

Sierra Vista City Council
Work Session Minutes
January 9, 2024

1. Mayor McCaa called the January 7, 2024, City Council Work Session to order at 3:00 p.m., Council Chambers, City Hall, 1011 N. Coronado Drive, Sierra Vista, Arizona.

Mayor Clea McCaa – present
Mayor Pro Tem Carolyn Umphrey – present
Council Member William Benning – present
Council Member Gregory Johnson – present (telephonically)
Council Member Angelica Landry – present
Council Member Marta Messmer - present
Council Member Mark Rodriguez – present

Others Present:

Victoria Yarbrough, Assistant City Manager
Chuck Potucek, City Manager
Chris Hiser, Police Chief
Brian Jones, Fire Chief
Laura Wilson, Leisure, Parks, and Library Director
Sharon Flissar, Public Works Director
Gabriel Squires, Public Works Internal Operations Manager
Matt McLachlan, Community Development Director
Jill Adams, City Clerk
Tony Boone, Economic Development Director
Dianna Cameron, Management Analyst
Jennifer Dillaha, Budget Officer
David Felix, Chief Financial Officer
Elizabeth Wrozek, PIO

2. Presentation and Discussion:

- A. January 11, 2024 Council Meeting Agenda Items ([agenda attached](#))

Mayor McCaa stated that the agenda starts with the call to order, roll call, invocation led by Reverend Carlson of the Sierra Vista Community Church, and the Pledge of Allegiance led by Council Member Messmer.

In response to Mayor McCaa, Mr. Potucek stated that there will be a meeting with the Joint Powers Authority Board for SEACOM in the morning on Thursday, January 11, 2024; therefore, he will be able to report what is going on there at Thursday's Council Meeting. He also reported that the sales tax report for November was flat. The City is up three percent for the year, which is not a horrible number, but things were slow, and staff will see what the holiday numbers look like and probably be ratcheting the sales tax forecast for next year's budget down in anticipation of next year's numbers.

Item 2.1 Discussion and Possible Action of the Work Session Meeting Minutes of December 12, 2023 – There was no discussion.

Item 2.2 Discussion and Possible Action of the Regular City Council Meeting Minutes of December 14, 2023 – There was no discussion.

Item 3 Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2024-001, Application to the Arizona Game and Fish Department for an Archery Shooting Range Development Grant – Ms. Wilson stated that this item is a request to apply for a grant that will help create an outdoor archery shooting range on city property located north of the Domingo Paiz Sports Complex.

Staff was referred to the Arizona Game and Fish Department by Crockett Bros Archery, a local business, and Matthew Irlmeier, current archery coach for the City's archery program, about the possibility of creating an archery shooting range. That referral led to a meeting between City's staff and a representative from the Arizona Game and Fish Department, who came and toured locations and found the proposed location as ideal to create a range. They also encouraged staff to consider applying for a grant in this round. The City's archery classes have been offered to the public for well over 20 years and they are currently held on Brown's Softball Field during scheduled permits because the fields have been getting busier with tournaments and games. There is currently no location dedicated to the sport, and creating a space would help to move the activity from its current location and provide a space for archery enthusiasts to use for classes, practices, and tournaments.

The Vista Shooters Archery is a local archery club that participate in the County's only Junior Olympic Development Program and USA Archery Adult Level Development Program. Their teams currently travel for their competitions, and they look forward to the day where they may be able to host some home tournaments to create a space that meets or exceeds all the requirements of the Shooting Ranges Development Policy located in the Arizona Revised Statutes. The Department will be requesting a grant in the amount of \$35,000 and the City's match is 50 percent or \$17,500, which would be requested during next fiscal year's budgeting process. Improvements would include shooting line shading, perimeter marking, safety signage, and other improvements as the budget would allow. Council's support of this request would permit staff to create and submit the application by its due date of January 15, 2024.

Mayor McCaa asked if the archery shooting range would be located north of the pump track. Ms. Wilson stated that it is going to be north of the pump track and west of the expanded parking area. Staff has already started clearing that out; therefore, when driving by there, take a right past Stone Complex and on the left side is the property line.

Council Member Rodriguez stated that the requirement limitations indicate that options may be done, and he wonders if the City will be looking at cash, land, labor, or a mixture. Ms. Wilson stated that the City would be doing the labor in-house, and it would be used to enhance the area. There is already a lot of dirt piled up in the area east of the pump track which would be taken over. There would be a large berm made of dirt, a shaded and dedicated area for the shooters to set up, which will make it much safer than its current location for the way that the archers are situated, direction of the arrows and signage.

Item 4 Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2024-002, Intergovernmental Agreement with the Arizona Department of Revenue for Tax Collection – Mr. Potucek stated that this is an update to an intergovernmental agreement that the City has with the Arizona Department of Revenue to allow them to collect the City's transaction privilege taxes, which they then remit back to the City. The Department of Revenue requested that all cities and towns approve a new intergovernmental agreement as the last one dates to 2016. This is simply an update to that and designates Mr. Felix as the agent for these tax collections, an administrative item.

B. [Overview of Community Development Block Grant \(CDBG\) Process](#)

Mr. McLachlan displayed a slide of the schedule and a flow chart that follows the system's Participation Plan adopted with the first Consolidated Plan in 2014 when the City became an entitlement community. He further stated that later in the month, the Department will be issuing a notice of funding availability and push out the application form to the public and the nonprofit community using the e-mail distribution list that the Department has developed over the years through its involvement in the team of care. The Department will review the applications that are submitted and will present these to Council in March for tentative review and selection. Using Council's feedback and guidance, staff will then build its first-year annual action plan that will be presented in April. There will be a 30-day public comment and then staff will present the final draft in May which will serve as the City's application to HUD.

The Consolidated Plan covers a five-year time frame that governs the use of Federal Housing and Community Development funds received through HUD. This document is used as a guiding strategy on how CDBG will be used in the community to meet housing and community development goals. Each project and program in the annual action plans that are considered over the next five years need to hang on one of the goals that are established in the five-year consolidated plan.

A consolidated plan is a planning document, the application to HUD that identifies the strategies to carry out community development goals. Then each year there is a comprehensive annual performance appraisal on how the City is progressing towards meeting those goals. There is Citizen Participation Plan that will be reviewed and updated as part of the process. The City will be identifying needs and priorities through consultations with its stakeholders and neighborhood groups, and then laying out the strategic plan on what goals and objectives the City is going to strive to achieve over the next five years.

The Annual Action Plan describes how the funds will be allocated in each program year and those projects are designed to implement the goals in the Consolidated Plan. The City is a recipient of Community Development Block Grant funds and on a historical basis, the City has averaged about a quarter \$1,000,000 per year. The funding that is appropriated to the community is based on population poverty levels and the City usually gets its appropriation announced sometime in the March, but until then, the Department uses an estimate based on last year's funding amount, which is what will be advertised in the NOFA.

Each project or program needs to connect with one of three national objectives, but the City leans mostly on activities benefiting low- and moderate-income persons and that can be done on an area wide basis or on a limited clientele basis. The Department identified census tracts within the City that qualify as a low mod and has a map graphic that will depict those on a clientele basis. Each of the subrecipient contracts has a reporting requirement where the beneficiary needs to demonstrate that they are within the low mod income strata activities which aid in the prevention, elimination of slums, or blight that can be done on an area wide basis or a spot basis. The City has already gone through the process of designating a redevelopment area, which fulfills this requirement. The City can also, on a property-by-property basis, analyze its characteristics relative to the statutory requirements for slum and blight. These programs involve the acquisition of property, deteriorated property. For redevelopment, it could be rehabilitation or demolition to cure the blighting influence on the surrounding neighborhood.

The Department hopes that they will never need the activities designed to meet in urgent need

that are typically connected with natural disasters; however, the funding amount that the City would receive would not help much in that regard.

Low to moderate income in Cochise County - the AMI for the City's metropolitan area is \$78,000. The moderate-income threshold is 80 percent of that AMI, \$62,400.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey asked if the AMI is for a family of four. Mr. McLachlan stated that there is a matrix that scale to family size that can also be referred to. The Department uses this with its Emergency Home Repair Program, where the application requires the owner to submit income documentation to show that they qualify as low to Mod for receiving Community Development Block Grant funds for emergency home repairs.

A map was displayed showing the neighborhoods that qualify as low and moderate-income areas. The map depicted block groups in the West End, east of Lenzner, South of Fry Boulevard, and a few block groups south of Charleston, east of Highway 90 that qualify for Community Development Block Grant fund investments. Historically, the City's focus has been concentrated on public facility infrastructure improvements on the West End. However, last year, funding was earmarked for installing fire hydrants within the Montebello Neighborhood. All these neighborhoods are income eligible and up for consideration in subsequent years as the City goes through the annual action planning process.

The City is currently in the needs identification stage that will be translated into goals and strategies to implement those priority needs. Then in subsequent years the City will implement those projects to better achieve those goals.

The Department is looking for validation on the currently adopted Consolidated Plan's goals:

Public infrastructure facility improvements - may be ADA improvements, improvements to parks, streets, curb, gutters, sidewalk, street lighting, and projects that will create a more suitable living environment.

Housing rehabilitation services - Due to the limited amount of funding received, the City has not been able to do whole house rehabs, but the City could concentrate those funds on emergency home repairs, changing out HVAC units, hot water heaters, spot repairs on leaky roofs, ADA accessibility upgrades.

Needed services - The City received an injection of funding to help deal with the pandemic, about \$500,000 that went to a variety of nonprofits for rental and utility payment assistance, hotel vouchers for homeless individuals, mental health counseling, employment services to help them get back up on their feet. However, going forward, the Department is looking at improvements to better serve nonprofits, things like the parking lot expansion at the Saint Vincent de Paul, facility upgrades at nonprofits. The funding may be used to augment services going beyond what is currently being provided by the nonprofits as seen with Southeastern Arizona Legal Aid where they are expanding the reach into Sierra Vista, ramping up public education on their free civil legal aid services to low-income residents.

Neighborhood stabilization - The Department has primarily deployed our abatement funds to address this issue. The Department has used Community Development Block Grant funds in the past to demolish a home in the Montebello Neighborhood that was deemed a public nuisance. The City got a court order for that demolition and the City can move more aggressively into this realm using Community Block Grant funds if the Council is inclined.

Economic development - The City provided CARES Act funding for micro enterprise business assistance to help stabilize those companies that were impacted by the pandemic.

Fair housing - The City continues to put out literature and educate the public on their rights.

Administration planning - The Department has kept at a relatively low percentage maximizing the use of Community Development Block Grant funds for projects and programs.

A slide was displayed of a chart on how funds have been implemented by goal:

- About 2/3 was used for public infrastructure and facility improvements;
- \$75,000 went towards emergency home repairs; and
- Needed services is an inflated figure because the City is typically capped at 15 percent of the annual CBG amount towards public services. However, that cap was lifted with the CARES Act funding and the City was able to go above that threshold.
- No monies were earmarked for the neighborhood stabilization goal and that was accomplished through the General Fund.
- Economic development's \$86,000 was CARES Act money;
- Fair housing was taken on through the Department's normal day-to-day operations.
- Administration planning was used for things like legal ads and the hiring a consultant to do the data analysis that goes into the Consolidated Plan update, which will be presented to Council in March.

A slide listing the projects within the public facilities and infrastructure realm was presented that depicts that most of the funding has been concentrated towards upgrading the neighborhood parks on the West End:

- Landscape and walkway improvements at Soldier Creek Park and Landwehr Plaza;
- In the process of implementing phase two at Soldier Creek Park, installing a slide;
- Surface parking added at Eddie Cyr Park to support the soccer fields.
- Timothy Lane, with some carryover money from the last Consolidated Plan, had its landscaping finished.
- The GNA kitchen remodel was finished in June.
- St. Vincent parking lot was finished in May.
- The hydrants are in the process as the bid package is being designed, turned over to procurement and that project is expected to be carried out by the end of the program year.
- There are some alleyway improvements done in Fry.
- ADA ramps and sidewalks were installed along Len Roberts Park on Theatre Drive.
- About 12 applications on emergency home repairs over Program Year 21–22-time frame.
- Boys and Girls Club \$15,000 for scholarships for low-income youth.
- COVID funding was allocated towards United Way for emergency crisis community assistance programs.
- The advocacy center, Lori's Place was awarded \$15,750 in the last annual action plan and the Southern Legal Aid was awarded \$6,000, which are ongoing programs.

Mr. McLachlan stated that the Department is looking for guidance on whether Council thinks the current goals are consistent with what they would like to see, the priorities and needs for the next five years, or if there any other areas that the Council would like explored with the Community Development Block Grant funds. He also asked if Council would like to see the continuation of distributing the funds across the low-mod census tracts or concentrate them to

try to maximize their impact.

Council Member Rodriguez voiced his appreciation of the many years' review so that Council could see the good products that have come to fruition. Some are still in the works, but the path that the City is on is good. He stated that he likes that it is spread out through different places, unless it is something that is earmarked for a major project, and shared concerns about parking lots in park areas that are dark that may affect people, i.e., Eddie Cyr Park. He also voiced his concern about the alley that the City has by the baseball fields and the parking lot that the City is currently trying to enhance as well as the new establishment of an archery area because there are no speed bumps. Lastly, he stated that out of 12 applications for the emergency home repair, some houses were in great need and would not have been done without the grant funds. ADA compliance is super important for the town as there are new parks and a lot more sidewalks and paths. In closing, he stated that the City will be looking for public input to see if something is missing or if there is an area where people are having trouble with that the Council does not know about.

Council Member Benning asked if the City partners with somebody for the emergency home repair. Mr. McLachlan stated that the City hires a contractor through Procurement to carry out the repairs. However, the Department will work with the homeowner to develop the scope of work and go through the bidding process that has been challenging. Outreach was done with the SACA membership; therefore, the City ended up going through a job order contract with Tucson to find a contractor that was willing to bundle up those repairs and take those on, but the Department is involved from start to finish.

Council Member Benning concurred with Council Member Rodriguez in that the vision is based on the need, and if the City can maximize its effect on one area, he is for that, but if it can be spread around and have the same effect around the community, he is for that also. He is for wherever that money can be best used for at whatever time.

Council Member Rodriguez stated that he has mentioned before the kitchen remodel for GNA, which he calls a \$14,000 counter that the City gave them. He realizes that it is based off the funds and what the prices were at the time, but he would like to assure them that they can reapply if they feel that the project was not completed.

Council Member Landry stated that she liked the presentation, the break down, and seeing the projects over the years. She further stated that she believes that the goals are consistent with the needs, but if there is anything that maybe Council is not aware of, it would be great to know. She noted that over the past few years, people are applying, and they are applying for what is available and getting help in areas that they need; therefore, she appreciates whatever help can be provided.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that she agrees with Council Member Landry and asked if the City reaches out to community partners when there is no longer any funding to help with ADA compliance for people with disabilities that fit within the income bracket. Mr. McLachlan stated that the City works with its partners. The goals will be implemented through a broad array of funding sources. He further stated that Council Member Rodriguez brought up ADA and street lighting along North Avenue and he believes that this will be addressed through an FTA grant that was received for accessibility around transit stops. The Department will probably be moving away CDBG funds on those type of projects and leaning on FTA to make those accessibility improvements going forward to the extent the funding continues to be available. However, for ramps, there are other nonprofits that the City can push out the information to let the public

know that help is available when money runs out with CDBG.

C. [Discussion/direction on Youth Commission trip to March NLC Conference in Washington, DC](#)

Mr. Potucek stated that a request has been made from the Youth Commission to attend the National League of Cities Conference; therefore, he requested a rundown of the costs associated with that. He noted that currently there is no policy to send commissioners from any commission to national conferences, which is somewhat out of the policy realm and requires Council discussion. Lastly, he noted that this was done in the past, but the costs and other commissions wanting to do that caused the Council at that time to limit it to state conferences.

Ms. Wilson stated that the Department uses the GSA schedule which is in line with current policy. There is one male and four females; therefore, estimated were four rooms, standard per diem rates for three full days at 75 percent, \$59.00 for both travel days on both ends, and an estimated airfare, which is subject to change. Overall, the cost is about a \$13,000 to \$14,000 trip. Mr. Potucek added that this is an unbudgeted expense; therefore, this expense would probably be out of the Council's travel budget to support the funding for this.

Mayor McCaa asked if there is a way to identify a delegate and not have all five commissioners attend the conference. Council Member Rodriguez stated that they can and explained that last year he saw other cities and states bringing in their youth commissions to the conference, which is what he would love to see for Sierra Vista. The state conference is great, but there is nothing like the national level, where they would get access as high schoolers, to legislators, the White House, an amazing benefit. The Commission talked about this as it is coming up in March and in moving forward would be doing fundraising to where that would not be a cost every time, but they would have more time to fundraise.

Council Member Benning stated that there are council members that do not go to the League of Cities because they feel that it is not the best use of taxpayer money, and Council would have to look at what they are going to bring from it, outside of state level, because there are current and past Council Members that did not travel to the League of Cities because they could do it online. He added that he understands gaining the experience, but he wonders about limiting and choosing people and noted that if a person is on a commission for eight years, then that person is the only one going for eight years and for him, it would have to be what they are going to bring back to the City more than anything. Lastly, he noted that some Council Members do not think that there is a return on investment on going and spending taxpayers' money.

Mayor McCaa asked if there must be a staff member/chaperone if only one youth attends. Ms. Wilson stated that he is correct.

Council Member Messmer asked if they would be sharing lodging. Ms. Wilson stated that she estimated that two of the girls would double up, but there would still be another girl, a boy, and the chaperone; she did not consider having a chaperone in the room with a minor, or if there would be another room. Council Member Rodriguez stated that he believes that the chaperone would be the mother of one of the girls. However, the boy still makes it odd. Ms. Wilson stated that he is correct and that is something that has not been shaken all the way out. The best-case scenario, they would be one room down.

Mayor McCaa asked if the chaperone could be a staff person. Ms. Wilson stated that it can be a staff person and noted that someone who is not on staff, or a Council Member would be unable

to utilize the government purchasing card. All City staff have had backgrounds and might be a better option as a chaperone.

Council Member Johnson stated that he wonders about the benefit to the City. It is well and good to reward these kids for getting involved in the local Youth Commission but sending them halfway across the country so that they can meet a couple of senators or congressmen that they could meet locally, is not the proper use of this money. He added that he personally does not travel on the expense of the taxpayer which has been one of his things since he ran for office; therefore, he must put a thumbs down on this. He added that he would not object if it was a state meeting, something that would be affordable. However, a \$650 estimated airfare that is subject to change makes him wonder what they are going to bring back that will benefit the youth of the City and the City itself.

Council Member Landry stated that it is not budgeted and noted that there was an e-mail that recently came out that stated that if Council wanted to go, they had to hustle up and decide what they are going to do as Council Members. This is quite an expense for this type of trip, and she also questions what the benefit is for the City. She further stated that the schools do various trips like this; however, they do a lot of their own fundraising. The kids in the band cannot afford it, so they spend a lot of their time, starting as Freshmen, working to try and save money to go on the band trip for their Senior year. She added that if the Youth Commission was able to pay for their airfare, it could possibly be considered, but there is also a lot of liability on the City when dealing with minors on far away trips. Therefore, she is a thumbs down.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that she shares in those liability concerns, all those concerns.

Mayor McCaa noted that 14 K is hard to swallow. Council Member Benning noted that it is an archery range. Council Member Rodriguez stated that he does not care about what it is going to do for the City because that is not how he operates. It is about what it is going to do for the person. He shared that in the military, he dealt with the same kind of leadership and what it was going to do for the unit. This is about what it is going to do for that person or overall, a City. To him it is invaluable what these young people are going to experience, and he will make it happen either way. If the Council does not support it, no problem, he will do fundraising on his own and make sure they get there because that is how much he believes in the youth on the Commission and he wants them to have this experience. Lastly, he asked Council to vote with their heart.

Council Member Messmer explained that it is not that she does not think that these kids would benefit, but Council Members are the stewards of the taxpayer's money. She stated that the representatives, obviously not the president or getting to visit Washington, can come to Sierra Vista and meet the kids that would be a better option. Unfortunately, she is going to say no because she does not think that the taxpayers would say that they thought that this was a good idea. However, if they fundraised, maybe next year the Council could think about trying to budget it.

Council Member Rodriguez thanked Council, noted that this happens every time, and encouraged Council to meet the youth because it would blow their minds. The experience they would get is what he wants for them. He does not want the representative to come to Sierra Vista because it is old thinking to him, and if they do come to Sierra Vista, great, but what does that do for the youth? These youth need to get out of Sierra Vista and go see other things, bring those ideas and knowledge back to the community. Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that they can all appreciate that.

Council Member Messmer stated that she would need to see what that National Convention is teaching those children and suggested having a video of the conference presented to Council. Council Member Rodriguez stated that there are plenty of videos out there as well as the video from last year.

Council Member Benning stated that it is not that Council is not supporting the youth, it is that as stewards of the taxpayer's money, there must be a return on something and not arbitrarily spending money for something because the Council answers to the public. He suggested looking at how this works locally because this has not been done at the state level. Council Member Rodriguez noted that they were taken to the state conference in the summertime.

Council Member Benning concurred with Council Member Mesmer, the Council must put the City first and its money, budget, and where it goes first. However, he will help raise funds and support them anyway he can, but he cannot support them going to DC with taxpayers' funding.

Council Member Rodriguez stated that he would handle it then.

Mayor McCaa stated that he would help fundraise.

D. Brief by Mignonne Hollis on the Mission of the Good Neighbor Alliance (GNA)

Ms. Hollis thanked Mayor McCaa for taking time out of his afternoon to visit Good Neighbor Alliance (GNA), which meant a lot to the people at the shelter. She also thanked Council Member Benning for having spent a night at the shelter and extended an invitation to all Council Members to spend time at the shelter when they have space available, which they no longer have.

Ms. Hollis stated that the shelter is a 23-bed shelter, and it is the only homeless shelter in Cochise County that services families. She further stated that the reason that she is before Council is to share their financial situation at the shelter.

Ms. Hollis thanked Council Member Rodriguez for his comments about the counter that GNA received through Community Development Grant (CDBG) funds. However, the issue with CDBG dollars is that it must be a project and the shelter does not need another project. The shelter needs cold hard cash to have their doors stay open. It costs \$30 a day per person, per resident and GNA refers to its guests as guests to fund them, which is roughly \$240,000 a year. While they received CARES Act money and the CDBG funds, GNA has not received any money for operation from the City of Sierra Vista (currently not an ask, but an awareness) and donations have been down in the last year by 30 percent.

Before COVID, the shelter was getting ready to shut its doors, but due to COVID there was CARES Act money. Therefore, Ms. Hollis called state representatives and the governor's office and explained GNA's circumstances; consequently, the state came in assisted due to the assistance of Speaker of the House Gowan, who made sure that GNA received the funds.

During COVID the shelters were asked to stay in place and GNA received CARES Act funds that kept GNA going, but the shelter is about out of money. GNA is once again in a situation where at the end of June, GNA will no longer receive money through the Department of Housing.

GNA has fundraising activities planned, but it must get cold hard cash to keep the doors open. Oftentimes through fundraising, people want to fund a project, but the shelter needs cold hard cash to meet payroll, to be able to pay the utilities, and have food. GNA's volunteers are amazing, where they come into the shelter every night and they cook, which everyone is grateful for as well as for the community's support.

Ms. Hollis stated that GNA will be asking the County for money as well and noted that this is the only County where none of its cities pay from their budgets into a shelter. All the other counties in Arizona and cities have a budget line item to pay directly into the shelters. She further stated that GNA wanted to make Council aware of this and noted that the shelter is not GNA's shelter, it is the community shelter, the County's shelter for families and GNA would hate to see this go away. This is not by any means a threat; it is just the way the numbers are flowing.

GNA had a very successful day program that was through a grant, but as soon as that grant ran out, GNA was no longer able to continue the day program. The day program was run by Doctor De Luca, where people were taught skills, kept them off the streets and from trying to get into buildings during the day, especially when it was cold, or too hot. The beds are taken every single night and there is a waiting list, which is heartbreaking to see humans not have a place to sleep at night, nor have food, nor have their basic human needs met.

Ms. Hollis noted that homelessness is listed in the City's Strategic Plan and GNA is asking Council to follow what is in the strategic plan.

Council Member Messmer asked about the number of employees. Doctor De Luca stated that there are 15 employees and explained that the shelter runs 24/7, three shifts a daytime and time and a half during the holidays. They do not turn off their lights, go without staffing, and there are no days off.

Mayor McCaa asked if it is \$240K a year for everything. Ms. Hollis stated that he is correct, on the shelter side. This does not cover salary for Doctor De Luca and Brad Roland, it is pure shelter operations.

Council Member Benning asked about the number of beds. Ms. Hollis stated that there are 23 beds, and it is configured based on who needs to come into the shelter that day. Therefore, if there is a family, then there are other people that cannot come that night because the family takes priority. Doctor De Luca stated that there is a men's dorm that has nine beds for single men and rooms where they can put two, three, or four females. However, if a family comes in, then that room will go to them, taking up those beds for single women.

In response to Mayor McCaa, Doctor De Luca stated that current funding runs out June 2024 and noted that it is rare for GNA to get money for operations because all their programs cover staff. Ms. Hollis added that the shower program and PATH programs, where staff goes out into the field are programs that pay for its staff. However, the funding for the residents at night and during the day will be running out. The Governor's office has been fantastic in getting GNA money every time that they have been asked. The last time GNA requested help was their biggest request because the funds were running out and the first question that the Governor's office asked was if the city and county contributed.

Council Member Benning asked how much GNA is requesting from the City of Sierra Vista. Ms. Hollis stated that GNA would like to have \$240,000 and for Council to consider putting this into a line item. GNA would like to have a financial commitment so that they can keep the doors open

and continue to operate the shelter.

Council Member Benning asked if GNA would split the \$240,000 if they partner with Cochise County. Ms. Hollis stated that he is correct; however, she is providing what GNA's numbers are and what they need to get to.

Council Member Benning asked if GNA has a pathway to the Department of Housing. Ms. Hollis stated that they do and added that anyone that would like to take a tour of the shelter is welcomed.

Council Member Messmer asked if there are guests at the shelter all the time since it is open 24 hours. Doctor De Luca stated that the day program closed in December because the money ran out. However, GNA did stay open and paid for staff for the weekend; therefore, the folks did not have to worry about what to do during that one weekend time. They pulled together some of the money for weekend staff. GNA was a 24/7 when they had the opportunity to pay for one eight-hour shift of staff through that grant, but that is no longer available. Ms. Hollis stated that they still must pay for someone to answer the phones. She added that guests are not allowed to stay on campus during the day because they do not have the money to pay for staff.

Doctor De Luca stated that on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, they have their shower program and laundry program, where folks come in that are under housing and shelter to do the program during the day.

Mayor McCaa asked if participants stay eight hours at the facility. Ms. Hollis stated that he is correct. Doctor De Luca explained that guests come in at 4:00 p.m. and leave at 7:00 a.m. On occasion they have had someone that was ill and were not put out in the streets. Ms. Hollis stated that staff makes it work. She shared that this organization is where her heart is and the staff that work there are amazing humans, and they lead with compassion all the time under some of the most horrific conditions. The wait is always longer and there are more people that are requiring services than what GNA has resources for.

In response to Mayor McCaa, Doctor De Luca stated that she is a professional beggar and continues to work on grants. Ms. Hollis stated that all grants require a project and none of the grants are for cold, hard cash for operations. Doctor De Luca explained that most of these grants are reimbursable; therefore, they must put forth their very limited cash supply and wait 30, 60, 90 days. She added that she put forth a \$700,000 grant so that they could build a men's dorm and double capacity, but that is reimbursable. Therefore, they would have to spend \$300,000 on the mobile home unit and wait 90 days for that to come back; however, GNA does not have \$300,000, but she wrote the grant anyway.

Council Member Messmer stated that it was mentioned that they need money for food. Ms. Hollis stated that she is correct in that it is for food, hygiene, and everything. She added that GNA does partner with nonprofits and churches, but donations are down 30 percent, and they are making the rounds to all the churches and nonprofits. People will donate food, clothing, but GNA runs into the issue with having space; therefore, they can only take so much.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey thanked Ms. Hollis and Doctor De Luca for what they are doing at Good Neighbor Alliance. She shared that she is a big fan of Brad Roland, an amazing, hard worker who is there all the time. She shared that she and her family are there once a month cooking and she knows that it is not just the community that is grateful for GNA's services and what is done to help, it is the guest. She noted that there is a whiteboard with a list of chores to

clean up after dinner and everyone is happy to do what they have been assigned to do because they are just grateful to be there. She then asked where GNA was getting the rest of money for operations through the years.

Ms. Hollis stated that it has always been a struggle with the shelter from the time they opened their doors. GNA was going to shut down their doors, and COVID hit at the same time, but Senator Gowan stepped in and got them emergency funding to get them through six months. Since, COVID hit, GNA was mandated to stay open and that is when CARES Act money came in to keep the shelter open. However, it has always been a struggle and with donations being down by 30 percent, this is where they are now. Before it was through donations, less than \$240,000 because of inflation. The economy has changed and there are more unhoused people than there were before. Funding has changed and prices have gone up - economics.

Council Member Benning asked about their meeting with the County. Ms. Hollis stated that they are setting that up. A lot of the communities in Arizona have been helpful, friends and connections that GNA has throughout the State have, during COVID, shipped down things. They were receiving items from Phoenix, Maryvale, other homeless shelters, and GNA is grateful for the community at large, but this is their community first.

Council Member Benning asked about other beds in the City. Ms. Hollis stated that there are none. This is the only shelter in the County that takes in families. Doctor De Luca stated that there is a battered woman facility.

In response to Mayor McCaa, Ms. Hollis stated that Bisbee's shelter does not take in families, and they have a foundation, strong money, a benefactor. GNA had individuals in the community that named the shelter in their will; therefore, for many years there were benefactors.

Council Member Rodriguez stated that he is interested in the meeting with the County because this is the community's shelter, and the City will need to get together with the County for a partnership to figure this out together. He shared that he has been out to the shelter a few times and asked if the pet area on the side was through a grant. Doctor De Luca stated that they were just awarded the grant to build a kennel so that they can now welcome the folks that have animals into the shelter. She added that Going to Grandmas helps them out, but nobody wants their animals to be placed out of town. Also, the Legacy Foundation awarded them funds to build that. Ms. Hollis added that these are projects, but if GNA cannot keep their doors open, then what good is the project going to do?

Ms. Hollis extended an invitation to tour the facility and spend an afternoon. The guests are amazing humans, and they have something to give back. She shared that the toughest thing is when she sees people coming that are well intended and then they are not so well intended to the guests. The work that happens at the shelter is very important.

E. Report on Recent Trips, Meetings and Future Meetings

Council Member Messmer announced the Arts, Humanity, and Culture Diversity Commission Meeting, reported on the Tourism Commission Meeting and its short-term goals/plans as well as a long-term goal of working with the Arts, Humanities, and Cultural Diversity Commission on bringing the largest Hummingbird attraction in the United States on the West End. She also announced that Jackie Clay, Cochise County Superintendent of Schools, is hosting an education conference on January 19, 2024, at Cochise College from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., where in attendance will be people from the State.

Council Member Landry reported that the Transportation Commission met on Wednesday, January 3, 2024, and toured the Sierra Vista Municipal Airport, where they met some tenants that house their aircraft there who shared their experiences, concerns over the years, and how things have changed. She announced that the next Transportation Commission Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 7, 2024, at 3:30 in the NW Conference Room at City Hall.

Council Member Benning announced the Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting.

Council Member Rodriguez reported that the Youth Commission met Sunday, January 7, 2024, and noted that they meet every month virtually and have a lot of good ideas that they want to do and see to fruition. He stated that if he must change the Commission to something else, he might have to do that because it might be easier since there is too much red tape when it comes to getting his youth to do things, the reason that discussion was held in the past.

F. Future Discussion Items and Council Requests

In response to Mayor McCaa, Ms. Yarbrough stated that during the Council's first meeting in February, she will have an update on the General Plan ballot process.

3. Adjourn

Mayor McCaa adjourned the November 7, 2023, work session of the Sierra Vista City Council at 4:10 p.m.

Clea McCaa, Mayor

Minutes prepared by:

Attest:

Maria G. Marsh, Deputy Clerk

Jill Adams, City Clerk

A recording of the Council Meeting is available at:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8PtUpIbkQsixlhSy-jeR_Q/videos