City Council
of the
City of Las Cruces

Regular Meeting

January 4, 2016
1:00 P.M.
Council Chambers, City Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT:	**STAFF:**
Mayor Ken Miyagishima	Robert Garza, City Manager
Councillor Kasandra Gandara, District 1	Rusty Babington, City Attorney
Councillor Greg Smith, District 2	Linda Lewis, Interim City Clerk
Councillor Olga Pedroza, District 3	
Councillor Jack Eakman, District 4	
Councillor Gill Sorg, District 5	
Councillor Ceil Levatino, District 6	

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I. OPENING CEREMONIES

Mayor Miyagishima called the meeting to order. Councillor Levatino led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Missy Pate sang the National Anthem.

Mayor Miyagishima and a volunteer from the Animal Services Center presented the Pet of the Week.

Mayor Pro-Tem Emeritus Dolores Archuleta recognized WWII Veteran Private First Class Harvey Brown and Mayor Miyagishima presented the Medal of Honor.

Mayor Miyagishima presented the Mayor's Citation for Community Service to Jaime and Melissa Salazar of La Nueva Casita Cafe.

Councillor Levatino presented a Proclamation to Dawn Starostka and declared January of 2016 Mentoring Month in Las Cruces, New Mexico.

II. CONFLICT OF INTEREST INQUIRY BY MAYOR AS REQUIRED BY LCMC SECTION 2-27(E)(2).

At the opening of each council meeting, the chairperson shall ask

if any member of the city council, city manager, or any member of the city staff has any known conflict of interest with any item on the agenda.

Mayor Miyagishima asked if anyone had any conflicts with anything on the agenda?

There is none.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Dolores Archuleta, Member of the Public said I want to thank our police, fire, and utilities for their work during the snowstorm.

Vincent Jeffers, Member of the Public said instead of having a feasibility study for a mental health facility I think we should study what's happening in Las Cruces.

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IV. ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

Mayor Pro-Tem Smith Moved to Approve the agenda as presented and Councillor Sorg Seconded the motion.

Mayor Miyagishima called for the roll on the motion to Approve the agenda as presented and it was Unanimously Approved. 7-0.

V. CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

*(1) Regular City Council Meeting of December 21, 2015

VI. RESOLUTION(S) AND/OR ORDINANCE(S) FOR CONSENT AGENDA

*(2) Resolution No. 16-136: A Resolution Authorizing the Las Cruces Fire Department to Accept Various Emergency Preparedness Equipment Valued at $22,896.77 and Funded by the New Mexico Department of Homeland Security Office of Emergency Management Pursuant to a Grant Funded by the United States Department of Homeland Security Office Homeland Security Grant Program for FY 2014.

*(3) Resolution No. 16-137: A Resolution Authorizing the Las Cruces Fire Department to Accept Various Emergency Preparedness Equipment Valued at $6,203.23 and Funded by the New Mexico Department of Homeland Security Office of Emergency Management Pursuant to a Grant Funded by the United States Department of Homeland Security Office Homeland Security Grant Program for FY 2014.

VII. RESOLUTION(S) AND/OR ORDINANCE(S) FOR DISCUSSION

(4) Resolution No. 16-138: A Resolution Authorizing the City of Las Cruces (City), on Behalf of the Parks & Recreations Department (Parks), to Accept Legislative Appropriation No. 15-0771 in the Amount of $7,000.00, through the New Mexico Department of Finance & Administration (NMDFA) to Plan, Design, Construct, Purchase and Install a Purple Heart Monument at Veteran's Park in Las Cruces; to Ratify the City Manager's Signature on the Contract Agreement; and to Amend the City's Adopted FY2016 Budget and FY2016 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

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Councillor Sorg Moved to Approve Resolution No. 16-138 and Mayor Pro-Tem Smith Seconded the motion.

Mark Johnston, Parks and Rec Director gave an overhead presentation.

Ron Gajewski said there's about 500 veterans in Doña Ana County and we're the largest Purple Heart City in New Mexico.

Mayor Miyagishima asked is the insignia Washington?

Ron Gajewski said yes.

Mayor Miyagishima asked when was it started?

Ron Gajewski said George Washington gave a swatch of purple for wounds during the Revolutionary War. There is currently a monument in Rio Rancho and San Antonio. We're the 100th Purple Heart City in the nation. We had 20 signs installed throughout the City and have two more coming for Veteran's Park.

Councillor Levatino asked do we have a timeframe for when this will be installed?

Ron Gajewski said we are in the process of awarding to the proper vendor. We're trying to have it completed for National Purple Heart Day on August 7th.

Mayor Miyagishima said we would like to have a ceremony for it.

Anthony Barncastle, Member of the Public said we have to thank the City, Chief Brown and Dolores Archuleta for their help.

Mayor Miyagishima called for the roll on the Motion to Approve Resolution No. 16-138 and it was Unanimously Approved. 7-0

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(5) Resolution No. 16-139: A Resolution Approving the Citizen Participation Plan, Required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), as Part of the Preparation for the 2016-2020 Consolidated Plan and Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice for the City of Las Cruces.

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Councillor Sorg Moved to Approve Resolution No. 16-139 and Councillor Levatino Seconded the motion.

Vera Zamora, Housing and Neighborhood Services Manager gave an overhead presentation.

Councillor Sorg asked could you give us a few examples of what the money is used for?

Vera Zamora said they are generally used for low to moderate income participants. We provide public services funding, homeless activities, infrastructure projects, and street projects.

Councillor Sorg asked could it be used to bring streets up to standard?

Vera Zamora said as long as the actual street is located in a low-mod designated area.

Councillor Sorg said I hope there is as much notice as possible to get them to understand what this is about.

Vera Zamora said we are in the process of folding 5000 mail outs.

Councillor Gandara asked did you say you had very little public participation?

Vera Zamora said that is correct.

Councillor Gandara asked will you have a second meeting to encourage participation?

Vera Zamora said that meeting was just to approve the plan. There will be three upcoming meetings.

Councillor Gandara asked are the surveys in Spanish?

Vera Zamora said yes.

Councillor Gandara asked have you considered focus groups?

Vera Zamora said I can include that group.

Councillor Gandara said I have some contacts. Would the public meetings be considered focus groups?

Vera Zamora said the consultants conducted meetings individually and with different committees and they'll be here 2-3 more times through the entire process.

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Councillor Gandara asked how will you engage participation with the transportation issue?

Vera Zamora said there will be an afternoon meeting at two different locations.

Carrie Bachman, Member of the Public said I'm the coordinator of Doña Ana Place Matters where we build bridges between community members and decision makers in the county and would love to do this with the City also. Public forums to me are one way so I would suggest facilitated discussions, a health equity board, involving community based organizations,

Dolores Archuleta, Member of the Public said I'm in the same board as Councillor Sorg as to what do they do. Will this plan help those with no money to fix their homes or find new homes?

Vera Zamora said this plan is to involve public participation to develop the consolidated plan and at that time we'll prioritize the funding requests. Every year we've been able to fund the City's home rehab program.

Ron Gurley, Member of the Public said I'm concerned with the way the voting takes place on the board.

Vera Zamora said he's referencing the Health and Human Services Advisory Committee.

Mayor Miyagishima called for the roll on the Motion to Approve Resolution No. 16-139 and it was Unanimously Approved. 7-0

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(6) Resolution No. 16-140: A Resolution in Support of a Feasibility Study for a Southern New Mexico Mental Health Facility.

Councillor Eakman moved to Approve Resolution No. 16-140 and Mayor Pro-Tem Smith Seconded the motion.

Councillor Eakman gave a verbal presentation. He said the feasibility study is underway with a consultant I have known for many years. One in four people take a mental health drug. The amount of days off for mental health is rising. There's been a decrease in hospital services available to treat the mentally ill. PD is expected to be trained mental health workers. The only public hospital is in Las Vegas. There's a shortage of mental health providers.

Ron Gurley, Member of the Public said my daughter has been in the state hospital four times. I've been the treatment guardian for over 100 clients for 23 years. We've tried to get a public hospital down here several times and were told that the local hospitals should be given more money. The Telshor Fund is not tax money.

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Micah Pearson, Member of the Public said I am the Vice President of the Mental Health Alliance in Doña Ana County and I have mental illness. I was working with the New Mexico Association of Counties on the State Memorial Joint Task Force, which is a task force to come up with solutions to those in the county detention center with a severe mental illness. Southern New Mexico is lacking access to services. We identified a need for a state hospital. The Telshor Fund is dedicated to healthcare.

Councillor Pedroza said I attended an event organized by Mr. Gurley it was stated that police come across many mental health issues. Can you give us an idea of what percentage of time that a police officer goes out that they encounter mental health needs?

Ron Gurley said one third of the police officers are fully certified CIT officers.

Mayor Pro-Tem Smith said CIT is Crisis Intervention Training.

Mayor Miyagishima said I'm proud of the PD.

Chief Jaime Montoya said we have certain officers who are passionate in working with the mentally ill. Robert McCord does a training every year with our officers. HIDA has given us federal dollars to train the rest of our officers.

Councillor Sorg asked will this feasibility study address the need for more providers?

Councillor Eakman said this study will show where we fall short.

Mayor Pro-Tem Smith said I want to make sure we're putting that money to good use and developing a feasibility study that will have answers that will help us as a guide. Could you expand on how we got to this point?

Councillor Eakman said it is going to require quite a bit of effort and lobbying.

Mayor Pro-Tem Smith asked what experience have you had with them so far and how were they picked by the County?

Councillor Eakman said I worked with The Principle in the past and he's always come in with results that are workable. He has worked with other states who have sparse budgets. They don't work for anyone.

Councillor Levatino said I have some concerns. Some of the problems will not be fixed by just building a hospital. The problem doesn't seem to be a lack of beds but an integrated program that intervenes prior to doing that. I'm also concerned that we have empty beds. I just read recently that 80% of those requiring ongoing mental health care are on Medicaid. The reason why we can't attract physicians is because of the payer mix.

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Councillor Eakman said we have a severe shortage based on the poverty level population.

Micah Pearson, Member of the Public said the task force identified a gap population. We don't have the facility or staffing to deal with certain situations. With the Affordable Care Act, we're having people covered on more than just Medicaid.

Councillor Levatino said the need for mental health providers has existed for years but they're not coming.

Kathy Fern, Member of the Public said my husband is a dentist and when we came here in 2005 we had to wait six months for the state office to process our paperwork. So the process for doctors and nurses to get certified here is difficult so look at the administrative side.

Councillor Gandara asked is the consultant group The Principle and what kind of feasibility study are they conducting?

Councillor Eakman said the first two studies are taking into account the data from all 12 counties. It's a combination of other studies and based on modern demand.

Councillor Gandara asked are you the representative for the City?

Councillor Eakman said I've been representing as a citizen and have not been designated to represent the City.

Councillor Pedroza said the feasibility study is going to suggest ways to meet needs. It's not mandatory.

Ron Gurley said we could provide some perks to get people to come down here.

Mayor Miyagishima called for the roll on the Motion to Approve Resolution No. 16-140 and it was Unanimously Approved. 7-0

VIII. BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Miyagishima appointed David Chavez (District 1), Clark C. Myers (District 2), Alice Salcido (District 3), Ernie Campos (District 4), Jose L. Amanda Sigala (District 5, and Dr. Michael Evans (District 6) to the Historic Preservation Ad Hoc Committee.

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Mayor Miyagishima appointed Robert Harrison (District 2) to the Parks and Rec Advisory Board.

Mayor Miyagishima appointed Ana Berrun to the Convention and Visitor's Bureau Advisory Board as "Limited Lodging" position.

Councillor Sorg Moved to Approve Mayor Miyagishima's board appointment of Ana Berrun to the Convention and Visitor's Bureau Advisory Board and Councillor Levatino Seconded the motion.

Mayor Miyagishima called for the roll on the Motion to Approve Mayor Miyagishima's board appointment of Ana Berrun to the Convention and Visitor's Bureau Advisory Board and it was Unanimously Approved. 7-0

IX. NOTICE OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE(S) ----- *1.) There will be no public discussion. 2.) A councillor may ask staff for clarification on the proposed ordinance(s).*

There are none.

X. CITY COUNCIL MEMBER BOARD REPORTS

There are none.

XI. GENERAL DISCUSSION

b.) City Council

Councillor Gandara said Happy New Year.

Councillor Pedroza said Happy Holidays and I'd like to thank those participating in the Veteran's Theater.

She said I attended the Pal Boxing Club Awards Ceremony and they're doing a great job with the kids.

She said January 18th is the Martin Luther King Breakfast and the Sunday before that is the march.

Councillor Eakman said Happy New Year and the name of the consultant doing the feasibility study is Howard Gershon.

Councillor Sorg said Happy New Year.

Councillor Levatino said Happy New Year.

Mayor Pro-Tem Smith said Happy New Year. Senator Papen has asked us to come forward with a resolution of support for an AOT (Assistant Outpatient Treatment) Bill. We're shooting for the first meeting in February.

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a.) Mayor

Mayor Miyagishima said Happy New Year. I'm very excited to work with everyone.

He said we need to clarify the next step in the minimum wage increase.

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c.) City Manager

Robert Garza said there are some changes that need to be made to the minimum wage ordinance. It was first 2015, 2016, and 2017 and then moved to 2015, 2017, and 2019 but you didn't change the dates that you would meet prior to implementation.

He said kudos to PD, FD, Utilities, and Transportation for the great job they did during the inclement weather.

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He said we have a heater in place at Frenger.

He said we are going to schedule a TIDD Board meeting and take a tour of the Downtown Plaza.

Mayor Miyagishima asked did we get to use the new snow plows?

Robert Garza said we used new sand/salt spreaders and blades for some of our vehicles.

Councillor Sorg Moved to Adjourn and Councillor Levatino Seconded the motion.

Mayor Miyagishima said all of those in favor signify by saying "Aye."

Council said "Aye."

Meeting Adjourned at 3:18 p.m.