

# Town of Mesilla, New Mexico

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES (BOT) OF THE TOWN OF MESILLA WILL HOLD A WORKSESSION  
AND REGULAR MEETING AT THE MESILLA TOWN HALL,  
2231 AVENIDA DE MESILLA.

MONDAY, APRIL 24, 2023 – 5:00 PM

## WORKSESSION MINUTES

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

**STAFF:** Rod McGillivray, Public Works Director  
Enrique Salas, Marshal  
Gloria Maya, Town Clerk/Treasurer/Recorder

### **Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget – Nora Barraza, Mayor**

Mayor Barraza: reviewed the schedule. Salaries projections recommendations from the Board of Trustees.

Trustee Garcia: what do the Department Heads want. What do we have in the budget?

Mayor Barraza: revenue projections have not been discussed by the Department Heads.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: have looked at reclassifications. Current salaries need to be competitive with neighboring entities. Public Works did receive a \$1.00 increase. Straight across the board may not be correct.

Mayor: Mr. McGillivray made the request upon the recommendation of Trustee Garcia.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: believes it was for all departments.

Mayor Barraza: Trustee Garcia directed the increase to Public Works. It is not fair to give increases to only specific departments. To give Public Works an increase Mr. McGillivray needed to decrease his operational line items.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: need to be creative in creating a new budget. Some departments need it more than others. New hire salaries have been changed due to the experience and knowledge of the individual.

Trustee Garcia: let me correct this, I did ask for a pay increase for everybody. The only thing she asked for was for to add Mr. Lorenzo who was left out. You asked the Board of Trustees for the pay increase, she didn't. You found it in your budget correct, I did not ask that.

Mr. McGillivray: Mr. Astorga was an oversight.

Mayor Barraza: Mr. McGillivray came to the board for an increase.

Mr. McGillivray: no

Mayor Barraza: Trustee Garcia had stated increases would be looked at mid-year.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: Department Heads know what is needed for their department and how to reclassify their staff. Public Works and Officers are low compared to other entities.

Trustee Johnson-Burick: need classification study done. Pay scales are based on responsibility, job descriptions and the rules and duties of the position. We cannot compare Mesilla to the City of Las Cruces or the county. Recommends looking at NMSU students who are working on a degree to do the study. A COLA is what we should be looking at right now.

Mayor Barraza: NMSU students can be looked at for the fall. Agrees looking at a COLA. The City of Las Cruces and the county are giving signing and retention bonuses.

Marshal Salas: the officer that left did get a signing bonus, but he went from \$18 to \$24 an hour with shorter shifts.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: has the Marshal's Department looked at reclassification according to pay?

Marshal Salas: he is looking at.

Trustee Johnson-Burick: does not believe the use of reclassification is correct. We are looking at compensation. Officers being hired at a higher rate than a Sergeant, who has more responsibilities, should not happen.

Mayor Barraza: salaries for the Marshal's Department were set up by the union.

Marshal Salas: that was in 2017.

Mayor Barraza: currently we do not have a union.

Marshal Salas: union renegotiation needs to be addressed. Officers come in at \$15.50 and move up to \$17 after the probation period. There is also a longevity increase every five years. Reviewed his increase recommendations.

Trustee Johnson-Burick: people will not work for \$15 an hour especially when their lives are put in danger every day. We need to be fair to all departments.

Mayor Barraza: all staff are crucial and important to the Town of Mesilla.

Marshal Salas: positions cannot be filled at the current pay rate.

Mayor Barraza: entities all over the state are experiencing the same issue. She understands salaries need to be increased but also, there is only so much revenue.

Marshal Salas: suggested requesting surplus money from the state as other entities have done.

Mayor Barraza: was unaware monies were available. The City of Las Cruces received some of those monies.

Trustee Garcia: I totally agree with the whole thing. What's the worst thing, they tell us no, we bring it back and we adjust it. That's the worst that can happen, we send it out if the state tells us no then we adjust it. We ask the state.

Marshal Salas: we won't know if we do not try.

Trustee Garcia: exactly. We are at \$2 million, if we go up to \$2.5 or \$3 million, we send it out and it is sent back then we adjust it.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: understands this hurts morale.

Mayor Barraza: looks at the whole picture, also there are project matches.

Marshal Salas: vehicle repair and maintenance is an issue, needs to be a rotating schedule.



Mayor Barraza: all departments are important.

Trustee Cadena: asked about the surplus and recurring expenses and if the reserve fund can be used. Recommends only having what is required by the state in the reserve fund.

Mayor Barraza: the reserve cannot be used for recurring expenses. Three years of expenditures are reflected in the budget presentation.

Trustee Cadena: some departments over spent and some under spent.

Trustee Johnson-Burick: a need to fix the situation in the Marshal's Department and entry level salaries as minimum wage is increasing.

Mr. McGillivray: Public Works is not where we need to be even with the increase that they were given. A pay scale is much needed. Do we not fill positions in order to give raises?

Mayor Barraza: the minimum wage will go up to \$13.50 for next year.

Ms. Maya stated she believes the increase, across the board, should be a dollar amount and not a percentage. This will help morale. Everyone is valued and is an asset to the town.

Mayor Barraza stated every employee has additional duties and does whatever is needed to help the town. The town currently pays 80% of benefits for employees under five years of service and 90% for employees over five years of service.

Trustee Johnson-Burick: reviewed the county's benefits.

Mayor Barraza: there is a need for increases in property tax and water rates. Does not feel it right to set the budget at \$3 million and then we have to cut back. She does not want to have to cut employee hours ever again. The last 14 years have been conservative; and we have been on track. We will have so much money, how will it be allocated.

Trustee Garcia: so why can't we do this, each department head asks for what they are wishing for. They give us three different numbers. If the Marshal wants three, two, one and Rod wants one, two; give them to Gloria, let her crunch the numbers. That would be an option, we can look at it. Right now, we do not have a number. Why can't we just give her numbers, punch them in and see what the dollar amount is. That would be three options. We have always looked at percentage never done a dollar amount. We always forget it is not a pay increase it is a Cost of Living. Rod said 5%, then 7% (inaudible) So let's go with the dollar, punch them in, bring them to the table and let's take a look at them. We're going around and around and around; it's not going to get anywhere. I think it is the best way of doing it.

Marshal Salas: his proposal includes a \$5 increase

Trustee Garcia: he does not have the benefits included. This way we know exactly. I just think that is the best option.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: she does not think any department is less important. Department Heads need to tell us what their needs are.

Mayor Barraza: those numbers are in the department request before you. Ms. Maya suggested looking at the costs for \$1, \$2, \$3 increases.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: concerned with giving a dollar amount across the board and the responsibilities of the departments.

Mayor Barraza: inaudible

Trustee Garcia: each department should put in the dollar amount they are requesting for their department.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: explain why they are requesting that increase amount.

Inaudible

Mayor Barraza: a study that will cost around \$100,000 can be put into the budget.

Trustee Johnson-Burick: believes a study will cost \$50,000.

Mayor Barraza: Chapter 18 study will cost no less than \$65,000.

Inaudible

Mayor Barraza: put aside \$100,000 for the study and Trustee Garcia recommended that we look at the costs of a \$1, \$2, \$3 increase.

Trustee Garcia: we've been talking about this for about two years now. Said that as an example, what I'm saying each department should put in the dollar that they are requesting for their department. Gloria put in the numbers.

Inaudible

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: departments should submit the numbers needed for their department to ensure employees are paid per responsibilities.

Trustee Garcia: also the \$5 increase with benefits for the Marshal's Department.



**MONDAY, APRIL 24, 2023 – 6:00 PM**  
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

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

**STAFF:** Rod McGillivray, Public Works Director  
Enrique Salas, Marshal  
Gloria Maya, Town Clerk/Treasurer/Recorder

**PUBLIC:**

Catherine Walkinshaw	Paul Germani
Russell Hernandez	Andy Embury
Andrea Bryan	Greg Lester
Ruben Quintana	Richard Moreno
Jasha Zapien	Rose Sherman
Susan Krueger	Mary H Ratje
Trina Witter	Stewart Oberman
S Nolen	

**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 Merrick, Trustee Cadena, Trustee Garcia, Trustee Johnson-Burick.

**3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA & APPROVAL**

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

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

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick Yes

Trustee Cadena Yes

Trustee Garcia Yes

Trustee Johnson-Burick Yes

**4. PUBLIC INPUT – The public is invited to address the Board as allowed by the chair.**

Mr. Lester thanked Ms. Walkinshaw for organizing the Earth Day Clean Up.

Mr. Hernandez stated it was a great clean up with a lot of community support. Visit Las Cruces Restaurant Week will be held June 8-18. He will provide more information as it becomes available.

Ms. Krueger stated PZHAC Case #061578 should go back to the PZHAC (Chapter 13) for more public input.

Ms. Witter stated the Ride of Silence will be held on May 17<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Nolen asked if the University Ave. waterline has anything to do with the walking path.

**5. PRESENTATION**

**a) National Bike to School Day Proclamation**

Ms. Curry and students read the National Bike to School Day Proclamation. Stated Mr. McGillivray has been a huge asset to MPO.

Mayor Barraza thanked Ms. Curry.

**b) Day of Prayer Proclamation**

Ms. Wendler read the Day of Prayer Proclamation.

Mr. Wendler thanked the town for their support.

**c) Professional Municipal Clerks Week Proclamation**

Mr. Embury read the Professional Municipal Clerks Week Proclamation.

**6. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:** (The Board will be asked to approve by one motion the following items of recurring or routine business. The Consent Agenda is marked with an asterisk \*)

**a) \*BOT MINUTES** - Minutes of Regular Meeting, April 10, 2023

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

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

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick Yes  
Trustee Cadena Yes  
Trustee Garcia Yes  
Trustee Johnson-Burick Yes

**7. STAFF REPORTS**

**a) University Ave. Waterline Replacement Project – RJM**

Mr. McGillivray gave an update on the University Avenue Waterline Replacement Project award.

**b) CIF 5786 University Waterline Replacement BHI Fee Proposal/Amendment – RJM**

Mr. McGillivray reviewed the proposal/amendment for CIF 5786 University Waterline Replacement BHI Fee.

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

**a) PZHAC CASE #061572 – submitted by Larry Limon, 2810 Calle Principal, requesting approval to replace cement tile roof with corrugated metal. Historical Residential Zone: (HR)**

**Motion: To approve PZHAC CASE #061572 – submitted by Larry Limon, 2810 Calle Principal, requesting approval to replace cement tile roof with corrugated metal. Historical Residential Zone: (HR), Moved by Mayor Pro Tem Merrick, Seconded by Trustee Johnson-Burick.**

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

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick Yes  
Trustee Cadena Yes  
Trustee Garcia Yes  
Trustee Johnson-Burick Yes



- b) PZHAC CASE #061578 – submitted by Celina and William Einig, 2815 Boldt St, requesting approval to install windows at her primary residence and raise the height of a 4- foot rock wall. Zone: Historical Residential (HR)

**Motion: To approve PZHAC CASE #061578 – submitted by Celina and William Einig, 2815 Boldt St, requesting approval to install windows at her primary residence and raise the height of a 4- foot rock wall. Zone: Historical Residential (HR), Moved by Mayor Pro Tem Merrick, Seconded by Trustee Johnson-Burick.**

Trustee Garcia stated Madam Mayor, the question that Mrs. Susan Krueger had, can you clarify that for her about the ordinance. Say it back to her....

Mayor Barraza responded PZHAC had a discussion regarding the windows; referred to the packet. It was approved unanimously.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick asked if it is a historical building. It reads that CID inspected the integrity of the building.

Mayor Barraza responded it is not a historical building. Mr. Maese provided clarification.

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

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick Yes  
Trustee Cadena Yes  
Trustee Garcia Yes  
Trustee Johnson-Burick Yes

- c) For Approval: University Ave Waterline Replacement Project Award – RJM

**Motion: To approve University Ave Waterline Replacement Project Award, Moved by Mayor Pro Tem Merrick, Seconded by Trustee Johnson-Burick.**

Trustee Garcia stated so we have the money the money, we're just going to put it back in. Just wanted to make sure everything was correct. Okay.

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

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick Yes  
Trustee Cadena Yes  
Trustee Garcia Yes  
Trustee Johnson-Burick Yes

- d) For Approval: CIF 5786 University Waterline Replacement BHI Fee Proposal/Amendment - RJM

**Motion: To approve CIF 5786 University Waterline Replacement BHI Fee Proposal/Amendment, Moved by Mayor Pro Tem Merrick, Seconded by Trustee Johnson-Burick.**

Trustee Garcia asked so we're paying that the \$742,000 but it's coming out of Colonias fund, correct.

Mayor Barraza responded that is correct.

Trustee Garcia asked so how much are we having to pay out from the town.

Mr. McGillivray responded \$100,000 was a grant with a 10% payback.

Trustee Garcia asked we're not paying back the grant, or we are paying back the grant.

Mr. McGillivray responded the breakdown is 10% match, 10% loan and 80% grant.

Trustee Garcia responded okay. Thank you, Rod.

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

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick Yes

Trustee Cadena Yes

Trustee Garcia Yes

Trustee Johnson-Burick Yes

#### **9. CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- a) Discussion concerning attorney/client privilege matters pertaining to threatened or pending litigation in which the public body is or may become a participant pursuant to NMSA 1978, Section 10-15-1(H)(7)

**Motion: To enter Closed Session: discussion concerning attorney/client privilege matters pertaining to threatened or pending litigation in which the public body is or may become a participant pursuant to NSA 1978, Section 10-15-1(H)(7), Moved by Mayor Pro Tem Merrick, Seconded by Trustee Garcia.**

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

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick Yes

Trustee Cadena Yes

Trustee Garcia Yes

Trustee Johnson-Burick Yes

Entered Closed Session at 6:35 p.m.

**Motion: To enter Regular Meeting: discussion concerning attorney/client privilege matters pertaining to threatened or pending litigation in which the public body is or may become a participant pursuant to NSA 1978, Section 10-15-1(H)(7) – no action taken, Moved by Trustee Johnson-Burick, Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Merrick.**

Entered Regular Meeting at 7:20 p.m.

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

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick Yes

Trustee Cadena Yes

Trustee Garcia Yes

Trustee Johnson-Burick Yes

#### **10. BOARD OF TRUSTEE COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Trustee Johnson-Burick: MPO Meeting April 12<sup>th</sup>; next MPO Meeting May 10<sup>th</sup> Dona Ana County Building

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: MPO Meeting April 12<sup>th</sup>; next MPO Meeting May 10<sup>th</sup>



Mayor Barraza: MPO Meeting; Finance Clerk Training April 18-21; NMML District Meeting last week; RTD Meeting

#### 11. BOARD OF TRUSTEE/STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Embury stated the new Fire Chief has brought a breath of fresh air to the department. There has been an increase in ambulance service and transports; we look forward to the new ambulance. A new academy will be coming up soon.

Mr. McGillivray stated the new audio system should be delivered in May. The Sidewalk Project will be completed this week.

Marshal Salas stated the ambulance is greatly needed. He apologized for giving the wrong date for the Drug Kick Back; next Drug Kick Back will be in October.

Ms. Maya asked if the \$100,000 for the study would be taken out of all the department's budget.

Mayor Barraza responded it may need to come out of administration/Human Resources. The board will have to put another \$100,000 into the budget. Operating expenses may need to be reduced.

Trustee Garcia stated first of all I think the board would like to feed the employees, May 8<sup>th</sup>, Double Eagle, Buddy Ritter, is providing lunch if any of the board members would like to pitch in. He's only charging us \$30 for the Town of Mesilla. On May 8<sup>th</sup> I'll be picking it up at 11:30 and I'm dropping it off here. I kinda volunteer Mayor Pro Tem...at 12:00 I'll bring it here to the town hall. He's making cheeseburgers with fries and dessert and drinks. He's going to provide all the ...whatever, whatever, whatever.. I'll get it here at 12:00, lunch hour. I'll pick it up at 11:30 and I'll drop it off here at Town Hall. I did ask Dorothy if she could send out an email for me that it's coming from the Board of Trustees and the mayor to tell everyone how much we appreciate their work especially after Cinco de Mayo. They're going to be tired and the last thing they want to do is bring lunch the next day. I would like to keep this going where the Board of Trustees and the mayor to feed the employees to show how we appreciate their hard work and everything.

Mayor Barraza asked if it is \$30 each.

Trustee Garcia responded no, it's \$30 total. He didn't even want to charge us that. He said he would do it for free. She argued with him. It is a \$1 a plate; \$30 for the whole thing. When it comes to our employees, go out there and hug them. Her second one was Mayor Pro Tem but I said let me see what Buddy tells me. I was shocked when he told me. He said he would do it for free, I said no, no, no. He wants to show his appreciation for the staff. He spoke very highly of the employees. I thought that was really generous of him. I signed up for the, next week, the Planning and Zoning training.

Mayor Barraza responded that the registrations are paid, and hotel reservations have been made.

Trustee Garcia stated Kathy, I went to the Earth Day Trash Pickup, I can tell you right now on Highway 28 and Calle de San Albino, Russell picked up every cigarette butt. We went down Highway 28, Calle de Norte, down Calle de San Albino, they left us in the dust but he picked up every single cigarette butt and every single glass he could find. And the public, I only stayed there 45 minutes, I had prior engagements and I saw the pictures that Senator Carrie Hamblen was there. I want to thank them for doing it. When we go down for election you give us 5 minutes to hear us talk. We as the board go in there for 5 minutes. You guys hosted this, and we give it back. It was nice. There was no politic talking. No Canadian game, I got lost when you were trying to explain it; that's probably why I left. But it was nice, it was so respectful, you had Joe across the street with his accordion playing. He was dedicating songs to his wife. The other neighbor came out with her maracas, and she was playing with him. Such a beautiful view to see the community getting together. Like Pat Taylor said, this is the time that we all should be together. And the other inaudible these are the residents, need to pick up trash. I'm not saying Public Works didn't pick up trash because it is beautiful, when you go down the street you see what you see, you know. Parked next to the church, you see them coming out of El Patio or wherever. I think someone found \$6 on the thing, it was fun. You know, you see the community going back up and down the street, very, very beautiful, beautiful. Very well, everyone so well respected each other and that's something we need to keep going. We can't, no one stayed in their separate group, everybody was talking with everybody. It was just a pretty site and I'm sorry that inaudible saw it. For once I was actually quiet just watching it. You know, the 45 minutes inaudible was awesome. Thank



you, and I do hope we continue doing this. The inaudible every year we do it. You know, the inaudible was there, you guys driving up and down to see if our trashes were full, if we need a ride, needed anything. Just a pretty view. I stopped by the drug thing to see if they wanted anything to eat, drink, anything. And at one point there was a line, there was a line to get in. The only thing I can suggest is I'm going to put you guys a sign out on the side street. You know, but, there was a turn out, there was a lot, a lot of people. There was a line, it was nice, you drove up, dropped off your pills, whatever, no questions asked. Your crew was here the other guy was right here. Saturday was just a nice view, beautiful, beautiful, and we should continue it, we should continue doing that. And that's all I have to say and thank you, thank you for bringing the community together. And thank you for doing that for inaudible. Very, very well respected from both sides. That's all I'm saying.

Trustee Cadena thanked Ms. Walkinshaw for doing that. Cinco de May Fiesta is coming up; she will be out of town. Thanked all staff for their hardwork.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick stated she does not respect one department over another; she is open to everyone. She looks at the responsibilities and emotional stress that come with a position. Every department is needed and wanted and does a great job. It is great to see residents and business owners take the initiative to do community projects. Mr. McGillivray gave a great presentation at the MPO Meeting.

Trustee Johnson-Burick thanked Ms. Walkinshaw for organizing the community cleanup.

Mayor Barraza stated the Cinco de Mayo Fiesta will be May 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Sellers has opened up more vendor spaces and decreased the balloon area. PZHAC, Trustee Garcia and herself will be attending a conference in Albuquerque next week. Work is beginning on the John Paul Taylor Museum. She is concerned with the parking situation especially on the weekends.

Trustee Garcia stated isn't that part of the, when they apply for a business, they have to have parking.

Mayor Barraza responded yes and there is a need to look at increasing parking fees. A budget worksession will need to be scheduled.

Trustee Garcia stated I'm sorry, I have like two questions, is Rani still helping us with the budget, I could of sworn I saw... is she still on payroll.

Mayor Barraza responded no.

Trustee Garcia stated but we are still getting help from Rani. Okay, my second question is, you're real good about sending out a newsletter at the end of the year, we didn't get one this year.

Mayor Barraza responded we are looking at sending out a newsletter in June.

Trustee Garcia stated we need to increase the stamps.

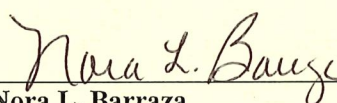
Mayor Barraza stated we are very fortunate that Ms. Bush has volunteered to finish the changes she had started.

## 12. ADJOURNMENT

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

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:52 P.M.

APPROVED THIS 22<sup>ND</sup> DAY OF May, 2023.

  
Nora L. Barraza  
Mayor





ATTEST:

*Gloria S. Maya*

Gloria S. Maya  
Town Clerk/Treasurer

