

City of Rio Communities Council Minutes
Regular Business Meeting
September 11, 2018

Call to Order

- Mayor Gwinn called to order the city council regular business meeting at 6:05 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

- Bobby Caldwell led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

- Present: Mayor Gwinn, Councilors; Bill Brown, Peggy Gutjahr, Arturo Sais and Joshua Ramsell.
Present: City Manager Bob Skerry, Finance Officer/Treasurer Celina Benavidez, Deputy Clerk Pam Johnson, P&Z member Jim Winters and Fire Chief LE Rubin.
- Mayor Gwinn asked for a moment of silence to remember what this day is (9/11).

Approval of Agenda

- Councilor Gutjahr moved to approve the agenda as written. The motion was second by Councilor Brown. With a 4-0 vote the agenda for the regular business meeting was approved as presented.

Approval of Workshop Minutes

- Councilor Sais moved to approve the workshop minutes of the July 24, 2018 and August 14, 2018. The motion was second by Councilor Ramsell. With a 4-0 vote the workshop minutes of July 24 and August 14, 2018 were approved as written.

Approval of City Council Minutes

- Councilor Brown moved for the approval of City Council minutes of July 10, and July 24 of 2018. The motion was second by Councilor Gutjahr. With a 4-0 vote the City Council regular business meeting of July 10 and July 24, 2018 were approved as written.

Approval of Special City Council minutes

- Councilor Gutjahr moved to approve the Special City Council minutes of July 31, 2018. The motion was second by Councilor Brown. With a 4-0 vote the minutes for the City Council Special Business meeting was approved as written.

Public Hearing

- Mayor Gwinn asked for a motion to go into the public hearing by roll call vote to cover 2018-chapter 6 subdivision.
- **Motion and roll call vote to recess Regular Business Meeting session and to go into Public Hearing:**
 - Councilor Gutjahr made a motion with a roll call vote to recess the regular business meeting and go into public hearing for Ordinance 2018- Chapter 6 subdivision. The motion was second by Councilor Sais. Vote: Councilor Ramsell=yes; Councilor Brown=yes; Councilor Gutjahr=yes and Councilor Sais=yes. With a 4-0 vote Council recessed the regular business meeting session and went into a public hear at 6:12 pm.
 - **Public Hearing Ordinance 2018-__ Chapter 6 Subdivision**
 - Jim Winters went over the amendments to subdivision ordinance. He stated the original ordinance was passed four years ago and two years ago the State legislature passed new set of rules. He then said these rules are on how we're supposed to post meetings for P&Z and Council any time there is a zoning change.
 - Jim Winters said basically what we did was since we had to change a lot of places changed the entire ordinance to comply. Previously it was only required to post

notification 300 feet and now it is required to post notification at 100 feet and that being the major change to the new ordinance. Old version will still be in our records so if anyone legally wants to go back and look at it they can.

- Mayor Gwinn said so they can still reference 2015-39 which is the old version.
- Mayor Gwinn asked if Council had any questions.
- Mayor Gwinn asked for a motion to go back into the regular business meeting.
- **Motion and roll call vote to go back into Regular Business Meeting Session**
 - Councilor Sais moved to go back into regular business meeting at this point by roll call vote. The motion was second by Councilor Ramsell. Vote: Councilor Brown-yes; Councilor Gutjahr-yes; Councilor Sais-yes and Councilor Ramsell-yes. With a 4-0 vote the regular business meeting was back into session at 6:15 pm.

City Manager Report

- Manager Skerry said a job offer went out for a code enforcer and he will be available the first of November. He then said the process of running the background and drug tests and if they come back ok the offer stands.
- Manager Skerry said the potholes are pretty much complete but there may be more needed, and we are in the process of getting someone to be on call when we need repairs. He then said he has an appointment on Thursday with the striping people that will be completing Goodman, Frederico which are the ones that have been chip and sealed it should be a total of six that will be striped.
- Manager Skerry said we have received back the NMDOT co-op grant and Celina has posted the RFP for this work and then said we hope to beat the cold weather because the chip and seal has to be done in warmer weather.
- Manager Skerry said he is working on further franchise ordinances, one for Comcast and one for Plateau. He then said we cannot have the tax on internet, but we can for television. He explained if we have franchise fee it makes it easier to negotiate for trunk lines and fiber optics and further said we already have fiber optics going to La Merced and fire station with Plateau. There is a proprietary fiber optic line going down Hwy 47 from Clovis to Los Lunas for Facebook that may be able to tap into. He further explained that franchise agreements give the company permission to use our alleys and rights-of-way.
- Manager Skerry said we received the LEPF funds we get each year and last year the funds paid for digital speed signs and then explained what was purchased in previous years.

Public Comment

- Alan Zach, Horizon Vista; said he is new to the City only been here a couple of months and he noticed that on his street there is no street lights or security. He then said there was a suspicious car parked at first with the lights on, he then observed that they turned off their lights and continued to stay parked and sat in the car, he then called a neighbor to be prepared, nothing happened but the car did drive off with the lights off. He further said there is the need for street lights for security. He then said another concern is a piece of property that was covered with weeds they took it upon themselves to spray the weeds. Once again he said the two issues he has is security and appearance.
- Mayor Gwinn said we are looking into street lights, we do have money in the budget for this issue and looking at solar lighting. He further said we have designated some lights in other areas and this corner is not on the list at this time, but as we moved forward we'll expand the list.

- Manager Skerry said we have a provider that is certified through CES and they are a State bid process that we will go through them regarding this bid process.
- Sandra Deno, Lee Elder Ct; she said her big concern is the police department and the crime running ramped such as break-ins on a daily basis and trashing of cars in broad daylight. What is the City's plan and how long do they have to live like this. Another issue is the Fire department, it seems to be functioning now, instead of paying other people why would we pay for a police force or at least some people.
- Mayor Gwinn said we will cover most of that further into the agenda.
- Marilyn Weiland, Gorman; said she is concerned about weeds and trash and explained that between Horner and old park there were five liquor bottles scattered on road. She then said regarding the weeds, she thinks we should contract with someone to mow the main roads, this looks bad and please consider.
- Angie Madrid, Horizon Vista; said she is concerned about safety and security, when she lived in Bosque Farms they have volunteers drive around neighborhoods and their presence made big difference, since we can't have police officer at this time this would help. Another safety concern is in the past week things are happening on the old golf course, there was a person/man coming off of Maddox shooting a rifle with a scope and explained a couple confronted this person and told the individual he needs to stop the shooting. Calls were made to the sheriff's department and if they responded it is all gone and over with. She then said a couple of days ago a person came out of the drug house across the street, jumped the gate on her property and that went to the old golf course, went down Horizon Vista and Western and was witnessed looking in the back of every single yard.
- Mayor Gwinn asked if the shooting was a one-time thing or is it frequent.
- Angie Madrid said the shooting started a couple of weeks now and usually happens late at night.
- Mayor Gwinn said he will call Cole and ask him to patrol the area.
- Frank Stasi, Rio Communities; said he has two points regarding the fire house, it's fine the way it is and we don't need the City Manager to manage the fire house and we do need four EMT's, but leave them alone there is nothing wrong with the system. He then said this Governing Body was divided about going to an administrator and now they are divided about the Fire Department and Council is trying to create problems. Second point is the code enforcer, there is no way this Governing Body should have waited a year to hire. You should have given the City Manager a deadline and if he wasn't able to do that get someone else. He further said there are numerous drug houses around the community and said there was a meeting at his building where 37 people showed up and they all talked about security issues.
- Jody Skelton, Rio Communities; said she agreed with Frank and would be one of those people to volunteer to drive around to help the people, community looks horrible and what is council going to do to clean it up. She then said the entrance into the City, the abandoned building, the wall, how long does it take to get a letter from their insurance company to repair it. She further said it is a violation of the open meetings council not allowing the public to see the job descriptions. She then said the public wants 4 EMT fire fighters not a Chief and leave the administration to the fire department and hire EMT's. She also said since Mr. Bob Skerry cannot hire a code enforcer in a year, she is asking for the city manager's resignation immediately, she is sick and tired of all this, she comes to meetings and no one seems to listen.
- Jo Stasi, Rio Communities; said when trying to sell a home in Rio Communities it is near impossible when the City looks like this, the purple building is a disgusting on the corner of Horner. She then said get a car, mark it security and train some volunteers to drive around the community, the lack of a code enforcer has increased crime at least we had presence before. She

then said she has talked to other Cities leaders and they have said it can be done to have volunteer participation. She further said when you had 2 Councilors vote a City Manager form of government, when Mr. Skerry had not fulfilled some of his job duties, why would you expand his wage range and give him a raise and please do not make the same mistake with the fire department, leave it alone.

- Ross Harms, Brown Dr.; said he received some information at P&Z last week and was told that basically the code enforcer can do very little, code enforcer can give notification if so wants to, if not just talks to you, and if a letter gets sent to resident and they don't want to respond they don't have to. He then said he was informed that the court doesn't care about weeds and gives them a slap on the wrist and then said it sounds like the code enforcer is useless and no action comes out of the Courts because the Court and police have more important things to do. He then said hiring of a code enforcer may be useless and not worth the pay. He further said what Council and the City Manager wants residents to do is self-police our neighborhoods.
- Misty Lemon, El Mundo; she said when first moved here she noticed mail boxes broken into and now on Facebook she has had over 85 people sending e-mails about cars disappearing, windows broken, and a little girl died under bridge where was the Valencia County police. Do we not pay for the salary of that one officer and why was he not at that scene? Has anyone heard anything regarding this incident.
- Ron Gentry, lives in the area, not in the city and have several businesses and an apartment complex; said he has had to spend more money on security because of plague of crime and drugs. He had hoped one officer would make a difference. He then said the Fire Department is very efficient and has run well for 30 years and stands in support to leave it alone, we do need paid EMT's. He said he hasn't seen the Rio Communities police officer in years. A lot of that areas goes to code enforcer, getting the city cleaned up, and we need a City Government that runs well. He then said regarding the entry wall that was damaged, the City should have enough money and fix it up for the individuals that privately own this property instead of them having to wait for the insurance company to fix it.
- Steve Gonzales, Captain Rio Grande Estates Fire Department; said he is here to address being against the need for a new fire chief, they do have shortfalls in response and need fire fighter EMT's that can be on call seven days a week and 12-hour shifts and can fill in the differences with volunteers. They have plenty opportunity for training and feel they are being pushed away and shunned by this Council and especially by a City Manager and want the support of the Council to grow and provide the services to the City, rebuild and restructure and prove to Council their direction is not needed at this point.
- Robert Morgan, Rio Grande Estates Fire Department; said he reinforces what the Captain said and that RGEFD is doing a good job, all officers have come together to make the station better. He then said they need volunteers and fire/ems crew on board. The Command staff is pulling over 12 hours and need more reinforcements. There have been little changes, some members took leave of absence and they are getting their volunteer numbers back up again.
- Ken Sandlin, Rio Communities; said listening to this crowd and same recurring issues after six years; no public safety, what is number one concerns for the residents, without public safety we have nothing, you can't attract businesses, we have one law enforcement officer but can't be found and he may leave area when the County is short officers. We've asked and get no answers and then said we have received grants for city hall, fixing roads and might put up lights but citizens still afraid to leave their houses. He then asked why we can't get more law enforcement.
- Mayor Gwinn explained the funding sources, the processing they have to go through and making sure the funding is recurring, he then stated that we did raise GRT taxes to fund the one officer.

He further explained that we have patterned ourselves after other communities that have gone through growing pains, he then said we can't rely totally on GRT to pay for more law enforcement. He then said Council is working and looking at a way to bring in a second officer.

- Mr. Sandlin said he applauds them for looking at it, but they need action and then said we have a City Manager making 65k a year, lets hire a couple of police officers. He said at the beginning of incorporation they had a committee to set up law enforcement, the residents coming to City Council have requested law enforcement, they have signed petitions for more law enforcement and now they demand law enforcement. This is our town also, he won't let his grandchildren come visit him because of the crime and how many children will it take to be killed before something will happen. The then asked what it is going to take to make the community safe, does he have to go to the media, attorney general office and ask for a vote of no confidence and a recall vote because his wife's life is more valuable then politics if that is what needs to happen he will make that happen.
 - Mayor Gwinn called for a recess due to derogatory comments and public comments getting out of control.
- Candace Espinosa, Rio Grande Estates Fire Department; said they need EMT/fire fighters, we do have mutual aid but don't know where they'll come from and we'll have delayed responses. It is hard for volunteers with full time jobs and can't be there 24/7 to answer calls and would be nice to have a full-time staff to answer those calls they cannot. There were 120 calls and were only able to answer 42 because of short staff. She then said the Chief and Captain are getting the budgeting done and paperwork and everything is complete, and we don't need someone else to do that but do need more personnel to go out and help our community.
- Andrew Tabet, Lieutenant Rio Grande Estates Fire Department; said he believes as a command staff they have moved forward in a positive way and would like to see it continue. He then said we need coverage and help with EMT's and fire fighters. He further said the Chief and Captain are doing their job and at the company level they are doing the best they can and the EMT's and fire fighters come into play for the community and the City.
- Ron Gentry said he has Christmas ornaments that he would like to donate to the City and explained what he will be giving to the City.

Economic Development

- Jim Winters said Kuan Tikun asked him to give the EDC report. He said EDC is working on a business brochure that would include a map of the business within the area. This will be handed to new businesses showing what we have in the area. He then said we need new members on EDC and suggested to talk to the Mayor if you are interested. They are also working on a professional logo to put on the brochure for businesses. He then said the Mission Graduate needs and employee to help staff the area and then said there are over 100 openings in industrial park now, 400 working there now and we need to improve education and they (the Mission Graduate) is looking for donations for a part-time administrator. EDC is still working on 501c3 and explained the City hindered in putting tax payers City funds into private business. He then explained the businesses in the industrial park Keter, Aristech and Clariant. He further explained that EDC has talked with other business about coming into the City but said there is a lack of existing warehouse or building space. He then explained Oasis is moving along working with various code agencies, also working with the restaurant and laundry.

Planning and Zoning

- P&Z Member Jim Winters said P&Z is very active re-doing subdivision regulations, especially upgrading to bring into compliance with the State. They have also moved on to zoning regs now

and will make same changes on how to notify residents of meetings. They will also look at setbacks, facing large demand for subdivisions, more roof tops will bring business and then said one of the subdivisions is 64 lots and another is 20 lots initially but up to 1200 lots if they do well.

Rio Grande Estates Fire Department

- RGEFD Fire Chief LE Rubin; gave the report for the month of August, 40 calls answered, 2 at Tierra Grande and 38 at local station. He then said they have had 5 people at Tierra Grande that took leave of absence and 2 may not be back. They need paid EMT's to answer calls, they call number has not changed still about 125 calls a month. Over the last couple of years, they have managed to answer 80-100 of those 125 calls but recently they missed the mark and was only able to answer 40 calls. There is rumors that we don't answer mutual aid calls and said Chief Culp the Valencia County fire chief explained to him that the calls which were in the mutual aid calls, which were in the City and in the unincorporated area. He further explained that we are not capable of answering all the calls, and even Chief Culp with a paid staff have not been able to answer all calls. He then said there are further rumors that Valencia County Fire Department and RGEFD are butting heads and not getting along and the county wants to take over RGEFD.
- Chief Brian Culp said he was asked by Chief Rubin and Mayor Gwinn to express and enlighten the Councilors and who maybe concerned about things going on in the County and within the Municipality. He said they do have a vested interested in the success of RGEFD because it encompasses a large area of unincorporated areas of the county. When RFEFGD was separated from the County and the City of Rio Communities became its fiscal agent the City took on not only the boundaries of the City but also the large amount of unincorporated area. Over his administration he has being helping with whatever they can and need to work together. He then said changing from a full volunteer to a combination department there is a lot of dynamics go along with that and any questions Council may have, feel free to asks. He said some problems Valencia County had when they changed career staff and volunteers when they first introduce the Career staff it was hard to manage a combined department and hard to keep people motivated and said Valencia County is still having issues in these areas. Valencia County wishes to have an open-door policy with municipalities. He then said Rio Communities area is one of the busiest districts and they need support from Council and Residents to help the fire department become successful. He then said definite barriers have been built.
- Councilor Gutjahr said she appreciates Chief Culp being here tonight and for the information.
- Chief Rubin thanked all that spoke for fire department. He then said there is a handicap issue with access into the building, because of being under construction but this needs to address for the meetings. He then said the relationship with Valencia County Fire and RGEFD is good. He then said the fund drive letters will be out this week in an envelope and said one place says Belen and everything else says Rio Communities. The truck repaired is back in service after a considerable cost and another one is sent to Summit for an estimate on repairs. The building renovations is coming along, at a snail's pace, but coming along and then explained the hood got put in this week and the suppression system is not finished and the electrical work still needs to be completed, and the walls are still in need of being painted. He then addressed Mr. Stasi and said that he had arranged for the painting work to be done at no expense to the fire department. He then said regarding admin staff an issue has come up to him several time and then said this is Captain Steven Gonzales, he is not Chief Gonzales, not in charge of the Fire Department and then said he represents himself as Captain. Progress in the last 60 days by this administrative staff has done more than what was done in the last year. He then asked for time to let these people do what needs to be done.

- Mayor Gwinn asked if residents will have smoke detectors to pick up and will Fire department be testing smoke alarms.
- Chief Rubin explained they purchased 125 and will be available soon and hopes to do an open house at the fire station during fire prevention week to be able to pass them out then as well. He then addressed nepotism on the documents that Council had provided from the NMML; exceptions stated shall not apply to people making less than \$600.00 a year in wages and then explained that according to FLSA nominal fees are not wages and then explained not everyone gets nominal fees and then said if they were paid by the hour that would make them an employee.
- Frank Stasi said that ACE hardware donated the paint for the fire department.

Ordinance 2018-__ Chapter 6 Subdivision

- Mayor Gwinn asked if there were any further questions from Council for P&Z.
- Councilor Gutjahr moved to approve Ordinance 2018-64 Chapter 6 Subdivision. The motion was second by Councilor Sais. Vote: Councilor Ramsell-yes; Councilor Brown-yes; Councilor Sais-yes and Councilor Gutjahr-yes. With a 4-0 vote Ordinance 2018-64 Chapter 6 Subdivision was passed, approved, adopted and signed.

Resignation of EDC Member

- Mayor Gwinn explained Jim Winters has resigned from EDC and asked Council to accept his resignation.
- Councilor Gutjahr moved to accept resignation of Jim Winters from EDC. The motion was second by Councilor Ramsell. Vote: Councilor Sais-yes; Councilor Ramsell-yes; Councilor Gutjahr-yes and Councilor Brown-yes. With a 4-0 vote the resignation of Jim Winters from the Economic Development Commission was accepted.

Accounts Payable

- Finance Officer/Treasure Benavidez made report on accounts payable and read all bills that need to be paid.

Card Service Center	\$ 1,787.77	USPS (newsletter mailers)	\$ 578.88
PNM	\$ 883.90	PNM	\$ 454.79
Century Link	\$ 203.08	NM Gas Co.	\$ 27.45
Court Automation Fee	\$ 72.00	NM Judicial Education	\$ 36.00
Elizabeth Adair (Court Clerk)	\$ 483.45	Century Link	\$ 93.85
AC Disposal	\$ 51.00	NM Water Service Company	\$ 126.09
Comcast	\$ 288.78	Sharp	\$ 213.49
Bob Skerry (travel)	\$ 190.06	AC Disposal	\$ 720.00
Sandy Schauer (newsletter)	\$ 2,396.41	Gusto (payroll processing)	\$ 75.00
CES (bldg. structure)	\$ 11,650.50	CES (bldg. structure)	\$ 29,433.90
CES (bldg. structure)	\$ 4,611.66	Robles, Rael, Anaya (attorney)	\$ 841.94
Gusto	\$ 6,222.92	Gusto	\$ 2,220.62
Gusto	\$ 2,221.66	Gusto	\$ 6,215.95

- Councilor Gutjahr explained to audience that everything listed under Cooperative Education Services is for the building

- Councilor Sais moved to approve the bills on as presented. The motion was second by Councilor Ramsell. Vote: Councilor Gutjahr-yes; Councilor Brown-yes; Councilor Sais-yes and Councilor Ramsell-yes. With a 4-0 roll vote accounts payable was approved for payment.

Resolution 2018-__ ICIP

- Manager Skerry explained that the ICIP has already been submitted on line, the dead line was September 4, however it needed a resolution in order to have a hard copy signed by the Governing Body. He then read Resolution 2018 – ICIP.
- Councilor Ramsell moved to approve Resolution 2018-138 ICIP. The motion was second by Councilor Gutjahr. Vote: Councilor Sais-yes; Councilor Brown-yes; Councilor Gutjahr-yes and Councilor Ramsell-yes. With a 4-0 vote Resolution 2018-138 ICIP was passed, approved, adopted and signed.

Fire Department Personnel

- Mayor Gwinn said they have had some discussion pertaining to the Captain and some issues that had come up.
- Councilor Gutjahr said she was one that had spoken up with concerns and the reason is because wanted to be clear that the fire department has always been the face and one of the stars of the community. She then said she wanted to be clear about expectations about personnel and said has talked to several people at the fire department regarding this situation and it has been enlightening. She also said it has been helpful to talk to current and past members of the fire department and she is pleased to see a lot of activity going on when she has passed by the fire department. She then said on her point of view she was comfortable with the conversations they had this morning and she has an open-door policy and have had calls from the fire department and hopes as we move on issues that it's clear we're working together through transitions.
- Councilor Sais said he has also spoke with fire department people and heard different opinions and then said what we hear around the community are rumors, like one of the things that was brought up is if Council does not comply the fire department is going back to the County.
- Chief Rubin said that rumor has come up for years when other Chiefs where at the fire station that the Fire Department will go back to the County and then said Chief Culp had stated the County has no plans on taking over the fire department.
- Mayor Gwinn said he had a couple of issues during the workshop and it was covered with Captain Gonzales, then explained one of resident saw Captain Gonzales using a cell phone while driving one of the fire department trucks and hope firemen will be role models and obey the law and thinks this issue is resolved.

Job Description Chief EMS/Fire Rescue Officer and Assistant Chief EMS/Fire Rescue Officer

- Mayor Gwinn said regarding the job descriptions the focus is on EMS and Fire Rescue and this would have a chief. He then said he wanted to find out how funds are collected, they collected by the County GRT and disbursed to municipalities. He further said he talked to the County Manager Danny Monnet and Chief Culp it was explained to him, by doing it this way a large portion will pay for the EMT side, but some funding will have to come from general funds.
 - Chief Culp explained he was asked by Chief Rubin for an opinion about what the EMS GRT's can be used. He then said he went to County legal for their opinion and he asked them if the money can be used for administrative positions, they responded that law is

not specific, but it does say specifically it must be used for emergency medical services. They then suggested asking for another plan of use.

- Manager Skerry explained that this all started on October 14, 2017 when Chief Culp e-mailed him stating that they weren't answering our calls, this was from the previous administration. He then got with the County Manager Danny Monnet and started talking about process of using EMT funds for EMT calls, because while crime is lower in our City compared to other cities, we are lowest on crime according to VRECC, we do have more calls for medical per person than all of the other Cities in the County. We are low on crime and low on fire, averaging 73 calls a month for emergency response, that is 85% compared to fire calls which are 13%.
- Manager Skerry said we started the process last October to solve the problem, by doing research of other departments, reading on line and looking at both Los Lunas and Belen who have mixed departments and have some administrative staff that are using their EMS GRT's. He then said all of them had started with paid administrative staff. He then said there were 46 Municipal Fire Chiefs at the NMML Conference in Roswell, he then said he had the benefit to have a round table with the 35 City Managers that were there to discuss this situation. He further said the end result after all of the research was to get this done by July 1st so Council could approve all the job descriptions, approve the budget and get someone hired by July 1. He then said it is not July 1st anymore, but we are there now, and the processes has been done.
- Manager Skerry explained this is a combination of job descriptions from the fire department, they are Chief and Assistant Chief, but the designation is this is a Chief EMS Fire Rescue Officer likewise for the Assistant, emphasizes on the EMS side since that is 87% of your calls. He then explained Albuquerque is in the news right now as they are also changing the name of their department and further explained this is happening nationally.
- Councilor Gutjahr said this has been talked about for a while and she has also done research, granted she is not a fire fighter or EMS and feels the hardest part to all of this, is things change over time and the way we ran things then, can't be run that way now. She then said one of the biggest issues is that this has not been available for public review and suggested tabling.
 - Ross Harms said he ran a plant in Michigan and explained on the things the State of MI required was every electrician become licensed and further explained their chain of command and said this is what he thinks the Chief EMS would still report to the Chief of the Fire Department this being two separate positions.
 - Jo Stasi asked if you were to implement these changes who would they report to.
- Mayor Gwinn explained the Chief would be on the same level as the City Manager, he would report to the City Manager and Council and everyone below would report to Chief and further explained since the City Manager was unable to continue explaining the job descriptions the assistant chief would be interviewed along with the City Manager for that position and would answer to the Chief as the Chief would be the department head. He then explained they have talked with Mesilla Valley they have a paid fire chief for the past 11 years before this they were a full volunteer fire department and still are except for the chief position.
- Mayor Gwinn further explained since we are Fire District 1, which covers a large area, we need to make our Fire Department successful for both the City and the County and we could do better in working with the county to find these solutions.

- Ken Sandlin asked the Fire Chief would report to the City Manager, he is the next chain of command and what qualifies the City Manager to be in charge of the Fire Department.
- Mayor Gwinn explained the Manager is in charge of the budget and procurement and setting policies and in charge of other fiscal items.
 - Ken Sandlin so he is not in charge of the personnel at the fire department.
- Manager Skerry explained no personnel in the fire department under the Chief but yes personnel within the City and also responsible of the budget, to meet State Statutes and stay within guidelines in the fire department, because in the past those haven't been met, grants have been missed because of the old administration.
 - Marianne Rittner-Holmes said she is a volunteer at RGEFD and then said we've heard a lot of comments this evening saying they want the four EMT's personnel. She further said she is in the opposition and wants the paid Chief and further said she had been an officer at our station with the previous administration and once again stated that the Chief then wasn't around, and the Assistant Chief was out of the State for hurricane duties and unfortunately you cannot manage from the middle or the bottom and the problem is the fragmentation of the volunteer system especially when you have a volunteer Chief. She then said how does a person work 40 hours a week and still volunteer an additional 30 hours. We need a cohesiveness Chief that would provide stability, would know what we need to do, what is necessary to run the department successfully and you don't get that with four EMT's, all you would get is just more people with no direction. She further said, a full time Chief would provide stability as well as an Assistant Chief.
 - Kimberly Larranaga said she doesn't understand why you are putting more responsibility on the City Manager when it seem like he can't handle things going on now.
 - Ron Gentry said he was on the commission when we worked with the community to fund the Fire Department, two major things one is control and the other is the money, it is not broken so don't change it. He then said Rio Communities has always been uniquely different and our fire department is superior to any in this State and EMT funds should be used for those services not funding of a fire chief.
 - Chief Culp said the aspect of the tax was for EMS providers and explained that Belen, Los Lunas, Peralta, Bosque Farms and the County used that funding for field personnel and said initially they did have funding under that tax for an EMS coordinator but has since had that put under general fund and as Mr. Gentry had stated that the tax was specifically for EMS response. He understands situation when volunteer stations grow the need for a paid Chief pay would have to come from general funds.
- Manager Skerry said the problem here is that everyone is wrapped up on the fire-fighting side and the truth is 87% of the calls are EMS calls so it really is an EMS station that handles fire calls and that is where the emphases is having more calls for EMS, so we are concerned about emergency calls and calls coming in and were previously not getting answered.
 - Chief Culp said the biggest concern he see is that Council needs to sit down with the fire department and have an open dialogue. He then said his ultimate goal for RGEFD is to be successful and Council has to set that up the open dialogue to have this happen.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked Chief Culp who does he report.
 - Chief Culp said he reports to the County Manager.

- Manager Skerry asked in the total department how many are volunteers.
 - Chief Culp said the Valencia County Fire Department has 6 districts, 8 stations, command staff is 4 ½, 8 FTE's for the County and there are currently 102 volunteers on roster.
- Manager Skerry said upper management is paid full time staff.
 - Chief Culp said the 4 ½ people in command staff are paid out of general fund and the full time FTE's are paid out of the EMS GRT.
 - Frank Stasi said he understands, you have money in general fund to pay a Chief but no money to protect us.
- Councilor Gutjahr said this is a portion.
 - Frank Stasi said you are still going into the general fund for something new and you are taking money out of general fund but not listening to the public.
- Manager Skerry explained the problem is 850 people a year that call 911 are fearful of their lives and but those 850 are not saying their lives are in immediate danger.
 - Frank Stasi said the problem here is that they do not want the City Manager to run this.
 - Chief Rubin said to make everything clear if Council hires a paid Fire Chief, that person is not going to answer to the Council but will answer to Mr. Skerry. These 2 positions previously were not transparent to put out these 2 positions and shouldn't be voted on tonight, because of the changed position titles and 2nd the two positions are command staff positions and won't help us answer calls. He then asked to have a dialogue with Council and the Fire Department staff. He then asked for Council to pull back the funding for these two positions take another year to have discussions whether to go forward with paid Chief or EMS.
- Councilor Gutjahr moved to table the job description discussion as listed during which time we will set up a joint meeting with the fire department to work out issues in this area and where we are headed on these job descriptions. The motion was second by Councilor Ramsell. Vote: Councilor Brown-yes; Councilor Sais-yes; Councilor Gutjahr-yes; Councilor Ramsell-yes. With a 4-0 vote the motion to table Job Description for the Chief EMS/Fire Rescue Officer and Assistant Chief EMS/Fire Rescue Officer to a time after further discussions with the Fire Department.

RGEFD – NM State Fire Protection Grant for \$100,000 application approval

- Fire Chief Rubin is asking for the approval to submit the application for the New Mexico State Fire Protection Grant, the application is due on or before September 20 and the fire department needs the permission of Council to move forward and submit. The application for \$100,000 carries \$10,000 match so the fire department would get \$90,000 from this grant. This grant would cover communication and bunker gear equipment.
- Councilor Ramsell moved to allow the Fire Department to submit New Mexico State Fire Protection Grant for \$100,000 with a \$10,000 match. The motion was second by Councilor Gutjahr. Vote: Councilor Sais-yes; Councilor Ramsell-yes; Councilor Brown-yes and Councilor Gutjahr-yes. With a 4-0 vote Council approved the fire department to move forward with submitting the application for the NMSFPG of \$100k with an understanding of a \$10k match.

Council Reports

- Councilor Ramsell said to Mr. Gentry that he has also gotten a notice regarding weeds and then thanked Mr. Gentry for donating Christmas decorations.
- Councilor Brown had no report.

- Councilor Sais had no report.
- Councilor Gutjahr asked residents to call her if they have questions because some of the things stated tonight are not accurate or given information that was misleading. She then said it is great for you to come here and voice what you have to say but thinks it is important to remember categorizing personnel is not appropriate in this kind of setting and thinks we have to be respectful of everybody.
- Councilor Gutjahr said she wanted to address the fact that several people brought up when they voted for City Manager vs Administer, that the individuals that voted for City Manager didn't want to work, she then stated that she keeps track of all the time that she spends on City duties and she spends anywhere from 2 ½ -3 days but she doesn't want to be here at City Hall to give instructions to staff, that's the advantage of having a City Manager.
- Councilor Gutjahr said what she is working on is various projects, workshops on finding money for another police officer and we have not finished looking into this area. She then said other areas of concern is the code enforcement issue, this is set in by ordinance on how the process is handled and the limit to fine/fees are set. She then said she has served on both sides as both a resident and on Council she understands the frustration when you don't think things are being addressed and then said please call me or any of the councilors.
- Councilor Gutjahr said she has talked with other fire department people and it is not one sided.
- Mayor Gwinn recognized Commissioner David Hyder and thanked Ron Gentry for the donation.
- Mayor Gwinn said upcoming events, on the 19th at 10 am is meet the legislators and three have committed to be here. The Clean-up is Saturday and residents who show ID with Rio Communities address will be served first.
- Mayor Gwinn said Council attended the annual NMML conference and the City was well represented.
- Mayor Gwinn said school is back in session and issues not in our community, but around the State of people not complying with bus stops and running around buses when the stop sign is out. Please be careful and watch out for the children.
- Mayor Gwinn thanked people for coming and would like to speak with them anytime to addressing any issue. He then said as a community we have to work together and things in government move slow and please contact us.

Adjourn

- Councilor Ramsell moved to. The motion was second by Councilor Gutjahr. With a 4-0 vote the City Council regular business meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth (Lisa) Adair, Municipal Clerk
(Taken by Pamela Johnson, Deputy Clerk)

Date: _____

Approved:

Mark Gwinn,
Mayor

Margaret (Peggy) Gutjahr,
Councilor Mayor Pro-tem

Bill Brown,
Councilor

Joshua Ramsell,
Councilor

Arturo R. Sais,
Councilor