

Sierra Vista City Council
Meeting Summary
[December 9, 2021](#)

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

Roll Call:

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

Others Present:

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

Invocation – Mayor Mueller led everyone present in prayer.

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

Item 1 Acceptance of the Agenda

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

Awards and Presentations

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Item 2 Consent Agenda

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

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

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

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

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

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

New Business

[Item 3](#) Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2021-089, Creation of Economic Development Commission

Council Member Johnson moved that Resolution 2021-089, Creation of Economic Development Commission, be approved. Council Member Umphrey seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried, 7/0. Mayor Mueller, Mayor Pro Tem Gray, Council Members Benning, Johnson, Landry, Rodriguez, and Umphrey voting in favor.

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

Council Member Benning moved that Resolution 2021-090, acceptance of the grant offer from the Arizona State Parks Non-motorized Grant Program for funding to construct a stabilized ADA loop trail at Garden Canyon Linear Park off St. Andrews Drive, be approved. Council Member Johnson seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried, 7/0. Mayor Mueller, Mayor Pro Tem Gray, Council Members Benning, Johnson, Landry, Rodriguez, and Umphrey voting in favor.

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

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

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

Call to the Public

Mr. Mark Gauthier-Braham talked about the housing crisis and suggested the provision of incentives instead of trying to control homeowner's decisions, and taking a leaf out of the institutional review boards and ethical committees to make an actual independent watchdog that can actually keep watch of these places.

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

Council Member Umphrey thanked Mr. Gauthier-Braham for his comments, and everyone on City staff for another challenging year. She added that she thinks that everyone has done a really great job and Council is lucky to have them on board. She thanked the people of Sierra Vista for persevering through another difficult year. She announced that next week there is an event to benefit the Friends of Sierra Vista Animal Shelter to help pay for low cost spay and neuter clinics. It is called Sips and Snips, which will be at Hoppin' Grapes on Friday, December 17, 2021. Tickets are on Eventbrite, and in closing wished everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and Happy New Year.

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

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

Council Member Benning stated that the City has an adult therapeutic group, one of two in the State of Arizona, and this Saturday, December 11, 2021, they will be performing from 2:00 p.m.

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

Mayor Pro Tem Gray echoed everyone sentiments about the weekend's parade and thanked the Leisure, Library and Recreational staff for the market in the park. She also thanked the Chamber, who did an excellent job, and gave them kudos because throughout a rough year for everyone, they have done really well and have been very creative in making sure people still understand businesses. She also thanked the Kiwanis for their assistance with the tree in the park, thanked the Little Library Bookstore for donating \$5,000 to help with some costs in the library. She announced that on Friday, December 10, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. at the Sierra Vista Mall the Canine Companion, which helps with service dogs for people with PTSD and children with autism, are going to hold a pet parade and pet talent show. Lastly, she stated that if people get a friend to make sure that they are willing to commit long-term because the worst thing anyone can do is to get a dog or a cat and then decide they do not want it. It is very traumatic for them, and it does not help the shelter. In closing, she wished everyone, and the City staff a Merry Christmas, and noted that it has been a challenging but productive year, and she has enjoyed it and hopes to continue enjoying it.

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

In response to Mayor Mueller, Deputy Fire Chief Dever announced that on Wednesday, December 15, 2021 from 4:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. in the Schlotzsky's and Ace Hardware's parking lot there will be a toy drive. He encouraged people to donate toys or money. He noted

that the Department has been doing this for a long time and it is a wonderful event and a wonderful way to give back to the community and those in need. The Bag and Tag event will be on December 18, 2021 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. to gather the toys into bags for the individual families and children who are in need. The community is welcome to come to that event that takes place Fire Station One on Fry Boulevard. Delivery will be on December 19, 2021 starting at 8:00 a.m., and members of the community are welcome to come help deliver the toys to those families throughout the region that begins at 8:00 a.m. at Fire Station One.

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

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

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

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

Adjournment

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