

CITY OF RIO COMMUNITIES New Mexico



Rio Communities City Hall
360 Rio Communities Blvd.
P.O. Box 565
Rio Communities NM 87002
505 861-6803
Hours: Monday-Thursday
8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.
email:
admin@riocommunities.net
info@riocommunities.net
website -- riocommunities.net

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April 2020

Governing Body

Mayor Mark Gwinn

505 264-3412

mgwinn@riocommunities.net

Councilor Margaret (Peggy) Gutjahr

Mayor Pro Tem

505 864-6908

pgutjahr@riocommunities.net

Councilor William (Bill) Brown

505 864-0718

bbrown@riocommunities.net

Councilor Joshua Ramsell

505 861-6803

jrumsell@riocommunities.net

Councilor Jim Winters

505 861-6803

jwtinters@riocommunities.net

Municipal Judge Heather Benavidez

505 861-6804

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Municipal Officers

Municipal Clerk Lisa Adair

Finance Officer/Treasurer

Stephanie Finch

City Offices — 505 861-6803

City Hall Closed Until April 10

As of the writing of this newsletter, Rio Communities City Hall will be closed to the public through Friday, April 10, 2020.

City staff has been authorized to work remotely. City Staff assistance is available by emailing admin@riocommunities.net or info@riocommunities.net or calling 505 861-6803 or 505 861-6804.

A staff directory is also available at riocommunities.net.

Completing the Census Helps Rio Communities

In mid-March, 2020, homes across the country, including in Rio Communities, were scheduled to receive invitations to complete the 2020 Census. Once the invitation arrives, people should respond online, by phone, or by mail for their home.

Here's some basic information about the 2020 U.S. Census.

What is the Census?

The Constitution requires that the Census, a count of everyone in the country, be conducted every 10 years. The first census was conducted in 1790. The 2020 U.S. Census count begins April 1 and ends July 24.

How is the Census counted?

To help ensure an accurate count, for the first time there are three ways to complete the 10 question Census count: online (beginning March 12), by telephone, or by paper (mail).

Lack of response will result in a Census Taker visiting. Every Census Taker will have proper identification.

Am I safe? Is my information secure?

Everyone is safe. The U. S. Census Bureau and its employees are required by law to never release Census information that could identify any individual. The Bureau will NEVER share information with ANY immigration enforcement agencies, law enforcement agencies, or to determine eligibility for governmental benefits.

Census information is only used for statistical reporting. Individual information is safeguarded by law for the next 72 years.

Why is the Census important?

First, it is used to determine the distribution of federal dollars for the next ten years. Since the 2010 Census, New Mexico has received \$7.8 billion dollars in federal money, with \$4 billion for Medicaid. Other federal programs supported were health care, highways, education, jobs and housing.

If New Mexico is under-counted in

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April 2020 Health Fair Cancelled in response to Governor Michele Lujan Grisham's declaration of a Public Health Emergency and the banning of large public gatherings.

Libraries, Books in Rio Communities

There's library news in the greater Rio Communities area. The City Council has adopted an ordinance establishing a public library and library board in Rio Communities.

Mayor Pro Tem Peggy Gutjahr said the city received a \$50,000 capital outlay appropriation from the New Mexico state legislature last year and might receive another \$10,000 this year for the library.

Volunteers are needed to serve on the library board which appoints a director and works on fund raising for the library.

The library ordinance says the board will consist of at least five members who are residents of the community served by the library. Board members are appointed by the mayor and approved by the council with terms of four years.

Board duties include receiving donations and gifts, advising the council about creating library rules and regulations, recommending nominees for the library director position and board members, assisting and aiding the library director, and recommending any action to maintain or administer the library.

The library director is a volunteer and is responsible for the operation of the library.

Anyone interested in serving on the library board should call City Hall at 505 861-6803 or email admin@rio-communities.net.

Check Out Little Free Libraries

There are three Little Free Libraries (LFL) in the area. They are located:

In front of City Hall. This the original LFL at 360 Rio Communities Blvd.

At Abundant Life Christian Center parking lot at 105 Avenida Del Fuego. This has trees so readers can enjoy the shade and New Mexico weather.

At the Tierra Grande Arch entrance on NM Hwy 47 south of Rio Communities.

A LFL is just what it sounds like, a box of books that a person can take a book from to read and enjoy.

What Is a City Ordinance?

A City of Rio Communities ordinance is the City's Rule of Law.

A City ordinance should include the reasons for the law and detail how the ordinance will remedy a situation, including possible consequences.

Economic Development Sends Address Labels

The Rio Communities Economic Development Commission (EDC) sent address labels to every address in Rio Communities to commemorate the 7th Birthday in January 2020 of the municipality.

The mailing included a note encouraging everyone to be sure their address is listed as Rio Communities on all mail, even junk. The note also stressed that people use Rio Communities when completing the Census form as this could help the municipality obtain funding and perhaps have its own zip code.

EDC members stuffed more than 2,000 envelopes with the labels and information for the mailing. EDC members are: Frank Logan, chair; Kuan Tikkun, vice chair; Fran Rossberg, Loedi Silva, and Tom Zanotti.



Rio Communities Economic Development Commission Chairman Frank Logan with the boxes of address labels sent to Rio Communities residents.

Completing Census

Continued from page one
this Census by only 1%, New Mexico will lose \$780 million in federal support. For every person not counted, we will lose \$3,700 in federal support to all of the above mentioned programs.

The second reason is that the Census count is also used to determine our local, state and federal political representation for the next ten years. All political boundaries will be redrawn based on population. Census under-counting will result in legal but unequal boundaries for representation.

Side note: City Councilor Bill Brown, a member of the Valencia County Census Committee, points out If you applied to be a Census Taker (\$16.50 an hour for a 20 hour, flexible work week), you will be contacted via a (505) 208-xxxx phone number. If you miss that call you will not be considered for the position, and must reapply.

UWSNM Will Collect City Trash

Trash in Rio Communities will be collected by Universal Waste System of NM (UWSNM) after the City Council approved a contract on Feb. 25, 2020, with the trash hauler.

Every household and commercial establishment must sign up with UWSNM for trash pickup.

New Gross Receipts Tax Rate

Effective July 1, 2020, the gross receipts tax which must be collected in the City of Rio Communities will increase by .25% to 7.6575%.

Revenue collected from the increase will go into the City's general fund. Gross receipts tax is collected from buyers of goods and / or services and is different than a mil levy.

Gross receipts tax in Belen January to June 2020 was 8.3125%; Bosque Farms, 8.5500%; Los Lunas, 8.6750% and Peralta, 7.9375%.

Public Works Fixes City Potholes

The new City Public Works Department employees have completed a lot of major pothole repair throughout Rio Communities and are continuing to do more pothole repair.

Public Works Department employees Randy and Ross have work experiences that make them very valuable to the City, said Code Enforcement Officer Gordon Reeves.

The Public Works Department employees have completed minor leak repair on the City Hall roof and cleaned out the curb and gutter on Golf Course Road and Rio Communities Way.

The City Code Enforcement Officer will be concentrating on illegally parked RVs as well as disabled and unregistered vehicles throughout the City limits.

Remember to remove dried up weeds and cut new weed growth. Check the city website, riocommunities.net, for ordinances keeping Rio Communities a pleasant place to live.



Rio Communities Public Works employees work on potholes.

UWSNM is available by phone, 505 377-8833 (open 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.); online, uwsnm.com; or email, service@uwsnm.com. Offices are located on Broadway SW in Albuquerque, but an office in Rio Communities is expected to be open before the end of 2020.

Collection days will be Mondays on the west side of Rio Communities Blvd. / State Hwy 47 and Tuesdays on the east side. All garbage should be bagged.

Contracting with a trash hauler for Rio Communities has taken about four years. It started with the development of a Solid Waste Collection Ordinance which the City Council passed June 25, 2019.

Multiple Public Forums and hearings were held in 2018 and 2019 during which the community identified all the qualities they wanted in a solid waste hauler.

A Request for Proposal for a trash hauler was released and published in November 2019, as required by the State and City procurement codes. The Request for Proposal reflected the contents of the Solid Waste Collection Ordinance.

Trash hauling proposals sent to the City were evaluated by a procurement team which scored the proposals by points per the Request for Proposal.

The City of Rio Communities contract with UWSNM includes optional recycling; reduced rates for indigent, seniors and veterans; assistance for the disabled; and methods of disposing of large items, yard refuse, and tires plus additional services.

A portion of the Gross Receipts Tax and the 4% franchise fee collected by UWSNM will be paid to the City of Rio Communities.

The regular monthly price for a residential 96-gallon poly-cart with once-a-week pickup is \$16 plus \$1.19 Gross Receipt Tax and \$.64 franchise fee for a total of \$17.83. Senior, indigent and veteran discounts would lower that price.

There are also annual payment and not-for-profit discount programs.

For a complete listing of services provided by UWSNM visit the City website at riocommunities.net.

City Applies for Road Improvement Funds

The Rio Communities City Council has approved an application for an agreement with the New Mexico Department of Transportation to participate in the 2020-2021 Cooperative Funding Program so that several roads in the municipality will be improved.

If the application for the funding of road projects in Rio Communities is approved, then the City will provide matching funds for the project at the rate of 25 percent of the total cost of the project.

More in this newsletter about what streets will be improved after the funding to Rio Communities has been approved.

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New Mexico

NEWS

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Welcome to the
City of
Rio Communities
New Mexico
NEWS

A digest of what is going on in the City of Rio Communities.

Inside this Edition

RC Health Fair Cancelled

City Offices Closed to Public
Until April 10

Employees Still Working

Completing Census Help RC
And Much More in This Issue

Rio Communities City Council

meets 6 p.m. 2nd and 4th Tuesday

Economic Development Commission

meets 10 a.m. 2nd and 4th Wednesday

Planning and Zoning Commission

meets 6:30 p.m. 1st and 3rd Thursday

Rio Communities Municipal Court

5:30 p.m. 2nd and 4th Thursday

Rio Communities News Shorts

If you are operating a business in Rio Communities then you should have a business license. Visit the City website at riocommunities.net or stop by City Hall at 360 Rio Communities Blvd. to find out what you need for a license or to renew your expired license.

City Council Approves Engineering Services Agreement

The City Council has approved an agreement for general engineering services with HDR Engineering which has an office at 2155 Louisiana NE in Albuquerque. Company engineers will be called on when needed for City of Rio Communities projects.

City Audit Receives Unmodified Opinion

Every year the finances of New Mexico municipalities are audited. The City of Rio Communities 2019 audit received an unmodified opinion which is the best opinion given. This type of opinion means that the auditor was able to audit the financial statements (entity's books, records, etc.) without problem. The auditor feels confident that everything in the financial statements is a true reflection of the entity's operations.

Dogs Need Tags in Rio Communities

All dogs in Rio Communities must have tags which are available at City Hall at a cost of \$5 if spayed or neutered, and if not then \$25. Please have proof of rabies shot.



A ribbon cutting was held for Sina Medical earlier in 2020 which is located in the Rio Communities Shopping Center south of Rio Communities City Hall. At top is Maryam Bornaei Ph.D., owner of the facility. At bottom people watch the activities at the ribbon cutting. The facility is not yet open.

