

Sierra Vista City Council  
Meeting Minutes  
June 27, 2024

Mayor McCaa called the June 27, 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 – present  
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 via Teams  
Council Member Mark Rodriguez – present

Others Present:

Victoria Yarbrough, Assistant City Manager  
Chuck Potucek, City Manager  
Chris Hiser, Police Chief  
Armin Lewis, Deputy Police Chief  
Lis Chatham, Police Department Commander  
Gabriel Squires, Public Works  
Laura Wilson, Leisure, Parks, and Library Services Director  
Matt McLachlan, Community Development Director  
Jill Adams, City Clerk  
Adam Curtis, Marketing and Communications Manager  
Elizabeth Wrozek, PIO  
Tony Boone, Economic Development Manager

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

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

[Item 1](#) Acceptance of the Agenda

Council Member Johnson moved that the agenda for the Regular City Council Meeting of June 27, 2024, be approved. Council Member Rodriguez seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried, 7/0. Mayor McCaa, Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey, Council Members Benning, Johnson, Landry, Messmer, and Rodriguez voted in favor.

Awards and Presentations

Mayor McCaa and Council presented a proclamation declaring Boys and Girls Club Week to Jay Hamwright.

Mr. Hamwright stated that the Boys and Girls Club is thankful and happy to celebrate National Boys and Girls Club Week. He further stated that the Club has been going since 1941 and he knows the importance of the Boys and Girls Club because he was a Club kid. Boys and Girls Club Week is a time to recognize the work that goes in, and the great work Boys and Girls

Clubs are doing in the community to support and shape kids' lives. He thanked the City Council and staff for having conversations and putting on great activities for the kids. The Police Department has been greatly involved with what the Club is doing, from sending out K9 units for demonstrations to conversations with teams about career opportunities. He also thanked the community and noted that without them the Club would not be able to do anything. He also thanked the Club's board members who work for free for the Club. Lastly, he stated the parents. The Club has over 200 kids served this summer doing fun activities and open all day.

City Manager's Report: Mr. Potucek announced that the City's offices will be closed Thursday, July 4, 2024, in observance of Independence Day. He announced that the legislature adjourned without further impact to the City's revenues, which is good news. He announced that the City received notification that the City did not get awarded the grant funds for Fry Boulevard. He also announced that the work session on July 9, 2024, and Council Meeting of July 11, 2024, will be cancelled. A special meeting has been scheduled for Monday, July 8, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers to address the City's acquisition of the Pueblo Del Sol Golf Course as Castle and Cooke has decided to leave the area. Since learning of the decision, no private buyers have been identified; therefore, the City has been negotiating taking over the property. The City is looking into a contractual agreement with a management company to take over operations. Lastly, he announced that the next regularly scheduled work session will be on July 23, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, followed by the regularly scheduled Council Meeting on July 25, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

## Item 2 Consent Agenda

[Item 2.1](#) Discussion and Possible Approval of the Work Session Minutes of June 10, 2024

[Item 2.2](#) Discussion and Possible Approval of the Work Session Minutes of June 11, 2024

[Item 2.3](#) Discussion and Possible Approval of the Regular City Council Meeting Minutes of June 13, 2024

[Item 2.4](#) Discussion and Possible Approval of Resolution 2024-041, Designating David J. Felix, Chief Financial Officer, as the person authorized to sign and submit the City's Annual Expenditure Limitation Report for FY 2025

Council Member Landry moved that the Consent Agenda consisting of the minutes for the Work Session Minutes of June 10, 2024, Work Session of June 11, 2024, Regular City Council Meeting of June 13, 2024, and Resolution 2024-041, designating David J. Felix, Chief Financial Officer, as the person authorized to sign and submit the City's Annual Expenditure Limitation Report for FY 2025, be approved. Council Member Benning seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried, 7/0. Mayor McCaa, Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey, Council Members Benning, Johnson, Landry, Messmer, and Rodriguez voted in favor.

## Public Hearing

[Item 3](#) Discussion and Possible Approval of Resolution 2024-042, Approval and Adoption of VISTA 2040 and Directing that Vista 2040 be Submitted to the Voters for Ratification and the General Election Scheduled to be held on November 5, 2024.

Council Member Johnson moved Resolution 2024-042, adoption of VISTA 2040 and Directing that Vista 2040 be Submitted to the Voters for Ratification and the General Election Scheduled to be held on November 5, 2024, be approved. Council Member Benning seconded the motion.

Mr. McLachlan stated that this is the fifth update to the General Plan, originally adopted in 1965. State law requires that the City either readopt the existing plan for an additional 10 years or update the plan. The City undertook the latter working through the commissions under the new format that was approved last year. The proposed Vista 2040 Plan builds upon the prior plans and studies which are adopted by reference into the General Plan. These are all deemed currently valid and relevant. The contents of the plan are formatted to follow statutory requirements, which are listed at the end of each chapter. The update was developed in consultation with the commissions over the past 12 months. It was also reviewed by outside agencies and the public during a 60-day review period.

While the City is geographically a large city at 152 square miles, 90 percent of that territory is owned by the State or federal governments. The City is expected to grow by 2,720 people over the 2020 census between 2024 and 2040 that represents a six percent increase. According to the community survey, slow growth that is harmonious with the environment and preserves the smalltown character is what the community prefers. Projections are not necessarily destiny. The community is very sensitive to the fluctuations of federal defense spending, which is difficult to project. There was a sharp increase post 911 that coincided with the housing boom nationwide and the effects of the sequestration that was implemented in 2013. Most of the anticipated growth is planned to occur within either previously platted subdivisions or specific plan areas, which provides some predictability on how the community will evolve in future decades. The predominant housing type will remain single family, which is the housing type that the community prefers according to the survey. Any new multifamily housing development is likely to be the product of low-income tax credits. Also, applications in this current round are only for phase two projects, not new projects. There have been some new projects proposed that were not approved this year, but between 2024 and 2040, the City expects a percentage of the new housing stock to include multifamily.

The RL Workman's subdivisions, Buffalo Soldier Ranch and Canada Vista, which contained 434 lots can accommodate around 1,000 people of the growth projection, about 37 percent. The City expects those neighborhoods to accommodate significant share of the projected population growth. Other future subdivisions expect to be built in previously master planned areas, i.e., Tribute where water accuracy certificates have already been obtained, a process that must be gone through with ADEQ.

On the commercial side, the focus is going to be working with the private sector to fill in gaps within the existing developed commercial areas where the infrastructure is already in place. The City has been averaging about 20,000 square feet in nonresidential development annually in recent years, and if that trend continues, the City can expect about 350,000 square feet to be built within the commercial and industrial zones between 2024 and 2040.

The City will continue to maintain focus on the reuse and redevelopment of the existing building stock, particularly on the West End to improve its economic health and vitality. The designations on the future Land Use Plan have been adjusted to be consistent with the City's zoning map in about 58 cases and those are available for public review on the City's website.

The City will continue to work with staff on implementing the Parks Master Plan, which calls for upgrades to existing parks as well as new parks, i.e., Roadrunner Park. It also is important to note that the City's 27 parks are impressive for a community the size of Sierra Vista.

The community survey indicates a desire for an indoor recreation facility, which is identified as a potential capital improvement project in the Parks Master Plan within the Veteran Memorial Sports Complex.

There will also be continued focus on leveraging partnerships, grants, facilitating sports tourism as an economic driver, the range of park experiences, both passive and active, sharing parks that are accessible, well maintained, and cited appropriately in a way that respects the City's natural environment and cultural landscapes. The concept plans for Roadrunner Park do that.

Conserving open space and green space, environmentally sensitive areas, i.e., as the natural functions of the floodplain are addressed in the General Plan. Maintaining and strengthening the City's economic base. The partnerships have been created, water conservation, extensive work through the partnerships to reduce water use in the community has been documented in the Plan. It shows that while the population has increased by 10,000 people since 2,000, the homes are using less water which is impressive and that is due to the water conservation codes that have been implemented to model the EPA water sense.

The Plan incorporates the findings of the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan. The major roads can accommodate the anticipated increase in traffic during the planning period without any further expansion. The BST improvements will be under construction to serve the charter school which is likely to be the last arterial roadway that will need to be built during the planning. The city will continue to fill in the gaps in the multiuse path network and endeavor to complete the perimeter loop around the City through the grants that the City has been successful in obtaining through the Federal Transit Administration. The City will continue to study the transit routes and fine tune those to maximize efficiency for the ridership. The City is going to concentrate on implementing the recommendations of the Airport Master Plan that is in the process of being updated.

The City's economic development approach will continue with the whole of government emphasis and key focus areas will be fostering culture of entrepreneurship, collaborating with educational institutions to equip the local workforce, business attraction and retention, and West End revitalization.

The Plan also supports Fort Huachuca as the City's main economic driver and minimizing impacts is the City's paramount concern that will be factored into ongoing development review as new applications are received to ensure that they are compatible with the Fort's missions.

There will continue to be strong focus on improving the City's readiness and public safety. The Police Department will meet or exceed their standards of accreditation and the fire department will do the same with the National Fire Protection Standards.

Arts and culture will continue to be a factor into the City's placemaking initiatives and the main goal there is updating the Art Vista Master Plan that was adopted 30 years ago in looking at ways to incorporate public art into the community along public properties and streetscapes.

In closing, Mr. McLachlan thanked Council for hanging in with staff through the process and the members and volunteers that participated on the commissions and the liaisons who helped

facilitate the effort. He also thanked Mr. Pregler and Mr. Fisher in assembling the document, developing the chapters, and putting together what he thinks is a very good General Plan for the years to come.

The Planning and Zoning Commission considered this at the second public hearing and unanimously voted to recommend approval and the staff recommendation is for the Council to do the same.

Council Member Landry thanked the staff for all the work that went into this and stated that this is a very comprehensive document, a very large document that is very well done. She encouraged all members of the public to look at it. This document can be broken down into sections and people may find a section that is very important to them and dive into that and read it because it is going to be on the ballot in November.

Council Member Rodriguez stated that during the work session it was mentioned that there will be a small amount of people that will check the box on the ballot. Therefore, there is going to be more of a campaign to get the word out on what this is about, how it works on the ballot, what it means if they check box or do not.

Mr. McLachlan mentioned that there will be a brochure that is very neutral, and staff will have the plan prominently posted on the City's website for people to delve in deeper if they want specific information on what the recommendations are going forward.

The motion unanimously carried, 7/0. Mayor McCaa, Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey, Council Members Benning, Johnson, Landry, Messmer, and Rodriguez voted in favor.

New Business

[Item 4](#) Discussion and Possible Approval of Resolution 2024-043, Tentative Budget for Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Council Member Rodriguez moved that Resolution 2024-043, Tentative Budget for Fiscal Year 2024-2025, be approved. Council Member Johnson seconded the motion.

Ms. Yarbrough stated that this resolution will adopt the tentative budget for fiscal year 24-25 in the amount of \$172,359,341. Adoption of this resolution is going to cap the fiscal year 25 budget at that amount and pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes, the final budget can be less than or equal to that amount, but it cannot exceed that amount. As discussed during the work session, there were three changes that were made since the public budget work sessions. Those address some changes in the Fire Department salaries, Sierra Vista Metropolitan Planning Organization budget, and a potential grant added to the Airport Fund. If Council passes the tentative budget, the next action will occur on July 25, 2024 when Council will review the final budget in the public hearing on property tax. The final action in this series will be August 18, 2024 with a resolution to adopt the property tax levy.

The motion unanimously carried, 7/0. Mayor McCaa, Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey, Council Members Benning, Johnson, Landry, Messmer, and Rodriguez voted in favor.

[Item 5](#) Discussion and Possible Approval of Resolution 2024-044, Approving the proceedings of the Industrial Development Authority of the City of Sierra Vista regarding the issuance of its

charter school revenue and refunding bonds, Lead Charter Schools Project, Series 2024 in an amount not to exceed \$8,500,000

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey moved that Resolution 2024-044, proceedings of the Industrial Development Authority of the City of Sierra Vista regarding the issuance of its charter school revenue and refunding bonds, Lead Charter Schools Project, Series 2024 in an amount not to exceed \$8,500,000, be approved. Council Member Johnson seconded the motion.

Mr. Slania, Counsel to the Industrial Development Authority of the City of Sierra Vista, stated that the proposed resolution authorizes borrowing in the amount of \$8,500,000 for Lead Charter School. This will be a bank placement. A bank is borrowing this, and it is a refunding. They are intent on lowering their interest rate and have an existing bond that will be refunded through this lowered borrowing. The equivalent of refinancing your mortgage that they are looking to move out for multiple years with the bank. It is a sister school to the next item on the agenda, which is Leading Edge Academy Maricopa, or Lead. They have two different charters, and they are treated differently. They have indicated a willingness to move forward and the Sierra Vista IDA approved their resolution that was brought before them.

The motion unanimously carried, 7/0. The motion unanimously carried, 7/0. Mayor McCaa, Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey, Council Members Benning, Johnson, Landry, Messmer, and Rodriguez voted in favor.

[Item 6](#) Discussion and Possible Approval of Resolution 2024-045, Approving the proceedings of the Industrial Development Authority of the City of Sierra Vista regarding the issuance of its charter school revenue and refunding bonds, Leading Edge Academy Maricopa Charter School Project, Series 2024 in an amount not to exceed \$15,500,000

Council Member Benning moved that Resolution 2024-045, proceedings of the Industrial Development Authority of the City of Sierra Vista regarding the issuance of its charter school revenue and refunding bonds, Leading Edge Academy Maricopa Charter School Project, Series 2024 in an amount not to exceed \$15,500,000, be approved. Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey seconded the motion.

Mr. Slania stated that this is a sister project to the one that was entertained. There are two prior bonds that are going to be refunded. There is also a small amount of equipment that the charter school is looking to finance. The amount is \$15.5 million, and they are existing schools. Therefore, the bonds are already outstanding. However, because of the tax federal tax rules, they cannot be refunded until next year. To affect an interest rate reduction, the bank is giving them a taxable rate from the time of the refunding through the time of the redemption next year. At that point they will become again federally tax exempt within the bank's hands. The bonds themselves will not change. They will convert the interest rate from one to the other and the bank has found this acceptable, and the school is bringing it forward at their request. The Sierra Vista IDA entertained and adopted its resolution.

In response to Council Member Johnson, Mr. Slania stated that neither the Sierra Vista IDA nor the City is financially responsible at all for these bonds. These are revenue bonds paid solely from the revenues of the school and under Statute, the City and IDA are not obligated to pay on these bonds.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey commented that Council keeps hearing this statement over and over, but she is glad that the Council Member Johnson asked for the public's benefit because it might be someone's first time hearing this.

Council Member Landry thanked Mr. Slania for always being available to answer questions, explain, and to break everything down.

The motion unanimously carried, 7/0. The motion unanimously carried, 7/0. Mayor McCaa, Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey, Council Members Benning, Johnson, Landry, Messmer, and Rodriguez voted in favor.

### Call to the Public

Henry Conroy stated that on November 3, 2020, the voters of Arizona approved Proposition 207 which allows adult use of marijuana, but some decisions eventually prove themselves harmful to a community and really should be questioned. He urged the City Council to review its decision to authorize marijuana dispensaries in Sierra Vista. The City has had over three years to evaluate and assess the impact of that decision on the community and the questions that the Council needs to look at are the following:

- In the past three years, has the City experienced adverse effects on children and adolescents' health and safety?
- Have the reports to poison control of children's overdose increased dramatically?
- Has the use of cannabis by youths and young adults increased significantly?
- Has the incidence of controllable substance abuse disorders increased over the past three years?
- Have there been increased incidence of psychosis and other mental health problems along with impaired brain development, especially among young adults?
- Have the schools experienced increased drug use in sale on their campus?
- Have there been higher rates of school dropouts?
- Has legal marijuana in Sierra Vista been tested and proven to be safe, i.e., not contaminated with e-coli, salmonella, or heavy metals, and that it is not the high potency marijuana?
- Has the City of Sierra Vista experienced more drug related automobile accidents and fatalities in the past three years?
- Has there been an increase in property crime, aggravated assault, robberies, and other violent crimes in the past three years?
- Has the City's cost of managing, treating, and controlling drug use, both legal and illegal in Sierra Vista, exceeded the potential revenue?

Mr. Conroy noted that studies have shown that the high potency cannabis is linked to psychosis in young adults causing schizophrenia, delusions, and hallucinations. Other states that have legalized marijuana have experienced major impacts on their community with increased burglaries, violent crimes, and rampant increases in health issues among young people. He further stated that it is difficult for a governing board to recognize an unwise decision, but it is also a stronger community that is willing to rectify the mistake. In closing, he asked Council to collect the statistics on the community and honestly assess all the facts as he believes that Council will be able to recognize the serious impact that their decisions to legalize marijuana sales has had on the community. He also believes that Council will be strong enough to reverse that decision and will find reasons for not closing the marijuana dispensary, but it is Council's responsibility to help protect the community from criminal activities that increase medical issues. Lastly, he noted [Arizona State Statute 36-2854\(A\)1G](#) and stated that Council has the authority

to reverse its decision and notify the owner that the license will not be renewed to give them sufficient time to close their store or convert to a different product. For every person who develops mental issues from marijuana use or moves on to harder drugs, Council's decision has a real direct effect on them.

#### Comments and Requests of the Council

Council Member Benning thanked Pastor Rowles for blessing and Jay Hamwright. He voiced his appreciation to Mr. Hamwright and his staff for everything that they do for the community. He wished everyone a happy July 4, 2024, to be safe, travel safe, and if they drink, do not drive. In closing he congratulated Taylor, his daughter, who is six weeks pregnant and is going to make him a grandfather.

Council Member Johnson stated that Sierra Vista is blessed with dedicated and talented spiritual leaders. One has been recognized and he personally congratulated Father Greg Adolf, whose status in the Catholic Church was recently upgraded to Monsignor Adolf, a well-deserved promotion for what he has done within the community as well as his community of faith. In closing, he stated that he is blessed to call him a friend.

Council Member Landry stated that there are many events going on during the weekend and next weekend. On Saturday, June 29, 2024 from 4:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m., there will be a Stand up for Freedom street fair that that will benefit the Warrior Healing Center in the alley behind Doc's Watering Hole in the in the Warrior Healing Center. She also asked people to stay safe on July 4, 2024 and to make sure that they have a plan if they are going to party hard. She announced that there is going to be a lot of events during the day from the Pet Promenade Parade that the New Frontier Animal Shelter puts on to other activities in the park as well as the fireworks in the evening. She noted that at the work session on Tuesday, June 25, 2024, a group was in attendance that brought forward information about recycling and she wanted to let everybody know that they can recycle aluminum cans and drop them off at the animal shelter, which helps them.

Council Member Messmer wished everyone a happy and safe July 4, 2024.

Council Member Rodriguez apologized for his absence on Tuesday, June 25, 2024, but he watched on Teams as he was travelling to see his daughter, who was recently promoted in the Marine Corps, and to celebrate her birthday. He thanked the Boys and Girls Club who do great things with their summer program that is a big part of the community as a lot of kids go there for the summer. He commented on the beautiful monsoon rain, announced Gunny's BBQ Latin Night on June 27, 2024 up until 8:00 p.m. He thanked Enrique from the City' yard who came out and fixed his trash can. Commented that a lot of people come out to Sierra Vista to see the July 4<sup>th</sup> events, a big deal and one of his favorite events of the year. He thanked the first responders who have been working extra hard these last few weeks due to a few incidents in the community. Lastly, he stated that he wants people to understand that Castle and Cooke is walking away from the City and not leaving any hope or help. Therefore, moving forward, everyone will see things coming out. He noted that they are not present in Chambers since the Council voted to start Tribute.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey had nothing to report.

Mayor McCaa gave a shout out to Parks and Recreation for the amazing job for the July fourth festivities and commented that the City has green grass.



Adjournment

Mayor McCaa adjourned the June 27, 2024, meeting of the Sierra Vista City Council at 5:42 p.m.

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Clea McCaa II, Mayor

Minutes prepared by:

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Maria G. Marsh, Deputy City Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jill Adams, City Clerk

A recording of the Council Meeting is available at:  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8PtUpIbkQsixlhSy-jeR\\_Q/videos](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8PtUpIbkQsixlhSy-jeR_Q/videos)