

CITY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES  
CITY OF TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES, NEW MEXICO  
CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS, 405 W. 3<sup>RD</sup> St.  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 2019

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Sandra Whitehead at 9:00 a.m., who presided and Renee Cantin, City Clerk-Treasurer, acted as Secretary of the meeting.

**B. INTRODUCTION**

**1. ROLL CALL**

Upon calling the roll, the following Commissioners were reported present.

Hon. Sandra Whitehead, Mayor  
Hon. Kathy Clark, Mayor Pro-Tem  
Hon. Rolf Hechler, Commissioner  
Hon. Paul Baca, Commissioner  
Hon. George Szigeti, Commissioner

Also Present: Morris Madrid, City Manager  
Renee Cantin, City Clerk-Treasurer

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

**2. SILENT MEDITATION:**

Mayor Whitehead called for fifteen seconds of silent meditation.

**3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Mayor Whitehead called for Commissioner Mayor Pro-Tem Clark to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

**Commissioner Hechler moved to approve the agenda as amended with the Presentations before Public Comment. Commissioner Szigeti seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

**E. PRESENTATIONS:**

**1. Presentation request related to the Lee Belle Johnson Center. Ron Fenn, Requestor:**

Mr. Fenn gave his presentation related to the Lee Belle Johnson Center. He is proposing that the Lee Belle Johnson Center be repurposed as a Recreation and Community Center for use of city residents, as it functioned from 1938-2015. His proposal is due the fact that the citizens and residents of Truth or Consequences have been without a continuous and dependable venue for Recreation and Community purposes since 2015. He is proposing that a new, not for profit entity, rent or lease the Lee Belle Johnson Center for an initial term of 1 year at the rate of \$1000 per month. Monies for the rent shall come from a donation by the organizers founder. The agreement will comprise the areas currently leased at \$0 for the benefit of non-residents. Upon approval of this proposal by the City of Truth or Consequences Management and Governing Body; a Representative Citizens Committee will be pulled together to formalize the process and establish a new entity for governing activities within the Lee Belle Johnson Center. This will include among other things, detailed agreement terms, operating schedules, and delineate responsibilities of the new entity and those of the city. July 1, 2019 is proposed to be the start date for a formal agreement between the City and this new Recreational Cultural Entity. He hopes this idea will spur the city to take action for the people.

**2. Presentation request related to the Lee Belle Johnson Center & Civic Center. Audon Trujillo, Requestor:**

Mr. Trujillo gave his presentation related to the Lee Belle Johnson Center, Civic Center and Convention and Entertainment Board. Mr. Trujillo noted that the Ralph Edwards Civic Center, and the Lee Belle Johnson Center are not earning as much revenue as they did back in 2013 due to the fact that we are waiving a lot of rental fees. He feels that federal and governmental entities should be paying for the use of these facilities. We also need an active Convention and Entertainment Board to ensure that the Convention Center, Recreation Center and Civic Activities Center are being utilized and attracted.

**C. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:**

LaRena Miller addressed the Commission related to:

- 1) The beautiful Historic Building at 301 S. Foch was built between 1935 and 1938 as the Municipal Building for the Town of Hot Springs. It contained the City Manager, City Clerk, the Police Department, Library, Chamber of Commerce and all other offices related to City Administration. In 1952 it was repurposed when the New City Hall was constructed for the City of Truth or Consequences on Sims Street. The building became a Community Center for all people. She can remember attending the County Fair in that building during the 1950's. In 2015 it was re-purposed to house the Spaceport America Visitor Center. Commissioner Kathy Clark, Commissioner Steve Green, and City Manager Juan Fuentes asked

the Geronimo Trails Scenic Byway Visitors Center to move into one of the rooms at the building so we could greet the public that came to the Spaceport Center. Since then, our visitation has doubled. We have answered questions, recommended eating places, promoted all the Hot Mineral Spa's, shopping and places to stay. We may have anywhere from 14 to 80 people a day stopping in and signing our guest book. All of this contributes to our Lodgers Tax, Gross Receipts Tax, and income for local businesses. We work with Spaceport America to open and close their Visitor Center and answer as many questions as we can, or refer them to someone who is able to provide the information. We do the mailing of fulfillment information to people who ask for it, and respond to queries by telephone and email. We ship cases of information to Regional Visitor Centers to encourage people to visit here, and in general, promote the local area. We provide bags of information for conferences and conventions either being held here, or to representatives of our cities attending such functions in other locations. We are open 7 days a week and our volunteer hours count as "in kind services" to the city with a value in excess of \$42,000 a year in lieu of wages paid to staff to operate a professional Visitor Center. Spaceport America is gearing up for the first launch of Virgin Galactic and the focus will be strong in T or C. Change is necessary for a town to grow and not stagnate and die. The addition of Spaceport America to Sierra County is a change that we needed. It has already revitalized downtown with new stores, and will bring in more business and industry as time goes by. Virgin Galactic Employees are either purchasing property in Sierra County or looking at property within intent to purchase. These are well paid professional people who would be an added asset to the communities they reside in.

Ariel Daugherty, Caballo Rd. addressed the Commission related to:

- 1) She speaks in favor of the Lee Belle Johnson Center going back to senior use. It has been 4 years since the city (*without any citizen input or awareness*) took over the building for the use of the Spaceport Visitor Center and it has not provided the "magic flow" of people nor the money that the city purported its reasoning. What has provided growth and greater income is the T or C Brewery. The music and other forums it has brought to the city has stimulated other cultural activities. She has started monthly movies and discussion series out of Ingo's Art Café. A Cultural Center by night, and Recreation Center by day, can go a long way in servicing the real needs of our community. She thinks with a number of volunteer activities that could go on there, there would be thousands of dollars of volunteer time that would be an asset to the city. The constant interruptions of the Recreation activities at the Civic Center have discouraged senior citizens from keeping involved, and this curbs their necessary exercise that they need. Her analysis in 2014 for the use of the Lee Belle Johnson Center shows that almost 7,200 people used the facility on a wide range of community activities, from voting, to Special Olympics, concerts and birthday parties. At no time during the 4 years did the actual number of visitors who went to Spaceport top this number. In fact, over the 4 years combined, she doubts that they reached 7,200 people

total. She based this on another analysis of Lee Belle Johnson visitors from the Spaceport from June of 2015 to June to 2016. In that 13 month period, the total visitors were 1,948 people. She hopes that the Commission will seriously consider the proposals being made here today, and what those of us from the public are urging.

Steve Zeske, 1019 Parway addressed the Commission related to:

- 1) He was very upset because he didn't have water since 5:00 p.m. yesterday but, he noticed that the city is paving all of the streets around the Lee Belle Center without fixing all of the sewers and the water mains under it, because it is too expensive. That's like putting a band aid on a gunshot wound. Our infrastructure needs work and nobody wants to raise water rates or taxes because you all want to get re-elected to further the "pro-business" agenda downtown. The business owner of the Brewery is on the Spaceport Board. And you have "old money" over there, but at least this guy is pulling a paycheck from the school district. A lot of the community really resents all of the focus on downtown. He's got a degree from the University of Illinois in Urban Planning from 1982, so he understands the economics of "bigger pie" "bigger slices of revenue." Except it seems to be happening a glacial pace here, and people are tired of it. It is a theory, and it certainly doesn't seem to be moving along very well. It's kind of like a Chupacabra, it's rumored, but nobody has ever seen it. Or you can say it is like Virgin Galactic actually launching a shuttle from the Spaceport for the \$220 million the State and County had to invest in. Often rumored doesn't seem to usually happen.
- 2) Every year when he goes back to Chicago he would like to leave the power on at his house, but the Utility Office tells him that he has to pay for garbage. He shouldn't have to pay for garbage while he's not here. He would like to leave some dusk to dawn lights on so nobody breaks into his house and starts cooking meth in his bathtub. He knows there is a dumping problem in the County, but he shouldn't have to subsidize it while he is not here. They keep telling him that the City Council has to change the law, but again like the Chupacabra, he doesn't think you will. So instead of making some money off of him leaving the power on, and paying the minimum, you are making no money off of him because every year he leaves and turns everything off.

Cary "Jagger" Gustin addressed the Commission related to:

- 1) He is representing the Sierra County Arts Council which consists of 128 members of our art community. They are here to support the Lee Belle Johnson Center to remain the way it is. With the Spaceport gearing up, maybe that should be given another opportunity. We need a presence for business people downtown. If it was changed to anything, they would like to see it as an Arts & Cultural Center. New activities could include, musical performances, festivals, dances, art and craft activities, the T or C Film Fiesta, The Community Theatre, community meetings and business conferences of all types. The only change necessary would be to open up the auditorium space to a configuration that allows more flexibility for public use. The Geronimo Trails Scenic Byways does



great things and we are in support of them staying also. They suggest a correlation of non-profit organizations including the SCAC and our T or C MainStreet group to be given the opportunity to manage the facility for the betterment of the community. Oversight of the Arts & Cultural Center could be through a 501 C3 non-profit form by representatives of interested groups. The city could fund with an MOU on a sliding scale allowing the employment of an Executive Director to schedule events and technical staff to setup, run, tear down, and clean up after events. Such an arrangement was in place in the 1990's allowing the Chamber of Commerce to run the Ralph Edwards Civic Center for the city. The Lee Belle Johnson Cultural Arts Center could be the cornerstone for T or C to have a dedicated Cultural Art District from the State of New Mexico. This would open the door to grant possibilities, and other Arts and Cultural funding sources for the area.

Ron Fenn addressed the Commission related to:

- 1) He thinks it's very interesting that all of these people are coming to support these things while he has been actively fighting to take over this center for four years, and where have they been? He reminded them that the Geronimo Trails Scenic Byway used to be at the Museum but they got into a disagreement so they moved. They then rented a space on Broadway that they operated from for years until the city gave them free rent and pays for them to be there. We pay two organizations to do the same thing on his dollar. He is offering them to turn it back to the Recreation & Community Center.

Linda DeMarino addressed the Commission related to:

- 1) This Saturday is the Art Hop downtown and this week is Space Festival week. She invited all to attend the event from 6pm-9pm on Saturday.
- 2) On behalf of the MainStreet Board of Directors, she wants to say that the Lee Belle Johnson building has a long and much loved history as a community resource, and it is completely understandable that people are missing the music, dances and community gatherings as it became known for. Spaceport proponents have over projected and undelivered, and many people are understandingly disappointed and angry. The economic benefits of the tourism launch so far have been real, but nowhere near projections. However, the recent news from Spaceport is good, as well as the turn out from the Spaceport Festival and the recent launches from Mohave, and Virgin Galactic are confirming its plan to launch this fall. Therefore, MainStreet could imagine supporting a proposal to return the Lee Belle Johnson building to its historic use as a Community Center ONLY if there was a migration plan identified that would keep the Spaceport presence in downtown T or C.

Audon Trujillo, 506 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> St. addressed the Commission related to:

- 1) In his presentation, he had two recommendations to hold a Town Hall Meeting on the use of the Lee Belle Johnson Center, and the use of the boards. He hasn't heard a word on why we are not dealing with these boards. Hopefully we will name them, put them into place, or get rid of them. People have been supporting

changing the Lee Belle Johnson Center back to what it was. It's important that we try to get the public sector out of the business of running the shuttle service and the museum for Spaceport, because that is a private sector enterprise, and this body as a government entity has interfered with the private sector by offering Spaceport this facility. We should give the private sector other options for renting and the Spaceport Shuttle.

John Davis, addressed the Commission related to:

- 1) He wanted to talk about the use of Roundup which is a carcinogen that kills our bees. The City of Las Cruces is talking about banning it by the use of their city employees, and he would like to see us do the same. Eventually it is something that he thinks will happen. April 5<sup>th</sup> was National Dandelion Day, which he thought was pretty cool because he likes seeing dandelions. A lot of people like to spray them with Roundup and he feels that they should not continue to do so because it poisons our air, our soil, and our people.

Joey Perry, Geronimo Trails Visitor's Center addressed the Commission related to:

- 1) She gave some of the stats of the Visitors who come to the Geronimo Trails Visitor's Center. The Geronimo Trails Scenic Byway Visitors Center is open 50 hours each week including most holidays, and they typically greet 25 to 50 people a day. Visitation has increased since moving to the Lee Belle Johnson Center in 2014. Being located with Spaceport America brings many guests who otherwise might not find us. Where do these visitors come from? We ask our visitors to sign a guest register telling us where they came from and why they came. Last year 8,117 visitors signed in. Over half of them were from other states, a 3<sup>rd</sup> were from the State of New Mexico, and 6% were international. Additionally, we served over 700 Sierra County residents who often stop by to pick up information and preparation for out of town guests. Among frequent reasons people visit the area are the hot springs, Spaceport America, outdoor activities and ghost towns. Additionally, special events like Fiesta, Dog Shows, Spaceport activities and seasonal activities at the lake attract visitors to our region. Among those visitors include potential new residents. Folks come from around the country looking for a place to re-locate or a place to retire. Subsequent visits provide them with additional information or give new residents a more rounded picture of our area. Our volunteers pull information together for them touting the wonders of Truth or Consequences and surrounding areas. Most frequently visitors want to know where to eat, sleep, soak, shop and play. We provide them with our visitors guide, refer them to our collection of menus for local eateries, and provide them with a Hot Springs brochure for soaking. We have developed and published handouts for accommodations, restaurants, hot springs, and kids activities, just to name a few. In conclusion the Geronimo Trails Visitors Center is an invaluable resource for the local community and for visitors, businesses, and residents. Hopefully, the information provided will help you better understand the importance of this critical resource to the City of Truth or Consequences.

Carol Barceló addressed the Commission related to:

- 1) She is a local volunteer who has only been here since January, and she thinks she's here to stay. She wanted thank everyone for being here and for all that they do. She wants to put in a ticket for the Community Theater to put on shows in the Lee Belle Johnson Center because it is much more amenable, comfortable and accessible for our seniors and our theatre patrons to attend.

Sophia Peron, Joffre addressed the Commission related to:

- 1) We pay the MainStreet Executive Director a salary, and we give MainStreet \$35,000 a year plus more, so with that being said, she thinks we should have a MainStreet report on some of these agendas instead of having Ms. DeMarino pull things off the top of her head.
- 2) MainStreet, Geronimo Springs, and the Chambers of Commerce were nowhere to be found at the Space Festival open house, American Kennel Club Show or the recent Quilt Show. They sit in their little center and twiddle their thumbs and that doesn't help hospitality or bring in tourism. If you don't put your guides that you spend all year creating, into a tourism facility, no one is going to see them. You have to pay the people who go and put them in those places.
- 3) Last year, Mayor Green and the rest of this Commission were shoving the Law Enforcement Complex down our throats so they can have the state of the art exercise room, and now they want to get rid of the exercise equipment which they should use.

Isaac Eastvold, sent an email with comments which were read by Commissioner Hechler addressed the Commission related to:

- 1) Since we heard about it earlier this year, we have been enthusiastic supporters of Ron Fenn's generous offer to get the Lee Belle Johnson Center back to its original community uses. It is one of those "great ideas" that would help put the T or C community back on course to realize its cultural and educational potential, and more fully serve some of the essential needs of T or C's large senior population. We would hope that our Chihuahuan Desert Conservancy, which currently has no community space to educate residents, occasionally could make use of this facility to offer programs on the marvelous desert landscapes surrounding our community, and the urgent need for conservation. Please consider the CDC as a "stakeholder" contributing to the Lee Belle Johnson Center's Citizens Committee. Since its WPA construction in 1938, and dedication as a community and recreation center for seventy-five years, this building has been the heart of Truth or Consequences. It is past time to get that heart beating again.

Lt. Erica Baker addressed the Commission related to:

- 1) She wanted to let the public know why they are not using the exercise machine. The equipment is too big and they wanted to do something good for the community. They thought it was a great thing to be able to contribute to the high school kids so they can have a workout machine in their brand new fitness

center. Since we can't use it, we figured it could benefit them, and we are all about helping out our kids in the community.

- 2) She thanked the Water Department for all of their hard work getting the water back on for our schools and our community.
- 3) She thanked the Commission for all of their hard work since all they usually hear are negative comments.

Tamer Rollins, new to T or C addressed the Commission related to:

- 1) He has been involved with, and is interest in filming. He has been working with a lot of local people, and when he shows films at Ingo's shop, he notices that a lot of people have sit on the floor. He would prefer if people could sit and view a film on a larger screen at somewhere like the Lee Belle Johnson Center. He hasn't seen any films there, but he thinks the facility would be more comfortable and affective for screening movies or documentaries. He knows there are other facilities that would probably better suit an office or a smaller conference area for the Spaceport.

#### **D. RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Hechler commented that we have all experienced sewer plant issues, water line issues, and transformer issues throughout the last year in Truth or Consequences. These issues have also been experienced by every other community in this state. These things happen. The true measure of a community is how we react to them, and how we prepare for them. Last night we had a city crew stay out there pretty much all night long with a major waterline break. It was a new infrastructure so don't blame it on the old infrastructure of the city, this was a PVC pipe. It was a 12 inch main going down the center of Kopra. These things fail from time to time. Our city employees did a wonderful job, and they were there all night long, and they repaired it in as fast order as they could. He was amazed that we actually had supplies within the city to make the repairs, and we didn't have to put everything on hold for an extended period of time to find these things somewhere else. He thanked the crews, and our City Manager for a job well done, taking care of us, and fixing the problem as quickly as they could.

Commissioner Szigeti thanked John Davis for his comments on Roundup.

He then let Mr. Rawlins know that the facilities at the Club are available for use.

He does not feel that the Lee Belle Johnson Center was a mistake. There has been some suggestion to use that area and the stage for some other events, which he would support, but he feels that it is a good idea having the senior activities housed up here because they are close to the Senior Center, and having everything in one location is a good idea.

Commissioner Hechler added for the record, he did see representatives from MainStreet at the Spaceport.

Mayor Whitehead responded to Audon Trujillo. She knows for several years he has talked about ordinances, resolutions, boards and what not. She met with Manager

Madrid and they discussed those concerns. They will try to get those items resolved here in the near future. She also announced that City Manager Madrid's door is always open to anyone who would like to meet with him.

**E. PRESENTATIONS:**

- 1. Presentation request related to the Lee Belle Johnson Center. Ron Fenn, Requestor:**

Item moved before public comment.

- 2. Presentation request related to the Lee Belle Johnson Center & Civic Center. Audon Trujillo, Requestor:**

Item moved before public comment.

**F. CONSENT CALENDAR:**

- 1. Accounts Payable, March 2019:**

Commissioner Hechler moved to approve the Consent Calendar as noted. Commissioner Szigeti seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**G. ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS/ZONING:**

- 1. Discussion/Action: Resolution No. 34 2018/2019 authorizing the execution and delivery of a Taxable Loan Agreement and Intercept Agreement by and between the City of Truth or Consequences and the NMFA for the purpose of purchasing Law Enforcement Equipment. Traci Burnette, Grant/Projects Coordinator & Zoning Official:**

Grant/Projects Coordinator Burnette presented the item. On January 9<sup>th</sup> you approved the Resolution authorizing us to submit an application to the public revolving loan fund and that application has been approved.

Commissioner Hechler moved to approve Resolution No. 34 2018/2019 authorizing the execution and delivery of a Taxable Loan Agreement and Intercept Agreement by and between the City of Truth or Consequences and the NMFA for the purpose of purchasing Law Enforcement Equipment. Commissioner Baca seconded the motion. Roll call was taken by the Clerk-Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.

- 2. Discussion/Action: Resolution No. 35 2018/2019 amending the Animal Shelter Fees to include microchipping and repealing Resolution No. 34 2017/2018. Randall Aragon, Police Chief:**



Chief Aragon first thanked the Commission for approving the loan for the equipment, Grant/Projects Coordinator Burnette who was like a “heat seeking missile”, and City Clerk Cantin for her support as well. He then turned the item over to Lt. Baker.

Lt. Baker reported that some of our return to owner efforts are hard with the animals, especially if they don’t have the information, tags or collars. A lot of the animals that are owned don’t have those things when we get them at the shelter. We’ve had several requests from citizens asking if the shelter could offer microchipping separate from the adoption process. We offer microchipping, but it is a fee that is a part of a whole cost when you adopt an animal. She wants to make it to where we are affordable, but we are not just giving that away for free. We pay about \$10 per microchip for the shelter, so their idea is to charge a separate fee of \$20 for microchipping. That way it would still be affordable to the customers, and it would help us trace the animals and get them back to their owners.

City manager Madrid recommended approval of this item.

**Mayor Pro-Tem Clark moved to approve Resolution No. 35 2018/2019 amending the Animal Shelter Fees to include microchipping and repealing Resolution No. 34 2017/2018. Commissioner Szigeti seconded the motion. Roll call was taken by the Clerk-Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.**

**3. Discussion/Action: Resolution No. 36 2018/2019 declaring surplus property from the Police Department and Sanitation Department.  
Renee Cantin, City Clerk-Treasurer:**

City Clerk Cantin reported that we usually do a resolution when we are declaring surplus property to go to auction. After a lot of research, as well as checking with DFA, it was determined that doing a resolution similar to the one that we do for regular surplus property would be the best bet, but we would declare it as nonessential property for public or government functions. The property we are discussing is the exercise equipment at the Armory that is too large for them to use in their current facility. The second item presented is the solid waste containers, and as you know, we have declared many as surplus, and we have put many in the auction. All we have left are completely rusted and non-usable containers, so the best thing to do with them would be to use a recycle company to dispose of them.

Mayor Pro-Tem Clark mentioned she understands that once the new High School Gym is completed, they also will allow the Police Department to use it. She asked Chief Aragon to confirm that.

Chief Aragon confirmed that Mayor Pro-Tem Clark is correct.

**Mayor Pro-Tem Clark moved to approve Resolution No. 36 2018/2019 declaring surplus property for the Police Department and Sanitation Department.**

**Commissioner Hechler seconded the motion. Roll call was taken by the Clerk-Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**4. Discussion/Action: Amend Award IFB: 18-19-006 WWTP and Lift Station Improvements Phase 2B. Traci Burnette, Grant/Projects Coordinator & Zoning Official:**

Grant/Projects Coordinator Burnette presented the need to amend the award to include additional additives for the WWTP and Lift Station Improvements Phase 2B.

**Commissioner Hechler moved to approve amending the Award for IFB: 18-19-006 WWTP and Lift Station Improvements Phase 2B. Commissioner Baca seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

**5. Discussion: Review of Personnel Board. Rolf Hechler, Commissioner:**

Commissioner Hechler presented the item as it was proposed last year. He proposed for the City Commission to serve as this board.

City Attorney Rubin inquired about the process and the policy that would need to be changed.

Chief Aragon shared a situation he went through in a different city. They had a civil service and a week before his arrival, they did away with it, and it was a fire storm. The League Attorney determined the Council should deal in policy and not in personnel matters. If you have a discussion on a grievance, some might have known the person or have gone to school with them or something. They turned it over to the council members to be the final board, and they found out that there was some liability because that is a legislative body that deals with policy, and they got them involved with personnel matters, so it reverted back to civil service. The Commission and politics should be kept out of it, and it should be independent or taken to District Court for that reason.

City Attorney Rubin referred to 10.26 which gives the City Commission several different options to choose from.

Commissioner Szigeti likes that they have that option available if it's prudent.

City Manager Madrid said there is only one issue where the Commission is required to get involved and that would be with the City Manager.

Mayor Whitehead asked what the will of the Commission is.

Mayor Pro-Tem Clark suggested they think about it.

City Manager Madrid wanted to notify the Commission of the Personnel Policy being reviewed and he suggested this discussion be included at that point.

Commissioner Hechler recommended that the Commission wait for City Manager Madrid's review, and get some input from other communities so they can take a look at them.

**H. NEW BUSINESS:**

- 1. Discussion/Action: Approve the donation of Exercise Machine declared as nonessential property to Hot Springs High School from the Police Department. Renee Cantin, City Clerk-Treasurer and Randall Aragon, Police Chief:**

City Clerk Cantin briefly reviewed the item reporting that it's great to support the community, and as discussed, the Police Department will be able to use the equipment as well. They are asking for approval to donate the exercise machine to the Hot Springs High School.

City Attorney Rubin wanted to clarify that the word "donation" is not a violation of the anti-donation clause, as the statute points out that we have the right to donate personal property to state subdivisions such as a school.

**Commissioner Szigeti moved to approve the donation of Exercise Machine declared as nonessential property to Hot Springs High School from the Police Department. Commissioner Baca seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

- 2. Discussion/Action: Approve the sale of Solid Waste Containers declared as nonessential property to a recycling company from the Sanitation Department. Renee Cantin, City Clerk-Treasurer:**

City Clerk Cantin reported that we would like to recycle the equipment that is no longer useable, and that would bring in extra revenue for the city.

City manager Madrid stated that the solid waste containers will probably end up being sold as scrap metal because they are not usable for any surplus.

**Mayor Whitehead moved to approve the sale of Solid Waste Containers declared as nonessential property to a recycling company. Commissioner Szigeti seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

**I. REPORTS:**

**City Manager:**

**City Manager Madrid reported the following:**

- He reported on the water leak which was one of the main lines and became a huge sink hole. There was great collaboration between the Water, Wastewater, Meter Readers and the staff who worked all night long and did a great job.
- He said we are in the dire need of an emergency action plan so we have a more effective way to reach the public.

**Commissioner Hechler reported the following:**

- He commended Chief Tooley who was active and provided water to those who needed it during the water leak.
- He asked that Mayor Whitehead talk about the free trash day during her report.

**Commissioner Szigeti reported the following:**

- He agrees that the notification to the public is an important part, and it has been a challenge. Even when you use the media, it is a challenge. Even the internet trolls were complaining about how we are spending millions of dollars on Spaceport instead of putting it into infrastructure. Everybody here knows how much we have put into infrastructure over the last several years.
- Also, to the best of his knowledge, the City of T or C has not given one penny out of our budget to support the Spaceport. The tax that we pay is a County tax and it was approved by the public. All of those decisions are made up at the State level.
- He asked the Commission for an hour of their time to view a video he came across on YouTube which talked about a serious problem that has turned critical in Seattle but is not unique to Seattle. Seattle has become a haven for the homeless and there are shelters all over the place. Crime has also gone through the roof and there is trash, and camps, and people with serious mental health problems sitting on the street corners in downtown Seattle. One of the points it made was that it is not really a homeless problem because almost 100% of these people have drug addictions, so it's really a drug problem and that's what makes it something that is shared by every other community in the state. It also goes through showing how the problem got that bad, which was basically through inaction of the city government. At the end of the video it looks at the State of Rhode Island who has put into place an enforcement and intervention program that seems to be working very well, and has a 90% success rate with the people who went through that program in the 3 years that it has been in existence. He forwarded this information to Chief Aragon who he has a great concern about these issues, and he was very impressed by this video as I was. It was then forwarded to many other important contacts/organizations. It was a very well done video. The scale of their problem is hard to compare but, there are important lessons to be learned for us a government body on what not to do and it also has very detailed information about stuff that actually works. He thinks it would be very beneficial for this governing body to review.



**Commissioner Baca reported the following:**

- He had an idea about considering doing the answering service like the school does. When there is a problem they call everybody within a few minutes. He doesn't know what it costs or how it works, but it could be worth looking into.

**Mayor Pro-Tem Clark reported the following:**

- A couple of years ago, the Police Department had an app that you could download to your phone and it would work like an Amber Alert. So she likes Commissioner Baca's idea of the answering system like the schools have.
- As far as the water, we have put somewhere between \$18 million and \$20 million into our infrastructure including this one we just did today. When she first got on here we were \$14 million in debt, and we put a couple more million dollars onto that, and paid it down to \$8 million, so that we could put some more money on that, and that is where these big hits are coming from. She feels that Traci really needs to be commended for her efforts in trying to find that money. A lot of people don't see infrastructure because it is under the ground or someplace else that is not really visible. As much as she would like to dig up every single one of the water lines in this town at  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a million dollars per a block, that is an awful lot of money.
- She thanked the city for fixing the water leak quicker than anticipated.

**Mayor Whitehead reported the following:**

- She thanked all of the crews that spent many hours out there during the water leak, and Paul Tooley and the Fire Department. She received a call at 2:00 pm yesterday afternoon letting her know about the situation, and she received another phone call last night at 9:00 pm so she got in her car and drove up down the streets and to the barricade where she stopped and talked to Paul Tooley and he let her know what was going on. So again, thank you to everyone.
- April 27<sup>th</sup> is the Spring Clean-up Day! You can contact Sanitation or City Hall for more information and she pleaded with everyone to please use this.

**K. ADJOURNMENT**

**Commissioner Hechler moved to adjourn at 10:59 a.m.**

**Commissioner Szigeti seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

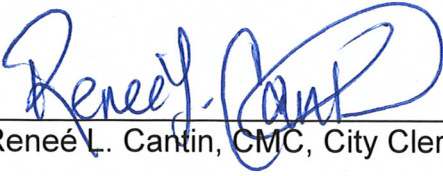
**Passed and Approved this** 8<sup>th</sup> **day of** May, **2019.**

  
Sandra Whitehead, Mayor





CITY COMMISSION APRIL 10, 2019 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES



Renee L. Cantin, CMC, City Clerk