

Sierra Vista City Council  
Meeting Minutes  
[June 10, 2021](#)

Mayor Mueller called the June 10, 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 (virtual)  
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  
David Felix, Chief Finance Officer  
Tony Boone, Economic Development Manager  
Nathan J. Williams, City Attorney  
Judy Hector, Communications and Marketing Manager

Invocation – Pastor Becky Preiss, Hope and Healing Christian Church, conducted the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance – Mayor Pro Tem Gray led the Pledge of Allegiance.

[Item 1](#) Acceptance of the Agenda

Council Member Umphrey moved that the agenda for the Regular City Council Meeting of June 10, 2021, be approved. Mayor Pro Tem Gray 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 next week begins Council's budget work sessions that starts on Monday, June 14, 2021, at 3:00 p.m. in Council Chambers for the purpose of going over the budget with an overall presentation so that Council may ask questions, and then, if necessary, on June 15 and 16, 2021 there are budget work session scheduled also for 3:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. The regularly City Council Work Session is scheduled at 3:00 p.m. on June 22, 2021, in Council Chambers. He reported that the rebid on North Garden Ave/Fry Boulevard Improvements Phase I Project was posted on May 26, 2021, that is due on Monday, June 14, 2021, and hopefully by the time that Council meets there will be news about it. The new lighted airport entrance sign proposals were opened on June 9, 2021, and High Desert Signs was the successful vendor at \$32,000 that was under budget. The JPA Board for SEACOM met during the morning for the purpose of interviews for the Executive

Director's position and voted to begin the contract negotiations with the successful applicant. Once those negotiations are complete and a contract is signed, he will be able to announce the new Executive Director.

Mayor Mueller stated that there is a new council person that is coming on board and there are budget work sessions scheduled for next week, who has not been privy to all the other discussions. He added that he hopes that staff has a plan to make sure that before the final vote is taken by Council, that the new council person is up to speed as much as possible on the budget.

Council Member Umphrey asked when the airport sign would be installed. Mr. Boone stated that the bid came in, and Ms. Downing is making a contract for it, and then there would be a follow-up meeting to confirm the design and timeline.

Council Member Umphrey asked if Council could view the design. Mr. Boone stated that he included information in the Executive Report, but he can provide it to her.

#### Item 2 Consent Agenda

[Item 2.1](#) Approval of the Special City Council Meeting Minutes of May 27, 2021

[Item 2.2](#) Approval of the Regular City Council Meeting Minutes of May 27, 2021

Council Member Benning moved that the Consent Agenda consisting of the Special City Council Meeting Minutes of May 27, 2021, and Regular City Council Meeting Minutes of May 27, 2021, be approved. Council Member Umphrey 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.

#### New Business

[Item 3](#) Resolution 2021-041, Authorization to proceed with Intergovernmental Agreement between the City of Sierra Vista, the Cochise County Sheriff's Office, and the Cochise County Community College District

Council Member Johnson moved that Resolution 2021-041, Intergovernmental Agreement between the City of Sierra Vista, the Cochise County Sheriff's Office, and the Cochise County Community College District to operate the Southeastern Arizona Law Enforcement Training Academy on the Cochise College – Douglas Campus, be approved. Council Member Benning seconded the motion.

Police Chief Thrasher stated that the resolution before Council is for authorization to proceed with the intergovernmental agreement to operate the academy down at the Cochise County Campus. This is a renewal of the agreement that was signed the last couple of years. This authorizes the Sierra Vista Police Department to provide the recruit training officer at the academy and to receive payment up to \$11,800 in overtime from the College for that officer's time while they are serving at the academy as well as using the defensive tactics room and the airport for driver's training.

The motion unanimously carried, 6/0. Mayor Mueller, Mayor Pro Tem Gray and Council Members Benning, Landry, Johnson, and Umphrey voting in favor.

[Item 4](#) Resolution 2021-042, Annual Equipment Financing and Declaring an Emergency

Council Member Umphrey moved that Resolution 2021-042, Annual Equipment Financing and Declaring an Emergency, be approved. Mayor Pro Tem Gray seconded the motion.

Mr. Felix stated that this is the annual equipment financing that is usually done during this time of the year. This year the city is only financing two refuse trucks more so for the cash flow situation in the Refuse Fund. Council passed a rate increase last year and it is still working its way through, but this way the City can keep some cash in the fund and not have the fund go cash negative. The city received one bid; however, the bid was 1.32 percent, a phenomenal rate, that is even lower than the rate of inflation. It is awarded to Bankfunding LLC, and it is a bank qualified lease for their purposes, a financial advantage to them, an IRS code that allows banks to give loans to cities and municipalities for small lenders and gives them tax benefits as well. The emergency clause is necessary because the city cannot get a 30-day interest rate lock and normally, a resolution takes 30-days to go into effect. This way it can go into effect immediately and staff can start on the paperwork.

The motion unanimously carried, 6/0. Mayor Mueller, Mayor Pro Tem Gray and Council Members Benning, Landry, Johnson, and Umphrey voting in favor.

[Item 5](#) Resolution 2021-043, Accepting the Resignation of Patricia M. Olson, with regret, and Appointment of Daniel Coxworth to the Planning and Zoning Commission, said term to expire December 31, 2021

Mayor Pro Tem Gray moved that Resolution 2021-043, accepting the resignation of Patricia M. Olson, with regret, and appointing Daniel Coxworth to the Planning and Zoning Commission, said term to expire December 31, 2021, be approved. Council Member Umphrey seconded the motion.

Mayor Pro Tem Gray stated that Ms. Olson had to resign from the Planning and Zoning Commission earlier this year due to personal reasons. The city went out and advertised for applications and Mr. Coxworth applied and is very experienced to be on the Planning and Zoning Commission. Therefore, she is happy to recommend him for appointment.

The motion unanimously carried, 6/0. Mayor Mueller, Mayor Pro Tem Gray and Council Members Benning, Landry, Johnson, and Umphrey voting in favor.

[Item 6](#) Resolution 2021-044, Appointment of Mark A. Rodriguez to the City Council, said term to expire December 31, 2022

Council Member Johnson moved that Resolution 2021-044, appointment of Mark A. Rodriguez to the City Council, said term to expire December 31, 2022, be approved. Council Member Benning seconded the motion.

Council Member Umphrey thanked everyone who submitted applications. Mayor Mueller stated that there were several folks that applied, who are very good folks. Council held four solid interviews – a tough competition. Council had to reach a consensus before putting a name forward, and the consensus was Mr. Rodriguez. Mayor Mueller congratulated Mr. Rodriguez.

The motion unanimously carried, 6/0. Mayor Mueller, Mayor Pro Tem Gray and Council Members Benning, Landry, Johnson, and Umphrey voting in favor.

Call to the Public – There was no response.

#### Comments and Requests of the Council

Council Member Landry congratulated Mr. Rodriguez and stated that she looks forward to working with him on Council. She also gave a shout out to everyone who came together and made the Summit Challenge a success, everybody that worked hard before and after the event. She stated that she participated in the event and noted that all the trails were well marked, and there were people that went up the day before and spent the night to make sure that all participants were taken care of. The people that gave out the stamps and stickers had to hike and be present all day long. She further stated that she appreciates everything that was done, and she looks forward to next year's event. Lastly, she thanked everyone who made it possible for her to be able to participate in the Council Meeting and to be able to join from afar.

Mayor Mueller voiced his appreciation for the extra effort made by Council Member Landry in participating because everyone knows from experience that sometimes it can be very difficult when there is an ailment.

Council Member Umphrey congratulated and welcomed Mark Rodriguez, thanked all the people who applied and noted that Council was in a very fortunate position, but it was not easy because there were so many good applicants. She stated that she hopes to see all of them involved in some way in the future. She thanked Dan Coxworth for joining the Planning and Zoning Commission, mentioned that last Saturday, June 5, 2021, the city had the honor of hosting a ceremony recognizing Nacho Valenzuela's work to preserve and restore the Fry Cemetery. She noted that Representative Kirkpatrick was present and presented him with a certificate of congressional recognition. She added that Elizabeth Wrozek, new curator for the museum, along with her staff did a great job. Lastly, she voiced her gratitude to Council Member Landry for being present during the interviews because she knows that it was not easy, but she greatly appreciates all the extra effort she put forth, and she hopes to see her soon.

Council Member Benning welcomed Father Greg and noted that it is always a pleasure and blessing when he joins the Council Meetings, stated that it is great that Council Member Landry overcame surgery, and he looks forward to her coming back. He added that the selection process was fun to say the least, there were amazing applicants, all 22, from the beginning, narrowing it down, and then selecting the final Council Member. It was a good process, and he thinks that everyone came together and talked freely and shared what was on their mind, and he appreciates the process. Finally, he welcomed Council Member Mark Rodriguez, noted that he thinks that he will do a good job finishing out the term, looks forward to him running again, and he hopes that for everyone else, he hopes that everyone stays involved with the City.

Council Member Johnson welcomed Mark Rodriguez to City Council and stated that Council looks forward to working with him. He announced that Flag Day is on Monday, June 14, 2021; however, the flag ceremony will take place at the Elks Club Ramada on Sunday, June 13, 2021, at 2:00 p.m., where the scouts are involved, followed by a barbeque that is free to all veterans.

Mayor Pro Tem Gray welcomed Mr. Rodriguez and stated that she looks forward to working with him. She also thanked him for his willingness to take the crazy journey.

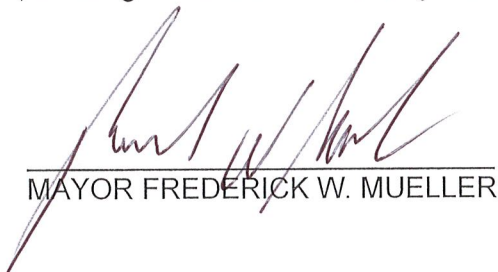
Mayor Mueller reported on a letter from the chief of the local Forest Service, where she stated that they are suspending any use of firearms within the forest on the east side of the Huachuca Mountains due to the dryness as they are afraid that even a ricochet bullet with a spark could set things off. He added that from his experience, she is probably right because in looking at the Huachuca Mountains, and coming down about an eighth of the altitude there is some yellowing and brown patches and that is where the Aspen Fire was about 35, 40 years ago. The aspens are already in distress, high up on the mountain, which is highly unusual. This tells him that as a civic leader, he must remind everyone not to throw things out like a cigarette, trash, or anything else, and when pulling a car off the road, they need to be parked so that the catalytic convertor does not catch the grass, and to mind all the normal, dry fire season stuff that would be done later in the year. Everyone needs to be aware of this, and if hiking/camping in the mountains, everyone needs to be on guard against fire. He noted that everyone remembers the Monument Fire and what everyone went through, and no one wants this to reoccur in the community.

Mayor Mueller announced that the Salvation Army put out a statement that they are accepting donations for the Telegraph Fire, a big fire in north central Arizona that has taken a few acres and is not yet under control. He added that in having gone through the Monument Fire, everyone knows that the Salvation Army came in and fed people for a couple of weeks. They need funds to be able to continue to do that up in that area as well. He encouraged people to donate to the Salvation Army so that they can spend it on food and other things that the folks may need. Lastly, he stated that there has been an increase on calls about suspicious vehicles. In the past there were people coming in with vehicles and parking them for people from the south, who would bring in drugs, to immediately go to Phoenix. He asked people that if they see a vehicle that is not usually parked in an area primarily between the city and the mountains, or the city and the area to the south, to call the Sierra Vista Police Department if it is in town, or the Sheriff's Department. He asked people not to stop and check it out because there could be someone hiding out with weapons, etc. because it has been known in the past and it is currently happening, that the cartels do in fact contact people in the Greater Phoenix area and have them drive the vehicles with a load to Phoenix. Sierra Vista has been lucky with the border crisis on impacts to the community, but the community does not want to allow criminal elements to abuse the good people that are coming across to convey drugs and other contraband into the State.

In closing, Mayor Mueller announced that on Monday, June 14, 2021, Vinny's Pizza is going to offer 25 percent of their proceeds to the fireworks for the July 4, 2021 celebration. This is a great community place that has been doing this through the years as well as other charities, high school events, Tip a Cop, etc.

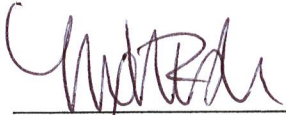
Adjournment

Mayor Mueller adjourned the June 10, 2021, meeting of the Sierra Vista City Council at 5:25 p.m.



MAYOR FREDERICK W. MUELLER

MINUTES PREPARED BY:



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Maria G. Marsh, Deputy Clerk

ATTEST:



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Jill Adams, City Clerk