

Sierra Vista City Council
Meeting Summary
March 14, 2024

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey called the March 14, 2024, 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 Clea McCaa II – absent
Mayor Pro Tem Carolyn Umphrey – present
Council Member William Benning – present
Council Member Gregory Johnson – present
Council Member Angelica Landry – present
Council Member Marta Messmer - present
Council Member Mark Rodriguez – present (telephonically)

Others Present:

Victoria Yarbrough, Assistant City Manager
Chuck Potucek, City Manager
Chris Hiser, Police Chief
Brian Jones, Fire Chief
Don Foster, Fire Marshall
Sharon Flissar, Public Works Director
Irene Zuniga, Capital Improvements and Development Manager
Jeff Pregler, Planner
Blake Fisher, Planner
Jill Adams, City Clerk
Nathan J. Williams, City Attorney
John Healey, Sports
Tony Boone, Economic Development Director
Adam Curtis, Marketing and Communications Manager
Elizabeth Wrozek, PIO

Invocation – Pastor Greg Rowles, God is Good Church, led everyone present in prayer.

Pledge of Allegiance – Council Member Messmer led the Pledge of Allegiance.

[Item 1](#) Acceptance of the Agenda

Council Member Benning moved that the agenda for the regular City Council Meeting of March 14, 2024, be approved. Council Member Johnson seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried, 6/0. Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey, Council Members Benning, Johnson, Landry, Messmer, and Rodriguez voted in favor.

Awards and Presentations

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey and Council awarded Mr. Felix the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada Award of financial reporting achievement.

Mr. Felix thanked the staff and City Council for participating in the award program. This is the 35th year in a row that the City of Sierra Vista has won this award. It does go through a board, and staff works hard.

City Manager's Report: Mr. Potucek stated that the award is a source of pride not only for staff but for the City because it shows the community where the funds are invested and used, which are being put to good use and done properly. He voiced his appreciation to Mr. Felix and the staff for what they do. He announced that the next work session is scheduled for March 26, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers that will include continued discussion on the Roadrunner Park design as well as the mid-year budget review focusing primarily on the Public Safety Retirement System, which leads into the budget work sessions in April. He also announced that the next regularly scheduled Council Meeting is on March 28, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. He reported that the needs assessment for the Municipal Court project proposals are due on March 15, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.; the contract is out for a signature on the RFP for the feasibility study of the Spaceport Re-entry Project, which will culminate in the City achieving a license for those activities at the Sierra Vista Municipal Airport and Libby Airfield; the annual Street Maintenance Project was awarded to KE&G in the amount of \$719,209 that will include asphalt patching, crack seal and liquid sand seal improvements. He added that the street list will be posted on the City's website and will be provided to Council, to make sure that the public is aware of that project. Lastly, he reported that the January sales tax figures were up 2.82 percent over Fiscal Year 2023 budget and 5.68 percent over budgeted amounts this year. Therefore, the City is still running positively, although there are signs of some issues, retail fell 1.1 percent which is about \$11,000, although the food tax made-up for that, which was up over 18 percent. However, the issue there is what the legislature will do with the food tax moving forward. This is an important revenue source for the community and although, nobody likes to pay taxes, it is something that would be difficult for the City to deal with if the legislature takes that away.

Item 2 Consent Agenda

[Item 2.1](#) Discussion and Possible Action of the Special City Council Meeting Minutes of February 20, 2024

[Item 2.2](#) Discussion and Possible Action of the Work Session Minutes of February 20, 2024

[Item 2.3](#) Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2024-010, Resignation of Shelly Short from the Sierra Vista Environmental Stewardship Commission

[Item 2.4](#) Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2024-011, Acceptance of Sewer Easements from Northeast Highway 90/92 Limited Partnership

Council Member Landry moved that the Consent Agenda consisting of the minutes of the Special City Council Meeting of February 20, 2024, the Work Session Minutes of February 20, 2024, Resolution 2024-010, accepting the resignation of Shelly Short from the Sierra Vista Environmental Stewardship Commission, with regret, and Resolution 2024-011, accepting sewer easements from Northeast Highway 90/92 Limited Partnership, be approved. Council Member Johnson seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried, 6/0. Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey, Council Members Benning, Johnson, Landry, Messmer, and Rodriguez voted in favor.

New Business

[Item 3](#) Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2024-012, Request to proceed with an Abandonment of a portion of Charleston Road Right-Of-Way

Council Member Messmer moved that Resolution 2024-012, a request to proceed with an abandonment of a portion of Charleston Road right-of-way located between Charleston Road and Parcel 107-16-026H, be approved. Council Member Landry seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried, 6/0. Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey, Council Members Benning, Johnson, Landry, Messmer, and Rodriguez voted in favor.

Public Hearing:

[Item 4](#) Consideration of funding requests for Program Year 2023 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Annual Action Plan

Three applications from outside agencies were received by the deadline that were screened for eligibility by Staff: United Way of Sierra Vista and Cochise County, Inc., \$37,500, and the Boys and Girls Club of Sierra Vista, Inc., \$30,000, which are both for public services that are capped at 15 percent of the overall CDBG grant amount, \$37,500. Staff has communicated with the executive directors of both non-profits, and they are receptive to splitting the maximum allowable amount. The other applicant is the Good Neighbor Alliance seeking \$11,493 to replace beds and mattresses at the emergency shelter that is classified as a public facility improvement and does not count towards the public services cap.

The City's \$191,007 funding request is for fire safety improvements that will fully fund the fire hydrants needed in the Montobello Subdivision to comply with International Fire Code Spacing Standards. The initial phase, budgeted last year at \$162,575, is currently expected to fund about half of the total cost. The ultimate actual cost will be determined through the competitive bidding process later this year. Any funds more than the amount allocated will be used for fire safety improvements needed in other low-moderate income census tracts as determined by the City's Fire Marshal.

New Business

[Item 5](#) Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2024-013, Transfer of Funds from the General Fund to the Highway User Revenue, Capital Improvements, and additional FY24 PSPRS contribution

Council Member Benning moved that Resolution 2024-013, transferring funds from the General Fund to the Highway User Revenue and Capital Improvements Funds, and approving an additional payment to the Public Safety Retirement System, be approved. Council Member Messmer seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried, 6/0. Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey, Council Members Benning, Johnson, Landry, Messmer, and Rodriguez voted in favor.

Call to the Public

Eric Peterman, a neighbor to King's Court, thanked the Police and Fire Departments for their responses. He handed out pictures of the property, noted that the Police Department has responded 18 times and stressed his concerns about the structure, which is in a deteriorated condition, and the police officers' safety because the floor is going to collapse. He added that he is aware that the City has filed a lien on the property and that there are unpaid expenses that

the City incurred in putting up a fence around the property. The City's administration has been vigilant in monitoring this property, but the City is constrained by law. However, he is hopeful that this property can remain a priority because there are neighbors who are concerned due to the building's proximity to the Sierra Springs Subdivision, who would not be a surprise if the building burned down considering the regular visits by people who have no place else to go or people looking to be mischievous. Lastly, he stated that the Toronto-based company that owns the property has not paid their 2023 taxes and their final installment is due on May 5, 2024.

Berlynda Schaff with the District 8 League, which covers eight local leagues, Bisbee, San Pedro, Benson, Dougl, Ponytail, Santa Cruz, Nogales, and Wilcox, announced that on March 23, 2024, the League Service and Ponytail are hosting opening ceremonies along with a lot of other things going on that weekend at the Stone Complex. Starting at 9:00 in the morning, there will be games following the opening ceremonies. She further announced that this year, the Little League is celebrating 50 years of girlfriend games that strengthen self-esteem, promotes teamwork, sportsmanship, and develops on-field fundamentals while providing a competitive outlet for girls. It was founded in 1974 and the program has more than 25,000 softball teams and 300,000 participants worldwide working to grow the game of softball at the grassroots level. Little League has collaborated with more than 25 countries to create a foundation of success and Little League Softball includes divisions of play for girls ages from 4 to 16, which accumulates at three Softball World Series tournaments for international competition and friendship. The League Softball is proud to offer different initiatives to support local leagues, including Little League, University, affordable coach and player clinics, and opportunities for financial assistance. Little League also brings communities together and offers a premier softball experience to families in the US and around the world.

Ms. Schaff reported that the Avengers Division for special needs kids was started seven years ago by Michelle Henredder along with Service of Ponytail President Audrey Hildreth. At that time, they only had five kids, but currently they have 35 players enrolled, ages ranging from four to its oldest player, Nathan who is now 28 years old. Little League does not do an age cap on special needs and the Avengers Division allows everyone to play. There will be a different schedule starting Saturday, April 6, 2024 to accommodate the special needs kids. The first game for the Littles will be on April 6, 2024 at 8:30 a.m. and on March 29, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. the Bigs A, which are the Bigs 1 and Bigs 2, will play against each other at the Veterans Memorial Park Sports Center Softball Field. Lastly, she thanked the City Council for the support of the sports field improvements that have greatly contributed to the League's ability to host games and tournaments.

Felicia Sawyer voiced her concerns about Council Meetings taking place at 5:00 p.m. due to the lack of transportation because the buses in Sierra Vista stop running after 3:30 p.m. Therefore, she had to walk about a half a mile to a mile. This availability cuts out people her age who do not have cars and the normal cab service in Sierra Vista is \$9 per trip, not per mile. She also stated that she has had wonderful experiences in the past with the Sierra Vista Farmers' Market, but because she uses a walker and has an oxygen tank attached to it, that is no longer available to her since the Farmers' Market has been placed over rocks. All this makes her feel discriminated against because she is unable to go. Lastly, she voiced her concerns about the crosswalk in front of Denny's on Fry Boulevard. It is hard for pedestrians, handicapped, elderly and youth to cross and although, walking down to the corner where the traffic signal is located, only gave her 23 seconds to get across.

Comments and Requests of the Council

Council Member Rodriguez apologize for not being able to be at the Council Meeting in person, but he was traveling to and from the National League of Cities Conference in DC. He stated that he is glad that the next work session will continue to discussion on Roadrunner Park because he has comments. He thanked the people that spoke to Council, thanked the Boys and Girls Club for all the great things that they do, congratulated the Little League on their 50-year anniversary, voiced his appreciation to the buddies who help the Avengers on the field who have practices on Monday, from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. and games on Saturdays at 9:00 a.m. He thanked Mr. Peterman for mentioning King's Court, which is a building that he and Code Enforcement have had their eyes on as well as the Thunder Mountain Apartments that are behind Hana Tokyo.

Council Member Johnson had nothing to report.

Council Member Landry wished everybody a very Happy Pie Day, congratulated and voiced her appreciation to staff for the financial reporting award, an achievement to have received it for so many years. She wished everybody a Happy and safe Saint Patrick's Day, cautioned people to have a plan to get home safe if they are going out to celebrate, and announced that next weekend will be the Tour de Zona. There will be signs and a lot of cyclists on the road; therefore, people should make sure to watch out for them, take a few seconds to take an extra look to make sure everybody is safe and has a good time. She also thanked all the people that came to speak at the Call to the Public and added that it is important to have people share their thoughts and their concerns, whether it is about the Little League or anything else. She added that anybody interested in the Little League may log onto littleleague.org/softball. Lastly, she announced that the Sky Island Summit Challenge is open for registration that takes place on Memorial Day weekend, Saturday, May the 25, 2024. She encouraged people to check it out and stated that there are options for one peak, two peaks, or three peaks, and her favorite thing - a passport only given out once the peak is reached.

Council Member Benning thanked Pastor Rowles for his blessing, thanked everyone who presented and came out to talk to Council, shared that he enjoys the Little League's Girls with Game, especially in March, and thanked all the amazing strong women in attendance and to the thousands watching on YouTube for everything that they do for this country. In closing, he stated that Margaret Thatcher once said that if you want something said, ask a man, and if you want something done, ask a woman, which holds true today. Lastly, he stated that he would be nothing or nowhere without his Oma and mom.

Council Member Messmer announced that the Adaptive Adults Spring Formal is on Saturday, March 16, 2024, at the Ethel Berger Center from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m., announced that the Tourism Commission will be present during the Tour De Zona the following weekend passing out pamphlets and helping people find great things to do in Sierra Vista. In closing, she wished everybody a Happy Saint Patty's Day.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey thank everyone who attended and announced that although Mayor McCaa is not present, he is currently watching the meeting and has heard the people that came to speak at the Call to the Public. In closing, she thanked everyone who came to the meeting and wished everyone a safe weekend.

Adjournment

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey adjourned the March 14, 2024, meeting of the Sierra Vista City Council at 5:53 p.m.

Carolyn Umphrey, Mayor Pro Tem

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/UC8PtUplbkQsixlhSy-jeR_Q/videos