to put a solar farm or apple grove somewhere in the city as well as the animal ordinance is coming back and we need to know how we should define our city.
- Councilor Gordon said when he was in planning and zoning, they were working on the grid and asked how far along that has come.
- Manager Dr, Moore stated the comprehensive plan is the same as the grid.
- Councilor Apodaca explain he thinks it would be a great thing for the city and have a plan in the future to make sure this is the plan we as council want.
- Councilor Gutjahr said we need to have an overall idea on how to present ourselves.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained the lands in Rio Communities and where the solar farm will be as well as the houses. He continued to explain the company stated they have talked to the school but he is not sure as to when.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked who owns the land around Rio Communities and began a discussion.
- Council went over the map of the outer areas of Rio Communities as well as who owns which lands.
- Councilor Apodaca said there should be a list of some sort that indicates who owns the lands as well as find out what we can for the future.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained that we are going to need to go back to the council of zoning maps to make changes to the properties and continued with the discussion.
- Councilor Gutjahr said we should consider how much do we want to grow and thing of what we can do with our area since it is dessert.
- Councilor Winters said we need to keep in mind everything on the east of Chamesa has to have sewer and water pumps and continued with the discussion.
- Councilor Apodaca said we need to look way into the future and ask what kind of city we want to become and continued by saying we are a mobile society and need to prepare for the future.
- Councilor Winters said why wouldn't we want to move north and acquire a college or 2 more schools in the future.

- Mayor Ramsell continued explaining he thinks the growth will be along Manzano expressway and to the east. He then stated there are huge lots where the solar farm and where growth can happen.
- Assistant to the City Manager Lopez asked if the Tome land grant is an issue.
- Mayor Ramsell said it will always be in issue for us and continued the discussion.
- Manager Dr. Moore went back to the priority list
- Mayor Ramsell said was an infrastructure planning assessment and continued with the discussion
- Manager Dr. Moore explained this was interest rates for back in 2016 and continued with the discussion.
- Council began a discussion on the process of the planning for the County and their focus to the unincorporated area of Valencia County.
- Councilor Winters explained he mentioned our City cleanup to someone out of Farmington that we have being doing for some time and she said they are a big City and they only do it twice a year and was amazed we do it once a month and continued the discussion.
- Manager Dr. Moore said just the two roll offs once a month is beneficial to our city.
- Manager Dr. Moore continued to discuss the priorities such as continue to fix up the council chambers, police station, potholes, public works facilities, ordinance rewrites (hearing process) permit procedures and city fees.
- Councilor Gutjahr said we need to not lose the ideas on honoring individuals, donations or what we have to do and continued the discussion.
- Councilor Winters said our attorney was supposed to go and update the ordinances and then asked where we in that process are.
- Manager Dr. Moore said yes we are.
- Manager Dr. Moore began a discussion on the legislative request for the top three and it would be nice for us to look at the ICIP and meet with them.
- Gale Jones retired clerk administrator from Bosque Farms and now Mayor Pro-tem from Mountainair and Melissa the current Clerk administrator from Bosque Farms and began a presentation on the history and the role of the Clerk and the governing body. History of the Clerk is the oldest of the public servants next to the tax collector. The early keepers of the archives. They did all the clerical and administrative duties of the King.
- Melissa continued the presentation with the responsibilities of the clerk. Example the records management SOP is a good tool to establish.
- Gale Jones said in 2018 the Clerks did get together and formed a Municipal records retention schedule.
- Clerk Adair said it has been adopted in our City.
- Clerk Administrator Melissa said that the change they made in Espanola was making the minutes permanent and continued with the discussion of the vital running of the municipality. By State statute the clerk is responsible for business licenses, insurance bond issues, event planning, annexation and can also serve as the court clerk. They may also be available to set the agenda for the other boards and commission, prep for the meetings and other duties and everything under the sun seems to fall under the Clerk. She further said they are an asset to the community.
- Gale Jones said the Clerk is vital to the municipality and required by statute that a municipality has a clerk.



- Councilor Gutjahr said until you go into government you don't realize the importance of a City Clerk in general and continued the discussion with the many IPRA requests and residents being disruptive at a meeting.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked if we have had any applications for a police chief and how long is the position opened for.
- Manager Dr. Moore said we have 2 and we will keep it open until filled. He then continued back with the priorities, getting the top three for the Capital outlay.
- Council continued with the retreat on the past priorities sheet from Councilor Gutjahr.
- Mayor Ramsell said let's just wait and get the new ones get up to speed on what is going on and where things are at and continued with the discussion on consent agendas and maybe moving to one meeting a month.
- Councilor Gordon said the only thing he is worried about is the perception from the public if we move to one workshop a month, what are we hiding.
- Mayor Ramsell said he has been told that we need to be more transparent, where he explains that we are very transparent and continued with the discussion.
- Council began talking about the City having a table at the Health fair.

**Adjourn**

- The City Council Retreat was adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Elizabeth F. Adair, Municipal Clerk  
 (Transcribed by Cheyenne Sullivan, Assistant 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