

Virtual Council Meeting Minutes

March 17, 2021 at 5:00 pm

Virtual Meeting

Columbus, NM 88029

**Call to Order, Pledge and Salute: Mayor Salas to commence meeting (At this time please silence your cell phones and any other electronic devices)**

**2. Roll Call:** Mayor Esequiel Salas - Present

Mayor Pro-Tem & Trustee Roberto Gutierrez - Present

Trustee Ricardo Gutierrez -Present

Trustee Paulino Villegas - Present

Trustee Bill Johnson – Present

We have a quorum

**3. Approval of March 17, 2021 Agenda.** Motion set by Trustee Villegas, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Ricardo. Trustee Villegas wants to be notified of who accepts the meeting invitations to have a better understanding of who is attending. Roll Call for Vote: Trustee Roberto Gutierrez: yes. Trustee Ricardo: yes. Trustee Johnson: yes. Trustee Villegas: yes. Motion Carried.

**4. Approval of the regular council minutes of February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021.** Motion set by Trustee Villegas, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Ricardo. Trustee Paulino Villegas thanks everybody present for attending. Roll Call for Vote: Trustee Roberto Gutierrez: yes. Trustee Ricardo: yes. Trustee Johnson: yes. Trustee Villegas: yes. Motion Carried.

**5. Approval of the consent agenda: Fire Dept, Library, Court, Sewer, Code Enforcement, Transfer Station, Streets, Cemetery, Parks & Recreation, Water Dept, Senior Center, Grants Admin and Sheriff's Dept.** Motion set by Trustee Ricardo, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Villegas. Mayor comments on projects reports by grand administrator, on North East channel, VOC has \$3,611.34 leftover on matching funds. That goes back on general funds. On new facultative pond, leftover is \$1,273.62 is leftover, going back to general funds. NM11 coverts project 3,433.99 leftovers will go back to matching funds. \$8,318.95 are going back to general funds. Trustee Ricardo mentions to Charlie the metal beams and scrap through the RV park. Metal beams through the RV park to be dealt with by Charlie Powell. Roll Call for Vote: Trustee Roberto Gutierrez: yes. Trustee Ricardo: yes. Trustee Johnson: yes. Trustee Villegas: yes. Motion Carried.

**6. Approval of finance report as presented by the accountants.** Motion set by Trustee Villegas, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Ricardo. Accountant Miguel Ruiz to give report. Mayor Salas comments the village cannot be in negatives in any line item. Transfers to be done by department heads to avoid negative numbers. Roll Call for Vote: Trustee Roberto Gutierrez: yes. Trustee Ricardo: yes. Trustee Johnson: yes. Trustee Villegas: yes. Motion Carried.

**7. Approval to have Francis Carayol build the village website using part of line item 101-43-4300 and the awarded grant from the Historic Preservation Commission to complete the village Website with historic Commission Section.** Motion set by Trustee Ricardo, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Johnson. Mayor Salas comments on how the village got an award \$7,050 from Historic preservation commission to build a website. The village will match \$400 dollars for a total of \$7450.00. There are requisites, which include two sections, one for historic section, comprised of information gathered by the historic preservation commission of the village. Information gathered will be more than just the Pancho Villa raid information. Contract with Francis Carayol to be completed. Roll Call for Vote: Trustee Roberto Gutierrez: yes. Trustee Ricardo: yes. Trustee Johnson: yes. Trustee Villegas: yes. Motion Carried.

**8. Approval to pay Falcon Water Tech the amount of approximately \$5,072.31 for a 2,500 lb. tote of antiscalant Chemical, AWC A-102 ULTRA.** Bobby mentions this is necessary, with Mayor pointing out this is done every year. A necessary purchase. Motion set by Trustee Roberto, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Ricardo. Roll Call for Vote: Trustee Roberto Gutierrez: yes. Trustee Ricardo: yes. Trustee Johnson: yes. Trustee Villegas: yes. Motion Carried.

**9. Discussion & Approval to pay stipend to historic commission youth researching history of Columbus for website section.** Motion set by Trustee Roberto, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Ricardo. The stipend situation would not happen until the new budget, Mayor Salas comments. Mayor Salas mentions we don't want to reward right away, but before considering paying any stipend, to have the website sections going. This stipend would not go into effect right away, perhaps until the new budget. Roll Call for Vote: Trustee Roberto Gutierrez: yes. Trustee Ricardo: yes. Trustee Johnson: yes. Trustee Villegas: yes. Motion Carried.

**10. Approval to pay Manuel Saavedra \$15,731.00 for refurbishing of Health & Wellness Community Complex wall & fence.** Motion set by Trustee Villegas, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Johnson. Mayor comments that the wall & fence at the Health & Wellness Community Complex need repair, and after obtaining the quote this is an approximate amount. Trustee Paulino Villegas replies a disapproval of moving forward with this purchase, mentioning that other things can be done with

that amount of money. Trustee Bill Johnson mentions it would help attract new tenants. Trustee Ricardo mentions this is an exaggeration of money, and he wants more quotes presented before deciding. It is agreed that the following vote is to table this line item for later. Roll Call for Vote 9 to table line item 10): Trustee Roberto Gutierrez: yes. Trustee Ricardo: yes. Trustee Johnson: yes. Trustee Villegas: yes. Motion Carried.

**11. Approval to hire Myriam Morales as assistant clerk under the water department.** Motion set by Trustee Villegas, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Roberto. Mayor Salas mentions how the village should plan on long-term hiring due to not knowing what the future holds. Roll Call for Vote: Trustee Roberto Gutierrez: yes. Trustee Ricardo: yes. Trustee Johnson: yes. Trustee Villegas: yes. Motion Carried.

**12. Approval of franchise fee under article III ordinance 220 amendment 2 to remain at 1% of CEC's gross receipts.** Motion set by Trustee Ricardo, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Villegas. Mayor Salas comments that this has to do with Article 3 franchise fee section 1. VOC has approved the amendment on this agreement with Columbus Electric, when Velia was here, but it never reached them or was never sent. Mayor mentions that Derrick Perkins (from EDF renewable Services) mentioned something concerning this during election year, that Columbus Electric might rise a campaign against the present administration concerning the fees, which would then apply to the residents, which includes negative comments. Trustee Roberto Gutierrez mentions if we can meet the CEC's gross receipts at 1.7% it would be a good balance. Trustee Villegas mentions that the 1.7% is reasonable. Roll Call for Vote (to have 1.7% of CEC's gross receipts): Trustee Roberto Gutierrez: yes. Trustee Ricardo: yes. Trustee Johnson: yes. Trustee Villegas: yes. Motion Carried.

**13. Approval of loan resolution 2021-08, loan agreement, intercept agreement and closing documents pertaining to the \$100,000 loan from NMFA for the purchase of a road grader.** Motion set by Trustee Roberto, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Villegas. Roll Call for Vote: Trustee Roberto Gutierrez: yes. Trustee Ricardo: yes. Trustee Johnson: yes. Trustee Villegas: yes. Motion Carried.

**14. Approval of resolution 2021-09 for a budget increase in revenue of \$2,350.00 under the General fund to account for a federal grant awarded to the Village for expenditures related to website development.** Mayor mentions that Itza can create a line item for this expenditure. Motion set by Trustee Villegas, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Roberto. Roll Call for Vote: Trustee Roberto Gutierrez: yes. Trustee Ricardo: yes. Trustee Johnson: yes. Trustee Villegas: yes. Motion Carried.

**15. Approval of resolution 2021-10 to authorize and approve submission of a completed application for financial assistance and project approval to the NMFA.**

Motion set by Trustee Villegas, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Ricardo. Roll Call for Vote: Trustee Roberto

Gutierrez: yes. Trustee Ricardo: yes. Trustee Johnson: yes. Trustee Villegas: yes. Motion Carried.

**16. Discussion of water conservation methods for the village of Columbus.** Motion set by Trustee Villegas, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Roberto. Mayor Salas starts discussion stating that there has not been enough rain, and the water levels on the water tables have been dropping. After speaking to Bobby (Public works director for the Village of Columbus), it would be beneficial to start discussing water preservation methods. Bobby mentions that the Altura well went dry. The concern is real. Bobby says the Village should provide a notice on the water bill. Trustee Villegas mentions that last year there was cemetery problems (water usage). People leaving the water on is causing graves to be dig up and to make the ground unstable. Cesar (streets department) mentions that the Village should close the water at certain times because it has become a problem. Trustee Bill Johnson approves the idea of placing a flyer in the water bill to let the community know of water preservation methods.

**17. Discussion & approval for ordinance 223 to increase the Water Rates for construction.** Motion set by Trustee Villegas, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Ricardo. Mayor mentions section 2, number 4. Bobby mentions the wording is wrong, and it is agreed by the trustees to change ordinance 223 wording and say, “to be taken directly from the wells” instead of ‘from a hydrant”. Trustees and Mayor Salas agree to table this line-item to gather more information and that Bobby should give his insight on how much to charge. Mayor Salas mentions that a workshop should be established soon to discuss the rates.

**18. Approval to add an amendment to planning and zoning of ordinance 212 to charge a fee of \$25 to \$90 for recreational vehicles that are lived in as a permanent resident or temporary permanent resident.** Motion set by Trustee Roberto, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Villegas. Charlie (Code enforcer for the Village of Columbus) mentions that recreational vehicles are called mobile house on the ordinance. Charlie mentions that people cannot live on recreational vehicles longer than 90 days. There are some people that have multiple RV’s and renting them, preventing tax payments. Water connections are also affected through this. Andres (from fire department) mentions that this fee is too low for a yearly fee. Mayor mentions that we should check each person individually. To set a fee across the board, nobody is going to fit in the same category, Mayor Salas mentions. Trustees and Mayor will change ordinance to better help the community, and everyone agrees to table it after reviewing ordinance. Roll Call for Vote (to keep ordinance 212 as it is and discuss this at a later date): Trustee Roberto Gutierrez: yes. Trustee Ricardo: yes. Trustee Johnson: yes. Trustee Villegas: yes. Motion Carried.

**19. Public Comment;** two minutes maximum per person.

**20. Trustee Comments:**

**21. Mayor Comments:**

**22. Next regular meeting date: 04/21/2021 at 5:00 PM**

**23. Motion to adjourn: Motion set by Trustee Villegas, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Roberto. Roll Call for Vote: Trustee Roberto Gutierrez: yes. Trustee Ricardo: yes. Trustee Johnson: yes. Trustee Villegas: yes. Motion Carried.**