

TOWN OF SILVER CITY
REGULAR COUNCIL WORK SESSION
GRANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATION CENTER, 1400 HWY. 180 E., SILVER CITY, NM
April 25, 2023, 5:00 p.m.

Members Present:

Ken Ladner, Mayor
Lucian Farmer, Councilor District 1
Nicholas Prince, Councilor District 2
Jose A. Ray, Jr., Councilor District 3
Guadalupe Cano, Councilor District 4

Others present:

James Marshall, Assistant Town Manager
Jim Reynolds, Town Attorney
Alfred Sedillo, Town Clerk
Freddie Portillo, Chief of Police

1. CALL TO ORDER - Mayor Ladner called meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND SALUTE TO NEW MEXICO STATE FLAG - Mayor Ladner invited the public to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and Salute to the New Mexico State Flag.

Mayor Ladner welcomed the City Administration, Law Enforcement and members of the community.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Mayor Ladner asked for a motion for approval of agenda. Councilor Prince motioned approval of Work Session agenda. Councilor Farmer seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

3. DISCUSSION:

A. Bring forth names to create a committee for hiring of a Town Manager and further discussion of hiring a Town Manager. Mayor Ladner stated there were names to be brought to the meeting to create a committee to create a job description for hiring the next Town Manager. Councilor Farmer stated he felt it should be up to the next Councilor appointed to District One (1) to bring forth names for the Committee. Councilor Farmer did not have any names.

Councilor Prince agreed with Councilor Farmer and did have names for the Committee. Councilor Prince has spoken to his constituents and citizens asking what will things look like especially with transparency. Having the Committee there can be public input and getting more professional advice beyond the capacity of what we have now as a Town Council. Also, there can be transparent discussion for the people they do not meet with over the next eighteen (18) months that way they will be able to make people feel good about how the process is going.

Councilor Cano stated she had names for the Committee and feels it would be good to start speaking about the name that are being presented as they wait for the appointment of the new Councilor. Councilor Cano stated the people she had asked are willing to go to meetings to give their input and participate in any way they can. She stated one (1) person was from District four (4) and the others were not and feels her list is pretty diverse.

Councilor Ray agreed with his fellow Councilors, but would like to see between three (3) or five (5) names and would like them to be ordinary citizens because they work for them in lieu of someone that is prominent in the community. He feels by asking ordinary citizens, they will feel part of the community by getting involved and have a sense of security within the Town Council. Councilor Ray had a couple of names. Councilor Ray reiterated having between three (3) and five (5) names for the Committee.

Councilor Cano asked if it was three (3) to five (5) total? Councilor Ray stated no, for each Councilor. The Council stated that five (5) each Councilor was already the agreement.

Councilor Prince stated one of his constituents in his district is Western New Mexico University where he would like to tap into some of the expertise of the teachers and student body. Councilor Prince would like to make sure the schedule of meetings to work for everyone on the committee to attend the meetings.

Councilor Cano read her list of names starting with the person from District four (4) Jack Howell stating his background of a former educator and a four (4) time Hall of Famer at Western New Mexico University, a lifelong resident, the leader of the Alumni Association for many years and extremely good at hiring and firing. The other four (4) names not in District four (4) are Mick Smith who is involved with the Grant County Community Foundation and several nonprofits. She attends most of the Council Meetings and she feels she has a firm hand on where the Community is headed. Given that we are on Apache land Councilor Cano would like to have an indigenous person on the Committee and would like to have Joe Saenz on the Committee. Mr. Saenz would bring a lot of leadership ability as he leads his tribe and would also bring a lot of valued information. Councilor Cano would also like to see Anthony Verovich on the Committee, he is a life long resident of Silver City. He is a young person with a young family with a child in elementary, middle and high school and a very successful coach. Coaches can often times pinpoint leadership qualities necessary to run an organization and he could represent the coaches who have shown in the past years that they really want to be involved in the Town. Councilor Cano's final name is someone everyone knows, Fred Baca the President of Grant County Senior Olympics a career educator who has taught a lot of leaders in this Town including herself and Lieutenant Governor Howie Morales and is involved in many other things in the community and is a member of LULAC. Councilor Cano stated her list is pretty representative of the Town and they will all be considered.

Councilor Ray stated he had spoken to two (2) people, Wendy Phillips who lives at the Trailhead on Spring Street near Boston Hill. The second person was Ronald Ortega a lifelong resident of Silver City, both of them do things Councilor Ray like and they speak to a lot of people. Councilor Ray has two (2) other people in mind, he has not yet asked them.

Councilor Prince stated he had some of the same names Councilor Cano had on her list and felt they would be good choices and is waiting for a couple of people to get to him. Councilor Prince would love to fill in the gaps with working teachers, Public Officials and local business leaders in the community. Once his list is complete, he will get it to the Mayor and Council.

Councilor Farmers stated Mick Smith was a wonderful choice, she attends the Council meeting frequently and has the beat of the Town down. In District One (1) Councilor Farmer would like to see small businesses like Silver Power Sports which is a thriving local small business and looking to expand. Councilor Farmer stated he would reach out to the owner. He would also like to see an advertisement for those who do not orbit in these circles could see what is happening and could sign up.

Mayor Ladner stated he did not look at any District in particular, he looked at Silver City as a whole. One name was Mattie Eagle, she has been a resident for twenty (20) years with two (2) children. She has worked on the Penny Park Project and has owned a business in Silver City and is now a CPA working remotely for her home. The next person is Romeo Cruz who has a handle in the business community, he is the Director of the Silver City Chamber of Commerce. Susie Trujillo also a long-time resident of Silver City and is active in many community organizations and other activities including the committee to plan and get funding and building of Tu Casa. While at Gila Regional Medical Center, she was instrumental bringing the Cancer Center to the hospital. George Carr is a retired attorney, participates in numerous community organizations and activities. He also volunteers with KURU Radio Station. Mayor Ladner's final name is Gail Stanford a long-time Silver City resident, she also has served on many organizations including serving on the Silver City School Board, ACLU and others.

Councilor Cano stated she did not know when Mayor Ladner spoke to Romeo Cruz, she had spoken to him the day before and he stated he was not interested. Mayor Ladner advised he had spoken to him today. Councilor Cano stated she knew the reason why, but did not say it publicly. Councilor Cano stated she felt it was a really good start.

Councilor Farmer asked if it is worth discussing the structure and blue print if the committee is going to meet once a week, once a month, once a quarter for an hour. Councilor Cano stated, probably a couple of meetings. They do not want to prolong the process of the job description committee, because there will be the search committee. Councilor Farmer asked when there would be a kick off meeting? Councilor Cano stated if the committee would not be selected until the end of May, then probably it would be July.

Mayor Ladner stated he would like to wait until they have a full Council before making any major decisions.

Mayor Ladner asked if there were any more comments? Seeing none he adjourned the meeting at 5:19 pm. Councilor Cano stated he had skipped item B. Mayor Ladner thought Councilor Farmer had spoken on the subject. Mayor Ladner proceeded to continue onto item B Councilor Cano advised according to Parliamentary Procedures, he had to go back into session before discussing item B. Council again advised Mayor Ladner he had to go back into session. Councilor Farmer asked Town Attorney Jim Reynolds if Mayor Ladner had to go back into session before proceeding to item B. Mr. Reynolds advise yes. Mayor Ladner called the meeting back into session.

B. Direction the Town Government is headed – Councilor Prince stated as a new member to the Council catching up on the City’s strategic plan a number of them have not been looked at in about ten (10) to fifteen (15) years or maybe twenty (20) years there are some that are still ongoing. Councilor Prince advised there are a few more strategic plans in the works and would like to discuss the direction of where the Town Government is headed.

Councilor Ray stated the Town is going in the right direction with things that will be happening this year, like public meetings for the new swimming pool and upcoming events that will be coming up in the next few months.

Councilor Farmer stated he agreed with the Council, his perspective with the Green Energy transition and the lack of copper mines coming on board it looks good for the mines for the next decade or two (2). The global demand for copper is going up which has faired well for our town keeping people employed and bringing in tax dollars. Growing the tourism industry which was a big loss during Covid and now is coming roaring back is good to see. Councilor Farmer feels that Silver City is a multi-piler town, with the University, hospital, mining the outdoors and tourism they all have to be taken into account. Councilor Frammer feels the Town has a great future.

Councilor Ray stated Freeport McMoran has always support the City and with their help the City is headed in the right direction.

4. MAYORS COMMENTS - NONE

5. ADJOURNEMENT – Mayor Ladner stated this concluded the business of the Town of Silver City Work Session. Meeting adjourned at 5:24 p.m.

/s/ _____

Ken Ladner, Mayor

Attest:

/s/ _____

Alfred Sedillo, Town Clerk