



City of Rio Communities Council Special Workshop
City Council Chambers - 360 Rio Communities Blvd
Rio Communities, NM 87002
Monday, October 07, 2024 3:00 PM
Minutes

Please silence all electronic devices.

Call to Order: Mayor Ramsell 3:07

Attendees

Governing Body

Mayor Joshua Ramsell
Councilor Lawrence Gordon
Councilor Thomas Nelson
Councilor Art Apodaca
Councilor Matthew Marquez

Staff

Manager Dr. Martin Moore
Deputy Clerk Lalena Aragon
Deputy Clerk Rachael Howe
City Attorney Randy Van Vleck
Police Chief Felix Nunez

Public Comment:

Dick Irvine Westen Drive Taked about the Veteran's Memorial. He gave the council a handout of what the City of Belen is doing.

General Fund Revenue

City Manager Dr. Moore gave a review of the budget fiscal year 2024-2025. He went over budget expenses for Fiscal Year 2026 - 2030. He explained Property Taxes and property Tax Revenue at a 2.75 Mils. Dr. Moore stated that he has talked with the Police and the Fire Chief about taking a look at using a grow fund which provide funds that help out with salaries for Fire and Police.

Councilor Marquez stated If the City raises taxes, the community needs to vote on it. He also stated he thinks the jump to 2.75% is too high.

City Manager Dr. Moore explained the projection is a revenue source.

Councilor Marquez stated the City could use Maverick's projections for Public Safety.

City Manager Dr. Moore stated that it's recommended that those funds go to public safety, Police and Fire.

Councilor Marquez believes the City needs to calculate the needs of employees that the City has and will need.

There was a discussion.

Councilor Apodaca stated the residents want this or that, but the residents are also stating they want Fire and Police and future employees to service them. He stated they needed to look at both sides.

Councilor Marquez stated the jump in taxes is too high. He believes the City needs to start off small.

Councilor Apodaca stated the last time the City did a Mil levy raise they made it significant enough, so they don't have to come back every year.

Councilor Marquez stated he believes the council and city does need to revisit this every year.

Councilor Apodaca stated this is a challenge for everyone.

Councilor Nelson stated going to the max the first year is extreme and maybe it should be a step-up year by year to the max.

Mayor Ramsell stated the length in time it takes to get that money and explained it is not an immediate turn around. He then explained where most of the money comes from and stated they are not from citizen tax money.

City Manager Dr. Moore stated it would cost the City \$600 thousand to hold onto the positions in the Fire and Police Departments.

Mayor Ramsell asked what exactly the dollar amount will be for those two departments.

City Manager Dr. Moore stated that they are looking at 1.2 million dollars a year for the two safety departments to be fully staffed based on a five-year projection.

There was a discussion

Councilor Gordon stated they have to decide how much is too much for them to be able to leave the public alone for a while.

Mayor Ramsell stated there hasn't been a tax increase since 2015.

Councilor Gordon states the City can't live on grants.

Councilor Nelson asks for a conservative number of what is absolutely needed before the next meeting.

City Manager Dr. Moore stated that we have Maverick coming in that will bring in some revenue and there will be some others in the future.

Police Chief Nunez stated that he had 337 calls of service in July. He started as a person in the field working and gave the example of a crime that had just taken place, he then asked how he is supposed to ask one officer to take 16 calls a day. Chief Nunez stated that they need to get more officers out on the street. Chief Nunez stated that they have to look at the reality of the issues in the City.

Councilor Marquez stated he also has to look at the revenue and what they can afford. How many people does the Police Department need, probably 20 people. He feels that if the City pushes this tax increase that people will start to move out of the City and there will be more vacant houses for criminals to break into.

Mayor Ramsell stated 8% of cannabis sells is medicinal and those sales are non-taxable. the only taxable sales are recreationally.

There was a discussion.

Fire Chief Tabet stated the staffing module will work for them for 3 to 5 years. After that they will have to increase staffing. He explained the module they have is the National Standard and the AMR situation is becoming a disaster and that is not just for Rio Communities it is happening across the board. Chief Tabet spoke about job security and wanting to have people that will be able to retire from here and he can't give them that assurance.

City Manager Dr. Moore suggest the council step back and look at 2021 when there were only 6 staff members and understand how far they've come and then decide where they will grow to get where they need to be next.

Veterans Day Celebration

Councilor Apodaca stated he will talk to the American Legion to see if they can come. He also stated that it's important to understand that it's the City's first Veterans day event and not a competition with Belen.

There was a discussion.

Police Department/Fire Department Change To a 14 Day Work Period

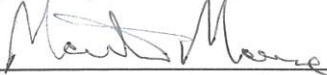
City Manager Dr. Moore stated I will let the City attorney discuss the work period.

City Attorney Randy Van Fleck explained the policy and what needs to change. He explained the changes to section 8 and section 10 and stated this will allow the departments to have flexibility and pay premium time.

Fire Chief Tabet stated this will allow for coverage and reduce burnout of his crew. He stated he feels it's crucial for the city based off the amount of calls they are getting.

Police Chief Nunez stated the police department schedule will be slightly different and they will be monitoring the overtime closely.

Respectfully submitted,



Dr. Martin Moore, (Acting) Municipal Clerk
(Taken and Transcribed by Lalena Aragon, Deputy Clerk)

Date: 12/9/2024

Approved:



Joshua Ramsell,
Mayor



Lawrence R. Gordon,
Mayor Pro-tem/Councilor



Arthur Apodaca,
Councilor

Thomas Nelson 12-9-24
Thomas Nelson,
Councilor

Matthew Marquez 12-9-24
Matthew Marquez,
Councilor