



City of Rio Communities Council Special Business Meeting
City Council Chambers - 360 Rio Communities Blvd
Rio Communities, NM 87002
Wednesday, July 23, 2025, 6:00 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 6:01 pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Councilor Nelson led the pledge of allegiance

Roll Call

Governing Body

Mayor Joshua Ramsell

Councilor Lawrence Gordon

Councilor Arthur Apodaca Via Telephone

Councilor Thomas Nelson

Councilor Matthew Marquez

Staff

City Manager Dr. Martin Moore

City Attorney Randall Van Vleck

Fire Chief Andrew Tabet

Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Councilor Gordon to approve the agenda, Seconded by Councilor Nelson.

Voting Yea:

Councilor Marquez

Councilor Nelson

Councilor Apodaca

Councilor Gordon

Motion passed with a 4-0 vote

Consent agenda

Councilor Gordon made a motion to approve consent agenda, Seconded by Councilor Nelson

Voting Yea:

Councilor Apodaca

Councilor Marquez

Councilor Nelson

Councilor Gordon

Motion passed with a 4-0 vote

Consent agenda Approved

Discussion- Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2025-2026

City Manager Dr. Martin Moore stated the final budget has the same numbers as the interim budget report with a minor suggestion of change. He explained no budget numbers have been changed since the interim budget. Dr. Moore stated that if there are possibilities for any adjustments, we will take those and make sure they are ready for the final budget adoption. Dr. Moore stated what we did is look at the revenues and where they will be going compared to where we thought they might be going. The gross revenue is where we expected it to be. When looking at the year-to-date activities there are some items that are still being posted due to the last quarter close out. When speaking to the accountants prior to the meeting, they stated they are almost finished and will be on the final documents. Regarding the Gross revenues Dr. Moore is not recommending any changes except for Small City assistance; Year to date has been amended and we are asking for the same amount as last year. We have not recommended any changes from interim budget, the departments in the general fund as far as the general operating expenses, and the other special fund. There will be new firefighter recruitment and law enforcement recruitment retention grants that will need to be adjusted into the budget at a later date as of now there have been no decisions made or any updates. Those revenues will impact on the pay adjustment for the employees and what we can do. We have grant reimbursements that are pending and when we receive those, we will let council know. On the employees pay adjustment there are suggestions of cost-of-living adjustment or base pay adjustment. We currently have two grants out for firefighter recruitment and retention and the law enforcement recruitment. Once those funds come in, we will be bringing it back to council and suggesting pay adjustments for the firefighters and law enforcement to get their pay to be around the same as other agencies around us. Dr. Moore suggested instead of making a cost-of-living adjustment that we do a base pay adjustment. This pay adjustment is for non-contract employees. The contract employees and executive municipal positions, City Manager, Fire Chief and Police Chief are not being recommended for pay adjustments.

Dr. Moore stated by the end of the first quarter of this year he would like to change the Code enforcement officer with the police department to the fire department. He stated also the library position be reduced from 40 hours per week to 30 hours per week. The librarian has been made aware of this change and agrees. We recommend this change be put in the resolution of the final budget.

Councilor Marquez asked Dr. Moore, will this make the librarian a part-time employee.

Dr. Moore explained the position will still be a full-time classification it would just reduce her hours from 40 to 30 hours per week.

Councilor Marquez asked Dr. Moore what that would do to her medical insurance

Dr. Moore stated that we have spoken to her about insurance and she has obtained alternative forms of insurance. We have also spoken to the state, and they are willing to waive her deductions.

Councilor Marquez asked Dr. Moore he understands we owe the fire department for the wildland fires. Will that be coming out of that money and will it get reimbursed.

Dr. Moore explained that will be coming out of the wildland funds and there are reimbursements that we will be receiving. Fire Chief Andrew Tabet has submitted those hours and rate of pay for those. We will be bringing those to council at our next meeting.

Mayor Joshua Ramsell stated if we can add in the resolution moving forward when firefighters go out to these wildland fires if they can be paid out directly without having to bring it to council each time.

Dr Moore stated yes, we can put that in the resolution if council is okay with it.

Fire Chief Tabet explained that the reimbursement money and the money we have in the wildland fund is going to be more than what we pay out. We pay eighty rates which is rates sent by the state, the truck makes its own amount of money on top of that. That is why we can have some unrestricted cash in the wildland fund. He feels it would be easier and faster instead of having to go through council each time if it can be handled on the finance side to get them paid.

Dr Moore explained there is a salary portion that goes to wildland fire fighters that is based on dollar to dollar on hours and rates. Then there is also the equipment they use that we will receive monies back for those.

Councilor Nelson stated that the next available payday we get those firefighters paid for the wildland fires.

Councilor Marquez stated how often we will be paying out once they go on these wildland fires.

Fire Chief Tabet explained that it would go a long way for the fire fighters to go and deploy for five to twenty-one days or more and be able to come back and not have to wait for their earned money and allow us to wait for that reimbursement which is usually between thirty to ninety days. That's why we always have extra funds in the wildland to cover it.

Dr. Moore stated one of these things we are asking for is utilizing what we expect for revenues or available cash in the wildland fund that we are budging a certain amount.

Councilor Marquez asked if the funds we have in unincumbered monies include the vacant positions we have.

Dr. Moore stated yes, the monies in the unincumbered fund include the vacant positions.

Councilor Marquez stated the GRT for the bypass road construction is that factored in.

Dr. Moore the state lump sums it all together into the budget.

Councilor Nelson stated the new cannabis shop is doing all there marketing in Belen we will need to make sure they are paying the city of Rio Communities. Along with Dough Daddys's.

Councilor Marquez suggested that we use the funds coming from the cannabis shops that we use that to go to the public safety.

Councilor Marquez asked if there have been any adjustments on property taxes due to veterans

Dr. Moore stated we have asked about that, and we have not received any kind of projection of what kind of impact it will have. We have budgeted lower on the property tax in anticipation of a decrease. We just don't have any numbers from the county or the state on what that decrease will be.

Mayor Ramsell explained there are two phases to that; there is the first phase is adjusting the rate, and the sliding scale would be the second phase.

Councilor Marquez asked if the adjustment we made to help pay for the increase in the employees' health insurance had been adjusted in the budget.

Dr. Moore explained no it has not been adjusted but it will be adjusted when the final budget is approved.

Dr. Moore asked council what they think about employee compensation.

Councilor Marquez stated that no to raise it to five percent and keeping it low at about two percent.

Councilor Nelson stated he agrees with councilor Marquez, and we also need to find another way other than money to compensate the employees.

Councilor Apodaca stated he agrees with Councilor Marquez but more around three percent.

Councilor Nelson stated he is fine with three percent but feels we need to ask the employees other than monetary what we can do to make them happier here.

Councilor Marquez suggested we have an employee's appreciation day and have a BBQ to help out and bring everyone together.

Councilor Gordon asked how much the 4 percent would be as an hourly rate.

Dr. Moore stated it would depend on how much they are making.

Adjourn

Motion made by Councilor Nelson to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Marquez. Motion carried out at 6:58pm.

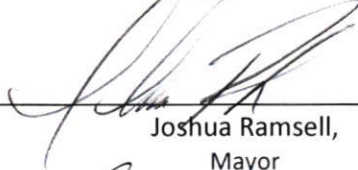
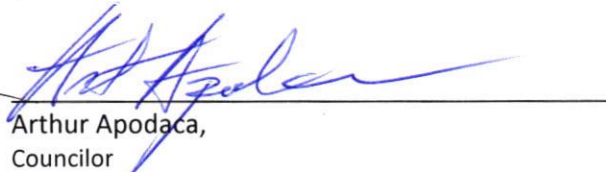
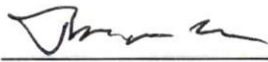
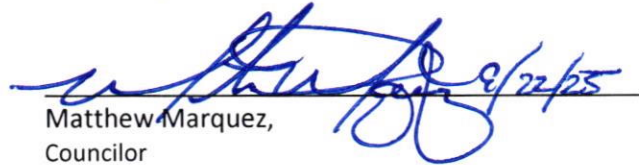
Respectfully submitted,



Dr. Martin Moore (acting Municipal Clerk)
(Taken and Transcribed by Patricia McCloskey)

Date: 9/22/2025

Approved:


Joshua Ramsell,
Mayor
Lawrence R. Gordon,
Mayor Pro-tem/Councilor
Arthur Apodaca,
Councilor 9-22-25
Thomas Nelson,
Councilor 9/22/25
Matthew Marquez,
Councilor