

JOINT CITY/COUNTY COMMISSION WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES, NEW MEXICO
CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS, 405 W. 3RD St., T OR C, NM 87901
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2016

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Steve Green at 8:00 a.m., who presided and Renee Cantin, City Clerk-Treasurer, acted as Secretary of the meeting.

B. INTRODUCTION

1. ROLL CALL

Chairman Lyon noted all Sierra County Commissioners were present:

Kenneth Lyon – Chair
Frances Luna – Vice Chair
Sherry Fletcher – Commissioner

Mayor Green noted the following Commissioners were reported present.

Hon. Steve Green, Mayor
Hon. Sandra Whitehead, Mayor Pro-Tem
Hon. Rolf Hechler, Commissioner
Hon. Joshua Frankel, Commissioner

Absent: Hon. Kathy Clark, Commissioner

Also Present: Bruce Swingle, County Manager
Juan Fuentes, City Manager
Serina Bartoo, Sierra County Executive Assistant
Renee Cantin, City Clerk-Treasurer

There being a quorum present, the Commission's proceeded with the business at hand.

C. WORKSHOP

1. Discussion related to needed upgrades to Punk Greer Arena to be used as a viable location for Economic Development.

Mayor Green gave a quick review of why we are here. Commissioner Richter was talking about this opportunity for economic development with City Commission. Vice Chair Luna invited him to the last Rodeo Event and it was an eye opener. You may be up on the horse for about eight seconds, but you have about 1,000 hours of practice before you get there. Vice Chair Luna introduced him to a man who was very active in the rodeos and he talked to many people and realized we are really missing out on a

gigantic opportunity here. So he reported back to the City Commission on his findings and what the suggestions might be and we decided to have this workshop. We felt that it is probably an area that can be bring more people to Truth or Consequences. He went over some of his talking points which included:

1. Is there enough infrastructure at Punk Greer Rodeo Arena to warrant an upgrade and investment?
2. Would we need an Engineering Study?
3. What needs to be done?
4. What would the upgrade cost?
5. Depending on the cost, would the County consider partnering with the City in this venture?
6. How would we market the upgraded asset to get a return on the City and County's investment?

County Vice-Chair Frances Luna started by saying out of the people in this room, Chairman Lyon has far more years of experience in this world. But we live this life and McKenzie has done Rodeos from Farmington to Lovington, Clovis to Deming and all kinds of wonderful and not so wonderful places in between. Between the Chairman and herself she thinks they've seen just about every arena where an event has been held. She will answer 4 of the 6 questions on the talking points in her presentation.

Vice Chair Luna broke this down to the immediate improvements that need to be made. The Hot Springs Rodeo Association had 29 Youth from Sierra County, Las Cruces, and Socorro kids coming here to Rodeo. In the past 24 months they have used the facility 12 times. As far as she knows other than the County Fair and one other Roping, that is all it's been utilized. She and her husband went through there to see what needs to be done to make it functional. She presented some phased upgrades that have the costs, the financial opportunities, and the potential that the arena has. This is not a poor man's sport. Vice Chair Luna gave a breakdown of some of the costs that are involved which is included in the Presentation. There are multi-children families and also Husband-Wife Team Roping. The Competitor Families buy beer, ice, snacks, gas, and like to shop when they are not competing. During two day events we should expect them to rent motel rooms if they don't have living quarter trailers. If they do have living quarter trailers, they are going to buy groceries, eat at restaurants, shop at western wear stores and Tractor Supply. There are studies that show \$85 per person per day is spent by Rodeo Families. And she would venture to say that's a little on the low side.

Vice Chair Luna went on to the improvements that need to be made. The Arena needs to be leveled, first and foremost; we need to take out the top foot and replace it with good materials. The cost for that per Bartoo is \$25,000. Chairman Lyon interjected we need to put a material there so when it rains it won't stay a mud hole for a week or two, it will just soak it up and turn it over. Vice Chair Luna continued stating the grounds need to be worked before the event, in between the events and Roping Rounds. Currently, someone goes and works the grounds and leave. If we are going to be able to make it a working facility, we need to be able to authorize people using the facility to use the equipment or be ready to pay someone during the entire event. The users don't

want their horses to get hurt out there. We are estimating \$6,000 which is needed now to fix some existing issues. There are rusted out pipes that need to be cut, some are rotted out and need to be welded. We need to purchase a Roping Shoot; a Stripping Shoot; address improvements in the Crow's Nest; and address the Sound System which is at least 20 years old. In a Phased process and the final step of the immediate needs would be to utilize the grounds and create RV Hookups for overnight stalls which will create revenue. She went on to show some of the pictures of the arena. The current ground has too much clay and holds water and is not level. During the 2015 County Fair there were over 20 individuals who traveled here for the Horse Show during the fair who were unable to compete in the Arena the way it was and they left. If Bartoo were to do the work, that foot of the material can be used around the property to level and address some of the other issues. The \$7,500 includes the arena, the leveling of the new footing material is \$17,500, so the total cost is \$25,000 for the ground. If the city were to take that foot of material out, it would reduce some of the cost. The arena needs to be worked before the events. We need to look at an agreement so the users can use that equipment. They recommend in the future the purchase of an Arena Groomer which ranges from \$2,600 to \$3,500 to attach to the current machine. However, if we get the proper ground in there the groomer is not necessary immediately. When we were walking around the facility, there are sprinklers there, and they cannot think of a time they have ever seen those sprinklers being utilized. Typically you have the water truck go in to water the grounds and the machine to go in behind it. The Arena Groomer does include the water tank to water the grounds as you groom it which would eliminate the need for a water truck in the long term. She showed pictures of some piping and pieces that have rotted out; and some gates where handles are not working very well; and the Return Alley needs some bars welded on the white piping. Maintenance has been a key problem there so there are poles which have shifted and some of the gates are no longer functional. Some of it is super easy stuff, it's just maintenance. She explained the improvements that need to be done to the Roping Shoot; the Lead to; and the Stripping Shoot. Chairman Lyon added that area needs to be larger because a Stock Producer doesn't have enough room to hold them.

Vice Chair Luna added another item that needs to be improved are the Announcers Stand which long term will need to be enclosed and weatherproofed. It's not too hot, too cold, or too windy, it's to protect it from the birds. She can only think of two other Arena's that don't have enclosed Crow's Nests. Mayor Green asked if the Announcer's Stand at the Sheriff's Posse Arena is big enough. Vice Chair Luna responded it needs to have more workable space, there needs to be a door and she recommends a half-door so the Secretary can open it and not have the Roping People coming in and out. Or it needs to be some kind of sliding door with some kind of entry space. The speakers currently there had been there since the Fair. She took them down and put them in her car. They should not be left up. If we ever want to do something there we will have to spend the money for the P.A. System which can be kept there all the time. The pricing she estimated for that is around \$2,500, not including labor to set it up. So for the revenue at the fencing built by Rotary for the Soccer Fields, she is proposing 10 RV hookups along the fence line which could be rented for \$20/night with Water & Electricity. There is both Water and Electric nearby and she's not sure about the cost

CITY COMMISSION DECEMBER 13, 2016 CITY/COUNTY WORKSHOP MINUTES

but she estimated about \$150 per hookup. The fence line from Radium to Zinc can be used for horse stalls. Realizing that the back of the stall would not be the fence, we would need to create a 4 sided pen for the stall. There is a dirt road there where water will need to be placed so they can get water for their animals. Without horse stalls, you will have people tying out their horses to their trailers which may bring Animal Rights people out who complain about those who are tied outside all night. There have been complaints about the mess from portable stalls. RV hookups and stalls are not required but they will bring more events and contestants. If you build it, they will come and they will be used. She added that money can be collected by the organization and handed over to the municipality or there could be some kind of agreement where the organization can collect that money and keep it to use it for the event or for the event fees.

Vice Chair Luna went on with what we do have now. We have a great arena and there is the infrastructure to warrant the upgrades and investments. It is being utilized and isn't in a state where it needs to be torn down. There are sponsor panels that can be sold for additional revenue. The bathrooms are ADA compliant but they do need some stall covers and the availability for electricity. The space to the right of them could be used for a Park Host to collect for RV's and people who are passing through with Horse Trailers who would want to use the facility and RV Hookups. Currently there are 8 holding pens. Contractors don't find this setup ideal any longer, and E.D. Edwards did propose a \$50,000 improvement to the Sierra County Extension Office to be funded through a grant which their previous Extension Office Agent to increase the number of holding pens so we would be able to stop using these. However, these are fully functional. There is only water on two sides of the pens and some need to be moved for the ease of moving cattle in the return alleys. Water troughs need to be bought and each one can be used for two pens. This would make it more user friendly and would only entail moving panels. One of Parks Employees said they were not safe to use, but some people leave their animals in there for the day and when they leave, they leave the gate open. So if you do have someone come in and unload cattle, you have to fix all of the open gates before you can unload.

There is currently only one covered seating area. It needs to be doubled at minimum and tripled at best. Breakdown for funding included: Grounds - \$25,000; Equipment Issue - Free; Existing Issues, welding and cutting - can be taken care of by volunteers (people within the rodeo group and 4-H Volunteers would be willing to do that); Roping Shoot - \$2,000; Stripping Shoot - \$800; Metal for Lead to - \$100; Announcer's Stand and System upgrade - \$2,500; Increasing work space - \$200; Spectator Seating (One set of bleachers); We do not have an estimate for the RV Hookups or running utilities; the Horse Stalls - from under \$300 to up to \$700 if a contractor were to weld them all together; Covering the stalls would come later; Troughs for the Livestock pens - 4 @ \$100 each (does not include getting the water to the stalls); Equipment upgrade (Arena Groomer) - \$1,800-\$3,600; Announcer's Stand (Enclosing) - \$5,000.

Vice Chair Luna continued Socorro, Deming, Lovington, Gallup, Clovis, and Farmington all currently pay for this out of their Town. Not from Lodger's Tax but with real money

out of their General Fund. Lovington paid the High School Roping Association \$10,000 to bring the rodeo finals to town for four days in 2015. Gallup paid the same Association \$15,000 last year. So it's worth it to them. They know that there are 200 contestants plus their families in their town spending that money. She gave a breakdown of the attendance at certain events. If we can get that arena going we'll draw in hundreds of people. So the potential of both locations can be used for additional pens. If the horse stalls are not built right away there is an area that can be used for dry camping. She and the Chairman have talked with the City Manager about using LEDA money to make long term improvements. But currently we can work together to combine both venues to host events. We just need to work on scheduling issues. The Horse Stalls from the Fairgrounds can be used now until upgrades are done and the Events Center can be used for awards, and the Pavilion is great for dances.

Final thoughts included, Socorro has a great new facility, we will have to compete with them and not the Sheriff's Posse Arena. Working with the Sheriff's Posse can bring more events in the long run. It's her understanding, the Clint Benjamin Memorial Roping which brought more than 200 people into town, has already been taken because Socorro offered cash for the event. If we get the arena to be functioning, we can get more events to come. Money will never be made off of the rental fees. The communities will receive better Lodger's Tax and Gross Receipts. Some want to fence the area so we can charge people to go in there, others have talked about covering the arena and if we can get grant money, that's a great thing. We need to make that arena function and get people comfortable with using it, before we go over the top. Other issues that should be considered at some point is Alcohol. There have been complaints in the past of drinking at the functions, and if it's eliminated, they won't use it. And a concession stand, long term needs to be worked in there also. She reviewed the proposed layout that was included in the Presentation. The planting of the trees were fantastic and will offer great shade when they grow.

Mayor Green thanked Frances for putting this together to open up the dialogue, As for some of the things she was talking about, such as getting more seating; he asked if the revenue generated is in a big pot or considered a spectating sport where they are charged for a ticket to watch an event. Vice Chair Luna responded when you go to a roping you don't pay to get in. But some events you have to pay \$2 to get in as a spectator. Chairman Lyon added a good comparison would be the Dog Show, we didn't charge. So the comparison of everybody coming and spending money really affects the turnout and the community enjoying the event if they don't have to pay. Vice Chair Luna added you have to be at the Professional Event to start charging, and she doesn't feel we will ever be there. People at the Albuquerque Rodeo remember our community because that's where they started. But we have to get back to that level because T or C has completely lost that.

Mayor Green asked about these communities who are putting up money out of their General Fund, and whether the Associations putting on the Rodeos are for Profit or Non-Profit? And if they are for Profit, how do the entities get around the anti-donation law. Vice Chair Luna responded she thinks the Clint Benjamin has a 501c3, the High

CITY COMMISSION DECEMBER 13, 2016 CITY/COUNTY WORKSHOP MINUTES

School roping do not have a non-profit. You will have the best of the best facility to charge that kind of money. If we have the necessary upgrades like the grounds, etc., this is a central location from Albuquerque and from Deming for people to come. This is one of the things Socorro offers and we can offer as well.

Chairman Lyon added on the stalls, they'll set those panels up and you can chain or lock them, or sometimes they take them down when they are not in use. Stalls are important to any event and they can use the stalls at the Fairgrounds, but there are only about 30 and you'll need 75 for a big event.

Vice-Chair Luna mentioned the 4-H Group who puts on the event in Dona Ann County, went to the Domenici Arena, which is covered and has great seating, pays \$2,600 to use that facility or the weekend. So they went to Landmark who let them use the facilities for nothing. There is no RV Hookups, no horse stalls, no great seating. But they would rather use the money for the kids than the arena. If we set the rental fees so high that it becomes a negative, nobody will use it. Mayor Green asked, and Vice Chair Luna confirmed that money is used for prize money for the kids. He asked if the kids know the money is coming from the Treasury of the community where the event is being held. Vice Chair Luna responded she would say yes, they went to the Jr. High/High School Finals in Gallup, there was the Mayor, the Indian President who were there at every meeting, and at the awards handing the prizes out. Everyone there knew what their gift was. They have a beautiful, phenomenal facility, and we are not going to have that. We were also encouraged to go and do business with those promoting the event. That's what we try to do here when we put on the 4-H Rodeo. She feels \$40,000 is not too much to split between the City and County to make that facility better to use throughout the year versus six times during the year.

Chairman Lyon said you've got a whole scope of different events. Another way to look at upgrades is just the enthusiasm of the young families with young kids are growing just for the Gymkhana event. He sees next year we will have maybe even twice as many. If you look at the young kids and young families who want their kids to start at Gymkhana. If you look at the money the County or the City puts in for little league, Gymkhana should have something comparable for those Ranch Kids to have something positive to participate in. He sees it growing there. Is it a money maker? No. But it's a great benefit for our kids.

Mayor Green agreed that's important as well. He asked Frances about different locations and if food is on a concession basis or is it run by the community so they are keeping all of the revenue. Vice Chair Luna responded both. In Deming, every food truck within 100 miles was lined up and the next year, none of those food trucks were there. When they were not there, two Mom's went to town and they spent \$300 on groceries and divvied it up amongst everyone and that's how they handled it. If there are concessions, people will support them. Chairman Lyon added at the Fair there are two or three and they don't allow more than that.

CITY COMMISSION DECEMBER 13, 2016 CITY/COUNTY WORKSHOP MINUTES

Commissioner Hechler asked if there is a Central Rodeo Committee that would oversee this arena or do they bring their own committee? Vice-Chair Luna responded at the Southern State Fair there is a Committee and the Rodeo Association contacts that organization and you figure out what they want and what you would have to provide. Commissioner Hechler added it would seem to him to have the continuity for these events, if we had our own committee to oversee the setup of the arena and the infrastructure and setting things up, then we would have more control over it with people in the community who were interested. Vice-Chair Luna said with all due respect to the Recreation Board, that's not their strong suit. She feels they do great things making recommendations, she thinks you need some group of people that run it and oversee it. The County Commission has the Fair Board oversee the Fairgrounds property. They oversee it and get the rental fees from it. Something like that would work.

Chairman Lyon said that Committee would be important too for promotions. Joshua had made a presentation about the Hay Association wanting to come here and the Mule Association already comes but they want to grow that event. Good facilities would help them grow that event. Vice-Chair Luna added even if you have a good contract written out and they contacted the City Clerk to utilize that, it would help streamline that. Roping and Rodeos never stop. Commissioner Hechler asked if there is a season. Vice-Chair Luna responded it's 24/7. High School Rodeos do not stop from August-May, and 4-H are May-July, and Gymkhana is in the middle of that. They rope every holiday except Father's day.

Commissioner Hechler mentioned to City Manager Fuentes we have the expertise in the City to actually start a Camp Host Program and this would be an ideal location. Instead of building ten RV Sites, he would consider building 12. You can recruit Camp Hosts with a variety of backgrounds. Whether they are Welders, Greeters, Security or whatever. Once we open up that door, you can have on-site management to offer the help to maintain that facility such as the state uses.

Mayor Green asked if there are any other questions. He would like to give the opportunity to the public who are attending to make comments, if any, and asked if other Commissioner's would like to say anything.

Chairman Lyon talked about setting the amount and working backwards. He knows Bruce has already talked to USDA and LEDA to secure funds. Vice-Chair Luna added it would be \$200,000-\$300,000 to cover all of the expenses. Chairman Lyon included the Announcer's Stand, the RV Hookups, the Horse Stalls and everything could be done. Frances has some of the costs nailed down, but then we have some costs like the RV Hookups that we are not sure of. He asked Bruce to comment on whether he thinks there is funding and grants out there.

County Manager Swingle added it was iffy as to whether it could be something we could fund. LEDA is something we could look at much easier than USDA. Mayor Green said with Rural Communities such as ourselves and our culture of the area is marketable, this is economic development for our area.

Member Fletcher had a question about the area there, she is assuming there would be funding for Engineering Study for that area and if that's a starting point to start building there for the infrastructure. Vice-Chair Luna doesn't see why we would need an engineering study. The land was given to the city for the purpose of Equestrian use, or that was her understanding.

Commissioner Clark joined the meeting at 8:49 p.m.

County Manager Swingle said they are aware of some water issues in the area. He asked if that was something that would require a study for the drainage, or something that is pretty weak. City Manager Fuentes said drainage will have to be addressed when we work the grounds. We have already installed the trees and an irrigation system. As Francis said we do have the ability to make it happen as we move ahead.

Mayor Green said certainly we would triple check the ownership of the property. Vice-Chair Luna said the County Assessor's records show that all of the property is owned by the City.

Commissioner Frankel asked with the current state of the arena, how does our arena rank against the other arenas that don't have the city involved? Then with the completed potential improvements how would it rank. Chairman Lyon responded he would give it a 1 to 2 because of the ground. Background is so hard when you get any kind of moisture on it you have a clump and to him it's more dangerous for Gymkhana. He worries about the kids more than the Ropers. If you improve the grounds he would go all the way up to a five to improve the facilities and it would be closer to other grounds.

City Manager Fuentes said from the priority list the grounds is number one. Vice-Chair Luna responded if the grounds is crap no one is coming. You are not going to take a \$10,000 or \$20,000 animal that you love and put it in something it's going to get hurt. City Manager Fuentes said as funds are being researched right now the number one priority is the grounds. If we say \$10,000 right now will help us move forward, that's a little more reasonable.

Vice-Chair Luna said the 4-H would rather have their event at the City Arena rather than the Sheriff's Posse and can if the grounds could be addressed. The City and the County can come up with the \$25,000 to replace the dirt by Memorial Day, it would be used that weekend by at least 75 people. Chairman Lyon believes if you fix that ground you can get some volunteers to do the patch up work. That would help get it where it needs to be.

Mayor Green added the potential for funding down the road, he believes, would be greater with Economic Development Cabinet Secretary if we see that we have put money into this project if we feel it's important for our economic survival. We might be a better grant candidate because we are investing in ourselves and our own future. We

CITY COMMISSION DECEMBER 13, 2016 CITY/COUNTY WORKSHOP MINUTES

just don't have the total ball of wax ourselves and will need some help. He invited members of the public to come if they have any comments.

With no comments, he thanked everyone for coming and he thanked the County Commission and his fellow Commissioners.


Mayor Green asked each entity to start to do some soul searching and have each Commission put it on their next agenda for approval to discuss this. The most important thing is to save the animals so people will be comfortable in participating and possibly a cost share effort. Whatever has to be done he believes Frances has given us a time frame to shoot for. Memorial Day is six weeks down the road, and he feels it's a worthwhile venture. We can control our own destiny rather than putting it into something we have no control over whatsoever.

Commissioner Clark apologized for being late but she wanted to add that they have her full support. Vice Chair Luna said individually it's a lot of money, but collectively it can be done. Commissioner Clark said as the Mayor said it opens it up for economic activity.


D. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 8:56 a.m.

Passed and Approved this 10th day of January, 2017.


Steven Green, Mayor



ATTEST:

Renee L. Cantin, GMC, City Clerk