

Town of Mesilla, New Mexico

REVISED

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

THURSDAY, MAY 25, 2023 AT 3:00 P.M.

(BOT MEETING IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING WORKSESSION)

WORKSESSION MINUTES

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

STAFF: Ben Azcarate, Lieutenant
Greg Whited, Fire Chief
Donald Toomey, Judge
Gloria Maya, Recorder

Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget – Nora Barraza, Mayor

Mayor Barraza reviewed the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget.

Mayor Barraza stated the Finance Department has not changed. The board commented they wanted to keep the court budget the same as the previous year at \$87,567. Needs guidance from the board as to how they want to proceed.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: we're all in agreement for that, right.

Mayor Barraza: if she recalls correctly yes.

Trustee Garcia: may I ask you a question, with the pay increase for Ramona, we have to budget for it or does she come out of the General Fund.

Mayor Barraza: she comes out of the General Fund. It is more than \$2.00

Trustee Garcia: her's is \$3.00. So there is not an increase in personnel then.

Inaudible

Mayor Barraza: the report given to the board from Judge Toomey is for July, 2022 to present. The total does not reflect what is paid out.

Trustee Garcia: asked why the Judge wants an increase.

Judge Toomey: he has never asked for an increase in his salary.

Mayor Barraza: prisoner care comes out from a different budget, not even the court. A question was asked of me, could you eliminate the bailiff. I heard you say...

Judge Toomey: he will be here only during court.

Mayor Barraza: normally if you have court in session, do you have an officer here from our department.

Judge Toomey: we do not, they are here if they are involved in a trial.

Mayor Barraza: if you do an arraignment, is the officer here.

Judge Toomey: yes, the bailiff is here during an arraignment, usually the Marshal's Department is not present.

Mayor Barraza: when is the Marshal's Department present, Ben.

Lieutenant Azcarate: at prisoner transport and during trials. Once he gets another SRO he can cover the court.

Mayor Barraza: can we arrange to have an officer during court, to do away with the bailiff and free up some of the money.

Judge Toomey: that is fine with him, but the state requires him to have somebody here for security purposes.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: she asked the mayor how they can save money by having someone that works here present.

Judge Toomey: there are currently two unfilled positions.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: Ben, so it would be an SRO.

Mayor Barraza: what it is our current SRO is covering, you all know that Deputy Garcia left. We haven't filled that position. It is summertime so we'll be okay cause school is not in session. The SRO was pulled to cover Deputy Garcia's shift. Deputy Baca is at the academy and will be back in October. Ben is scheduling an interview for the one vacancy. If the budget is approved we will have another vacancy starting in July.

Lieutenant Azcarate: if we hire..inaudible

Mayor Barraza: he can come in and do the bailiff thing, how often is that.

Judge Toomey: half days on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, it's rare that we do the four hours.

Trustee Cadena: is that the thing to do instead of people out on the streets.

Lieutenant Azcarate: we have coverage.

Trustee Cadena: she would rather pay the money.

Trustee Garcia: hold on, hold on – explain what the SRO officer is and the two officers on duty.

Lieutenant Azcarate: described the SRO duties. The SRO is required to be at the school in morning, noon and after school.

Trustee Cadena: she works at the school, very familiar with SROs.

Inaudible

Trustee Cadena: she is only asking for the safety of the Town of Mesilla, she would rather have them patrolling.

Lieutenant Azcarate: the officer has all this (showed his vest).

Trustee Cadena: you're the expert, I'm just asking the question. She does not want the Marshal's to be short.

Lieutenant Azcarate: we will be fine.

Judge Toomey: she does not want the board to nitpick over what is \$50 a week.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: that is \$8,000 which could be used for indigent care.

Judge Toomey: budget could be \$8,000 but it is no more than \$50 a week.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: those are actuals, \$6,000.

Judge Toomey: now we are talking about only when court is in session.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: that still \$6,000 that could go somewhere else. I think...

Judge Toomey: it won't be \$6,000 since court is not in session that long.

Inaudible

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: how much time do we have left in this budget.

Mayor Barraza: we have about six weeks.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: so you said six weeks and you said \$50 a week...

Inaudible

Judge Toomey: it only when court is in session.

Trustee Cadena: and when did you change that.

Judge Toomey: just May.

Trustee Cadena: so the hours will go down since you changed the process.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: the actuals don't change.

Trustee Cadena: they do. The bailiff was coming in five hours a day Monday through Friday. In May, this month, he changed it...He went from fifteen hours a week to four hours a week.

Judge Toomey: because of budget consideration.

Trustee Cadena: are you happy with the Marshals.

Judge Toomey: I'm happy with the Marshals.

Mayor Barraza: could we do a compromise, can we try using the Marshal's Department to cover the bailiff, as a pilot program, just a couple of the weeks, to see if it works. If it doesn't we can go back. If the board is okay and the judge is on board they can work it out.

Judge Toomey: he is okay with that.

Mayor Barraza: we do have an exit. How do you all want us to handle the budget? We can try it for a couple of weeks and if it works it's a savings for the court. The judge did talk to her about cutting Joe's hours. If the board is okay with that, let's give it a try and if it doesn't we'll go back.

Trustee Garcia: if we keep him at the same budget that means Ramona does not get an increase.

Mayor Barraza: she would.

Trustee Garcia: so if we left it at the \$87,000, including her pay increase and everything and we're still fair...

Mayor Barraza: he will have a savings in the agreements. You will have to make an adjustment in the operating expenses. Judge, you will need to make an adjustment in your operating expenses of \$5,423.00

Judge Toomey: operating expenses include the telephone, paper, pens, staples, etc.

Trustee Garcia: we won't have the bailiff anymore, the contract. That will give you \$7,700. We won't have to ... your expenses.

Inaudible

Judge Toomey: does not see where he can cut and still...

Mayor Barraza: what is in agreements and contracts.

Inaudible

Mayor Barraza: don't think they are being reimbursed.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: there is some wiggle room.

Trustee Garcia: what is Other Expenses, it's like negative 20.

Inaudible

Mayor Barraza: there was no bailiff at that time.

Inaudible

Ms. Maya: Other Expenses includes the bailiff, copier, Tyler.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: the bailiff was thrown into the Other Expenses. We need to keep it at \$87,567, if we do the trail for \$7,700; he should be fine at the \$87,567.

Trustee Garcia: sit with Ramona and Gloria to see what the agreements and contracts are.

Ms. Maya: Ms. Molina knows what agreements and contracts the court has.

Mayor Barraza: he currently has enough money to cover him till the rest of the year. Does the board want to increase it to put money in other areas?

Trustee Garcia: can I ask you for your personal opinion.

Mayor Barraza: it is up to you, I will do whatever you want.

Trustee Cadena: the raise is covered, that is what he is asking for. What he is requesting is covered in the current budget, so we just leave it.

Mayor Barraza: it will be left at \$87,567. The Marshal's Department is requesting a new officer.

Trustee Garcia: increase in agreements and contracts.

Mayor Barraza: MVRDA increased their agreement, the new company setup, and Danny Garcia.

Trustee Garcia: asked what Uniform Donations is.

Lieutenant Azcarate: donations from Lions Club or VFWs for uniforms for the CSI.

Inaudible

Trustee Garcia: is Michelle coming out of Animal Control.

Mayor Barraza: coming out of salaries.

Lieutenant Azcarate: Animal Control is for supplies, training, and bills that come from the county.

Inaudible

Trustee Cadena: what is for the insurance for.

Ms. Maya: Worker's Compensation, Vehicle Insurance, Property Insurance – billed from the state.

Trustee Garcia: what is the transfer out for SRO town portion.

Mayor Barraza: 25% is paid through the town, 75% is the Las Cruces Public Schools portion.

Inaudible

Mayor Barraza: the salary difference was put into operating expenses. The truck payment is being placed into stipends since it is paid off.

Fire Chief Whited: stipends are based on a point system for attendance and training.

Inaudible

Trustee Garcia: check on EBID taxes.

Inaudible

Ms. Maya: asked the board if they received her email regarding Ms. Sellers.

Trustee Garcia: if it is once a year thing, are we coming back next year adding it back in there.

Ms. Maya: Ms. Sellers would get it every year since it is a stipend if she is doing the task.

Mayor Barraza: it would need to be approved at the next budget.

Trustee Garcia: what is your opinion Mayor Pro Tem. Trustee Cadena said she is okay with it.

Inaudible

Trustee Garcia: the fiesta we always hear it's a team effort, team effort; I don't like to hear... so it is not just one person. You've said several times in the board room, it's a team effort when the fiesta pulls off.

Ms. Maya: she does all the planning....

Trustee Garcia: hold on one second. I am not one to take credit for anything and I will not take credit for anything. And a conversation between me and somebody it stays within me and somebody. You know if they ask for help I have no problem helping out. If we don't have events I have no problem looking for stuff, call this person, call that person, call this person. And I'm very grateful that she's kept everything, you know, and this was previously before till now. So showing improvement on what the fiestas have been going through it is nice to see.

Inaudible

Trustee Garcia: so I can say when she first started, you know in the last minutes, I told her call the school, call this call that. Here's this number I gave contacts. Now this past year the year before, you know, here and there. Like I said I am not one to get credit, I don't care. I'm... but I'll say a million times, everything is a team effort, that's what we have been told all year around. Team effort we just gotta remember that. Let's put that to aside and let's talk about the extra duties she has done, for this person has done, if she's done extra duties. And I give you ... for actually and all department heads for sticking as Judge Toomey... this person deserves more. And you and I don't get along and I'll say that on record. I give you for sticking up for your employee. She is doing this, she's gone over and beyond of her job. Giving a \$3,000 stipend I have no problem with it for one reason, because you are sticking up for your employee. Does that make sense?

Ms. Maya: yes

Trustee Garcia: I'm not saying that based on fiesta or job duties, I'm not basing that on any of that, because we have to remember, team effort, we've heard it from you and heard it from the mayor.

Ms. Maya: you will hear it from other employees. Ms. Sellers ...

Inaudible

Trustee Garcia: making the performance from whatever comes out of team effort. Now we're talking about the over and beyond duties that she does, in IT, that's what your saying.

Ms. Maya: her IT knowledge...

Inaudible

Trustee Garcia: all I know is plug and unplug, now I can go to that server and blah, blah, blah, my bosses don't even know it. You ask me now, I don't know I just hit F2, F3 ... and I'm done. It does take time, I'm there at 5 in the morning, I'm there at 7 at night, I'm there at midnight trying fixing those servers. Inaudible I have no problem, 1) you're for sticking up for your staff member and I appreciate that 2) if she went over and beyond her job duties yes, we need to recognize that. And the only reason I say that is because my boss took me into his and like I said it wasn't for me being in trouble for once. It for how much ... I've done and I'm getting a pay increase that I'm getting. The \$3,000 I don't mind it but it's up to you guys. I mean I'm basing it on going over and beyond. Not her job duties, just going over and beyond. That's her point.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: I'm going to be the bad guy but I'm not trying to be and it is not personal. I'm very number oriented and duty oriented, I've always been like that. That's how I run my business,

that's how I see things in general. I've never and I know it sounds like we're personally attacking Dorothy but I'm not because everything I've said in this board room, her and I have talked in depth, conversations about it. I'm forward, I don't say anything when someone is not here. I tell them personally and that is based off conversations her and I have had. So when we talk about giving her that \$5 increase I didn't agree because what she is doing is separate from her duties that she currently has. So in my opinion the stipend was the right way to go because she is doing extra. It's just a lot of questions that I have. Who did IT before and it was our clerk. It that our clerk's duties and that the other thing, do we need to find somebody and this is just me being long term not just short term. Do we need to find somebody that is tech savvy, or should that be added to her job duties? And then we can reevaluate pay because nowadays it's all about technology. We are in the age everything, anything we send out...facebook when we advertise these things. That's one of the biggest, biggest way to reach a giant community. And with that comes our website and that kind of stuff. She really understands the time it takes to get this tech done. It's not an easy job, it's a lot harder. Statistics that go with it especially to see all the numbers, to see how that works and how it doesn't work. So I, and in no way, and I told her too personally I wasn't attacking her and she said no these are conversations that her and I have had. Just in passing at fiestas, we talk at fiestas as we walk around, how can we make this better. Granted this is limited as to what the town has elected to do. But again that's a team effort, trying to make things bigger, better; crowd control. But I have sat with her so I don't like ... the problem without a solution. I just, its, I'm comfortable with the \$2,000; I, because of the tasks she does and that's not to eliminate any of the job or how well she's being doing it. I do agree with the stipend but I feel this is something we can reevaluate, so we can adjust her pay next year to determine what she's worth. I mean, not what's she's worth, like in the job description she's doing. Cause that's what we based it on. We base pay off the job description, how much ... that's what I meant. Not personally or how she's doing.

Ms. Maya: the board needs to look at the person and what they are doing and not the name Dorothy. My intention for the stipend is for IT tasks. I don't know what we would have done when the server went down if she had not stepped up to the plate.

Trustee Garcia: In all honesty, Ms. Gloria, have you ever called IT after hours and what they charge an hour.

Ms. Maya: we couldn't afford it.

Trustee Garcia: you couldn't afford it. We call ours on a Saturday and it took me half a day..\$1,000 down and \$500 an hour. IT is very, it's either going to make you or break you, we need it. I just think we put the \$3,000 and we redo the job description, are we going to put IT on there?

Mayor Barraza: I agree IT is very expensive. To be available when we need them, when we are in crisis mode, we need someone like right now. Our server is maxed out, we are working with DSI on a quote for a new server. Some of the American Act money will be used to replace the server. Early this week the server maxed out, no one could do anything, copy machine stopped printing. This can be very disastrous. An individual came forth, managed to open up space on the server so staff could continue doing what needed to be done. It took away from her duties to come and take care of the problem we were experiencing. Currently we are short staff in the front office, she is taking time from her duties to take payments, answer the phone, and directing people. She gets behind in what she needs to do to help Gloria, Briana as well has stepped up to the plate. She never hesitates or says no. We could hire another person to everything she is doing at a much higher rate. What Gloria is asking for is very minimal.

Trustee Garcia: I'm basing it off of when an IT guy is called. The \$3,000 is still small, I just think, also on her reports she can justify the \$3,000 by adding that to her monthly report. Did this, did this justifying what she did. Putting on her report, I did this, I worked on server, it will pay off.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: That's her other question how many hours has she done IT solely.

Mayor Barraza: in the last two weeks I can't tell you how many hours daily she has done. This individual is now the contact person for DSI.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: and does DSI charge us every time she calls them.

Ms. Maya: we are on a contract service agreement with DSI.

Individual

Mayor Barraza: Gloria is not into technology, I'm not into technology so we have to rely on the younger person who understands it and knows what to do in certain situations. She is very supportive and helpful with other departments.

Inaudible

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: Inaudible I'm not saying she has not done her job. I'm one that bases it on description and a number person. I don't know how many hours she worked, I don't have.. It makes me uncomfortable and I don't have enough data. Does that make sense? It's not toward the person at all, I'm just...

Trustee Garcia: would you be comfortable if she put on her monthly reports, I worked on...

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: the whole, reevaluate that she is paid for the work she is doing. I think it should be reevaluated. They agree with \$3,000, I don't but again it's just a number. She doesn't mind reevaluating what she does, she is very by the book especially if she's doing it let's pay her for that. I'm okay with the \$2,000 but they like the \$3,000, I'm okay with that.

Mayor Barraza: does not believe it should go on the monthly report that is an internal thing. This person is doing what is on her job description. This person is going beyond that in addressing the needs that we have here. She does not want to add IT to that position. We can sit down and reevaluate and if we need to hire an IT person that can be done separately. We are trying to compensate her for what she has done to go beyond her call of duty. And let her know she is appreciated.

Trustee Garcia: let me ask you a question, is it just this one person that is working in the front since we are shorthanded.

Mayor Barraza: Briana helps as well. This has been a unique situation since we are short-staffed.

Trustee Garcia: there's more people helping out, that part I don't see fair.

Mayor Barraza: Briana is the Deputy so it is inline with her job description.

Trustee Garcia: so if we're pulling.. Inaudible

Mayor Barraza: it is very rare when we have to bring Dorothy in.

Inaudible

Mayor Barraza: once we get passed budget it won't be so bad.

Trustee Cadena: I trust that the mayor knows what we need to do to move forward. Staff is putting out fires.

Trustee Garcia: when the Marshal's Department asked for \$5.00 you said no. So just be careful when we're saying something and then we're giving someone a pay increase. I don't mind the \$3,000, I'm going based off the IT which is very expensive.

Ms. Maya: we are looking at the IT piece.

Inaudible

Trustee Garcia: get a contract locally and not in Albuquerque. I hope you come up with one, this how much it is going to cost to do our server, like that.

Mayor Barraza: DSI has worked well for us, familiar with the Incode program. The server is full, in the process of getting the quote to update the server. FYI, she did send out an email to NMML asking for salary schedules and job descriptions. We see what goes on here on a daily basis, she will do whatever to get the job done. When you see someone going on beyond the call of duty...we will make the change from \$2,080 to \$3,000.

Inaudible

Mayor Barraza: unexpected emergencies do arise in old buildings as well as the plaza.

Inaudible

Trustee Cadena: maybe she should have not said anything.

Trustee Garcia: would keep the same 2022-2023 budget and the \$5,000 for utilities.

Trustee Cadena: take the money from utilities. If an emergency arises money can be pulled from somewhere.

Mayor Barraza: money would need to come from another department's budget. The difference is \$2,950, deduct from utilities \$2,950 making it \$22,050.

Trustee Garcia: where does the money from Community Center and Plaza rentals go.

Mayor Barraza: money goes into General Fund.

Trustee Garcia: do they pay utilities.

Mayor Barraza: we are looking at increasing the rentals.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: calculate utilities on square footage.

Mayor Barraza: Fire Department pays utilities but does not pay rent. Rollovers will be looked at during the final budget.

Inaudible

Mayor Barraza: working on Court Bond balances.

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: some budgets lines are padded due to the revenue sources.

Trustee Cadena: asked about the \$84,000. It had to come from somewhere to cover the deficit.

Inaudible

Trustee Cadena: budgets the entire amount of what is sent by the state, spends everything received.

Inaudible

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick: asked where the money will come from for employees receiving a \$500 stipend.

Mayor Barraza: monies will come from the line item they are paid from. The stipends that have been added to the hourly pay cannot be taken away. Starting July 1st those stipends will be paid separately.

Trustee Garcia: there is not a budget for a stipend in the Marshal's Department.

Mayor Barraza: we will be looking at the employee's files to verify the stipends. That information will be brought forth to the trustees in July.

Trustee Garcia: give a deadline to anyone requiring a certification.

Inaudible

Mayor Barraza: by law pay cannot be lowered. Moving forward stipends will not be incorporated into the hourly rate.

Inaudible

Worksession ended at 5: 30 p.m.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
MINUTES
5:30 p.m.

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

STAFF: Ben Azcarate, Lieutenant
Greg Whited, Fire Chief
Donald Toomey, Judge
Gloria Maya, Recorder

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.

3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA & APPROVAL

Motion: To approve agenda, Moved by Trustee Garcia, Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Merrick.

Roll Call Vote: Motion passed (summary: Yes =3).

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick Yes

Trustee Cadena Yes

Trustee Garcia Yes

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

No Public Input

5. NEW BUSINESS

a) Presentation: Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget

Mayor Barraza presented Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget

Trustee Garcia asked if the board will get an update on stipends at the final budget.

Mayor Barraza responded the final budget presentation will include an update on the stipends and any carryovers will be incorporated into the budget.

b) Approval: Interim Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget

Motion: Approval: Interim Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget, Moved by Mayor Pro Tem Merrick, Seconded by Trustee Garcia.

Trustee Garcia asked that once the budget is completed; work will begin on job descriptions.

Mayor Barraza stated changes will be incorporated into the final budget that is submitted to the state.

Trustee Garcia asked that the changes discussed in worksession be verbatim.

Roll Call Vote: Motion passed (summary: Yes =3).

Mayor Pro Tem Merrick Yes

Trustee Cadena Yes

Trustee Garcia Yes

Trustee Johnson-Burick Yes

6. ADJOURNMENT

The Town of Mesilla Trustees unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting. (Summary: Yes-3).

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 5:38 P.M.

APPROVED THIS 12th DAY OF JUNE, 2023.

Nora L. Barraza

Nora L. Barraza
Mayor

ATTEST:

Gloria S. Maya

Gloria S. Maya
Town Clerk/Treasurer

