

**MINUTES OF THE CITY OF LAS VEGAS CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2024 AT 5:30 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 5:30 pm.

**ROLL CALL**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**MOMENT OF SILENCE**

Councilor Casey asked for a moment of silence to thank our creator for all the good things he has given us and for all the wonderful people, wonderful friends, people who care about the community, people who are willing to serve the community, and for people who care about each other and about animals. Councilor Casey asked that we be thankful for those people that we are fortunate and blessed enough to live with and among.

Mayor Romero also asked for a moment of silence for Mr. John Abreu.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mayor Romero asked to amend the agenda to move Business Item 1 after public input.

Councilor Montoya asked to amend the agenda to move Business Item 7 before Business Item 2.

Councilor Montoya made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Councilor Casey seconded the motion. Mayor Romero asked for roll call. Roll Call Vote was taken and reflected the following:

David Ulibarri	Yes	Michael L. Montoya	Yes
Barbara Casey	Yes		

City Clerk Fresquez advised the motion carried.

**PUBLIC INPUT**

Linda Montoya spoke on behalf of Christine Ludi and advised that she would make an excellent City Councilor.

Jan Beurskens was in support of Mayor Romero’s recommendation of Christine Ludi for Ward 4 City Councilor.

Cindy Collins asked for Council's support regarding the nomination of Christine Ludi for Ward 4 City Councilor and advised that she has incredible leadership in education and finance.

Nancy Colalillo was in support of Christine Ludi who has amazing leadership skills, a financial background and is a key to the education community.

Meredith Britt advised that she was thrilled to hear that Christine Ludi was nominated for the position of Ward 4 City Councilor. Ms. Britt advised that she has

incredible leadership skills, experience, dedication to the community and is a very approachable person.

Gregorio Loera asked Council to approve Christine Ludi who has a proven record of leadership. Mr. Loera advised that she has vast experiences in management, finance, education and leadership.

Darlene Ulibarri was in support of the appointment of Christine Ludi and spoke about Ms. Ludi's attributes like her commitment, hard work, integrity and honesty.

Jim Terr was in support of the appointment of Christine Ludi who is accomplished and dedicated.

Napoleon Quintana was in support of the appointment of Joseph Dominguez.

Gary Ludi was in support of the appointment of Christine Ludi and asked for those in the audience to stand if they were in favor of Christine Ludi.

Ron Maltais was in support of the appointment of Christine Ludi and advised that she was an excellent candidate.

## **BUSINESS ITEMS**

1. Request approval to appoint one of the two applicants who submitted letters of interest for the Council seat for Ward four (4): **Christine Ludi or Joseph Dominguez.**

Mayor Romero advised that he served as Ward 4 Councilor since 2018 and before that his father did. Mayor Romero advised that it's been 14 years of understanding the needs of Ward 4. Mayor Romero advised that he received 12 applicants and 2 did not meet the criteria of residency prior to 90 days. Mayor Romero advised that he chose two individuals that understood the needs of Ward 4 and the community needs a complete Council. Mayor Romero advised that he received a lot of calls from the community asking him to look into a new generation for a leader. Mayor Romero spoke briefly about Joseph Dominguez.

Joseph Dominguez spoke about his education and being an Executive Level Administrator at New Mexico Highlands University. Mr. Dominguez advised Mayor and Council that he would be withdrawing his candidacy for the position of Ward 4 City Councilor and advised that after personal circumstances and commitments he would be unable to fulfill the responsibilities. Mr. Dominguez mentioned the critical importance of the City Council moving forward in filling the vacancy in a timely manner. Mr. Dominguez advised that the constituents in Ward 4 are not currently being served to the best of their abilities and each member of the council needs to prioritize the needs of the city over personal biases and disagreements. Mr. Dominguez advised that they need to collectively work toward a brighter future for the City of Las Vegas and the well-being of the community and felt like they lost sight of that. Mr. Dominguez stated that he appreciated the consideration and apologized for any inconvenience.

Mayor Romero spoke about Christine Ludi's work experiences, professionalism and being able to make decisions on her own.

Christine Ludi advised that she submitted her letter of interest for the vacant position of Ward 4 because she would bring a lot of experience to the table. Ms. Ludi discussed being on the West Las Vegas School board for 18 years, having experience with budgets, contracts, and audits. Ms. Ludi advised that she served on other City boards and if appointed would like to expand small businesses, have affordable housing, continue road/street projects and work on the animal crisis. Ms. Ludi advised she was grateful for the support from her family and those who spoke on her behalf. Ms. Ludi stated she could be a team player for the City of Las Vegas and would do what is right and just.

Mayor Romero thanked Joseph Dominguez, Christine Ludi and all those who applied.

Councilor Casey made a motion to approve the appointment of Christine Ludi to the City Council Ward 4 seat.

Mayor Romero asked if there was a second.

Mayor Romero stated that it was important for the citizens in Ward 4 to have representation.

Mayor Romero asked if there was a second.

Due to the lack of a second the motion died.

Mayor Romero apologized to both Ms. Ludi and Mr. Dominguez. Mayor Romero advised his colleagues that he would be selecting names.

### **MAYOR'S APPOINTMENTS/REPORTS AND RECOGNITIONS/PROCLAMATIONS**

Mayor Romero presented Buen Vecino awards to Romolo Coca and Pablo Coca.

Pablo Coca thanked everyone for recognizing his father Romolo Coca.

Mayor Romero thanked the departments who participated at the Las Vegas day.

### **COUNCILORS' REPORTS**

Councilor Casey advised that she was very disappointed that they have not appointed someone to the Ward 4 seat. Councilor Casey advised that they need to so they could have a complete Council and so they could start moving the City forward because now they have to wait another month before they could take care of business. Councilor Casey advised that it was disappointing that the Mayor's selection was not acceptable to others, especially when there were people from the community there to express their support for the Mayor's selection. Councilor Casey advised that it's deplorable and hopes that it doesn't happen again.

### **POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT**

Interim Police Chief Caleb Marquez gave a detailed presentation regarding the statistics for the Month of December on the following:

- Field Operations Division (patrol) calls
- Communications Division (Dispatch) calls
- Animal Care Center updates
  - Dogs (96) 12/1/23
  - Feline (30)12/1/23
  - Dogs Adoptions (9)
  - Cats Adoptions (2)
  - Dog transfers (27)
  - Cat transfers (0)
- Dog end count (72)
- Cat end count (29)
- Information Division/Records
- Street Crimes
  - Evidence seized
  - Attended Meetings
- Travel/Trainings
- Recruitment
- Department vacancies (32)
- Community Events

Mayor Romero acknowledged Mr. Ortega and Beatriz with the Animal Care Center for doing the best they can.

Councilor Montoya thanked Interim Police Chief Marquez and his staff for setting up a booth at the Legislature for Las Vegas day. Councilor Montoya advised that it was nice to see Luna Community College, New Mexico Highlands University, West Las Vegas and East Las Vegas Schools also at the Legislature. Councilor Montoya advised that the City submitted about 17 legislative requests. Councilor Montoya asked if it would be possible to reach out to students at Highlands to see if they would be interested in working part time as Communication Specialists. Councilor Montoya asked if they have contacted the Governor's Office regarding assisting with the Bike Rally and Fourth of July Fiestas.

Interim Police Chief Marquez advised that he would be working on a formal letter to request assistance for the Bike Rally and Fiestas. Interim Police Chief Marquez advised that local agencies also help like the San Miguel County Sheriff's Office, District II State Police, Guadalupe and Mora Counties. Councilor Montoya thanked Interim Police Chief Marquez for his leadership.

## **FINANCE REPORT**

Interim Finance Director Dominic Chavez reported on the month of December the General fund had a surplus of (\$799,593), the Enterprise fund had a surplus of (\$608,747), the Recreation department had a deficit of (\$56,313), the Lodger's Tax fund had a deficit of (\$27,945) and Cannabis had a surplus of (\$56,756).

Councilor Casey thanked Interim Finance Director Chavez and the Finance department for sending out the check register for them to review.

Councilor Montoya advised that they did not have a Finance Committee meeting but they would have one next month.

Mayor Romero thanked Interim Finance Director Chavez for keeping the continuity going in the Finance department.

Councilor Ulibarri also thanked Interim Finance Director Chavez for all he does.

### **PRESENTATIONS**

Philip Martinez, President of the Las Vegas - San Miguel County Chamber of Commerce thanked his staff and gave a quarterly report on the following;

- Visitor Center staffed 7 days a week
- Visitor Center Clerks reach out to businesses regularly
- Visitor Center stats (4128 visitors)/packets sent out (40)
- LVSM Film Commission Events
- Weekly radio show (SDC)
- Sponsored legislative breakfast

Mayor Romero advised that he looks at the scope of work to ensure everything is being met. Mayor Romero thanked Angie Lyster and Elias Trujillo for going above and beyond for promoting the City.

Councilor Montoya asked how many visitors they got in 2022.

Mr. Martinez advised they had 2,151 visitors in 2022.

Discussion took place regarding the type of assistance the Chamber provides to San Miguel County and how many series/films would be coming to Las Vegas to film.

Councilor Montoya advised that he appreciated all that they do and for sponsoring the legislative breakfast for Las Vegas day.

Councilor Ulibarri thanked Mr. Martinez for doing a good job.

Michael Peranteau, Executive Director of MainStreet gave a quarterly report on the following;

- Transformation Strategy 1 - Great Blocks in Railroad District
  - \$1 million spent on phase 1
  - \$1.2 million in Capital Outlay funding awarded for phase 2
- (2) Businesses closed
  - Paper Trail and Travelers Cafe
- (2) New Businesses opened/(2) New Businesses in the process of opening
  - Yokais Tavern and The Front Wear
  - The Vegan Hot Spot and Boutique Grocery Store
- (1) Building sold
  - Tito's (the Hedgcock Building)
- MainStreet de Las Vegas was accredited for 2024
- Assisted with community events
- City Wide Mural Project update
  - Mural #1 on Legion Drive completed
  - Mural #2 on South Grand 85% finished
  - Murals #3 and 4 will begin Spring of 2024
- MainStreet de Las Vegas annual Gala
- 3 Service contracts per year
  - Consult on repairs to Tito's building

Councilor Montoya asked where MainStreet was during the Rio de Las Luces celebration.

Mr. Peranteau advised that they wanted to participate but they did not have the funding or staff to do so.



Councilor Montoya asked what grants they applied for.

Mr. Peranteau advised they applied for a grant from the Santa Fe Community Foundation for an art project with the Arts Council, they raised \$6,000 and wrote a grant for more marketing projects. Mr. Peranteau advised that he was working on an art grant for the Community Garden and Art Park.

Discussion took place regarding the renovation of the Railroad District going over budget due to the lack of communication with the previous City Manager and MainStreet not overseeing the budget.

Councilor Montoya asked how MainStreet was involved with the east Lincoln Street scaping.

Mr. Peranteau advised that they tried to be involved but the previous City Manager did not let them, and none of the amenities are in that one section. Mr. Peranteau advised that they have talked about ways that they could replace the money that was lost.

Discussion took place regarding the money that MainStreet fundraised and what it was used towards and phase 1 of the renovation of the Railroad District.

Mayor Romero asked if the last two murals would be completed by June and to look into the facade squad fixing up the Parish Hall.

Mr. Peranteau advised yes and he would look into that location for the facade squad.

## **BUSINESS ITEMS**

7. Discussion and Direction regarding Municipal Code, Section 440-25  
Provision of municipal water services to non municipal users.

Mayor Romero suggested looking into changing the language from giving the Utilities Director authority to the Director presenting to the Council and Council making the ultimate decision to allow water taps.

Councilor Montoya advised that he would not be in agreement until they have a long term plan on leasing water or a one time purchase for bulk water. Councilor Montoya advised that they have over 800 vacant homes and properties within city limits that they are required to have water for. Councilor Montoya advised that the City's Master Plan calls for within city limits first before extending out of the city limits. Councilor Montoya discussed the annexation by the airport and Zamora arena and having that water available in that area. Councilor Montoya advised that they are not using the Taylor Wells like they should be. Councilor Montoya advised that there should be an ET zone Committee between the City and San Miguel County.

Mayor Romero asked Utilities Director Maria Gilvarry what the definition of the ET zone was.

Utilities Director Gilvarry advised that she believed it was from city limits to three miles outside city limits.

Mayor Romero advised that about six or seven people have contacted him about water taps and having water lines in front or besides their properties. Mayor Romero advised that he's asking to change the language to state, "when determined by the Water Director and with approval of the City Council".

Councilor Montoya advised that he was the Chairman for the Utilities Committee 18 years ago and the current language regarding the Water Director having authority to approve water taps was probably passed back then. Councilor Montoya advised that it should be the Utilities Director recommendation because that individual knows and understands the water system and if they allow those six or seven people more people will start coming and that will cause issues.

Discussion took place regarding water availability, how much water is being diverted and the amount of water that is being provided are almost the same amount.

Councilor Montoya advised that he doesn't want to limit the amount of water for every household in the city and advised that it's important to have quality of life. Councilor Montoya advised that it should be going through the Utilities Committee and there should be public meetings.

2. Request approval of Resolution No. 24-02, budget adjustment for the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

Interim Finance Director Dominic Chavez advised that the City of Las Vegas was in need of making a budget adjustment in the 2023-24 fiscal year budget to include an expense increase to Fund 101-4800 – Police Department – US Marshall in the amount of \$7,000 (to align revenue and expense). A rev/exp increase to Fund 268 – T-Mobile Hometown Grants 03-22 in the amount of \$50,300. A rev/exp increase to Fund 282 – Senior Center in the amount of \$5,000 and a rev/exp increase to Fund 433 – NM Aviation Department Grant in the amount of \$160,000.

Councilor Casey made a motion to approve Resolution 24-02, budget adjustment for the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year. Councilor Ulibarri seconded the motion.

Resolution 24-02 was presented as follows:

**CITY OF LAS VEGAS, NEW MEXICO**  
**Resolution No. 24-02**

**A RESOLUTION TO MAKE BUDGET ADJUSTMENT FOR THE 2023-2024 FISCAL YEAR**

**WHEREAS**, the Governing Body of the City of Las Vegas has developed a budget adjustment request for fiscal year 2023-24; and

**WHEREAS**, said budget was developed on basis of increases in revenue, expenditure and transfer (in) out through cooperation with all user departments, elected officials and other department supervisors; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Las Vegas is in need of making a budget adjustment in the 2023-24 fiscal year budget to include an expense increase to Fund 101-4800 – Police Department – US Marshall in the amount of \$7,000 (to align

revenue and expense). A rev/exp increase to Fund 268 – T-Mobile Hometown Grants 03-22 in the amount of \$50,300. A rev/exp increase to Fund 282 – Senior Center in the amount of \$5,000 and a rev/exp increase to Fund 433 – NM Aviation Department Grant in the amount of \$160,000.

**WHEREAS**, the Governing Body finds the budget adjustment request should be as it meets the requirements as currently determined for fiscal year 2023-24; and,

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of Las Vegas, that the recitals and any exhibits are incorporated herein by reference and the Governing Body hereby approves the aforementioned budget adjustment request and respectfully requests approval from the Local Governing Division of the Department of Finance and Administration.

ACCEPTED AND APPROVED this day \_\_\_\_\_ of January 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor David G. Romero

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Casandra Fresquez, City Clerk

Mayor Romero 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.

- 3. Request approval of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Las Vegas (CLV) and Luna Community College (LCC).

Parks & Recreation Manager Loretta Martin advised that Luna Community College would be utilizing the turf fields at Rodriguez Park.

Councilor Casey asked if it would be an issue for the Little League teams.

Parks & Recreation Manager Martin advised they would overlap in April but they would be working together on scheduling for the fields.

Discussion took place regarding the responsibilities of Luna and the responsibilities of the City being in the contract.

Councilor Montoya discussed his concerns regarding the following language, “the term for one year each fall and spring season and may be renewable annually for a four year period upon the approval of the City Manager”. Councilor Montoya advised that all contracts whether they are yearly or four years go before Mayor and Council. Councilor Montoya advised the Council to consider changing that language to include that it be brought back to Mayor and Council for approval.

Councilor Ulibarri voiced his concerns regarding the general maintenance and trash being picked up around the fields.

Athletic Director Randall Krutsch advised that they have people assigned to pick up trash whether its wind blown or left from other people. Mr. Krutsch advised that they do leave trash cans in the dugouts and they are emptied everyday by student athletes.

Mayor Romero advised that the scoreboard at the softball field disappeared.

City Manager Montgomery advised that they have looked in storage areas and could not find it so they would be moving forward with an investigation.

Councilor Montoya made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Las Vegas (CLV) and Luna Community College (LCC) with the change in the MOU to state “recommendation of the City Manager approved by City Council”. Councilor Casey seconded the motion. Mayor Romero asked for roll call. Roll Call Vote was taken and reflected the following:

Barbara Casey	Yes	Michael L. Montoya	Yes
David Ulibarri	Yes		

City Clerk Fresquez advised the motion carried.

4. Request approval of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Las Vegas (CLV) and the Wolfpack Travel Baseball Team (WTBT).

Parks & Recreation Manager Loretta Martin advised that the Wolfpack Travel Baseball Team under the direction of Craig Aragon would be utilizing the fields at Keyes Park for practices. Parks & Recreation Manager Martin advised that they have been utilizing the fields and would like to until April 1st.

Councilor Montoya asked if an attorney reviewed the MOU, and if the fields were adequate enough for them to use.

Parks & Recreation Manager Martin advised yes the attorney did review it and yes they are adequate enough.

Councilor Casey advised that there were improvements done last year at the fields.

Councilor Montoya asked if it would interfere with any of their programs.

Parks & Recreation Manager Martin advised no, it would end on April 1st and they start Little League in April.

Councilor Casey made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Las Vegas (CLV) and the Wolfpack Travel Baseball Team (WTBT). Councilor Montoya seconded the motion. Mayor Romero asked for roll call. Roll Call Vote was taken and reflected the following:

David Ulibarri	Yes	Barbara Casey	Yes
Michael L. Montoya	Yes		

City Clerk Fresquez advised the motion carried.

5. Request approval of GSA Contract with Trane US. Inc. for removal and upgrading the HVAC system at the Las Vegas Senior Center for a total of \$291,240.92 including NMGRT.

Community Services Director Wanda Salazar advised that it was a \$315,000 Aging and Long Term Services legislative appropriation that will expire June 30, 2024. Community Services Director Salazar advised that the purpose of the appropriation is to install HVAC units at the Las Vegas Senior Center site. Community Services Director Salazar advised that Trane would be removing the units from the ground and installing them on the roof.

Mayor Romero asked if they tried to seek bids for the project.

Community Services Director Salazar advised that Travis Martinez and Arnold Lopez assisted her with recruiting vendors for the project and did not believe they tried to seek bids. Community Services Director Salazar advised that Hays Plumbing did a walkthrough and quoted the project close to \$800,000.

Councilor Casey made a motion to approve the GSA Contract with Trane US. Inc. for removal and upgrading the HVAC system at the Las Vegas Senior Center for a total of \$291,240.92 including NMGRT. Councilor Ulibarri seconded the motion. Mayor Romero asked for roll call. Roll Call Vote was taken and reflected the following:

Michael L. Montoya	Yes	David Ulibarri	Yes
Barbara Casey	Yes		

City Clerk Fresquez advised the motion carried.

6. Request approval of MOA between San Miguel County and the City of Las Vegas for Animal Sheltering Services.

Interim Police Chief Caleb Marquez advised they're seeking renewal of the MOA and it was reviewed by an attorney. Interim Police Chief Marquez advised that it does help them with operating costs for the shelter.

Councilor Montoya advised that he had gone to the animal shelter and it was locked with a sign that said services are only provided on Monday and Tuesday and the rest of the week they are by appointment only. Councilor Montoya voiced his concerns regarding the chains and locks being a safety issue for the employees and animals. Councilor Montoya advised that the City asked for \$2 million as a legislative request and the County asked for \$5 million as a joint effort to keep the Animal Shelter open and operating. Councilor Montoya advised that they should look into joint efforts with Mora and Guadalupe Counties.

Councilor Casey asked what the reasoning was for the gate being locked.

Interim Police Chief Marquez advised that the gate was locked due to being short staffed and people walking to the back creating a safety issue and also people dropping off animals and driving off without making contact with staff. Interim Police Marquez advised they were looking into putting push stops on the doors.

Mayor Romero advised that this MOA would be for this current fiscal year and then they would have to bring it back again for the next fiscal year.

Interim City Manager Montgomery advised that the last contract expired June 30, 2023. Interim City Manager Montgomery advised that it would be the City's responsibility to invoice the County and then the City will proceed with a new contract for the new fiscal year for July 2024.

Councilor Montoya thanked San Miguel County for their partnership.

Councilor Montoya made a motion to approve the MOA between San Miguel County and the City of Las Vegas for Animal Sheltering Services. Councilor Casey



seconded the motion. Mayor Romero 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.

**ADJOURN**

Councilor Casey made a motion to adjourn. Councilor Montoya seconded the motion. All were in favor.

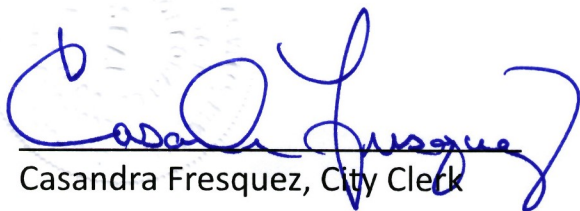
City Clerk Fresquez advised the motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:47 pm.



Mayor David Romero

ATTEST:

  
Casandra Fresquez, City Clerk