



Town of Mesilla, New Mexico

BOARD OF TRUSTEES (BOT)

TOWN OF MESILLA

SPECIAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 2022

MINUTES

TRUSTEES: Nora Barraza, Mayor
Stephanie Johnson-Burick, Mayor Pro Tem
Biviana Cadena, Trustee
Veronica Garcia, Trustee
Adrianna Merrick, Trustee

STAFF: Rani Bush, Town Clerk/Treasurer
Kevin Hoban, Fire Chief
Enrique Salas, Marshal
Gloria Maya, Recorder

PUBLIC:

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Barraza led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ROLL CALL & DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Roll Call.

Present: Mayor Barraza, Mayor Pro Tem Johnson-Burick, Trustee Cadena, Trustee Garcia, Trustee Merrick.

3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA & APPROVAL

Motion: To approve agenda, Moved by Mayor Pro Tem Johnson-Burick, Seconded by Trustee Garcia.

Roll Call Vote: Motion passed (summary: Yes =4).

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson-Burick Yes

Trustee Cadena Yes

Trustee Garcia Yes

Trustee Merrick Yes

4. PUBLIC INPUT – The public is invited to address the Board for up to 3 minutes.

No Public Input

5. WORK SESSION

a) Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Preliminary Budget

Mayor Barraza: reviewed the process that will be followed.

Ms. Bush: reviewed the 2022-2023 Preliminary Budget. Any changes will be done before submitting the final budget.

Mayor Barraza: there will be changes will be in personnel salaries, operating expenses will remain the same as 2021-2022. Projected revenue for 2022-2023 is \$2.67 million, an increase of 8% based on GRT numbers; projected expenditures is \$1.9 million. Once final adjustments are done left over monies will be given to the departments to plug it in where it is needed.

Ms. Bush: the numbers will be reduced since there is still payroll and bills to pay through the end of June.

Mayor Barraza: there is plenty of money to cover expenses through the end of June.

Ms. Bush: reviewed the different funds and the projections for 2022-23.

Mayor Barraza: asked Ms. Bush to show the numbers reflecting a 3% and a 5% COLA increase. We have exceeded what was projected for this fiscal year, so she feels comfortable giving a 5% COLA and the projections since there are two more months of GRT.

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson-Burick: YTD reflects a 42% increase in local taxes.

Mayor Barraza: reiterated there are two more months of GRT coming in for this fiscal year. She continues to be conservative in the projections and look at the trend.

Trustee Cadena: asked for clarification of administrative fees.

Mayor Barraza: administrative fees are for film permits, boring permits, community center, park, animal registration fees and plaza rentals, etc. Some salaries are paid from those fees.

Ms. Bush: reviewed the expense line items.

Mayor Barraza: line items are self-explanatory. Changes to the salary line items are due to tax or benefit increases. She will meet with Judge Toomey to review his budget; it will be at his discretion to give his clerk the 5% increase.

Trustee Garcia: asked about a line item for the alternative judge.

Ms. Maya: Alternative Judge Lerma asked that he not be compensated.

Ms. Bush: budget is work in progress.

Mayor Barraza: town is charged for every day someone is jail at \$162.00

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson-Burick: why was only \$32,000 budgeted.

Mayor Barraza: that has been the history of what was being paid in prior years. Fees are imposed by the state statute and sent to the state monthly.

Trustee Cadena: revenues do not even come close to the expenditures.

Mayor Barraza: those fees are at the Judge's discretion.

Trustee Cadena: expenditures need to be applicable to revenue.

Mayor Barraza: feels the concern is with prisoner care line item. Some of the funds are restricted.

Ms. Bush: we will need to speak to the judge and do some research. There is a lot of work to be done.

Trustee Cadena: past years it was consistent at around \$32,000; this year it is at \$92,000. She feels this is a good budget.

Mayor Barraza: asked if the board is okay with giving the employees a 5% raise.

Trustee Merrick: asked on what is the 5% based on.

Mayor Barraza: it is based on their yearly salary. This is based on our revenue for the fiscal year. We also need to be cautious as fuel cost are increasing.

Trustee Merrick: asked about the 5% increase received by Fire Chief Hoban.

Mayor Barraza: the Town of Mesilla Personnel Rules and Regulations reads that an employee will receive a 5% longevity increase every five years on their anniversary date. This will be in addition to the COLA.

Trustee Merrick: that is in the handbook for review.

Ms. Bush: the budget reflects the hourly and annual information.

Mayor Barraza: Ms. Bush and Mr. Padilla will get \$1,000 after their probation period which is included in the proposed budget. Ms. Maya and Marshal Salas will be receiving the longevity increase which is also included in the proposed budget, if approved by the board.

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson-Burick: needs to be done on the employee's anniversary date and not sooner.

Mayor Barraza: Ms. Maya and Marshal Salas's anniversary date was prior to the handbook being approved in December, so do they not want to give the increase to them.

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson-Burick: she thought the increase was being given early but now she understands they are getting it later. She agrees they should receive the increase.

Trustee Garcia: the longevity increases, and COLA increases are two separate things.

Mayor Barraza: the longevity increase can not be retroactive.

Trustee Garcia: the 5% is not even a \$1.00 for some employees. She would like to give them a little more.

Mayor Barraza: we need to consider operating expenses as fuel and supplies have doubled from last year.

Trustee Garcia: asked if this can be revisited in mid-year. New employees are coming in at same or higher salaries than the existing employees.

Mayor Barraza: our goal is to bring the employees up or exceed the \$15.00 an hour.

Trustee Merrick: we need to look at the employee's performance level, what they do and what they need to do.

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson-Burick: we are being generous by giving a 5% increase; other government entities are not doing that.

Mayor Barraza and Trustee Cadena left to the Ride of Silence at 6:14 p.m.

Trustee Merrick: funds collected in the court are allocated.

Ms. Bush: correct they are restricted.

Trustee Garcia: Fire Chief Hoban's 5% longevity increase was not in the budget.

Trustee Merrick: there is a larger picture to the budget.

Ms. Bush: there is the day-to-day operation, and the board is a finance board. The process is you look at policies and how they affect the budget; then make necessary adjustments.

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson-Burick: she thought Department Heads were between \$50,000 and \$55,000 how did the fire chief get where he is at.

Ms. Bush: some of the numbers did not add up when she looked at the previous budget. She used the numbers from the report created through Incode. She will do a lot of cleaning up.

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson-Burick: pay adjustments were being done without going through the board.

Trustee Merrick: agreed those adjustments should go through the board as a finance board.

Ms. Bush: her concern is the number of funds and line items currently in place.

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson-Burick: feels things were done without informing the board; not transparent. She wants to get her facts straight to see if there was differential treatment that was not brought to the board.

Ms. Bush: the budget has not been managed well but going forward she wants to ensure things are transparent and keep the board informed. She will be cleaning it up as it goes along.

Trustee Merrick: inaudible

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson-Burick: the money for the film project is not in the budget.

Trustee Merrick: they asked for \$20,000 which we cannot do so we recommended \$10,000.

Ms. Bush: looking at our budget \$20,000 is not a lot.

Trustee Garcia: would rather give the \$20,000 to the staff.

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson-Burick: would rather put that money back into the community.

Ms. Bush: any budget concerns should be brought to her attention prior to the worksession on Monday.

Trustee Cadena: asked if Ms. Bush has seen any major changes.

Ms. Bush: this is the year for cleanup. The COLA is not a raise.

Trustee Merrick: there are a lot of variables to increases.

Mayor Barraza and Trustee Cadena returned to worksession 6:38 p.m.

Mayor Barraza: only 50% of the COVID monies has been received. They will be looking at creating a salary schedule.

Trustee Merrick: people want to be able to retire from Mesilla. She looks at it as a money thing. There is a bigger picture to the budget.

Mayor Barraza: Mesilla cannot complete with the surrounding entities. She would like to keep our staff and ensure there would not be a furlough as it happened in the past.

Trustee Cadena: asked if Mesilla has a grant writer.

Mayor Barraza: she will contact the A.J. for assistance.

Trustee Cadena: there is currently money for outdoor recreation.

Mayor Barraza: she forwarded that information to Ms. Sellers. Unfortunately, we do not have the staff to manage those grants or the funds to hire someone.

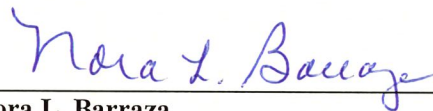
Worksession ended at 7:08 p.m.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The Town of Mesilla Trustees unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting. (Summary: Yes-4).

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:08 P.M.

APPROVED THIS 13th DAY OF JUNE, 2022.



Nora L. Barraza
Mayor

ATTEST:



Rani Bush
Town Clerk/Treasurer

