

**CITY OF ALAMOGORDO, NEW MEXICO
CITY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
6:00 P.M., VIRTUAL MEETING
February 9, 2021**

**RICHARD BOSS, MAYOR
SHARON McDONALD, COMMISSIONER
JOSH RARDIN, COMMISSIONER
DUSTY WRIGHT, COMMISSIONER
SUSAN PAYNE, COMMISSIONER**

**NADIA SIKES, MAYOR PRO-TEM
JASON BALDWIN, COMMISSIONER
BRIAN CESAR, CITY MANAGER
PETRIA BENGOCHEA, CITY ATTORNEY
RACHEL HUGHS, CITY CLERK**

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / INVOCATION / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Boss called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Roll Call was taken by the Deputy Clerk. Deputy Clerk Gutierrez announced there was a quorum present. Invocation was given by Deputy Clerk Gutierrez, and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Wright.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

City Manager Cesar said item No. 9 needed to be pulled from the agenda tonight and would be brought back at a later date.

Commissioner Baldwin moved to approve the agenda as amended.

Commissioner Wright seconded the motion.

Motion carried with a vote of 7-0-0.

PRESENTATIONS

1. The Alliance for Regional Military Support (ARMS) will provide a briefing on activities in support of Holloman AFB and the regional military installations of Las Cruces (WSMR), and El Paso (Fort Bliss). *(Richard Dayoub, ARMS Treasurer and Gus Rodriguez, ARMS Chairman)*

Mr. Richard Dayoub and Mr. Gus Rodriguez gave a screen presentation of ARMS, sharing their mission, goal, and strategy (included in agenda packet backup). Mr. Dayoub encouraged the City in the future to allow them a few more minutes to present because they were supposed to do these presentations quarterly on the work that was being done, specifically with Holloman and Alamogordo and on all three installations in our neighboring communities.

Commissioner Payne asked if Mayor Boss was meeting regularly with ARMS? Mayor Boss said we had a very good relationship with White Sands Missile Range. However, things had slowed quite a bit due to Covid, and they were not meeting as regularly as they had in the past. Commissioner Payne asked Mr. Rodriguez if the Mayor was involved with their regularly meeting with community leaders? Mr. Rodriguez said their representative for Alamogordo was Mr. Ed Brabson, and they were open to having participation from the Mayors, Commissioners or City Managers of Alamogordo, Las Cruces, and El Paso at any time. Mayor Boss said he met occasionally with Mr. Brabson and he had passed a lot of information on regarding things happening at Holloman AFB and White Sands Missile Range, as well as Fort Bliss. Commissioner Payne said she would like to hear these types of presentations more often. Mayor Boss said he could pass some of this information onto the Commission more often.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sikes said Mr. Rodriguez had mentioned working with the medical facility at Holloman AFB and changes going on medically. Were there more details he could share. Mr. Rodriguez said this should be a major concern to communities because all our communities were underserved medically. So, they would like to move all medical services under one large defense department – the Defense Health Agency. All the service chiefs were opposed to this because they really did not know how it would impact services. For example, potentially at William Beaumont Hospital they were at one point looking at a loss of about 300 folks out of that hospital and shifting those services into the community. ARMS was continuing to work

them, although Congress was slowing them down in this effort. It was something we needed to remain vigilant in because if they did move forward, it was going to impact as they continued to shift those services out into the community. For example, regarding pediatrics, they had no need to take a pediatric physician into combat. Therefore, they were looking at just eliminating some of those service lines and pushing them out into the community.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sikes said Holloman AFB was touting the recent release of the Environmental Impact Statement, and she had recently learned that the F-16's would no longer be flying over the Gila. Had that affected our relationship with Holloman at all? Mr. Rodriguez said that was something he would need to refer to Mr. Brabson who had regular interaction with the leadership out there.

Mr. Dayoub said they really wanted to make these presentations on a quarterly basis, as they had made that commitment in writing. It had been difficult getting on the agenda, but they were prepared every quarter to give them an update. Also, over the past several weeks they had had numerous briefings with the second in command of the Army's futures, General King. Those notifications were sent via email to Mr. Brian Cesar's office through an invitation to participate in those phone calls. If he would provide ARMS with every Commissioner's email address, they would be happy to make sure everyone was notified about all these presentations to help keep them up to date as they went through each quarter. Mr. Rodriguez said next week they would be hosting a briefing by the Fort Bliss Garrison Commander on some of their missions. The target participants were economic development folks, and he would make sure they all received a copy of that invitation so that any member of the Commission could participate if they wished.

Commissioner McDonald asked about the station capabilities and the rating with the AARP. Where did Alamogordo stand right now and what would the update bring Alamogordo to? The second point was working with the area school districts to focus on STEM, A.I., Autonomy and Data Mining. Mr. Rodriguez said he believed the region as a whole was about two points shy of being the baseline for the standard. In talking with Mr. Brabson and his interaction with folks within Alamogordo, when they reviewed the criteria, they noticed that the graduation rate reflected in that material was lower than what it actually was within the City. They were working with AARP to try and get those updates to them so that they could go ahead and approve the scores. Pretty much Las Cruces, El Paso, and Alamogordo were all about two points shy of the baseline. They learned about this when the Air Force was trying to make a decision as to where they were going to station the Space Command Headquarters. The criteria they were using was AARP's evaluation of communities. Regarding STEM, one of the things they wanted to do was to start working with the schools and interacting with them and to provide them that information to encourage them. In the most recent briefing they'd had from Army Test and Evaluation Command, the Commanding General encouraged them to talk with teachers and counsellors in order that they could guide young people into those arenas. He was talking about it from the government service standpoint. In particular, at White Sands Missile Range they had an aging civilian employee population, and they needed to get some folks in the pipeline to take over as the older ones retired. Mr. Dayoub said these programs were also critical at the post-secondary level and there needed to be an overlapped partnership between the colleges and the school districts. That would allow these students who had a passion and skillset for this curriculum to be encouraged to pursue it further at the post-secondary level in order that they could eventually fill these highly paid positions with the Department of Defense. Mr. Rodriguez said these jobs were all located within our region, so their effort was to try and provide these opportunities with good pay and good benefits to the young people so they would not leave our region.

Mayor Boss thanked Mr. Dayoub and Mr. Rodriguez for a great presentation and for the support they gave our military and defense contractors. He looked forward to having presentations more often.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Cesar made the following remarks:

City Manager Cesar said he would like to turn his time over to Police Chief Richard Denton, who wished to make a presentation. Police Chief Denton said he was presenting the Officer of the Year award for 2020.

Police Chief Denton said his first nominee was Officer Daniel Nevarez. He gave a brief overview of Officer Nevarez' history, including his commendable and positive attitude and ability to show compassion towards citizens that are displaying signs of mental illness and psychosis. His fellow Officers would often look to him for advice on handling various situations and walking them through a solution. His investigations were thorough and complete, and he was always proactive in his work and demonstrated a strong work ethic.

Police Chief Denton said the second nominee was Officer Cheyenne Bunker. She always demonstrated a high level of competency, and during 2020 she had 19 felony arrests, 15 arrest warrants, 20 search warrants, and 21 criminal complaints. Her investigative skills were amongst the best in the department. She made 111 arrests in 2020. She was able to successfully investigate a physical fight scene where a firearm was brandished and where several children were present, resulting in the arrest of an individual for assault with a deadly weapon, as well as the charge against a parent for child abuse. Officer Bunker was also dispatched to an address on a criminal sexual penetration of a 16-year-old female who was missing part of her brain and only functioned as a 6-year-old. She successfully obtained a search warrant and spent countless hours going through 150,000 pages of messages. She was able to find enough evidence to charge the male subject with criminal sexual penetration of a minor. She should be recognized for her work ethic, excellent teamwork, and her expanding job knowledge.

Police Chief Denton said the third nominee was Officer Mauricio Puente. He is a certified K-9 Officer, and as such, had made countless arrests for drug-related crimes, including methamphetamine, heroin, and marijuana. In March 2020, he was dispatched to an address where a suspicious vehicle was parked. During the investigation, he noticed numerous items of paraphernalia to include a Billy club style stick. The following day, he was viewing an intra-department email on a Rocky Mountain Intelligence network alert, where he learned of a robbery that had taken place in Laramie, Wyoming a few nights earlier. In the alert was a photograph of the male subject holding the Billy club. Also, in July, he responded to a residence regarding a physical domestic. He was able to apprehend a subject, who had a weapon in his waistband. As a result of the investigation, the subject was charged with felony child abuse, aggravated assault against a household member, felony false imprisonment, battery against a household member, and negligent use of a firearm. He also responded to a motel regarding a domestic disturbance where a female had a knife to the throat of another female. He was able to de-escalate the incident and eventually charge the female suspect with first degree felony kidnapping and third-degree felony assault with intent to commit a felony. During a traffic stop he noticed a weapon inside the vehicle, obtained a search warrant, and subsequently charged the suspect with felon in possession of a firearm, possession of methamphetamine, and possession of paraphernalia. He had a total of 170 arrests, 335 traffic stops, and issued 156 citations, 30 felony arrests, 3 felony warrants, 9 search warrants, and 6 DWI arrests.

Police Chief Denton noted that each of their hard work did not go unnoticed. Just to be nominated was an honor. Police Chief Denton then announced Cheyenne Bunker as Office of the Year for 2020.

The Mayor and Commission all noted their appreciation to the three individuals and to the entire Police Department.

REMARKS AND INQUIRIES BY THE CITY COMMISSION

Commissioner McDonald made the following comments:

Commissioner McDonald said back in July the demolition of Sacramento Elementary School was put in place, and the actual demolition started to happen in November. The job was almost completed now,

and she wished to thank Superintendent Jerrett Perry and the Alamogordo Public Schools for the job that was being done. It was done in a clean and neat manner and there had not been damage done or debris laying around. For this project at 300 Alaska Avenue, it was almost done, and she believed they were moving for a new look. She appreciated that because it was in her district.

Commissioner McDonald said she also wished to thank the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Otero County Solid Waste Authority Board because she attended their meetings and obtained a lot of information. She had been looking at the Comprehensive Plan for the City, and she was wondering if moving forward that we could receive the return on investment for each of the projects we had done. Based on what we had done in the City so far, she was wondering if they could see how the monies spent were distributed amongst each of the different districts. Hopefully with the Comprehensive Plan they would be able to actually see how the City was making the money work for the City of Alamogordo. She would follow up with City Manager Cesar on this, as she would like to include those items at a future date.

Commissioner Rardin made the following comments:

Commissioner Rardin asked if we had a list of how many local businesses had shut down permanently over the past year due to the (Covid) shutdown. City Manager Cesar said he did not have such a list, but he could reach out to the Chamber of Commerce to see if they did. City Clerk Hughs said it was hard to say if they had closed due to Covid. Over the past year there were probably 25 to 30 businesses that had closed, but we did not know if it was due to Covid. She could run a report for him that would show how many businesses had closed. Commissioner Rardin asked how many business registration renewals we typically sent out? City Clerk Hughs said there were just over 1,700. Also, she'd had about 12 businesses that had been applying for brand new licenses between late December and January.

CONSENT AGENDA

2. Approve the minutes for the January 26, 2021 Regular meeting. *(Rachel Hughs, City Clerk)*
3. Consider, and act upon, acceptance of grant agreement from NMDOT, Aviation Division, to Alamogordo-White Sands Regional Airport in the amount of \$9,200.00 to obtain construction cost estimates for Taxiway A. *(Jim Talbert, Airport Manager)*
4. Consider, and act upon, acceptance of grant agreement from NMDOT, Aviation Division, to Alamogordo-White Sands Regional Airport in the amount of \$72,000.00 to install remaining solar runway lights. *(Jim Talbert, Airport Manager)*
5. Consider, and act upon, acceptance of extension of grant and additional funding in the amount of \$84,953.33, awarded to Alamogordo Police Department from Paso Del Norte Health Foundation. *(Richard Denton, Police Chief)*
6. Consider, and act upon, Resolution 2021-06 requesting written approval from the Local Government Division of the Department of Finance and Administration, State of NM for the revised budget numbers computed as of February 9, 2021. *(Evelyn Huff, Finance Director)* **(Roll Call Vote Required)**
7. Consider, and act upon, acceptance of a capital outlay grant agreement in the amount of \$150,000.00 to make improvements to the Sergeant Willie Estrada Civic Center. *(Veronica Ortega, Community Services Director)*

Commissioner Payne moved to approve items 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 of the Consent Calendar.

Commissioner Baldwin seconded the motion.

Roll Call vote was taken.

Motion carried with a vote of 7-0-0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

8. Consider, and act upon, a transfer of ownership of Dispenser Liquor License to License Numbers 0119, 0283, and 0910, located at 100 N. White Sands Blvd, 822 N. Scenic Drive and 2201 N. White Sands Blvd to BW & Gas Convenience Retail. *(Rachel Hughs, City Clerk and Marvin Green, Allsup's Regional Manager)*

Mayor Boss asked if Mr. Green was present to represent the applicant? City Clerk Hughs said he was the Regional Manager of Allsup's, and he was present to answer any questions as Mr. Trkla was not able to be present. This was a transfer of ownership and Allsup's had the existing licenses.

Commissioner Rardin moved to approve.

Seconded by Commissioner Payne.

Motion carried with a vote of 7-0-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9. Consider, and act upon, Case V-2020-0002(A) to allow the placement of a 14x46 manufactured home that has been placed in the rear yard of the property located at 818 8th Street, within an R-3 Zoning District (Two Family Dwelling District). *(Stella Rael, City Planner)* **(Roll Call Vote Required)**

Note: City Manager Cesar removed this item from the agenda to be brought back at a later date.

NEW BUSINESS

10. Consider, and act upon, Ordinance 1626 for first publication authorizing the execution and delivery of a loan and subsidy agreement for the amount of \$2,151,300.00 between the City of Alamogordo and New Mexico Finance Authority. *(Evelyn Huff, Finance Director)* **(Roll Call Vote Required)**

Finance Director Huff said this was the first publication of the Ordinance for the State Drinking Water Loan. This was for first publication of the Ordinance. It would be brought back again for final publication, and they were looking at closing the loan around mid-April.

Commissioner Baldwin moved to approve.

Seconded by Commissioner Rardin.

Roll Call vote was taken.

Motion carried with a vote of 7-0-0.

Mayor Boss said it was fantastic that we got this loan because it was something we needed to do, and we did not have the financing to do it. In the long run down the road, we would be very thankful we did this.

11. Appointments to Boards and Committees. *(Richard Boss, Mayor)*

Mayor Boss read the openings and appointed Caleb Moore and R. Kent House to the Cemetery Board. No one was opposed.

Mayor Boss clarified that anyone interested in serving on a City Board or Committee could always apply online as well.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Payne moved to adjourn at 6:54 p.m.

Commissioner Rardin seconded the motion.

Motion carried with a vote of 7-0-0



ATTEST:


City Clerk Rachel Hughes


Mayor Richard Boss

(Prepared by Teresa Gutierrez, Deputy Clerk)

Approved at the Regular Meeting held on February 23, 2021.