

Elia Garcia
Mayor
Rene Rodriguez
At Large
Cesar Nevarez
District 1 / Mayor Pro Tem



Ralph Duran
District 2
Victor Perez
District 3
Yvonne Colon-Villalobos
District 4

**SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 8, 2020 @ 6:00 P.M.
VIRTUAL MEETING**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Elia Garcia
Rene Rodriguez
Cesar Nevarez
Ralph Duran
Victor Perez

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Yvonne Colon-Villalobos

STAFF PRESENT:

Adriana Rodarte, City Manager
Olivia Navarro, City Clerk
Jim Martinez (*joined virtually*)

Mayela Granados, Executive Assistsant
Estevan Gonzales, IT Director

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at: 6:19pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance and a Moment of Silence

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Adriana Rodarte.

3. Establishment of Quorum

Quorum was established with five members present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

4. Public Comment

Margarita Perez, Diana Nunez and Jesse Montelongo spoke during Public Comment.

CONSENT AGENDA

5. EXCUSE ABSENT COUNCIL MEMBERS.

OLIVIA NAVARRO

A motion was made by Rene Rodriguez seconded by Ralph Duran to *approve the Consent Agenda*. Motion passed.

Ayes: Rene Rodriguez, Cesar Nevarez, Ralph Duran and Victor Perez

Nays:

Absent: Yvonne Colon-Villalobos

REGULAR AGENDA

MAYOR AND COUNCIL

6. DISCUSSION AND ACTION RE CITY MANAGER CONTRACT AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS.
MAYOR ELIA GARCIA

A motion was made by Ralph Duran seconded by Rene Rodriguez to *approve item number six (6) for discussion*.

Ralph Duran rescinded his motion,

A motion was made by Ralph Duran seconded by Victor Perez to *delete item number six (6)*. Motion passed.

Jesse Montelongo spoke on this item.

Ayes: Rene Rodriguez, Cesar Nevarez, Ralph Duran and Victor Perez

Nays:

Absent: Yvonne Colon-Villalobos

CITY MANAGER

7. DISCUSSION AND ACTION TO REBUTTAL ALLEGATION BEING BROUGHT UP BY MAYOR ELIA GARCIA AGAINST CITY MANAGER ADRIANA RODARTE.
ADRIANA RODARTE

A motion was made by Victor Perez seconded by Rene Rodriguez to *approve item seven for discussion*.

Adriana Rodarte read statement.

An amended motion was made by Victor Perez seconded by Cesar Nevarez to *incorporate the statement (see Exhibit "A") read by Ms. Rodarte to the minutes*.

An amended motion was made by Victor Perez seconded by Cesar Nevarez to *allow the rebuttal (See Exhibit "A") entered into the minutes and nothing was substantiated from these allegations.* Motion passed.

Ayes: Rene Rodriguez, Cesar Nevarez, Ralph Duran and Victor Perez

Nays:

Absent: Yvonne Colon-Villalobos

8. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON ADVICE RECEIVED FROM CITY ATTORNEY IN CLOSED SESSION, AND ACTION TO APPROVE REAL ESTATE TRANSACTION; AUTHORIZE FILING OR SETTLEMENT OF LEGAL ACTION; AUTHORIZE EMPLOYMENT OF EXPERT WITNESSES AND CONSULTANTS, AND EMPLOYMENT OF SPECIAL COUNSEL WITH RESPECT TO PENDING LEGAL MATTERS. ADRIANA RODARTE

9. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON QUALIFICATIONS OF INDIVIDUALS FOR EMPLOYMENT AND FOR APPOINTMENT TO BOARDS & COMMISSIONS, JOB PERFORMANCE OF EMPLOYEES, REAL ESTATE ACQUISITION AND RECEIVE LEGAL ADVICE FROM CITY ATTORNEY REGARDING LEGAL ISSUES AFFECTING THESE MATTERS. ADRIANA RODARTE

10. DISCUSSION AND ACTION REGARDING PENDING LITIGATION AND RECEIVE STATUS REPORT REGARDING PENDING LITIGATION. ADRIANA RODARTE

A motion was made by Ralph Duran seconded by Cesar Nevarez to *delete items eight (8) eight, (9) nine and (10).* Motion passed.

Ayes: Rene Rodriguez, Cesar Nevarez, Ralph Duran and Victor Perez

Nays:

Absent: Yvonne Colon-Villalobos

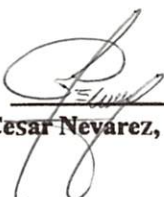
11. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Victor Perez seconded by Ralph Duran to *adjourn at 7:18 pm.* Motion passed.

Ayes: Rene Rodriguez, Cesar Nevarez, Ralph Duran and Victor Perez

Nays:

Absent: Yvonne Colon-Villalobos


Cesar Nevarez, Mayor Pro-Tem

January 7, 2021
Date approved


Olivia Navarro, City Clerk



Elia Garcia
Mayor

Rene Rodriguez
At Large

Cesar Nevarez
District 1 / Mayor Pro-Tem



Ralph Duran
District 2

Victor Perez
District 3

Yvonne Colon - Villalobos
District 4

Adriana Rodarte
City Manager

December 8, 2020

Good evening Mayor and Council,

I want to start by thanking every single one of you for being public servants; I have learned it is not an easy task. I have much respect for the job you do. My next statement is not a reflection on this entire governing body.

This special meeting is a clear act of retaliation for findings that have been brought up to council. It happened back in 2018 and now we are here again 2020. These bullying tactics to suppress staff from speaking out will not work. I will not be silenced! I will make sure that staff and the public feels comfortable bringing up legitimate complaints without being harassed and retaliated against for doing so.

I also want to remind everyone we are in the middle of a pandemic. I have staff members who have lost loved ones and who have battled or currently battling COVID as we speak! That in itself is stressful and now having to deal with this I have no words for it. But, even with these challenges staff shows up every day to provide a service we have not skipped a beat. For example, staff was able to come together and provide this virtual setting in a blink of an eye and this is all due to the talent we have in house. We strive every day to provide the best service to our citizens.

Moving on to the allegations being made against me. Note: it is a false email from an anonymous source please see attached. The only reason I am bringing them forth is because I have nothing to hide and as you know if they are not addressed now, they will eventually be brought up later. So, let me discuss them.

I was hired as the HR Director in 2013. I was then offered the Interim City Manager position from April 2015 through February 2016 without a contract, I was then offered the position of the City Manager position and signed my contract March of 2016 and once again in 2018. In 2020 we were unable to renew my contract since there were two council members that did not attend the meeting at that time. As you can see my hiring agreement has changed several times throughout my employment with the City of Socorro. On March 2, 2020, a motion was made to allow me to stay as city manager which passed by all council members present. It is alleged that I am employed illegally

because of the City Charter requiring a contract. When I have worked without a contract before while interim City Manager. We cannot pick and choose what we want to follow in the Charter. Let us be consistent!

Second item is not disclosing a conflict of interest when paving streets in the Cotton Valley Subdivision. I want to say I do not own any property here in Socorro I am currently renting a home which I do not own just like other City Manager's. I am also not an independent executor of any type of estate or in any will or anything. I have family members, friends, and acquaintance all over Socorro jurisdiction as I have lived here all my life. I am being treated as an elected official when I am not. I do not vote or make decisions on how funds are spent, Council does that, it is one of their most important duties. The Cotton Valley Subdivision has been on several agenda items that have been approved by this council to pave in March 2018, May 2018 May 2020, our Capital Improvement Plan for fiscal year 2019 and Capital Improvement Plan for fiscal year 2020. Mr. Solis who is a resident and a huge advocate for that subdivision has sent out multiple e-mails asking Mayor and District 1 to address his concerns. I attached one of his many emails he has sent out throughout the years.

Thirdly hiring incompetent talent and only people I know and had past relationships with. I am extremely confident of our hiring process. All hiring's are done following Ordinance 186 Amendment no. 5 guidelines. A panel and several different variables are taken into consideration before a hire is made. Before my time here you could see employee's, files that do not even have applications on file. We have implemented **fair** employment practices. All new hire information is available upon an open records request. The City of Socorro has a team that is extremely competent and has made a difference in the way we do business.

There are many flaws to our ordinances policies and procedures due to the years of neglect Socorro has experienced; which is impossible to change overnight but I can tell you for the first time in history we have had continuity and we have made great strides to building a better Socorro. This Governing body has made some tremendous improvements starting with changes to the subdivision ordinance and there are many other items that have improved and are currently being worked on to improve the city. We are making progress and we will continue to work to improve our beautiful city of Socorro. I thank everyone again for your service and time.

Respectfully,



Adriana Rodarte, MBA
City Manager