

Sierra Vista City Council
Work Session Minutes

October 25, 2022

1. Call to Order

Mayor Mueller called the October 25, 2022, City Council Work Session to order at 3:00 p.m., Council Chambers, City Hall, 1011 N. Coronado Drive, Sierra Vista, Arizona.

Mayor Rick Mueller – 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
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, Parks, Leisure, and Library Services Director
Sharon Flissar, Public Works Director
Matt McLachlan, Community Development Director
Adam Curtis, PIO
Jill Adams, City Clerk
Dianna Cameron, Management Analyst
Corporal Scott Borgstadt
Jay Matchett, Director of Housing Connection

1. Presentation and Discussion:

A. October 27, 2022, Council Meeting Agenda Items (agenda attached)

Mayor Mueller stated that the Council Meeting for Thursday, October 27, 2022, starts at 5:00 p.m. with the call to order, roll call, invocation, pledge, the acceptance of the agenda, and the City Manager Report.

In response to Mayor Mueller, Mr. Potucek stated that he will have a few project updates during the Thursday, October 27, 2022, meeting, and reported that the August sales tax report was received, two months in, which are up by nine percent. The City is currently sitting at 8.25 percent year over year from last year which well exceeds the budget.

Item 2.1 Discussion and Possible Action on the Regular City Council Meeting Minutes of October 13, 2022 – Council Member Umphrey stated that she will abstain from voting on the minutes since she was absent during the October 13, 2022 meeting.

Item 2.2 Discussion and Possible Action on Resolution 2022-067, Accepting a Warranty Deed for needed public right-of-way along the western side of S. Carmichael Avenue from GL Mountain Vista, LLC – There was no discussion.

Item 2.3 Discussion and Possible Action on Resolution 2022-068, Recission of Resolution 2020-040 Authorizing the Mayor of the City of Sierra Vista to Declare a Local Emergency – Council Member Johnson requested a change to the wording of Resolution 2020-068 to include language from Resolution 2020-040.

Item 3 Discussion and Possible Action on Resolution 2022-069, New Series 10 Liquor License for Debra Russell on behalf of Sierra Vista Natural Foods Cooperative Inc. dba Sierra Vista Food Co-Op located at 96 S. Carmichael Avenue, Sierra Vista, Arizona – Ms. Adams stated that this is a new application for a series 10, which is a beer and wine store license for the Sierra Vista Food Co-op. The notice of the public hearing was posted on the facility and to-date there have been no comments received from the public, pro or con. The Police Department has done a background of the applicant and has no objection to the application moving forward. If approved, it will be returned to the State. This is a license application that is one of the few that has been done recently by the City since the creation of the Entertainment District that allowed for this license to happen because there is a church in one of the buildings close by. The Entertainment District allows for the waiver of those requirements.

Item 4 Discussion and Possible Action on Resolution 2022-070, Intergovernmental Agreement with the Cochise County Community College District for the sharing of Property, Facilities, Equipment, Personnel, services, and/or other Assets; and Construction and Shared use of a Driving Track – Ms. Wilson stated that this item is to approve an intergovernmental agreement between the City and the Cochise County Community College District. This is to joint utilize a 10-acre parcel of land that is west of the Sierra Vista Riding Club Arena and east of Fire Station Three. The College and staff have identified this location as a great place to joint use it for the College to construct a large concrete pad for the new First Responders Academy. They will move that academy into the Sierra Vista location and construct five acres of the property with a thick concrete pad that will be utilized for this course which paves the way for them to bring that academy to the City. It can be jointly used by City staff as well for CDL courses and other driver training. The College plans to use it for their CDL courses.

Ms. Wilson stated that this a good opportunity to work together on something than can be great for everyone. The calendar will be run through her office just like they do other City assets.

Mayor Mueller asked if this is going to be primarily for driving training for Police, Fire, and CDLs for the City. Ms. Wilson stated that he is correct.

Council Member Benning stated that this is a good idea, and he appreciates all the work put into this and asked if the City will be tied in maintaining the upkeep of the concrete slab. Ms. Wilson stated that he is correct, but it does not mean that the City cannot have those discussions later and make amendments if they wanted to construct something else. This agreement may be construed as a living document that can be changed based on both parties agreeing to. Just like other traditional City projects, it becomes dedicated to the City and the City agrees to maintain the property.

Mayor Mueller noted that considered should be who is getting the primary benefit and the City will be getting their fair share in the future. Mr. Potucek commented that this is a six-inch concrete slab, a multi-million-dollar facility. The College was able to get the funding through the State to do this and it is integral to bringing the Public Safety Academy to the campus in Sierra Vista which is a benefit to the community. While priority usage is for the training purposes, there are also some side benefits i.e., taking the training off the airport to be able to focus on economic development there without having to worry about a place for people to train. The events occurring at the airport can then be scheduled to occur at this facility as well, an opportunity to make some revenue. Lastly, he stated that this is a very good agreement and Dr. Rottweiler, and the staff were very good to work with on this project.

Council Member Rodriguez stated that he thinks that this is a good step towards getting a full Fire Academy in the City. The concrete pad paves the way. There is a lot of unutilized land that is a good use for City-owned land. This is also very convenient to Fire Station Three as well as the other stations.

Item 5 Discussion and Possible Action on Resolution 2022-071, Intergovernmental Agreement with Whetstone Fire District for Ambulance Billing Services – Mr. Potucek stated that this a renewal of an agreement that the City currently has with the Whetstone Fire District to provide

ambulance billing services. The City charges about \$16 per bill generated and Mr. Felix assures him that this is done at a small profit.

Council Member Rodriguez asked if the \$16 fee for the billing, and not what is charged for an ambulance transport. Mr. Potucek stated that he is correct.

Item 6 Discussion and Possible Action on Resolution 2022-072, Official Intent to be Reimbursed for Certain Capital Expenditures – Mr. Felix stated that this is the standard reimbursement resolution that is done every year. The City plans to finance certain activities through the budget process and the IRS regulations stipulated that a city must pass a resolution like this showing the city's intent. If a resolution is not passed, then the city must have the financing in place within 30 days after the actual expenditure. This allows for the flexibility to finance the items at the end of the year if needed, but it does not mean that the city must finance. This also saves interest money such as seen for many years where vehicles were going to be financed, but never showed up. If the financing was done at the beginning of the year, interest would then be paid on those vehicles and not having any vehicles, a waste of money.

Mr. Felix further stated that two ambulances were added because there has been a slight change in the Schneider Project to move the tennis courts in; therefore, the vehicles will be financed and use the cash, cash that out and help pay for the change order for the Schneider Project for the tennis courts.

Mr. Potucek stated that he believes that the ambulances need to stay on the list to provide flexibility in the future, but Schneider has identified about a million or so dollars in savings on the current project, which should be adequate to cover the tennis courts. The financing of the ambulances may still be important to the City because the City is still trying to come up with sufficient funding for the Animal Control Expansion Project next year. The ambulances may not need to be financed if revenues are good, but it is wise to include them.

Item 7 Discussion and Possible Action on Resolution 202-073, Support for Tohono O'odham Nation Grant Application and Award for Medical Chest Compression Device– Fire Chief Jones Fire Chief Jones stated that Sierra Vista Fire Medical Service submitted a grant application of \$17,000 for a medical chest compression device known as the LUCAS device. The grant award was received on September 22, 2022, from the Tohono O'odham Nation. The funding for this project will increase survivability rates of patients suffering from an Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest (OHCA) emergency.

Council Member Johnson stated that the devices run about \$17,000. Fire Chief Jones stated that they did, but they are higher now.

Council Member Johnson asked where the device would be assigned. Fire Chief Jones stated that this initial LUCAS device will probably go on Engine One; however, the two ambulances that are being ordered will be supplied with LUCAS devices. This will be for all the front-line ambulances.

Mayor Mueller asked Fire Chief Jones for a letter to the Tohono O'odham Nation to thank the Nation as the City has been a recipient of their grants three/four times since they have been required by law to have these programs.

Council Member Rodriguez thanked Mike McKearney, who did a lot of the leg work for this grant. He also thanked City staff for looking for grants and taking their own personal time to do things like this.

B. Status Update on Community Connect Events (One Stop Resource and Referral Center) and Homeless Service Pilot Program – Better Work (New Initiative)

Mr. McLachlan stated that part of the work in Community Development is coordinating with the Continuum of Care. HUD requires the engagement of the providers in the area as part of the

planning processes for the Community Development Block Grant Program. The idea of being working together is stronger than working through individual organizations to solve the complex challenges on housing and homeless issues. The two initiatives that are being discussed are an outgrowth of the City's involvement on the COC as well as the two-year Strategic Plan that places a focus on addressing affordable housing and homeless issues in the community.

The Sierra Vista Community Connect has been underway for eight months and it is a good time to look back on how it is performing relative to the initial goals going into this. The starting premise was setting up a low-cost, low time investment test run on bringing the providers together at a single location and make services more easily accessible, much to how the Warrior Healing Center is set up for providing Veteran services. The recommendation came from a gap analysis that was conducted two summers ago that involved extensive interviews with nonprofits across the County. While everyone knew that it was a good idea and best practice, the participation was unknown, and attendance would look like going into this.

Mr. McLachlan introduced Jay Matchett, Executive Director of Cochise Housing Connection, who has been under contract to help promote, organize, and carry out these events over the past eight months over at the Ethel Berger Center. He added that his man hours have greatly exceeded what has been put into the contact, which is very much appreciated. Corporal Scott Borgstadt with the City Police Department and representative of the Better Bucks of Sierra Vista has also been a champion, who will provide comments following Mr. Matchett's presentation on the providers and participation rates.

Mr. Matchett stated that Community Connect is a monthly pop-up, one-stop resource, and referral center that collaborates with the community partners which provide a central point for navigating and accessing regionally available support services. This works to foster self-determination and curb homelessness. It brings together about 25 different agencies from Arizona At Work to DES, healthcare providers, homeless services, childcare, domestic violence in a one-stop shop where folks can easily at a glance see what is in the community and can meet with them so that they can find out more and, in many cases, sign up for services and/or make follow-up appointment.

Mr. Matchett stated that he is grateful to everyone that signed up because it is a time commitment, and it has been successful because of them, and displayed graphs to depict event metrics and trends. He stated that Community Connect does intakes from people entering the event. The first graph showed a spike in the beginning and that it fell off during the summer. An average of 40 to 60 plus intake forms completed each time, but not everyone is captured. They try to make that as tight as possible, but people that come by are not always willing to fill out the form, and they try to be respectful of that. However, it is starting to grow again in the fall. These estimates are based off agency tracking forms, where they keep track of how many people they talk to. This assists in estimating how many people got through and did not necessarily fill out an intake form.

More interesting data points from the registration forms are the number of people who say that they are struggling to pay their rent/mortgage has increased from 45 percent to 70 percent of the attendees. Averaging that over the entire program, it is over 50 percent. The rolling average over the past eight months is 23 percent of the attendees report that they are employed, 44 percent report that they have social security income, another third for social security disability, 12 percent for VA disability, and 65 percent report that they are on some sort of public assistance, i.e., SNAP, medical assistance, or both. There are some gaps in what people find beneficial in attending Community Connect.

A snapshot was displayed of who attends Community Connect. The average age is about 51 and it tends to skew towards seniors, which is understandable since this takes place on a Tuesday. There are a lot of struggling seniors and they do make a lot of use out of this event. Living situations break down as follows: 50 percent rent, 12 percent owned, 31 percent other situation which captures homelessness but other in between, i.e., staying with family or friend. People are coming from (top four) Sierra Vista at 76 percent, Huachuca City at nine percent, Hereford at five percent and Benson at five percent. However, there have been a few people from Whetstone, Bisbee, Douglas.

Over the course of the first eight months there have been almost 500 people attend. The total points of contact, which is the time that people can touch with one of the agencies, is 3,015. The number of follow-up appointments resulting from those interactions is 217, the number of completed applications for services is 121, and the total number of meals served was 580.

The agency points of contact peaked significantly in the beginning, then dwindled but over the spring/summer it is going upwards. Community Connect is working with the agencies to get the forms because it reflects the attendance. The homeless demographics and trends follow a similar arc where the program averages about 15 to 20 homeless folks each time. This is back to where they were in April. It fell off significantly during the summer. Overall, this program has helped to reach 141 homeless individuals, which have been broken down by sex/gender that shows that 72 percent are women, 24 percent are men, and four percent trans/nonbinary. Homeless with dependent children has gone up significantly since the beginning and it is unknown as the reason why. It began with 13 percent and currently is at 43 percent.

Mr. Matchett noted that amongst the homeless population, 28 percent are employed versus the overall attendees which are 23 percent, and they are less likely to be on public assistance than the overall attendee. This points to a real opportunity for this event to plug that hole and get them connected with DES or other support services because a lot of these folks are not plugged into some of those supports that are available in the community.

Council Member Benning thanked Mr. Matchett for spearheading the program and working with Mr. McLachlan. He asked if there is a way to track the number of visits per person. Mr. Matchett stated that they would like to be able to track that better, but they want to make it unanimous because people are hesitant to give out their information. There is not a great barometer for the number of visits per individual. Anecdotally, there are familiar faces that show up; however, there are a lot of new faces as well each time. They have tried to walk a fine line between getting those forms out so that they can get data, but they do not want to discourage people. They have had to pare down that form.

Council Member Benning asked about the agency follow through data. Mr. Matchett stated that the agency tracking forms report the number of people talked to them at the event, signed up at the event for some sort of service, and the amount that were scheduled for a follow-up intake elsewhere (home base). Agencies will follow up with him. It is a mixture.

Council Member Rodriguez stated that he is aware that the event is always on a Tuesday, and he has attended three at different times. However, that day is bad for some agencies because they are doing their own thing. He asked about changing the date of the event so that the people that are working can attend. Mr. Matchett stated that thought was put into the possibility of different days, but part of the reason that they are constrained is that the Ethel Berger Center is a busy place. There are a lot of different events going on at there and one of the days that has been kept open is Tuesday. He added that they did not want the event to take place on a Monday due to holidays taking place on Mondays, but they would like it midweek; however, Wednesdays are difficult at the Ethel Berger Center. Therefore, if they want to continue to use the Ethel Berger Center, which works out as the staff is fantastic as they do the set up and they take it down as well, and it is a good location. They are constrained by their schedule and there are no staff services during the weekend. He added that he is willing to entertain switching it up, but as far as booking it out Tuesdays was always available. They also believe that keeping it consistent is important for not only the people that come but also the provider, first Tuesday of the month.

Council Member Rodriguez stated that everyone has different needs, but he would like to look at the data to see what services are missing. Mr. Matchett stated that they ask people what they came for and what they found most helpful in exit surveys. Most lacking is the Housing Authority. There are a lot of requests for the Housing Authority to answer questions about Section 8 and other programs that they provide. To-date, he has not been able to get them to attend. Other ones are affordable housing for seniors, immediate rental assistance. He added that they can provide information about

the program, but it would more helpful if it was coming from the County agency that provides that.

Council Member Rodriguez asked if Tuesday is a bad day for them or a reason as to why they are not participating. Mr. Matchett stated that he spoke with the agency and their view is that the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher waitlist is currently closed, and new applications are not being accepted, which would provide false hope. Even though it is closed, people would like to know what they need to do if the waitlist opens to get ready and get on it. It is 1,200 people long and it has gone down to 300/400 and it will reopen.

Council Member Johnson asked if there has been any thought based on the number of people that attend to maybe hold the event every other month because when it first started there was a lot of demand and then it tapered off in the summer and is now picking up. Mr. Matchett stated that the providers were asked, and the majority felt that every month was good for them because it was consistent, and two months is a long time to wait. Agencies have self-selected in and out. Maybe they cannot because they are volunteer based; therefore, they drop out for a month or two and then come back. It has worked out so that people can find out what is available to them.

Council Member Rodriguez asked about the number of meals served. Mr. Matchett stated that primarily the food is for people that are coming in for services. If there is extra food, which they have sometimes, the agencies receive a meal because they are seeing folks. However, they have been good about generally not taking a meal if it looks like they will be short.

Council Member Umphrey thanked Mr. Matchett and suggested a check box for homelessness to indicate their number of visits.

Council Member Landry thanked Mr. Matchett and stated that it is great to see the trends and what is going on. She added that it is great to have an area where all the agencies can get together because sometimes, people do not know what is out there and what they may need. She would like an option for people that are unable to attend and asked how people find out about the program. Mr. Matchett stated that people find out through word of mouth. The event is advertised on social media, flyers at the library and other places. Also, Corporal Borgstadt hands out flyers to the homeless. The flyer is also sent out to the agencies. There have also been articles in the newspaper and announcements on the radio.

Mayor Mueller asked Mr. McLachlan about putting information on the City's website so that people can have that when they cannot make it to the event on Tuesday. Mr. McLachlan stated that the Legacy Foundation has a resource directory to where people are referred to, but a link can be added to the Legacy Foundation on the City's website.

Council Member Benning asked about success stories. Mr. Matchett stated that success is having all the agencies being together. They are all in their own silo doing their own work, but a lot of what has happened, the collaboration, creation of cross pollination that leads to referrals. They are communicating and breaking down of the barriers, which was not even thought about when starting the event. This has paid a lot of dividends that is hard to measure. There have been people come back or emailed him updating their situation, i.e., as they go housing, was able to get information. It is little things. This is also about keeping people stable and in their house, assisting the seniors that are on a fixed income, dealing with inflation and rent increases. Folks that come to the event do not know what to expect, and then they come in and see all the different tables and they might not need a service that day, but the seed has been planted and they are spreading that information, which is hard to quantify and measure.

Mr. McLachlan stated that the Better Work Initiative was developed in concert with Better Bucks of Sierra Vista as another avenue to provide homeless assistance through positive means and encouragement that dove tails with the homeless service pilot service program, which was included in this year's State budget, \$10 million. This money was set aside for programs with an immediate labor component. The grant is being administered by the Arizona Department of Housing and only

local governments may apply, which would preclude Better Bucks of Sierra Vista from being a direct recipient. This is a dollar-for-dollar matching program. The City's responsibility will be to pick out the job sites, assignments, provide transportation, and supervision of work crews.

Corporal Borgstadt introduced Chris Hale, one of the Board Members of Better Bucks. He stated that their charter, after the end of the first year would analyze where they were at, and any funds over and above of what it takes to run the program would go back into the community in some way, either helping with the homeless through other agencies or nonprofits or coming up with another idea.

The Better Work Program named by Mr. McLachlan started out in the Better Bucks Board of Directors. They talked about the possibility of creating this program specifically for the homeless, where they would be provided day labor and be paid in cash, \$14 per hour. They would be provided with an opportunity to work in the community, get paid directly, and then also introduce them to services that they might not know of. The two requirements to be eligible for the program is to be homeless and they must be registered in Homeless Management Information System. This starts them moving towards or into the programs and introducing them to the services that are available. The City will provide the supervisor for the day, picking them up at the location, take them to the work site, and then take them back to the pickup location where they will be paid. The Better Work Program is not only working with the City, but also with the Good Neighbor Alliance as a pickup location as they are the central location for the homeless population, plus it will introduce them to where they need to go if they need services. The program will start out slow to see how it works. The program will be launched in January 2023, and it is hoped to have five to six workers initially to see how the program works, work out the kinks, and then grow from there.

Corporal Borgstadt stated that he had talked about the program idea to Mr. McLachlan and Ms. Yarbrough, which was great because not even a week later the grant came through, which fit perfectly with the Better Work Program's intentions. There is hope to add more work crews, more days, cleaning up City properties and State Trust Lands, but not the private sector.

Mayor Mueller asked about the requirements to be eligible to participate in the program. Corporal Borgstadt stated that to be eligible, the person must be homeless, and be registered in HMIS, government program that gets them registered so that they can get into services.

Mayor Mueller asked if there is a requirement for the individual to be independent of chemicals. Corporal Borgstadt stated that this was discussed by the Better Bucks Board as well as criminal history. They cannot be intoxicated and if they are or show signs of intoxication they will not be allowed to work on that day. However, they cannot be required to be completely sober or drug free.

Mayor Mueller stated that he hopes that if folks are identified with those problems that the agencies that deal with those issues be involved. Corporal Borgstadt stated that this is part of the HMIS because there are questions in the HMIS that address that and works on getting them the help they need.

Corporal Borgstadt shared his experience in working with the homeless and most of them have a criminal record, most are working or trying to work through the court system and cannot be successful because they do not have a job, they are unable to get a job because they do not have an address, they do not have an address because of various things; but it is hoped that this program starts them on the right process, on the right sequence of events to get them an income and then work towards housing and create a job history. There have been some local businesses that are interested in taking some of these folks over as they go through the program's process. The program does not allow for the individual to make more than \$599.99 per calendar year through the program. Otherwise, W9's must be sent out.

Agencies i.e., Arizona At Work on board and once they start getting close to this, they will start talking to the individuals about other options that available as well as other local businesses that are interested in possible hiring these individuals on a full time or full-time part-time position.

Mayor Mueller stated that if there is a person that is showing progress, then the program should do whatever it can, especially with local employers and the fact that they need to train folks on all those things that the City is currently short on.

Council Member Johnson stated that only 42 hours will be gained from each individual due to the \$600 cap. However, that seems to be a normal work week and noted that he is troubled by paying them cash because that just fuels the beast for many of these people and he wonders if they could be paid in Better Bucks. Corporal Borgstadt stated that this issue was brought up, but Better Bucks does not cover everything, i.e., rent, fines. The question has been brought up that if these folks are paid in cash, are they going to take that money and go buy drugs? It is possible, but if they had a full-time or part-time job and they were making a living week by week, that does not mean that they would take part of that money and spend it for that type of thing. The intention is to guide these people to changing their lifestyle, giving them that opportunity. Getting them a start and leading them towards services, whether it is addiction services or getting into housing, to the better path and moves them on so that they can become consistent productive citizens.

Council Member Rodriguez voiced his excitement for the program, and he knows that a lot of people are. There are a lot of issues with State Land with illegal dumping and this seems to be a great opportunity to clean up some properties. He added that he concurs with the Mayor's comments and perhaps a letter of reference can be provided to them so that they can take the next step towards another job. He asked if Better Bucks is an option versus cash, or perhaps both. Corporal Borgstadt stated that probably what will happen is that they will get paid their \$54 for that day and a couple books of Better Bucks as well.

Council Member Rodriguez asked if the supervision will be a rotating duty and/or extra hours. Mr. McLachlan stated that it will depend on the nature of the assignment. This is not envisioned to be a daily work program. They are looking at four-hour shifts potentially twice per month or three per month, depending on the demand. The assignments can involve cleaning out kennels at the Animal Shelter, maintenance work at the parks, abatement on State Land, and these are costs that the City is already incurring that can be applied towards the match requirement to leverage the State money to assist with the work that will be undertaken through the program to provide a community benefit. There are a lot of financial benefits as well as community benefits.

Corporal Borgstadt stated that the Animal Shelter has a real issue on the weekends of getting people to come in and clean kennels. In researching the program, it was learned that in Tucson, their women shelters have individuals clean kennels on the weekends. He added that he addressed this with Ms. Garcia, and she did not have an issue. He then addressed it with the Forgach House, and they are excited about the program as they have people that are ready to work. The intention is that on Saturdays and Sundays to start out with two workers per day from the Forgach House that would be picked up by someone at Animal Control, take them to the facility and work four hours, be taken back and then paid.

Council Member Umphrey stated that she likes this idea, and it may not be perfect in the way that everything must be executed, but it is vital piece of the holistic approach being taken. She added that recently she learned that those who suffer from addiction, when they have more pride, self-esteem, and confidence, it helps battle the addiction. These people are going to feel accomplished after doing some work, especially much needed around the City.

Council Member Benning agreed with Council Member Umphrey and stated that nothing can replace the feeling that one gets from earning their own keep. Once they do that, they will be encouraged to do other things. He explained that signing up with HMIS, which has certain criteria, enables them to get other services. This is a start, even if it is forty hours a month. This will show an organization that they are taking responsibilities. Forty hours is a lot when one is not working, and they do not know where their next meal is coming from, four hours and \$54 is a lot of money.

Council Member Landry thanked Corporal Borgstadt and Mr. Matchett and stated that a lot of her

C. Report on Recent Trips, Meetings and Future Meetings

Mayor Mueller shared that he had a meeting last week where Representative Adam Smith, Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, presented to the Huachuca 50. Discussions took place about what is going on for the future of Fort Huachuca.

In response to Mayor Mueller, Mr. Potucek stated that at the next work session, staff will present to Council on the boards and commissions.

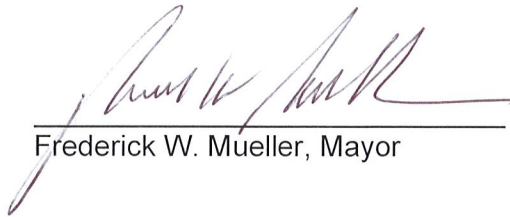
D. Future Discussion Items and Council Requests

Council Member Benning stated that after hearing from Better Bucks and the discussion about Better Work, he would like to bring back to the work sessions the 501C3 presentations as well as the business of the month. However, he would like to do a business highlight and not the business of the month on every Council Meeting.

Ms. Yarbrough stated that the November 10, 2022 meeting will be moved back to 4:00 p.m. to accommodate the Mayor's special event for the evening.

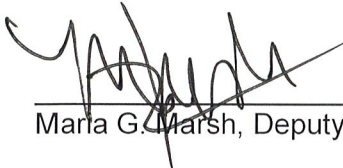
3. Adjourn

Mayor Mueller adjourned the October 25, 2022, work session of the Sierra Vista City Council at 4:18 p.m.



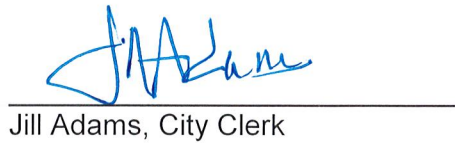
Frederick W. Mueller, Mayor

Minutes prepared by:



Maria G. Marsh, Deputy Clerk

Attest:



Jill Adams, City Clerk

questions were answered. She also stated that she likes knowing that there are employers out there who are ready to take people that have been through the program and to continue so that they can get the help that they need because it can be scary to put yourself out there; however, once they do, they can see that there is hope. Sometimes all they need is a boost and to know that there is a path in place to break the cycle.

Mayor Mueller talked about how to influence the employers to get them involved.

Corporal Borgstadt stated that he is currently receiving phone calls since the grant went out about people that could benefit from this. The word is getting out in the community, and they are excited as well.

Mayor Mueller stated that as the Council looks at next year's strategic plan, there may be a need to figure out how employers may be influenced to use the folks in the program. It may be incumbent on Council as leaders of the community to get that done.

Mr. Potucek stated that Council Member Johnson had asked about Better Bucks' financial situation. Corporal Borgstadt reported that the program launched October 2021. A full year has been run and based on the first year, the total amount of purchases made in the local retailers is \$14,056, and \$8,942 Better Bucks were used. Customers paid over and above what they used for Better Bucks, \$4,597. Better Bucks paid out \$10,371 to local merchants based on the Better Bucks that were used. Year to date for 2022, Better Bucks is over \$10,000 and going to surpass the first-year mark.

Better Bucks as a whole, there is a little over \$27,000 in the bank account, which is why they can move forward with the Better Work Program. Some of those funds will be used to help facilitate the Better Work Program. He added that the bus passes are amazing, and people love them. For the first year, 889 buss passes were used. A lot of times when the booklets are turned in, the bus passes are still in the booklet; therefore, Better Bucks takes those passes and hands them out to the service agencies that are listed in the book, i.e., Forgach House, Good Neighbor Alliance, Lori's Place, the Warrior Healing Center. They then hand those out to folks that use them to go to a job, or an appointment. Better Bucks is also working with the Care Court that recently started up and people that participate, if they are meeting their requirement and show up, they are given Better Bucks as a reward for doing this and they get extra bus passes so that they can make their appointments and court dates.

Better Bucks works with Good Will as they participate in the program and folks can use Better Bucks at Good Will, and they have reported that their shoplifting has been reduced by almost 90 percent. They are also provided booklets and they hand them out for folks that need them.

Council Member Umphrey asked if one Better Buck at Goodwill provides one item. Corporal Borgstadt stated that he does not know.

Council Member Rodriguez asked if there is an expiration date, and if so, is there leniency by the merchants. Corporal Borgstadt stated that they are supposed to say no. There is also a limit as to how many may be used at one time, and they are not for alcohol or tobacco. If someone uses 30 and they are only allowed to use 20, the merchant will not be penalized. However, the merchant is given a warning. There have been only a couple of receipts that have been denied due to alcohol being a part of the purchase. Better Bucks wants to have a good relationship with the merchants and if there is an expired one, they will be accepted but they will be warned.

Mayor Mueller noted that he had some booklets that were about to expire; therefore, he went to the Salvation Army, who gives them out on a regular basis, so that they could hand them out before they expired.

Council Member Rodriguez stated that he appreciates the police officers giving people a second chance to break the cycle. He added that not every City does this, and he is glad that Sierra Vista is doing it and he looks forward to more success stories.