

CITY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES  
CITY OF TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES, NEW MEXICO  
CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS, 405 W. 3<sup>RD</sup> St.  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2017

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Steve Green at 9:01 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. Steve Green, Mayor  
Hon. Sandra Whitehead, Mayor Pro-Tem  
Hon. Kathy Clark, Commissioner (by telephone)  
Hon. Rolf Hechler, Commissioner

Absent: Hon. Joshua Frankel, Commissioner (Excused)

Also Present: Juan Fuentes, City Manager  
Renee Cantin, City Clerk-Treasurer

Mayor Green added he would like the record to reflect Commissioner Frankel has been out sick and is excused from this meeting.

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

**2. SILENT MEDITATION**

Mayor Green called for fifteen seconds of Silent Meditation.

**3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Green called for Commissioner Hechler to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Mayor Pro-Tem Whitehead moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Hechler seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

**C. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC (3 Minute Rule Applies)**

Mayor Green called for Public Comment, noting the three minute rule applies, and any material for the Commission was to be left in the black box by the podium.

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LaRena Miller, Director of the Geronimo Trails Visitor's Center in the Lee Belle Building addressed the Commission related to:

1) Gave a report on the Visitor's at the Lee Belle Johnson Visitor's Center. During 2016, they greeted 6,676 Visitors who signed in, which is 36% more than 2015. About 20% of them come from Outside the United States; 55% are from State's other than New Mexico; maybe 20-25% from Outside of Sierra County in New Mexico; and only about 5% come from Sierra County. And most of those from Sierra County are because they are bringing Visitor's, picking up information to send to Visitor's so they can decide what to do when they come visit. They mailed out 81 Visitor and Relocation Packets; Provided 395 Conference Bags of information and distribution; they responded to 1,284 email requests for information (which was up 27% from last year because people are wanting to do things electronically); They answered 431 telephone calls for information (they also try to refer them to the proper parties for the correct answers if they don't know them). Spaceport America has been helpful in increasing the numbers and in turn, they assisted with keeping their Visitor's Center open during October, November, and December at the request of the city. Another thing that has helped tremendously is the City having a Marketing Agent who sends Press Releases out and such, it helps a lot more people find us. She thanked them for their time.

Diane Lombardo, Silver St. addressed the Commission related to:

1) Kudos to PALS and Diane and Carole for doing such a terrific job in getting it going. It's really in the City's court now, so let's get it going.

2) She is wondering why the City is requiring Driver's License for employees of the city. She has a license and she loves it and knows most people have one. She knows at least three people in this town who are highly qualified for city jobs and cannot apply because they choose not to drive for whatever reason. If you look into their work history you will know they have Computer Skills, Management Skills, and are highly qualified dedicated people who can't work for the city because they don't have a license. She's not talking about people who lost their license for criminal offenses, she's talking about some who do not choose to have one or for disability reasons. These people would be great assets to the city and they can't even apply. One of them, their family has lived here for generations and if you want to know about them you just have to ask.

Ron Fenn, Truth or Consequences addressed the Commission related to:

1) He read a letter that was refused by both newspapers and no comments from the City Commission. It's called Public Corruption. The complete letter is part of the Agenda Packet file. This is an excerpt from a letter on the website which will be posted on the Save our T or C Recreation Center Facebook page.

Ron Pacourek addressed the Commission related to:

1) Last month the Public Utility Advisory Board voted to appoint a member to the board because they are short one and it has not been included on the agenda and he has requested it to be added. He is wondering why it's not on the agenda.

2) They voted months ago to expanding the Public Utility Advisory Board by two members to include the impact fees. He asked at their last meeting what the status of that was and nobody had an idea. He would appreciate if someone would get back to

them on what's going on and why Randy Ashbaugh has not been on the agenda to be approved.

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

Commissioner Hechler responded in regards to Mr. Ashbaugh not being on the agenda. He has not met all of the requirements and he is aware of that and is working on that. And once he is, this Commission will be able to vote on that.

Mayor Green thanked Diane for her comments, and said it was a point well taken. He asked LaRena just so the Commission can have a sense of what's in it, if a relocation packet can be left at City Hall. So when the Commissioner's come in to pick up their information they might have a chance to go through that and see what is actually in them. He is quite sure it's perfect, but they would just like to see what is going out to the public and there might be some input the Commissioner's would like to see put in.

#### **E. PRESENTATIONS**

1. Proclamation recognizing January 22-28, 2017 as School Choice Week in Truth or Consequences. Steve Green, Mayor

Mayor Green read the proclamation recognizing January 22-28, 2017 as School Choice Week in Truth or Consequences.

2. Presentation by PALS. Carole Wheeler & Linda DeMarino

Ms. Wheeler brought an update on where they are with the Off Leash Dog Park Project. In the beginning, what was needed was the location, the fencing and the signage. With those in mind, they went through the budgeting process and the Commission included the unfunded items for the location and concept in the 2016-2017 budget. So, what we do have now is the location, the fencing which was donated, the money for the amenities to proceed with the startup and for the signage. Their proposed budget was a \$20,000 startup cost and with in-kind and donations they have raised \$22,750 for the startup of the Dog Park. It's time they feel, to build the Dog Park, they would like to have it placed on the agenda for action and hope to pass it to the city for the construction phase and they are hoping to have it up and running by March 1<sup>st</sup>. with the blessing of the Commission, the majority of the people like Firehouse Dog Park name concept. They would like it renamed to the Firehouse Dog Park and asked for Commission approval on that. They are asking to place this on the agenda or possibly have a workshop if that's what it takes to get it started. It would be great if we had it going and up and running by Fiesta. It would take a couple of months for the users to get used to it also. MainStreet and Linda have been a great help and with their help, the donations were able to be tax deductible. They also thanked John Hendry for the donation of the fencing. They have two individual donors who donated over \$500, one organization that donated \$100, and a local business that donated \$50. A Foundation that wants to help the animals of the area donated just about \$5,000. She thanked the City Commission for their concern, interest, and guidance. The biggest start up thing is the line locates, and the Commission approval.

Mayor Green said the fencing was donated and that was a huge gift. He asked if the city is responsible for putting in the fencing or did the gift come with putting it in. Ms. Wheeler responded from her conversation with Mr. Hendry, he would like the city to do the line locates so he can bring a crew and dig the holes and set the fence. He doesn't want to be responsible for digging. Once the fencing is done, he will then go purchase the three gates that are necessary. She is not sure that's changed. Mayor Green asked if it would be fair to say the amenities will be the benches, doggy cans, doggy bags.

Ms. Wheeler added the Foundation provided the funding for the amenities, they will have three poop stations where you can stuff used shopping bags in, two all weather, outdoor message centers, with Plexiglas and lockable, where we can post thank you's to sponsors and business of the month supporters, dog park rules; and three all-weather benches one for each section (one section for large dogs, one for small dogs, and one for single use for people whose dogs aren't old enough or may be in heat); lockable permanent storage bench to keep hoses, rakes, shovels, etc. for volunteers. She added these are not necessities, but we have the opportunity to start with these right off the bat. The City won't have to provide them but maybe down the road we can get some funding for shade shelter. To get the park going, this is a great start.

Mayor Green wants to express his thanks for the initiative PALS has taken. It's a lovely example of citizens who see a need where possibly the city can't fulfill that need at that particular time. But your passion and ability to gather likeminded people, start with a concept, recruit interested people, and to now have a start date of March 1<sup>st</sup>, you all are to be commended. Ms. Wheeler wanted to make sure they understand this is not a one person operation. They have all been wonderful and the City Resident's and Linda DeMarino has also been a great help.

#### **F. CONSENT CALENDAR**

1. Joint City/County Commission Workshop Minutes, December 13, 2016
2. City Commission Regular Minutes, December 13, 2016
3. Accounts Payable, December 2016

**Mayor Pro-Tem Whitehead moved to approve the Joint City/County Commission Workshop Minutes for December 13, 2016; the City Commission Regular Minutes for December 13, 2016; and the Accounts Payable for December 2016. Commissioner Hechler seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

#### **G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

1. Discussion/Action: Punk Greer Rodeo Arena Improvements. Juan Fuentes, City Manager

City Manager Fuentes gave an overview of the Commission Action Form where it noted the request to bring this item back after the workshop. To start the process of how it would be best to move forward with the improvements presented by Commissioner Luna. He spoke to the County Manager and he believes they will be taking this item to their next meeting. We do not have funds set aside now for these improvements and if

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that is the will of the Commission, then we can certainly aim for a budget adjustment at the next meeting. Some of the work will be done in-house and we do have Parks Staff working on some of our facilities, and Streets Staff working on a sidewalk project. So we would use Facility Staff to try to assist in this project or other projects. As you just heard with the Dog Park, there is another thing we will have to prioritize. We also have to decide whether all of its done in-house or some is contracted out. But specifically on this item, he will stand for questions and suggestions as far as budget and the priority for this project. He believes the recommendation was for the upgrades to be done by Memorial Day which is May 29<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Clark asked the City Manager to remind her of what the amount was for updating those facilities. City Manager Fuentes said he believes the total amount was \$55,000.

Mayor Green filled Commissioner Clark in on what the basic discussion was related to this request. The first thing Vice Chair Luna wanted to do would be to bring the ground down by about a foot. He would personally like to see what the County's position is on this because we've asked them to partner with us and share the expenses. He'd be very interested to see if the County sees fit to be involved financially.

Commissioner Clark responded that was kind of where she was going, if we could see what the County was going to do before we go in and make a budget adjustment. She understands what they need with the dirt and she totally agrees with that and the ponding issue. She asked if we will have the information of whether we are going to partner with them before the next meeting. City Manager Fuentes does not know but will certainly be following up with the County Manager today to let them know what the questions were. Mayor Green believes the County normally has meetings on the third week and for some particular reason they have changed their meeting to January 24<sup>th</sup> which coincides with our meeting. So it will be impossible for City Manager Juan Fuentes to get that answer and we can put it on for the first meeting in February. Commissioner Clark added, so conceivable we would have three and a half months to get that done before Memorial Day. Mayor Green suggests that we wait, we've asked the County to partner with us on this, we should wait to see what their attitude is.

**Commissioner Clark moved to approve to postpone action until we have definitive information from the County. Commissioner Hechler seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

### **H. NEW BUSINESS**

1. Discussion/Action: Reappointment of Lee Ann Tooley to the Housing Authority Board. Renee Cantin, City Clerk-Treasurer

City Clerk Cantin addressed the Commission with the Housing Authority Board's recommendation where they unanimously approved to reappoint Lee Ann Tooley to the Housing Authority Board.

**Mayor Pro-Tem Whitehead moved to approve the reappointment of Lee Ann Tooley to the Housing Authority Board. Commissioner Hechler seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

Mayor Green would like to make sure we send a letter. City Clerk Cantin confirmed this. And he also requested we thank them for volunteering to serve. City Clerk Cantin confirmed that is also included.

2. Discussion/Action: Welcome Information for new Utility Customer's moving into town. Steve Green, Mayor

Mayor Green presented his idea from when he was a kid and someone new would come into town and a group called the Welcome Wagon would take them a Bundt cake or something which was kind of a nice ice breaker. We have new people coming into our community and the one office they have to go to is the Utility Office, so he thought we should put together a welcome bag. He thanked LaRena Miller from Geronimo Trails who has offered to donate these bags if the city didn't want to get their own bags. He is thinking we could purchase some bags which are \$125 for 250 bags and put the City Logo, the address, telephone number, and our website on the bag. And after someone comes in to get their Utilities turned on, they would be given this bag. It would include a welcome letter and he read the welcome letter. He would like the Commissioners to write welcome letter so we can put them together and create a finished product. In the packet, he has information about: Recycling (in English and Spanish); Sierra Health Council Community Resources; Library; Dog Licenses; Hospital; SJOA New Mexico Workforce Solutions; the Artists Guide; Sierra County Visitor's Guide; Brochure about our Hot Springs; Geronimo Trail National Scenic Byway; Geronimo Springs Museum; Veteran's Park and Museum; Sierra County Travel Guide; the Teen Club; Business License; and MainStreet. He asked if they think it's a good idea to please communicate what they would like to see on the welcome letter and in the bag or what they would not like to see in it so we can add it to the next agenda for action.

Commissioner Clark feels it's a great idea. She further thinks they should be delivered directly to the door and they appreciated the more personal touch. She feels we should continue this discussion and there might be some other things that might be added, but the personal touch is a nice thing to do. As long as the Utility Department didn't feel it was an extra burden on them, then she's fully supportive of this project. Mayor Green responded his idea was they would be premade in groups of 25 in the office and could be given by the Utility Department when they open an account before they walk out. To him it sets a nice table.

Mayor Pro-Tem Whitehead thinks it's a good idea. But we have to find out what the cost will be of the bags and where this money will be taken from and does it take away from other projects and activities for the city and the employees. And is this something that's going to be promoted and handed out to every individual that comes in or is it just going to sit in a closet and not handed out because we don't have enough resources to do that. So we have to take into consideration a lot of these ideas. Again, it's a great

welcome package to the community, but we don't want to waste any of our financial resources at this time either. Mayor Green responded he understands and there are some good points she made. However, he doesn't feel like it would stress staff to reach down and give one to a person who has opened a new account. And not to be facetious, but if the community can't spend \$125 to welcome people to it, we are doing something dramatically wrong and we're in the wrong business. And if that comes to where the City can't find \$125, he will do what Carole Wheeler and her group have done and will get us the money.

**Commissioner Clark moved to approve bringing it back for discussion to the next meeting. Commissioner Hechler seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

## **I. REPORTS**

### **a. City Manager**

- 1) We have two new hires at the Airport. They are currently receiving some training from Steve Spaw whose last day is tomorrow. He thinks the two new hires will be a great addition and assets to the City and the Airport. We are looking at making some administrative changes with the resources that we have to better address the needs at the Airport.
- 2) Staff is still working with the Auditor's and we are making progress. We hopefully will have that completed by the end of this month.
- 3) Kudos to Gloria Franke who is doing a great job and started taking down the fencing at the Louis Armijo Park. We received some compliments about how it's more open and looks much better. And she is addressing a lot of the maintenance and improvements of the facilities, but there is still much more to be done.
- 4) City Offices are Closed on Monday the 16<sup>th</sup> in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

### **b. City Commission**

**Mayor Pro-Tem Whitehead** wished all of her fellow Commissioner's, Manager Fuentes, Staff, all City Employees a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

**Commissioner Clark** same as Mayor Pro-Tem Whitehead. Mayor Green agreed.

**Mayor Green** started with thanking all of the Organizations, Churches, and Volunteers who made Christmas a lot happier for the young and the older in our community.

2) He had a phone call followed up by an email in relationship to business licenses and business permits. One of the questions was, when a person or a business employs an out of town contractor, does that contractor know that each subcontractor must have a business license to do business in the city. That may or may not be happening. Also, they were concerned about renewals of business licenses. So he would like to ask staff to put together a brief outline of the procedures for renewals.

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How do we keep track of it when people hire out of town contractors, and they bring out of town contractors; is the license or permit say in black and white that you are responsible and that you will be held responsible for the Business Licenses of the subcontractor's that you will be hiring to do the job. There seems to be some misunderstanding and lack of understanding of the process. He hopes that will solve some of the angst he is hearing in the community.

**J. ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Pro-Tem Whitehead moved to adjourn at 9:50 a.m. Mayor Green seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Passed and Approved this 24<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2017.

  
Steven Green, Mayor



ATTEST:

  
Renee L. Cantin, CMC, City Clerk