

Sierra Vista City Council
Meeting Summary
[May 13, 2021](#)

Mayor Mueller called the May 13, 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 Sarah Pacheco – present (5:07 p.m.)
Council Member Carolyn Umphrey - present

Others Present:

Chuck Potucek, City Manager
Victoria Yarbrough, Assistant City Manager
Adam Thrasher, Police Chief
Brian Jones, Fire Chief
Laura Wilson, Leisure and Library Services Director
Matt McLachlan, Community Development Director
Sharon Flissar, Public Works Director
Jill Adams, City Clerk
Tony Boone, Economic Development Manager
Nathan J. Williams, City Attorney

Invocation – Pastor Greg Rowles, God is Good Church, conducted the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance – Council Member Johnson 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 May 13, 2021, be approved. Council Member Benning seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried, 6/0. Mayor Mueller, Mayor Pro Tem Gray and Council Members Benning, Landry, Johnson, and Umphrey voting in favor.

City Manager's Report: Mr. Potucek announced that the regularly City Council Work Session is scheduled at 3:00 p.m. on May 25, 2021, in the City Manager's Conference Room that will include the normal update, discussion on the Council's Policy and Procedures Manual, Council Executive Report and a budget update. The regularly scheduled City Council Meeting on May 27, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. is also in Council Chambers. He also announced that two bids were received on April 30, 2021, for the North Garden Avenue/Fry Boulevard Improvements Phase I Project; however, both were significantly overbudget to the tune of about \$800,000. Staff met and decided on what to cut out of the Project and have it still proceed with the length from Carmichael to North Garden, and the Gate. Those determinations have been made and the project will be rebid. He added that there are other ways that can address some of the shortfalls, including maybe putting some of the items in the Phase II Project, which are being discussed.

Staff is working fast due to the tight timeframe so that the Project can be done by next summer. The final numbers for the EMS Substation Design-Build Phase are not due until later in the summer, but higher costs are anticipated with this Project; therefore, some budget changes are being made that will be presented to Council during the next work session. He also announced that on a positive note, the March sales tax numbers are in, and from March 2020 to March 2021, there was a 28 percent increase in sales tax receipts over that time, which is probably the most significant number he has seen in many years. This puts the city at almost 10 percent up over 2020 for the fiscal year, which is also a very significant number. Internet sales and shopping local seem to be paying off for the city. The Apron and Taxiway J Rehabilitation Project is scheduled to start in the summer; the Street Maintenance Pavement Patching, Crack and Sand Seal Construction Project is already out with KE&G that is expected to be completed by June 15, 2021; and the Police Department Locker Room Remodel's is expected to be completed before June 30, 2021.

Item 2 Consent Agenda:

[Item 2.1](#) Approval of the Regular City Council Meeting Minutes of April 22, 2021

[Item 2.2](#) Resolution 2021-027, Granting an Electrical Utility Easement to Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative for the Canada Vista Subdivision

[Item 2.3](#) Resolution 2021-028, Designating David J. Felix, Chief Financial Officer, as the person authorized to sign and submit the City's Annual Expenditure Limitation Report for FY 2021

[Item 2.4](#) Resolution 2021-029, Designating David J. Felix, Chief Financial Officer, as the person authorized to sign and submit the City's Annual Expenditure Limitation Report for FY 2022

Council Member Johnson moved that the Consent Agenda consisting of the regular City Council Meeting Minutes of April 22, 2021, Resolution 2021-027, granting an electrical utility easement to Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative for the Canada Vista Subdivision, Resolution 2021-028, and Resolution 2021-029, both designating David J. Felix, Chief Financial Officer, as the person authorized to sign and submit the City's Annual Expenditure Limitation Report for FY 2021 and FY 2022, be approved. Council Member Landry seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried, 7/0. Mayor Mueller, Mayor Pro Tem Gray and Council Members Benning, Landry, Johnson, Pacheco, and Umphrey voting in favor.

Public Hearing:

[Item 3](#) Resolution 2021-030, Codification of Code of Ordinances and declaring a 30-day Public Record

Council Member Umphrey moved that Resolution 2021-030, codification of Code of Ordinances, and declaring a 30-day public record, be approved. Mayor Pro Tem Gray seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried, 7/0. Mayor Mueller, Mayor Pro Tem Gray and Council Members Benning, Landry, Johnson, Pacheco, and Umphrey voting in favor.

[Item 4](#) Resolution 2021-031, Development Code Text Amendment to Section 151.22.026, Recreational Vehicle Park (RVP) Overlay District and declaring a 30-day Public Record

Mayor Pro Tem Gray moved that Resolution 2021-031, Development Code text amendment to Section 151.22.026, Recreational Vehicle Park Overlay District and declaring a 30-day public record, be approved. Council Member Umphrey seconded the motion.

Mr. Wilde with Good Living Ventures spoke in favor of the Recreational Vehicle Park Overly District.

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

New Business:

[Item 5](#) Resolution 2021-032, Authorization to Accept Arizona Department of Administration, Office of Grants and Federal Resources, Arizona 9-1-1 Program (GFR Grant Number: GFR-ADOA-AZ911-22-02A)

Council Member Benning moved that Resolution 2021-032, acceptance of the Arizona Department of Administration, Office of Grants and Federal Resources, Arizona 9-1-1 Program Grant, be approved. Mayor Pro Tem Gray seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried, 7/0. Mayor Mueller, Mayor Pro Tem Gray and Council Members Benning, Landry, Johnson, Pacheco, and Umphrey voting in favor.

[Item 6](#) Resolution 2021-033, Authorization to Accept Arizona Department of Administration, Office of Grants and Federal Resources, Arizona 9-1-1 Program (GFR Grant Number: GFR-ADOA-AZ911-22-02B)

Council Member Johnson moved that Resolution 2021-033, acceptance of the Arizona Department of Administration, Office of Grants and Federal Resources, Arizona 9-1-1 Program Grant, be approved. Council Member Benning seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried, 7/0. Mayor Mueller, Mayor Pro Tem Gray and Council Members Benning, Landry, Johnson, Pacheco, and Umphrey voting in favor.

[Item 7](#) Resolution 2021-035, Arizona State Parks and Trails Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant Application

Council Member Pacheco moved that Resolution 2021-035, Arizona State Parks and Trails Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Application, be approved. Council Member Umphrey seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried, 7/0. Mayor Mueller, Mayor Pro Tem Gray and Council Members Benning, Landry, Johnson, Pacheco, and Umphrey voting in favor.

Call to the Public

Michael DeCarlo explained that he had been ill and had been unable to attend the meetings. He stated that he moved out of his house, motivated by the tax put on nursing home beds, because he figured that if he was going to be on his back, and he was going to be taxed for occupying a bed, he might as well go back to where he came from. He added that he is in the process of moving to Ohio, back to where he grew up. Since he bought the house there, he has received \$3 Million in federal grants to improve the lake front. He added that SEACOM is a good thing when only dealing with fire and medical emergencies, but there are different layers of government: federal government and they are involved with the Fort and Forestry and the State has given them \$500,000; county government that should have a share of running SEACOM because this is a political mixture; city government that has created an enterprise, which everyone knows that in government is nothing more than a monopoly. He further stated that this is a conglomeration of four layers of government, including law enforcement, sharing information and a fusion center. This opens a can of worms where people could be spied on because the information is being shared. He also suggested that instead of giving staff a two percent increase, doing a pay freeze across the board since the city was shut down for a year,

and repairing the holes at Timothy Lane Park underneath the swings. He further recommended taking the \$100,000 that is being put up for crack pots for City Hall and reappropriating the funds towards the parks. He also recommended that \$7,000 be budgeted to purchase a generator, an extension cord and power strip to solve the problem, saving \$93,000. Lastly, he commented on the tax's receipts, isolation/lockdowns compared to freedom – people are out, and people can buy so much hand sanitizer and masks online that can be taxed, let alone the plexi glass and wood for frames.

Mr. DeCarlo addressed Police Chief Thrasher regarding the 9-1-1 grants, stating that the state where he is moving to lost power and found out that the installation, primary and alternate power supplies, were plugged into the same source.

Comments and Requests of the Council

Council Member Johnson announced his 29th wedding anniversary and questions how he became so lucky and how does she put up with him.

Council Member Landry congratulated Mr. and Mrs. Johnson on their anniversary and announced that the Huachucans are sponsoring the Sierra Vista Open starting on Friday, May 14, 2021 through Saturday, May 15, 2021. She also stated that as schools are coming to an end, she encourages people to show extra love to the teachers as they have been through so much, especially this past year. Lastly, she announced the Sky Island Summit Challenge and Sips and Skies at Veterans' Memorial Park. She shared that she has been hitting the trails, which are beautiful, and she encourages people to be out on the trails because Sierra Vista is a great place.

Mayor Mueller noted that people can sign up for the Sips and Skies event at [eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com).

Council Member Pacheco stated that she did not time her second shot for COVID well as she has had a rough day health wise and is being precautionary. She announced that this is her last Council meeting as she is resigning from the position. She stated that it has been an absolute pleasure to serve the City of Sierra Vista. Life took some turns that passed a couple of years that she was not expecting as the pandemic affected her family and they ended up leaving jobs that they had for 14 years and their home of 12 years, but they purchased a home that is putting her outside of the city limits. She further stated that her experience on Council has brought an appreciation to her, the time and dedication that the role takes is a thankless and very time-consuming job. She noted that the people on Council love the town and although, they do not always agree, they all agree on loving the town that is important for everyone to know. Council Member may have different views on what is best, but they all want the best for the town, and for the future of Sierra Vista. She voiced her appreciation for the mentorship and fellowship of Council Members and staff for the last two years. She hopes that during her time on Council that she was able to bring a focus to the disadvantaged people of the community and noted that she plans to continue that in the community. She added that she brought a different perspective, but she believes that a good Council is one that represents diversity of perspectives so that there can be good discussion. There were good discussions and respectful and that is what makes a healthy governing body. Lastly, she stated that she is proud of the community and excited about the Fry Forward Project and that the city is now the Hummingbird Capital of Arizona, and hopefully it can become of the United States.

In response to Mayor Mueller, Council Member Pacheco stated that her last day on Council is May 19, 2021.

Mayor Mueller stated that there is time to go through the process to ask for applications for Council Member Pacheco's replacement for the remainder of her term. The process will start immediately. He thanked Council Member Pacheco for her service and added that he agrees whole heartedly with her on the importance of diversity of opinion. He voiced his appreciation on her perspective on things, even though they did not always agree. A well thought out opinion makes the Council better.

Council Member Umphrey wished a happy anniversary to Greg and Suzanne. She addressed Council Member Pacheco and stated that she is very grateful in having worked with her and reminisced on their first meeting that took place three years ago at the Cochise College parking lot. She stated that it has been an honor to work with her and is glad that she is still going to be in the community serving in a way. She announced that 15 of the City's teachers and staff from the Sierra Vista Unified District retired or are retiring at the end of the year. They had a combined 444 years of service to the district, which is incredible. There was a retirement dinner for them with the Education Foundation and she is grateful for everything that they have done, and people still going into teaching, especially after last year. It speaks to how special the community is. Lastly, she stated that the city is officially the Hummingbird Capital of Arizona, even though the city had self-imposed that they were the Hummingbird Capital of the United States. She thanked former Council Member Calhoun for coming up with the idea, Representative Gail Griffin for making sure that it got signed.

Council Member Benning congratulated Greg and wished Mr. DeCarlo well and encouraged him to stay active and to remember that even though he was in the Navy, "the Navy always got your six", keep it up. He asked people to keep all teachers and administrators in their mind and congratulated all the seniors as they graduate and those that have already graduated. He announced that he will go over to PPEP Tec on Friday, May 14, 2021, as he is their guest speaker for the commencement. He then congratulated his daughter on graduating with a Mechanical Engineering Degree from ASU's Honor College, Magna Cum Laude and with honors. He added that in one more year, she will have her masters in Airspace Engineering and noted that she gets all her brains from him. Lastly, he shared his excitement about the Parks Master Plan that he was able to see because he is the liaison for the Park and Recreation Commission. He gave kudos to Ms. Wilson and Mr. McLachlan, who worked hard along with their staff. He asked Council that when they look at the Parks Master Plan to not only look at the numbers, but to hear everything else out foremost because it shows a lot of good things that is coming.

Mayor Pro Tem Gray wished Council Member Johnson a happy anniversary and stated that he is probably like she, as she asks herself all the time how her husband, Thomas, has been able to put up with her for 25 years. She thanked Council Member Pacheco for her time on Council, work for the community, wished her luck with everything, and noted that she is sure that she will be seeing her around town. She congratulated Sierra Vista for the Hummingbird designation and acknowledged former Council Member Calhoun for her work on this, and Council Member Humphrey who helped carry that through after Council Member Calhoun was off Council. She also thanked Ms. Hector for getting all the numbers and statistics together so that those could be presented in an organized/informed way. She also thanked Representative Griffin and Mayor Mueller. Lastly, she stated that it is National Police Weekend and thanked the police officers for all their work in keeping the community safe, recognized Melanie Edwards Barton, Sierra Vista Chamber Director, and announced that things are opening back up and shared that after the last Council Meeting, she, Mayor Mueller, and Council Member Umphrey attended a meeting at Twilight, and everyone was happy to get out. She encouraged people to look for more of these

coming up and noted that on the last Wednesday of the month, the Chamber has networking at noon, a great way to get together with people that are running businesses and trying to make things work.

Mayor Mueller stated that he was concerned, now that he is entering his dotage, because he could not remember whether he mentioned at the previous Council's meeting that Mother's Day was on Sunday, May 9, 2021. He added that no one wants to forget their mother and proceeded to wish a Happy Mother's Day and thank all mothers, grandmothers, aunts, stepmothers, and adopted mothers for all that they do for the community. He announced that there are some events coming up, i.e., Sips and Skies, etc. He noted that the Fourth of July is going to be a full-on event with the exception that on the 3rd, there will not be any kids' events before the band, but there will be a band in the park, ending with the fireworks. He announced that Armed Forces Day and Peace Officers Memorial Day is on May 15, 2021. He asked people to take time to remember folks that are currently serving in the Armed Forces as well as the Peace Officers throughout the country. Lastly, he announced that on Memorial Day, there will be a virtual ceremony at Veterans Memorial Cemetery. He added that the folks on the Post will have some type of ceremony, but it is not clear yet and it may be by invitation only. Also, the Veterans Group at the Cochise Memory Garden will have their service at 11:00 a.m. or 11:30 a.m. In closing, he thanked Council Member Pacheco and voiced his appreciation in that she brought intellectual diversity to the Council, and he looks forward to working with her.

Adjournment

Mayor Mueller adjourned the May 13, 2021, meeting of the Sierra Vista City Council at 5:47 p.m.