



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

*Please silence all electronic devices.*

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**Call to Order**

- Mayor Joshua Ramsell called to order the workshop at 3:00 pm.

**Attendees**

- PRESENT: Mayor Joshua Ramsell, Mayor Pro tem Peggy Gutjahr, Councilor Arthur Apodaca, Councilor Lawrence Gordon, Councilor Jim Winters. Present: City Manager Dr. Martin Moore, Municipal Clerk Lisa Adair, Finance Officer Stephanie Finance, Accounting Specialist Angela Valadez, Finance Clerk Renee Adams, and P&Z Secretary Scott Adair.

**Accounts payable report**

- Finance Officer Finch went over everything over \$500.00; Wells Fargo in the amount of \$2,497.73; 4 accounts to Robles, Rael & Anaya in the amount of \$12,878.13; HD Supply in the amount of \$718.99; Ralph T. Barnes in the amount of \$1,020.00; Green Light Depot in the amount of \$2,087.88; Artesia Fire Equipment in the amount of \$1,206.25; Able & Willies One Stop Shop in the amount of \$3,307.00; 6 accounts to Newegg Business in the amount of \$12,395.87; Amazon Business in the amount of \$6,866.86; 3 accounts to HDR in the amount of \$4,344.50; Quill in the amount of \$2,399.74; 2 accounts to Home Depot in the amount of \$2,913.86; 2 accounts to Oriental Trading Company in the amount of \$1,619.28; Amazon Business in the amount of \$999.00; Green Light Depot in the amount of \$4,799.40.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked about what months these amounts to Robles were purchased.
- Finance Officer Finch explained what the charges for Robles where and stated the months where for January and February and continued with the discussion.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained they did get it approved by the State to start spending the grant money for the Maker Space and it will be reimbursed.
- Finance Officer Finch further explained that the office supplies for the Assistant to the City Manager was purchased with the first phase of the City Hall remodel.

**Animal Survey from P&Z**

- Manager Dr. Moore explained that we received about 200 surveys back and began a discussion on what was in the survey and what the community would not like to see in the community and what they would like to see.
- Secretary Adair explained that the one item was human treatment, such as housing for the animals and proper care and second was if you were going to have restrictions, we need to enforce it.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained that there were strong feelings on both sides.
- Councilor Apodaca asked for large animals such as horses and larger lots that are on the east side of the city, are those lots grandfathered in.
- Manager Dr. Moore said if there are covenant written that is a civil matter as in written in the deed and said what zoning restrictions are as to house and animals but are not restricted as long as there is proper zoning in place and continued the discussion.

- Councilor Apodaca asked when the city was first developed was there a neighbor association or different covenants that affected this.
- Councilor Winters explained what he has seen it says 'other than dogs and cats' and what kind you can have as well as how big.
- Councilor Gutjahr said there was discussions with VIA regarding some of these issues. She then said what she saw interesting was the grandfathered in part of the survey was even from both sides.
- Mayor Ramsell said what is interesting is people are very concerned about these animals overall and how it affects the property value.
- Manager Dr. Moore said his understanding we have an existing noncomplying nuisance and gave examples such as, where there are 2 horses on a property or a building not in zoning ordinance then they would have to remove a horse but not add another or the building would have to come down but not be replaced.
- Councilor Gordon said if the animal is replaced how would you prove it wasn't the existing animal, if say the horse dies and you get the same looking horse.
- Manager Dr. Moore started a conversation regarding ordinances and ask planning and zoning to look at the problem areas in town and come up with a solution on what can take place as far as animals and buildings.
- Councilor Gordon suggested coming up with an ordinance that can include our undeveloped land for livestock animals.
- Manager Dr. Moore said that he recommends addressing that at a later time and focus on what issues we have now. He also said we have citizens who called and stated they did not response due to the government does not have the right to tell us what we can and cannot do with our animals.
- Secretary Adair asked can we legally restrict from pets being just cats and dogs to larger animals and also approval of the neighboring committee.
- Councilor Winters said all major cities do well the first part they do but not the second part, this started a discussion.
- Municipal Clerk Adair suggested having registration for animals like we do for dogs.
- Councilor Gordon said he thinks that would be a good idea because it gives them an idea of how many are in the community.
- Secretary Adair asked what are we trying to achieve if the animal ordinance is encouraged and began a discussion
- Mayor Ramsell said the biggest complaint is the smell, the flies and stated some residents have complained about the noise from the goats but haven't heard anything about cows.
- Councilor Winters said there are about some cows and continued the discussion.
- Secretary Adair said this is a safety and health issue.
- Councilor Gutjahr said what does it mean for people who have chickens.
- Councilor Winters said he's not sure due to most cities are big on chickens.
- Municipal Clerk Adair asked if there is a certain lot size to have chickens on the property.
- Councilor Apodaca stated this is a safety issues due to a child not knowing the dangers of approaching a horse and the horse can harm the child.
- Councilor Winters said they have been fighting this for almost 8 years and continued the discussion.

- Manager Dr. Moore said the best visual is to look at Roswell as they have livestock on the outskirts of the town and in town they do not.
- Councilor Winter said lot sizes should be a focus, the discussion continued.
- Municipal Clerk Adair asked about putting this as next special workshop agenda item.
- Council decided to name it as Animal Welfare for next special workshop.

#### **Agenda items for the March 10, 2022 special workshop with P&Z**

- Council said they would like to see the Animal Welfare, as well as the Comprehensive Plan for the Special Workshop on March 10<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Public Safety Task Force**

##### **a) Taskforce meeting and b) Community Meeting**

- Manager Dr. Moore said the next meeting is on March 8<sup>th</sup> with that being said we are coming along great and hope to have some resolutions done and began a discussion on the path. The goal right now is May and that meeting we will be bringing finds and draft of what is coming out of the meetings. Before the main presentation we will be bringing up to you the budget.
- Manager Dr. Moore stated that the next item on the meeting is code enforcement and trying to recall if we have domestic violence as well as a discussion. He said he's been talking to the Sheriff's office, and they are very pleased on what we have been doing.
- Municipal Clerk Adair suggested that they inform the public that the Task Force Committees are not a meeting but a committee due to confusion.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked how can we let the public know.
- Municipal Clerk Adair stated that since we put out that there might be a possible quorum, we should state it's a committee meeting, this started a discussion.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained when COVID came into play and meetings had to be closed to the public and they looked into what kind of mechanisms we use to have the public listen and comment and if they want to be sent a link they can.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked about Facebook live, that the Clerk and Mayor are keeping an eye on the comments asked on Facebook and sometimes there are questions on the live, but as of right now they have access to Facebook as well as a link and can send in there concerns a head of the meeting to the Clerk and continued a discussion.

#### **Public Comment**

- Municipal Clerk Adair said there was one comment on Facebook from John Thompson saying Happy Birthday Art Apodaca.
- Manager Dr. Moore read into the minutes from Tommy Westmoreland; The speed limit sign on Manzano Parkway has been replaced and looks great; The missing electrical plate on the turn signal pedestal has been repaired (47&Monzano); The Tillery building is open on the northside. Looks like someone is going in and out. Does anyone know if the building is being demolished or renovated?
- Manager Dr. Moore said he has been in contact with the property owner and cannot speak about the specifics.
- Manager Dr. Moore continued with the list of questions from Tommy Westmoreland; Since we have received new signs have we begun replacing old ones, ones missing or unreadable?
- Manager Dr. Moore stated yes, we have replaced about 12 signs including stop signs as well and have been making sure to get things done.

- Councilor Apodaca asked does this include the signs that are on backordered due to supply issues.
- Manager Dr. Moore stated he wasn't sure about how many have come in knows they are being replaced.
- Manager Dr. Moore continued with the list of questions from Tommy Westmoreland; I noticed the small, decommissioned brush truck has returned to the fire department. I saw last week that the council has authorized up to 60 thousand dollars for a public works vehicle. I am wondering if the small red decommissioned fire truck could be re-purposed. My reasoning is that it has waterproof compartments already and the center of the bed is a flat surface. If the engine is still in pretty good shape, we could spend a lot less than \$60,000 to fix it. It sits at the firehall and seems to be moving from place to place for days and weeks at a time. I agree the old suburban probably needs to go to U-pull-it.
- Manager Dr. Moore said short answer we have a F-550 and are in talks with the Fire Department due to size and low miles of vehicle. He then said he has been looking around outside state contracting to try and find something but have yet to find a vehicle due to the chip issue. He went on to talk about the public works truck and how he has been trying to look for an SUV as well.
- Councilor Gutjahr said when they talked about the brush truck, was it going to be used for something else.
- Manager Dr. Moore said the Fire Department said they wanted something to be able to push snow, this started a discussion.
- Manager Dr. Moore continued with the list from Tommy Westmoreland; Do we have a time frame for fire chief candidates to be brought to council?
- Manager Dr. Moore stated we are waiting for one more individual and then the final round of interviews will happen.
- Manager Dr. Moore continued with the list from Tommy Westmoreland; It is my understanding that there were 9 sites being considered for a city park. At the last P&Z meeting I heard a small snippet concerning the development of 2 acres for a park at or near Houston Street, next to La Merced School. Is our plan to select one of the 9 proposed sites or wait for the developer to build or set aside one in a future development?
- Manager Dr. Moore stated this has not been brought up in front of Council.
- Manager Dr. Moore continued with the list from Tommy Westmoreland; Both of the old parks need to be mowed and cleaned up. The fences are falling down, and cables are either broken or missing. These folks want to sell at a very high price. One would think they'd want it to look better. Did they receive a letter from the city as the rest of us?
- Manager Dr. Moore said his short answer is if someone has an address in Rio Communities then they would have received the letter.

### **Manager Report**

- Manager Dr. Moore stated regarding our sign board I got an email from our Finance Director stating the Finance Department and Clerk Office will have a training on the electric sign and hope to have it up either March 8<sup>th</sup> or March 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Manager Dr. Moore stated on Hwy 47, they have contacted an electrician who have come out to inspect them and they are working on a plan for repair.

- Manager Dr. Moore said we have two road grants and will be discussing them at the next Council meeting.
- Councilor Gordon asked about the code enforcer.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained that the Assistant to the City Manager will be standing in and the fire department said they can assist if need be.
- Councilor Gordon asked if they have written a summons.
- Manager Dr. Moore said yes.
- Councilor Apodaca asked if there were a set amount of hours, they are focusing on code enforcement.
- Manager Dr. Moore said this is an issue by issue because we are targeting the big-ticket items first.

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

- Councilor Winters had no report.
- Councilor Gordon had no report.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked about the code enforcement letter that went out to everyone is there a systematic on how we are following up on these letters.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained what has been happening and told Council they do not have systematic way but there is a system they are going to start using and if the public does not want to help then they will be sent to court.
- Councilor Apodaca asked for a follow up for the boards we have signed up to be part of, is there someone I need to contact to be part of the board.
- Manager Dr. Moore said he will find out and follow up with details.
- Mayor Ramsell said something to consider is moving to one workshop per month. He then stated that we no longer for the approval of the agenda and the minutes will no longer need a role call vote, now we can just say yes or no and move forward.
- Councilor Gordon asked about the hole.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained that HDR had the hydrologist from Phoenix down and agreed on the work and there is now a division of labor, but with the GEO technical study, replacement of fill, etc. can be used with the homeland security fund.
- Councilor Apodaca asked about the couple of individuals showed interest on joining P&Z and EDC, is there a deadline for applicants.
- Mayor Ramsell stated they are thinking about extending P&Z to 7 members and with EDC we are still trying to figure out how we wanted to go about that.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked when would we actually have the conversation to having 1 or 2 workshops a month.
- Mayor Ramsell said possibly after December, we hope maybe post budget and have that on the agenda.
- Councilor Gutjahr said if maybe having a consent agenda which would be one vote on the item.
- Municipal Clerk Adair said that we talked about e signatures and by having this signing the minutes would be faster but would need your signatures in person for ordinances and resolutions.
- Councilor Apodaca said he wanted to say thank you everyone for the birthday wishes and he is proud and honored to be part Council.

**Adjourn**

- The workshop was adjourned at 4:24 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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Arthur Apodaca,  
Councilor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lawrence R. Gordon,  
Councilor

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Jimmie Winters,  
Councilor