



City of Rio Communities Council Special Business Meeting
City Council Chambers - 360 Rio Communities Blvd
Rio Communities, NM 87002
Monday, May 05, 2025 5:00 PM
Minutes

Please silence all electronic devices.

Mayor - Joshua Ramsell

Mayor Pro Tem - Lawrence R. Gordon

Council - Arthur Apodaca, Thomas Nelson, Matthew Marquez

Call to Order

Mayor Ramsell called the meeting to order at 5:00pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Councilor Nelson led the pledge of allegiance

Roll Call

Governing Body

Mayor Joshua Ramsell

Councilor Lawrence Gordon

Councilor Arthur Apodaca

Councilor Thomas Nelson

Councilor Matthew Marquez

Staff

Manager Dr. Martin Moore

Deputy Clerk Lalena Aragon

Municipal Clerk – Treasurer Roy Hubbard

City Attorney Randy Van Vleck

Fire Chief Andrew Tabet

Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Councilor Gordon to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Councilor Apodaca

Voting Yea:

Councilor Gordon

Councilor Apodaca

Councilor Nelson

Councilor Marquez

Motion passed with a 4-0 vote.

Discussion, Consideration, and Decision - City of Rio Communities Applications to Intervene in Case # 25-00035-UT before the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission Regarding New Mexico Water Service Company Application

Cynthia Apodaca General Manager New Mexico Water Authority

Mrs. Apodaca stated that she encourages Council to become a official party to the proceedings and explained that this will give them the opportunity to review all documents and data and will automatically get updates and information relevant to the hearing and an opportunity to provide input into the decision-making process. She stated that two weeks ago they filed the full application to update their sewer collection fees and explained that they are only for properties that have never had sewer connection, and the fees are to make sure that new development pays for their own cost to hook up to the wastewater system and existing customers are not burdened with the cost. She stated the last time it was raised was 23 years ago in 2002 and the plan has reached compacity. She explained the increase is due to current connection cost and dwelling compacity for new development and NM

water will not receive any money and if the new developers don't pay this fee it will have to be paid by existing customers or NM water will not be able to accommodate new developments.

Councilor Marquez asked about the increase and stated that with this increase it will kill the city. He then stated that he is under the impression that there are enough hook ups for 500 homes.

Councilor Nelson stated that there were 21 new homes in Rio Communities last year and there are 100s of homes that will stop development with this increase.

Councilor Apodaca stated that she had mentioned that there may be a way for the city to work with them and tried to get some funding with grants.

Mrs. Apodaca stated that what she heard from Dr. Moore, that the city has grant writers and is willing to look into that idea.

City Manager Dr. Moore asked if the increase would affect the Maverik development.

Mrs. Apodaca stated that Maverik already has a sewer connection it may need to be updated.

Mayor Ramsell asked after the rates are raised, will the rates stay the same in the future.

Mrs. Apodaca stated that they will do the study on the Rio Communities plant and then see what needs to be updated or replaced.

City Manager Dr. Moore recommended approval of this agenda item.

Motion made by Councilor Nelson to approve City of Rio Communities Applications to Intervene in Case # 25-00035-UT before the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission Regarding New Mexico Water Service Company Application. Seconded by Councilor Gordon.

Voting Yea:

Councilor Gordon

Councilor Apodaca

Councilor Nelson

Councilor Marquez

Motion passed with a 4-0 vote.

Discussion - Budget Review for Fiscal Year 2025-2026

City Manager Dr. Moore explained that there is still a gap between expense and revenue. He explained that general corrections and stated that there is little money there. He talked about the environmental fund and stated that this is from the clean and beautiful grant and next fiscal year this will change. He then went over Emergency Medical Services.

Fire Chief Tabet stated that this is a grant that is applied for yearly, and this is the first year that they have seen this much money and this isn't a guaranteed amount.

City Manager Dr. Moore went over the fire protection fund.

Fire Chief Tabet stated that the fire department has submitted the application, and they have up the ISO rating and should know in the next couple of weeks what they will receive.

Councilor Marquez asked why under other maintenance and repairs there is zero and other years it was 8,000.

Fire Chief Tabet explained that it may change, or it may not, he explained that in previous years it was up to 20,000, it just depends on what maintenance needs to be done.

City Manager Dr. Moore went over the Law Enforcement protection fund and explained this is with 2 officers.

City Manager Dr. Moore went over the law enforcement funds. He then went over Municipal Street and stated that it would come close to 18,000.

Councilor Marquez asked if there was a plan for the bypass road.

City Manager Dr. Moore explained that there is a plan, and they are aware of the cost, and it will be factored into the budget. He then stated as far as the American rescue plan, and we are done with that plan. He went over the Bill Brown fund. He went over the Fire Excise tax and stated where the stipend money comes out of.

Chief Tabet stated that they are talking with the Valencia county fire chief to see if this money can be used for salaries.

City Manager Dr. Moore explained the EMS GRT and explained that this is used to pay salaries and if we don't spend it down, we will have to give it back.

Fire Chief Tabet stated that as of now it pays two salaries, and we are hoping to get one more out of this.

City Manager Dr. Moore went over to the Wildland fire fund and recommended keeping it at 40,000. he stated that this can be used for salaries, and it may have to help the city out with the salaries. He then went over the State Legislative Appropriations, he then went over the Road/Street projects and stated that Don Diego has not been added in this. He explained that the New Mexico Municipal League has offered some assistance in grant writing and stated that there is an area of grants that the city has not pursued those are areas of grant making foundations.

Councilor Marquez asked for the match amount for the Don Diego road.

City Manager Moore stated 5% and continued to go over the general administration fund and explained how the money is spread out. He went back to the general funds and stated that there are a couple of areas that he will look at to take some cost off the general funds and stated that he did restore travel for elected officials and other departments and stated that he wanted to point out in law enforcement that the non-salary portion that can come out of that he explained the fire department they are looking at the EMS GRT and pull some cost out of the general fund and explained by taking some out it would give us half the chiefs salary and also looking at the library and stated that they will not be able to get a little bit out there. He explained that there is no money he can take out of that. He talked about looking at non-essential employees and working on getting a cost of living raise and also some compensation for employees.

Council Discussion

Councilor Apodaca stated that one thing he wanted to talk about in the budget was the historical part of city hall.

City Manager Dr. Moore stated we have some art in public places, and we can use money for that, and we also have some legislative money we can use for that,

Councilor Nelson talked about the new equipment for public works when they are going to start using it and stated that it is rotting sitting there. He asked if there are any special use permits for business manufacturing and stated they are mining dirt. He then talked about the bypass road and asked who is bonding it and stated that the city of Belen bonded that road.

City Manager Dr. Moore explained if they did it is because the LEDA funds the \$6.6 million for construction were passed through there it is tied to the industrial revenue bond to pay the cost of construction.

Councilor Gordon thanked Dr. Moore. Municipal Tresure and Chiefs for working on the budget.

Councilor Marquez asked to receive all information on the agenda in the packet so they can review it beforehand. He thanked the fire and police department for doing a great job and thanked the staff for working hard every day.

Mayor Ramsell thanked Councilor Gordon for the chess club and stated that the residents really enjoy it.

Executive Session - For the purpose of Police Chief Employment Contract pursuant to NMSA 10-15-1(H)(2) - Limited Personnel Matters

Motion and roll call vote to go into closed session

Motion and roll call vote made by Councilor Nelson to go into executive session for the matters stated by the Mayor. Seconded by Councilor Gordon

Voting Yea:

Councilor Gordon

Councilor Apodaca

Councilor Nelson

Councilor Marquez

Motion passed with a 4-0 vote at 6:52pm

Motion and roll call vote to go back into the regular business meeting session

Motion made by Councilor Nelson to go back into the regular business meeting, Seconded by Councilor Gordon.

Voting Yea:

Councilor Gordon

Councilor Apodaca

Councilor Nelson

Councilor Marquez

Motion passed with a 4-0 vote at 7:14pm

Welcome everyone back and statement by the Mayor:

Motion made by Councilor Nelson to approve the statement by the Mayor. Seconded by Councilor Gordon.

Voting Yea:

Councilor Gordon

Councilor Apodaca

Councilor Nelson

Councilor Marquez

Motion passed with a 4-0 vote

Discussion, Consideration, Decision – Police Chief Employment Contract

Police Chief Contract 87k 7k match from law enforcement protection fund 3-year term chief is an at will employee.

Motion made by Councilor Marquez to approve the Police Chiefs Employment 3-year contract to \$87,000 with a \$7,000 match from the law enforcement protection fund. Seconded by Councilor Gordon.

Voting Yea:

Councilor Gordon

Councilor Apodaca

Councilor Nelson

Councilor Marquez

Motion passed with a 4-0 vote

Adjourn

Motion made by Councilor Gordon to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Nelson motion carried at 7:17pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Roy Hubbard, Municipal Clerk-Treasurer
(Taken and Transcribed by Lalea Aragon, Deputy Clerk)

Date: 5/27/2025

Approved:



Joshua Ramsell,
Mayor



Lawrence R. Gordon,
Mayor Pro-tem/Councilor

Arthur Apodaca
Councilor



Thomas Nelson,
Councilor



Matthew Marquez,
Councilor