

MINUTES OF THE CITY OF LAS VEGAS SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, JANUARY 29, 2024 AT 1:30 P.M. IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS.

MAYOR: David Romero

COUNCILORS: Barbara Casey
Michael L. Montoya
David Ulibarri

ALSO PRESENT: Tim Montgomery, Interim City Manager
Casandra Fresquez, City Clerk
Caleb Marquez, Sergeant at Arms

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Romero called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM.

ROLL CALL

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Councilor Ulibarri asked for a moment of silence for all the employees at the City of Las Vegas and for the good job they do. Councilor Ulibarri also asked for a moment of silence for all the citizens in the community.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilor Casey made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Councilor Ulibarri seconded the motion. All were in favor.

City Clerk Fresquez advised the motion carried.

PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public input.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilor Casey made a motion to approve the minutes from January 10, 2024. Councilor Ulibarri seconded the motion.

Councilor Montoya asked about the update regarding the funding at Rodriguez Park that he requested during the January 10th meeting.

Mayor Romero advised that they were on Approval of the Minutes.

Interim City Manager Tim Montgomery advised that he did not have that information available at the moment.

Councilor Montoya asked if the Fire Inspection was done at the Samaritan House that was also stated during the January 10th meeting.

Interim City Manager Montgomery advised that the Fire Inspection was completed and the Samaritan House was in compliance.

Mayor Romero advised there was a motion and a second and asked for roll call. Roll Call Vote was taken and reflected the following:

Michael L. Montoya	Yes	Barbara Casey	Yes
David Ulibarri	Yes		

City Clerk Fresquez advised the motion carried.

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Request approval of a Grant Agreement between the New Mexico Office of the State Engineer and the City of Las Vegas.

Interim City Manager Tim Montgomery advised that the contract would be between the City of Las Vegas and the State of New Mexico. Interim City Manager Montgomery advised that the purpose of the contract was to assist with the Emergency Water Lease Rights that were put in place. Interim City Manager Montgomery further advised that the contract would permit the City of Las Vegas to receive \$2,000,000 from the State of New Mexico to pay for the Emergency Water Rights. Interim City Manager Montgomery advised that they would receive a first installment of \$500,000 to pay for the Water Rights for fiscal year 2023, a second installment of \$1,000,000 for fiscal year 2024 and the contract would conclude in fiscal year 2025 with the remaining installment of \$500,000 for a total of \$2,000,000.

Mayor Romero advised that this was for the actual funding and advised that Councilor Montoya, Interim City Manager Montgomery and himself met with Mr. Domenici last week.

Interim City Manager Montgomery advised that they discussed the intent of the Water Rights versus the water quantity and advised that the State was willing to contribute the \$2,000,000 to pay for the Emergency Water Rights.

Councilor Casey made a motion to approve the Grant Agreement between the New Mexico Office of the State Engineer and the City of Las Vegas. Councilor Ulibarri seconded the motion.

Councilor Montoya advised that he had stated in June of last year that the City of Las Vegas would not use a drop of water by December 31st as per the lease agreement and they didn't. Councilor Montoya advised that he had stated that the treatment plant would be gone by November of last year and it's gone. Councilor Montoya advised that he had stated that it was not an emergency at the time and it still isn't. Councilor Montoya advised that he had asked since day one that all shareholders be included, they were included two weeks ago. Councilor

Montoya stated that on day one he indicated that they would be setting precedence on the price of water per acre foot for future use. Councilor Montoya stated that he stands by his comments and believes as of today there is still 500 acre feet of water at Storrie Lake and the reservoirs are nearly full. Councilor Montoya stated that there is no assurance regarding the quality or quantity of water with the lease agreement for \$2,000,000 and asked what happens after the two year period. Councilor Montoya stated that it's just a band-aid, and since day one he supported a long term solution for 20-30 years of a one time purchase or lease. Councilor Montoya advised that the item was never taken to the Utilities Committee for discussion or recommendation. Councilor Montoya mentioned that he wondered where the media has been for the last eight months because people in the community don't have a clue as to what is going on today and stated the only ones present in the audience were City employees.

Mayor Romero advised there was a motion and second and asked for roll call. Roll Call Vote was taken and reflected the following:

David Ulibarri	Yes	Barbara Casey	Yes
Michael L. Montoya	No		

City Clerk Fresquez advised the motion carried.

Mayor Romero advised for the record the item was for the actual funding. Mayor Romero thanked Council for approving it because if they hadn't he's not sure where the City would have come up with that money.

- 2. Request approval of Out-of-State Travel for Beatriz Gallegos, Animal Care Manager to attend training in Blue Ridge, Texas.

Interim Police Chief Caleb Marquez advised that training would be for the Lost Dog Recovery Workshop and Puppy Development Workshop.

Councilor Montoya asked if it was for travel only and if the training had been paid.

Animal Care Manager Gallegos replied yes and stated the training had been paid.

Councilor Montoya asked who paid for the training.

Animal Care Manager Gallegos advised that given the issues they've had with animals in the community, a lot of people wanted her to attend the training, specifically the Lost Dog Recovery Workshop to help figure out where the packs of dogs in the community are moving to and to help people find their dogs who go missing. Animal Care Manager Gallegos advised that those people gathered donations and paid for the training. Animal Care Manager Gallegos stated that all she was requesting from Council was per diem.

Councilor Montoya asked who solicited the money.

Animal Care Manager Gallegos advised that she was not sure how it started but it was between the non profit that helps the shelter and others who have worked with the shelter from the community.

Councilor Montoya asked if the training was for all breeds of dogs and if the training was a requirement by the City of Las Vegas.

Animal Care Manager Gallegos replied it was for all breeds and no it was not required by the City of Las Vegas but it would benefit the community. Animal Care Manager Gallegos stated the training would help them to understand where the packs of dogs are going by knowing how they navigate/travel and the Puppy Development Workshop would help them with the nutritional aspects of puppies they get that are really young and without a mom.

Councilor Montoya asked City Manager Montgomery if there was an Employee Policy or Code of Conduct that allows employees or the City to solicit funding for training.

Interim City Manager Montgomery advised that there is an Anti-Donation clause.

Councilor Montoya advised that he's never heard of the City soliciting donations to send anyone to training. Councilor Montoya asked how much money was raised.

Animal Care Manager Gallegos advised around \$1,400.

Councilor Montoya asked the City Manager to look into their policy and if needed to divert that money back because he didn't think it was appropriate. Councilor Montoya advised that he thinks it's against the Procurement Code and the Anti-Donation clause. Councilor Montoya asked Interim Police Chief Marquez if it was his recommendation.

Interim Police Chief Marquez replied yes and stated it would help them with the packs of dogs in the community and the large influx of puppies they receive.

Councilor Montoya asked if Management Skills were part of the training.

Interim Police Chief Marquez advised no.

Councilor Montoya stated that he was positive that they cannot use money donated from anywhere else and that the City has to pay for both the training and the travel.

Mayor Romero advised that he didn't think Animal Care Manager Gallegos solicited money, there were conversations with organizations and he believed they offered and paid. Mayor Romero advised that it's similar to other grants where organizations pay for training. Mayor Romero advised that it would benefit the city and stated to his knowledge there were no requests made by the City or by a City employee, it was in speaking with advocates and non-profits who offered to pay for the training.

Councilor Casey advised that the Anti-Donation clause was being misinterpreted and stated that the Anti-Donation clause pertains to the City/Government not

being able to give money to a private entity or a private citizen. Councilor Casey advised that people have been advocating to raise money so they could help the City's shelter, which was where the money came from. Councilor Casey advised that they had been working on fundraisers for a long time to raise money not only so Animal Care Manager Gallegos could attend workshops that would be beneficial to the City but to also buy supplies like straw, food, vaccines and other things. Councilor Casey advised that there was nothing illegal or inappropriate with people giving the City money for a particular use.

Councilor Ulibarri advised that he hoped the training could have also been for Code Enforcement. Councilor Ulibarri advised that there are packs of dogs all over the city and on the westside and he hasn't seen any citations given to owners that allow their dogs to be loose.

Interim Police Chief Marquez advised that Animal Care Manager Gallegos would bring back what she learned at the training and assist the Animal Control Officers on how to find resources for the animals.

Animal Care Manager Gallegos advised that Code Enforcement has not made the relationships with the organization like she has and it was specifically offered to her to go to the training. Animal Care Manager Gallegos advised that it's beneficial that she takes the training because she's in it for the long term and is willing to put a lot into the Animal Shelter and help anyway she can.

Interim City Manager Montgomery advised that he reached out to HR Director Darlene Arguello and she stated that there is not a clause regarding specific donations which confirmed that what Councilor Casey said was correct regarding the Anti-Donation clause being misinterpreted often. Interim City Manager Montgomery advised that the donated funds that the City did not solicit would be appropriate.

Councilor Casey made a motion to approve the Out-of-State Travel for Beatriz Gallegos, Animal Care Manager to attend training in Blue Ridge, Texas to learn

about lost dog recovery and puppy development. Councilor Ulibarri seconded the motion. Mayor Romero asked for roll call.

Councilor Montoya asked for City Manager Montgomery to look at the Code of Conduct, specifically item number 2 - letters A, B, C and D.

Mayor Romero advised there was a motion and a second and asked for roll call. Roll Call Vote was taken and reflected the following:

Barbara Casey	Yes	David Ulibarri	Yes
Michael L. Montoya	No		

City Clerk Fresquez advised the motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no need for executive session.

ADJOURN

Councilor Casey made a motion to adjourn. Councilor Ulibarri seconded the motion.

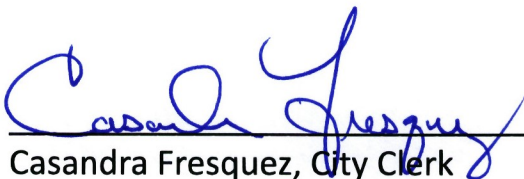
City Clerk Fresquez advised that the motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 1:50 PM.



Mayor David Romero

ATTEST:


Casandra Fresquez, City Clerk