



EXTRAORDINARY SKIES.  
UNCOMMON GROUND.

## CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minute summary of the regular meeting of the City Council of Sierra Vista held on the 9<sup>TH</sup> day of December, 2021. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 13<sup>TH</sup> day of January 2022

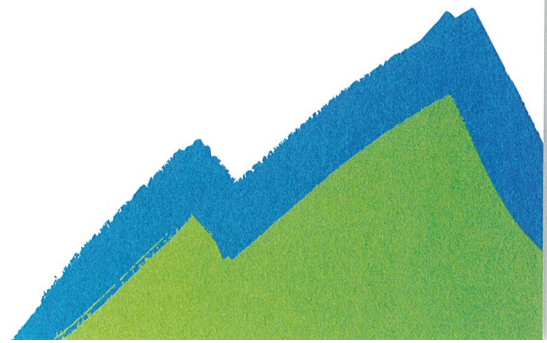
SEAL

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Maria G. Marsh  
Deputy City Clerk

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Jill Adams", written over a horizontal line.

Jill Adams  
City Clerk



Sierra Vista City Council  
Meeting Minutes  
December 9, 2021

Mayor Mueller called the December 9, 2021, City Council Regular Meeting to order at 5:00 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers, 1011 N. Coronado Drive, Sierra Vista, Arizona.

Roll Call:

Mayor Rick Mueller – present  
Mayor Pro Tem Rachel Gray – present  
Council Member William Benning – present  
Council Member Gregory Johnson - present  
Council Member Angelica Landry – present  
Council Member Mark Rodriguez – present (telephonically)  
Council Member Carolyn Umphrey - present

Others Present:

Chuck Potucek, City Manager  
Victoria Yarbrough, Assistant City Manager  
Adam Thrasher, Police Chief  
Brad Dever, Deputy Fire Chief  
Laura Wilson, Parks, Recreation and Library Director  
Sharon Flissar, Public Works Director  
Matt McLachlan, Community Development Director  
Tony Boone, Economic Development Manager  
Karen Lamberton, AICP, SVMPO Director  
Chanel Kirkpatrick, Public Works External Service Manager  
Nathan J. Williams, City Attorney  
Jill Adams, City Clerk

Invocation – Mayor Mueller led everyone present in prayer.

Pledge of Allegiance - Council Member Umphrey led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Item 1** Acceptance of the Agenda

Council Member Landry moved that the agenda for the Regular City Council Meeting of December 9, 2021, be approved. Mayor Pro Tem Gray seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried, 7/0. Mayor Mueller, Mayor Pro Tem Gray, Council Members Benning, Johnson, Landry, and Umphrey voting in favor. Council Member Rodriguez attended telephonically and was not heard.

Awards and Presentations

Mayor Mueller presented the Mayor's Award to United Way of Sierra Vista and Cochise County for the critical role they played during the COVID-19 crisis in Sierra Vista, who partnered with the City to distribute Community Development Block Grant CARES Act funds, more than \$70,000, to citizens in need.



Ms. Ramona McCann on behalf of United Way thanked Council for entrusting them, especially Mr. Reed, who came on behalf of United Way to all the meetings, and Mr. Sanders for being a great advisor.

Mayor Mueller stated that United Way did a great job in helping the City spend money and noted that the City is the second community in the nation that figured out a way to get this money legally to the people that needed it. The City could not have done it without United Way, and there are other charities in town, i.e., the Salvation Army, which gave out money for rental assistance and other things during the same time as well as Catholic Community Services. Lastly, he stated that Christmas time is the time of giving; therefore, he encouraged people with a little extra cash, who are looking for a good cause, and for a tax deduction in most cases, to donate to the United Way and all the charities in Sierra Vista - a good way to make one's money work to take care of those who are less fortunate.

**City Manager's Report:** Mr. Potucek announced that the next scheduled Council meeting is on December 16, 2021 at 2:30 p.m. that will be a special meeting to go over legal and personnel issues in the conference room. He reminded everyone that the Council work session of December 21, 2021 and the regular Council meeting on December 23, 2021 have been cancelled due to the holiday season. He noted that on December 24, 2021 and December 31, 2021, city offices will be closed in observance of Christmas and New Year's. Therefore, refuse service for those two weeks will be on Monday and Wednesday for the Monday refuse service and then Tuesday and Thursday for the Tuesday refuse service.

Mr. Potucek reported that September sales taxes that were reported in October were up \$122,000 or 6.5 percent over last year, a little down from the numbers that the City had before, but still very robust. The City is 9.3 percent ahead of last year's tax receipts and 13.9 percent over budget. Although, very good, those numbers will be re-looked at due to the holiday season to see improvement on both.

Mr. Potucek announced that the design engineering services for the Animal Control Center's improvement and expansion project are out with qualifications due on December 20, 2021. The Municipal Airport Redevelopment Project, which is moving the dirt, is progressing as a third of the dirt has been relocated to Fort Huachuca that will help the City in terms of improving that property for potential use in the future. He also stated that he has been getting a lot of good comments around town about the Fry Boulevard Improvements Project that is now starting to take shape and is on track to be finished in February, 2022. The EMS Substation is also going on as planned. Lastly, on behalf of the City's wonderful staff, he wished residents Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year. In closing, he stated that it is once again a privilege to serve the Mayor and Council, and he looks forward to a productive and prosperous 2022.

Mayor Mueller voiced his concern about the lack of lighting on the EMS Substation Project, but he saw that the polls were going up. However, he does not know when they are going to flip the switch to turn them on, but hopefully before the moonless night.

## **Item 2 Consent Agenda**

**Item 2.1** Discussion and Possible Action of the Regular City Council Meeting Minutes of November 18, 2021



**Item 2.2** Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2021-084, Re-appointments of Brad Snyder and Daniel Coxworth, and appointment of Leslie Thomas to the Planning and Zoning Commission, said terms to expire December 31, 2023

**Item 2.3** Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2021-085, Acceptance of Public Improvements for the Holiday at PDS, Phase 5A subdivision plat

**Item 2.4** Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2021-087, Electrical Utility Easement Modification for the Veteran's Memorial Park Sports Complex and Sports Division Building

**Item 2.5** Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2021-088, Re-appointment of Debbie Perkinson to the Employee Benefit Trust, said terms to expire December 31, 2024

Mayor Pro Tem Gray moved that the Consent Agenda consisting of the Regular City Council Meeting Minutes of November 18, 2021, Resolution 2021-084, re-appointments of Brad Snyder and Daniel Coxworth, and appointment of Leslie Thomas to the Planning and Zoning Commission, said terms to expire December 31, 2023, Resolution 2021-085, acceptance of public improvements for the Holiday at PDS, Phase 5A Subdivision Plat, Resolution 2021-087, electrical utility easement modification for the Veteran's Memorial Park Sports Complex and Sports Division Building, and Resolution 2021-088, re-appointment of Debbie Perkinson to the Employee Benefit Trust, said term to expire December 31, 2024, be approved. Council Member Benning seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried, 7/0. Mayor Mueller, Mayor Pro Tem Gray, Council Members Benning, Johnson, Landry, Rodriguez, and Umphrey voting in favor.

## **New Business**

**Item 3** Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2021-089, Creation of Economic Development Commission

Council Member Johnson moved that Resolution 2021-089, Creation of Economic Development Commission, be approved. Council Member Umphrey seconded the motion.

Mr. Boone stated that there is no defined process to add an additional commission, whether it be regulatory or non-regulatory. In preparing the proposed resolution and supporting documents, he used the language of the City Administrative Directive Boards and Commission Practice and Procedure Guidelines as approved by Council Resolution 2020-035 on June 11, 2020 and published as amended on June 25, 2020. The resolution does two things, if approved, this directs the creation of the Economic Development Commission, and it approves the mission statement, as drafted, and included in your resolution. In this case, Council is leveraging past decisions of the Council, going back to 2020-035, utilizing a non-regulatory commission includes a couple elements and things that were discussed in the work session. There were questions and comments, but in this case the resolution and the admin directive cover roles, responsibilities, membership, selection in terms, meetings, agendas, public record laws, admin, and budget.

Council Member Johnson stated that Council has discussed this at great length, and thanked Mr. Boone for his efforts in putting this commission together. He added that he hopes and prays that it works to supplement Mr. Boone's efforts on behalf of the City and its Economic Development Commission to continue to grow the town.

Council Member Benning also thanked Mr. Boone.



Mayor Mueller stated that for those people that may be interested in serving on commissions, whether it is the Economic Development Commission, or otherwise, the way to do that is to contact the City Clerk. There are openings on several commissions; therefore, he encouraged people to get ahold of the City Clerk and find out what those commissions are, figure out what their interests are and apply. He added that it is a relatively simple process, and it is rewarding work, having been a City commissioner himself.

The motion unanimously carried, 7/0. Mayor Mueller, Mayor Pro Tem Gray, Council Members Benning, Johnson, Landry, Rodriguez, and Umphrey voting in favor.

**Item 4** Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2021-090, Acceptance of the grant offer from the Arizona State Parks Non-motorized Grant Program for funding to construct a stabilized ADA loop trail at Garden Canyon Linear Park off St. Andrews Drive

Council Member Benning moved that Resolution 2021-090, acceptance of the grant offer from the Arizona State Parks Non-motorized Grant Program for funding to construct a stabilized ADA loop trail at Garden Canyon Linear Park off St. Andrews Drive, be approved. Council Member Umphrey seconded the motion.

Ms. Flissar displayed a map as requested by Council Member Rodriguez during the work session and stated that this agenda item will accept a grant from the Arizona State Parks Nonmotorized Grant Program to install a loop trail and other improvements at the Garden Canyon Linear Park off Saint Andrew Drive. The project has faced two recent upgrades at the park, with Phase One being the installation of a trailhead parking lot approximately a year ago. That project used the same funding source through Arizona State Parks. The planned improvements at Garden Canyon Linear Park were developed as part of a master planning effort several years ago, with the park eventually slated to include ramadas, picnic tables, a natural playground, educational areas, and a handicapped accessible loop trail. The Grant award is \$150,000 with an in-kind City match of \$18,780.94.

Ms. Flissar referred to the map displayed and explained that number one is Garden Canyon Linear Park, 148 acres in total. It looks smaller on the map because the limits go from Fort Huachuca all the way to State Route 92 that basically encompasses the wash area. Immediately next to that area, number two is the future Roadrunner Park that is just shy of 14 acres that was dedicated to the City by Castle and Cooke as part of the Canyon de Flores Subdivision. Number three is the former school site now City-owned parcel, and it is just over 15 acres. All three combined will eventually be included in the master planning for that area.

Mayor Pro Tem Gray stated that she is happy to see this and shared that during a meeting with someone that lives in Canyon De Flores told her that they were happy that this was coming in and they will have an opportunity to utilize this trail.

Mayor Mueller stated that he was around when this Roadrunner Park was originally kicked off. The City was not able to acquire the property at zero costs from Castle and Cooke as the City would have liked to have done. Therefore, this pretty much took most of the park development fee for that area to buy parcel number two, and fortunately over the years, the City has been able to save enough money to make a good deal with the Schools, once they realized that they did not need the capacity for a junior high school site at that location. The City was able to make a good deal in the last year to purchase that third piece of property. It is a gradual thing, and it has been very frustrating, especially for the neighbors there because when they were built, and



currently they are pretty much built out, they were promised a park and they did not really have anything but a trail. Now the City can start to give them what they should have had if the City had the money available at the time to build the proper park. Lastly, he thanked Ms. Flissar, Mr. Potucek and Ms. Yarbrough for their management of the funds and doing the negotiation with the School Board to get the property as all those are intricate detailed actions that had to be taken to make this possible.

Council Member Rodriguez voiced his appreciation for the map and the commitment. He added that the residents living in that neighborhood for a long time will now have something that they can use for their money that they paid into early on.

The motion unanimously carried, 7/0. Mayor Mueller, Mayor Pro Tem Gray, Council Members Benning, Johnson, Landry, Rodriguez, and Umphrey voting in favor.

**Item 5** Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2021-091, Public Transportation (Transit) Agency Safety Plan

Council Member Umphrey moved that Resolution 2021-091, Public Transportation (Transit) Agency Safety Plan, be approved. Council Member Johnson seconded the motion.

Ms. Flissar stated that this agenda item will provide Council approval of the Vista Transit Public Transit Agency Safety Plan. The Safety Plan is a relatively new requirement for those agencies who receive federal transit funds. The first Transit Safety Plan was approved by Council one year ago, and since it was a new requirement for all agencies at the time, the initial Plan was developed jointly with other Arizona rural transit providers by the Arizona Department of Transportation. Although the initial ADOT Plan provided a good framework from which to build as a shared plan, it was more general in nature and lacked details specific to each organization. For this year's annual update, Vista Transit partnered with the Sierra Vista Metropolitan Planning Organization for the necessary funding to complete a Plan specific to Vista Transit. The Plan was developed by the Consulting Firm of Michael Baker and a more in-depth presentation on both the Safety Plan and the Short-Range Transit Plan was given at the work session on Tuesday, December 7, 2021. Since the Safety Plan is a relatively new federal requirement, it is not expected that transit systems would be fully compliant at this point. The Safety Plan merely provides guidance moving forward and helps to track progress towards meeting established goals. Some of the areas for improvement include updating the Emergency Evacuation Plan and other policies and procedures such as the Vista Transit Employee Handbook and the Hazardous Materials Program. This will be an annual effort from here on forward and is required for Vista Transit to maintain its funding through the Federal Transit Administration.

Mayor Mueller thanked Ms. Lamberton for being present from the MPO and noted that Council appreciated the brief from the Schneider folks as well on Tuesday, December 7, 2021.

The motion unanimously carried, 7/0. Mayor Mueller, Mayor Pro Tem Gray, Council Members Benning, Johnson, Landry, Rodriguez, and Umphrey voting in favor.

**Call to the Public**

Mr. Mark Gauthier-Braham talked about the housing crisis that is being faced, which is specifically affecting the underrepresented the most. He noted that anyone who has looked for an apartment lately knows that there is not much available, and what is available has been



priced to a point that most people really cannot afford it. This has given certain people the ability to suppress and harm those who normally would not have a voice. Individuals have become homeless because their apartments have gone up, and one of the reasons that many people have not talked about it, or reported it, is because of their fear of getting evicted. He then presented Council with statistics on the effects of homelessness, specifically in Arizona, and noted that there are claims that landlords are causing part of the problem. Studies were done about rent in comparison to property values that show that the poor communities were charged more. In closing, he stated that this is affecting everyone, and as City Council, he is sure that Council could think of many things that \$3.8 million could be used for because this is a very complicated issue, and it is a balancing scale. He suggested giving incentives and taking a leaf out of the institutional review boards/ethical committees and making an actual independent watchdog that can keep an eye on these places.

Mayor Mueller thanked Mr. Gauthier-Braham for his comments and stated that the City's connection to housing is through Mr. McLaughlin in the Community Development Department, who can connect individuals with state agencies that deal with the issues mentioned. He added that this is an issue that Council looked at several years ago, and the situation was significantly worse. The City has done a lot of work with cleaning up unsightly trailer parks because there were people with miserable living conditions, but the City has cleaned those areas up and got people to develop and redevelop those areas. However, the challenge is that the City currently does not have a good feel today like it did 12 years ago on where the low-income housing is and what the needs are. Twelve years ago, the City had a study done that provided the categories and the needs for the community.

Mayor Mueller stated that based on a prior email, he talked with the City Manager and asked him to see what the City can do to get another study to address the housing problem in the next couple of years because it is going to take a couple years. If the need is out there, the City needs to identify what it is and work toward that goal. He added that since the trailer parks are now cleaned up, there are a lot of vacancies, and eventually people with mobile homes will move in. However, they must be wealthy enough to own a mobile home to be able to do that. There are some challenges that need to be worked through, and the first step is to have a housing need survey as well as addressing the issues mentioned by Mr. Gauthier-Braham to help people that are in a position that they should not be in.

### **Comments and Requests of Council**

Council Member Rodriguez thanked Ms. Wilson, her staff, Chamber of Commerce, and everybody involved with the Christmas Parade, a great event despite the negative comments received online. He added that everybody that he talked to was thankful about the way it was set up and enjoyed it. However, some tweaking for next year will need to be done, but it was a great event. He also mentioned the Firefighters' Toy Drive going on as well as the Bag, Tag, and Delivery. Lastly, he voiced his appreciation at Mr. Gauthier-Braham's comments and reported that he had a chance to go by the EMS station project and was able to talk to Mr. Robles, the project superintendent, who mentioned that it has been good in working with the City because he has worked with other cities that were not as easy to deal with. Mr. Robles is very thankful for the quick response that the City has provided and solutions that they have come across.

Council Member Umphrey thanked Mr. Gauthier-Braham for his comments, and everyone on City staff for another challenging year. She added that she thinks that everyone has done a really great job and Council is lucky to have them on board. She thanked the people of Sierra



Vista for persevering through another difficult year. She announced that next week there is an event to benefit the Friends of Sierra Vista Animal Shelter to help pay for low cost spay and neuter clinics. It is called Sips and Snips, which will be at Hoppin' Grapes on Friday, December 17, 2021. Tickets are on Eventbrite, and in closing wished everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and Happy New Year.

Council Member Landry stated that a lot of things are going on this time of year, and announced that on Saturday, December 18, 2021, there is going to be a Huachuca Art Gallery Open house from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at 1835 Paseo San Luis. She encouraged people to support smaller local artists and to visit this cool place, which will have art, jewelry, and different gift ideas along with raffles that are always a lot of fun. She announced that the animal shelter is currently suspending turn-ins because they are at capacity, but if people are looking for a new best friend, they should go out to the animal shelter and meet the animals. However, if people do not want to adopt, they can foster. Lastly, she wished everybody Happy Holidays, and encouraged people to share the holiday spirit, especially this time of year, because there are people that may be missing their family, are away from their family, or may be experiencing a holiday different from before.

Council Member Johnson wished everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and a safe and Happy New Year. He stated that it is not too late to donate toys to the Sierra Vista Fire and Medical Annual Toy Drive. Finally, as he completes his first year as a City Councilman, he thanked the City staff for their hard work and due diligence this year to continue to move the City forward during these tough times. He stated that it is his honor to serve on this body.

Council Member Benning stated that the City has an adult therapeutic group, one of two in the State of Arizona, and this Saturday, December 11, 2021, they will be performing from 2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. at the Oscar Yrun Center where they meet all the time to dance. He thanked Ms. Wilson and the Leisure and Library Services staff for an amazing job at the park on the two-day event. He announced that there is craft event on Saturday, December 11, 2021 at the Park, and noted that there a lot more events going on at the parks because the City is trying to highlight its parks more and bring more people in. One of biggest pushes was to get more sports tourism and more things happening. Upcoming is the El Tour de Zona and so far, there are over 438 applicants for the races. There are three races and people can go online and check those out. The shortest one is like 26 miles. He noted that 38 percent of those 438 people are from out of the State, and five percent are from Canada. He also announced that on March 25, 2022 through March 27, 2022, there will be RVs at Veterans Memorial Park as well as a tent city where people can come stay and at night there will be festivals. Lastly, he thanked Mr. Reed, Executive Director for United Way, and the rest of the board members who spearheaded the project, which is an honor to work for such a great group and he is glad that the City was able to partner with them. He also thanked Mr. Gauthier-Braham for his comments, and concurred with the things he said, but he knows that this issue is in Council's Strategic Plan, and he looks forward to having a discussion during a work session. In closing, he stated that two years ago, he lost the greatest man he has ever known on Christmas Day. He stressed that it is never too late to say I love you, to call and say I miss you, and to miss those opportunities. In closing, he wished staff, Mayor, Council, and most importantly the people of Sierra Vista a Merry Christmas, noting that it is an honor to sit on the dais and to serve.

Mayor Pro Tem Gray echoed everyone sentiments about the weekend's parade and thanked the Leisure, Library and Recreational staff for the market in the park. She also thanked the Chamber, who did an excellent job, and gave them kudos because throughout a rough year for everyone, they have done well and have been very creative in making sure people still



understand businesses. She also thanked the Kiwanis for their assistance with the tree in the park, thanked the Little Library Bookstore for donating \$5,000 to help with some costs in the library. She announced that on Friday, December 10, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. at the Sierra Vista Mall the Canine Companion, which helps with service dogs for people with PTSD and children with autism, are going to hold a pet parade and pet talent show. Lastly, she stated that if people get a friend to make sure that they are willing to commit long-term because the worst thing anyone can do is to get a dog or a cat and then decide they do not want it. It is very traumatic for them, and it does not help the shelter. In closing, she wished everyone, and the City staff a Merry Christmas, and noted that it has been a challenging but productive year, and she has enjoyed it and hopes to continue enjoying it.

Mayor Mueller stated that he has talked about the housing study, and Council realizes that is an issue for the community, but Council will be talking about this to see what can be done to rectify it. He further stated that he briefly talked about the charities in town and the great job they are doing in taking care of the City's folks in the crisis going on currently, as well as during normal times. He encouraged people, who have the economic ability to donate, to do so because there are a lot of great local charities, and some of those are tax deductible. He noted that this is the time to look around and help, if not by writing a check, giving money, one can volunteer, look for ways to support a church and charities of their choice. He thanked City staff for great work and a great year. He asked people to be safe as we go into the holiday weekends, and if traveling, to not overspend too much time on the road, and to take breaks so that they can make it back home secure.

In response to Mayor Mueller, Deputy Fire Chief Dever announced that on Wednesday, December 15, 2021 from 4:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. in the Schlotzsky's and Ace Hardware's parking lot there will be a toy drive. He encouraged people to donate toys or money. He noted that the Department has been doing this for a long time and it is a wonderful event and a wonderful way to give back to the community and those in need. The Bag and Tag event will be on December 18, 2021 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. to gather the toys into bags for the individual families and children who are in need. The community is welcome to come to that event that takes place Fire Station One on Fry Boulevard. Delivery will be on December 19, 2021 starting at 8:00 a.m., and members of the community are welcome to come help deliver the toys to those families throughout the region that begins at 8:00 a.m. at Fire Station One.

In response to Mayor Mueller, Deputy Fire Chief Dever stated that if people are unable to make the date to drop it off at the ACE parking lot, they can knock on the door at any of the fire stations and drop it off if it is before December 18, 2021.

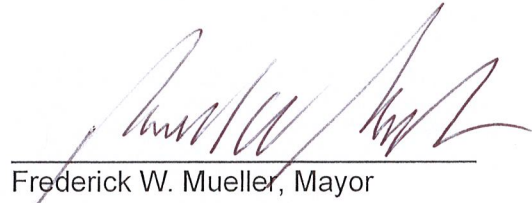
Police Chief Thrasher announced that on Sunday, December 12, 2021 the Police Department will have their Christmas with a Cop sponsored by the Service Police Officers Association starting at 7:30 a.m. at Walmart. They have over 100 needy children that are signed up to shop and they get \$100 worth of merchandise. He added that Walmart will pick up the taxes.

Mayor Mueller thanked City staff for all that they do and have done over the past year for the community. Staff has done a great job as you can see, it is not just being on the beat or answering fire calls, building buildings and streets. They are out there in the community, and they are of the community making the community better to make sure that this is indeed a great community.

Council Member Benning stated that on December 18, 2021 the Glow Rods will be at the park from 12:00 noon to 10:00 p.m. They will light up and drive around the community.

**Adjournment**

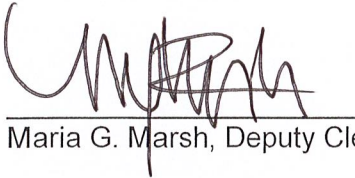
Mayor Mueller adjourned the December 9, 2021, meeting of the Sierra Vista City Council at 5:54 p.m.



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Frederick W. Mueller, Mayor

Minutes prepared by:



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Maria G. Marsh, Deputy Clerk

Attest:



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Jill Adams, City Clerk