

CITY OF BLOOMFIELD
REGULAR COUNCIL MINUTES
March 11, 2019

The Regular Meeting of the Bloomfield City Council was held at 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers at 915 N. First Street, Bloomfield, NM. The meeting was in full conformity with the laws and rules of the Municipality.

In attendance were Mayor Cynthia Atencio and Councilors Curtis Lynch, Sue Finch, Ken Hare and Matt Pennington.

Also present were City Manager George Duncan, City Attorney Ryan Lane, and City Clerk Dorothy Nobis. Department Heads present were Brad Ellsworth, Jason Thomas, Police Chief David Karst, and Fire Chief John Mohler.

Mayor Cynthia Atencio offered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Following the Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance, Councilor Pennington led everyone in the singing of Happy Birthday to Councilor Sue Finch.

Mayor Atencio asked to have Item D – Discussion and Possible Action to Approve Resolution 2019-05, a Resolution Declaring the City of Bloomfield a Second Amendment Preservation City to Item A. **Councilor Hare** moved to approve the changes and **Councilor Finch** seconded. Approval was unanimous.

Councilor Finch moved to approve the Agenda with that change and **Councilor Lynch** seconded. Approval was unanimous.

Councilor Pennington moved to approve the minutes and **Councilor Finch** seconded. Approval was unanimous.

New Business:

Mayor Atencio asked the Council to approve Resolution 2019-05, Declaring the City of Bloomfield a Second Amendment Preservation City. **Councilor Lynch** moved to approve the Resolution and **Councilor Finch** seconded. **Approval** was unanimous, with Councilor Pennington voting with a “Hell, yes.”

Councilor Hare had questions regarding Accounts Payable. Finance Director Brad Ellsworth, City Manager George Duncan, Police Chief David Karst, and Public Works Director Jason Thomas provided answers to those questions. A discussion was held regarding the issues the City of Bloomfield has faced with the lack of prompt and effective trash pickup from Transit Waste, which has a contract for trash removal with the city. Councilor Pennington stated that trash pickup is the biggest complaint he hears at his business, Farmers Market. City Manager Duncan said that Transit Waste hasn’t been responsive to phone calls from the city. The discussion

included the suggestion that the city look at contracting with Waste Management for future trash pickup services. City Manager Duncan said the City of Aztec recently cancelled its agreement with Transit Waste and Waste Management is now serving its residents. A possible rate increase in trash pickup could result if the city contracts with Waste Management. Staff was requested to review the current agreement with Transit Waste and report findings to the Mayor and Council. Councilor Pennington moved to approve Accounts Payable and Councilor Finch seconded. Approval was unanimous.

Public Works Director Jason Thomas requested approval of Resolution 2019-03, Regarding Public Use Requirements for the East Blanco Bridge Project. **Councilor Lynch** moved to approve the Resolution and **Councilor Finch** seconded. Approval was unanimous.

Public Works Director Jason Thomas requested approval of Resolution 2019-04, Declaring the Eligibility and Intent of the City of Bloomfield to Submit an Application to the NMDOT for MAP Funds for the East Blanco Bridge Project. **Councilor Lynch** moved to approve the Resolution and **Councilor Pennington** seconded. Approval was unanimous.

City Manager George Duncan started a discussion with the Council regarding the Lodgers Tax Board. Mayor Atencio explained the Lodgers Tax is provided by people using commercial lodging accommodations (hotels, motels, and campgrounds) and it provides revenue for advertising, marketing and promotion of tourist related events, attractions and facilities, and for acquiring, establishing and operating those events, attractions and facilities. She also stated that the members of the Lodgers Tax Board are advisors to the city regarding how Lodgers Tax money is spent. **Councilor Hare** said there are state statues and city ordinances that must be honored. He also said the terms of all of the current members of the Lodgers Tax Board have expired. The Mayor appoints members to the board and Mayor Atencio invited those who would like to serve on the board to let the City Clerk know of their interest. The board must include two members who are owners or operators of a hotel, motel, or campground, two members who are owners or operators of industries located within the municipality or products to tourists, one member who is a resident of the municipality and represents the general public, and two members at large. Members serve staggered terms of two years each or until a successor is appointed. Councilor Hare also stated a quarterly report from the board should be provided to the City Council, that meetings should be publicized, and that all Lodgers Tax expenditures must be approved by the City Council. **Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce Board President Janet Mackey** updated the Council on the upcoming San Juan River Balloon Rally, scheduled for Father's Day weekend in June. Mrs. Mackey said she had researched other balloon rallies in the area and found the Bloomfield rally to attract about the same number of hot air balloons. She also stated that Bloomfield motels used to donate rooms for the pilots, but decided it would be better if Lodgers Tax paid for the rooms. The chamber provides meals and gift bags (which include items donated by area businesses), and propane for the pilots. The chase crews for the balloons pay for their own accommodations and meals, Mrs. Mackey added. The chamber promotes the rally through social media, print and radio advertising and through a KREZ television personality, who provide regular updates on the rally for the station's news broadcasts. Councilor Hare said the city needs to look on the Return On Investments of the rally and look at additional ways to make the event bigger to attract more tourists.

Unfinished Business:

Councilor Hare reviewed Accounts Payable from February 25, 2019. Councilor Hare had several questions for City Manager George Duncan and Finance Director Brad Ellsworth, which were answered to Councilor Hare's satisfaction.

Department and Public Input:

David Gerg thanked the Council for its support of the Second amendment and asked what it means to the citizens. **Mayor Atencio** explained that people can still be prosecuted under state law if they sell a gun without a background check. The city will not provide resources to arrest or prosecute people under that law. Mayor Atencio also stated that the approval declaring the City of Bloomfield a Second Amendment Preservation City makes a statement of support for San Juan County Sheriff Shane Ferrari. **Councilor** Pennington added that the Council should not have to pass resolutions to protect the citizens' constitutional rights.

Janet Mackey thanked the Council for their support of the Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce's Annual Awards Banquet March 8, 2019. She said awards were presented to deserving members of the community and that Mayor Atencio was recognized as the Citizen of the Year.

Dwane Robinson spoke to the Council about the continuing problem of a resident on Pixley Street. A discussion ensued regarding the situation, with Police Chief David Karst stating he continues to work on a solution.

Police Chief David Karst gave the Council an update on the Police Department. Chief Karst said he has two School Resource Officers working with the Bloomfield Schools and the school district donated a 2013 Ford Explorer to the department. The department has received \$26,000 in grant funding. The Chief also said House Bill 154 is before the legislature, requesting that anything over \$100,000 in the Law Enforcement Protection Fund goes to the state's General Fund. Law enforcement officers believe that money should go back to the agencies. Last year, the LEPF provided \$40,000 for the Bloomfield Police Department, which was used to purchase in car and body cameras, which had not been updated since 2014. Chief Karst said he is working to get the Bloomfield Police Department credited again, the San Juan County Sheriff's Department is doing routine audits of the armory and evidence departments. The code compliance department is undergoing a revamp, the Chief added, and one position for a Code Enforcement Officer has been posted. The new officer will be trained in code compliance and city ordinances. He is also redoing the Neighborhood Watch program, with a Sergeant assigned to each NM district within the city.

Councilor Hare said business license renewals are coming in and the city should move to create a culture of code compliance similar to what the City of Aztec has.

Councilor Pennington thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and that he considers it a personal affront that the Council has to vote on a Resolution that helps us defend our rights. He said he stands with those who support the Second Amendment and thanked everyone for being at the meeting. Councilor Pennington said he's had questions regarding the hours of the Aquatic Center and asked if staff could post the hours on the city's website and on social media.

Mayor Atencio said several members of the Council are aware of the problems of the website and are looking at web site assistance from Four Corners Economic Development Services.

CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Atencio asked for a motion to go into a Closed Executive Session to discuss limited personnel and pending/threatened litigation. **Councilor Finch** moved to go into Closed Executive Session to discuss those issues and **Councilor Lynch** seconded. Approval was unanimous and the council went into Closed Executive Session at 7:45 p.m. At 8:25 p.m., **Mayor Atencio** asked for a motion to return to the regular meeting, stating nothing was discussed in the executive meeting other than limited personnel and pending/threatened litigation, and approval was unanimous.

Adjournment:

Mayor Atencio called for adjournment at 8:25 p.m. All were in favor.

Mayor Cynthia Atencio

ATTEST:

Dorothy Nobis, City Clerk