

CITY COMMISSION SPECIAL/WORK SESSION MINUTES  
CITY OF TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES, NEW MEXICO  
BLACK RANGE LODGE, 405 W. 3<sup>RD</sup> St., KINGSTON, NM  
TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 2018

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Steve Green at 10:07 a.m., who presided and Renee Cantin, City Clerk-Treasurer, acted as Secretary of the meeting.

**B. INTRODUCTION**  
**1. ROLL CALL**

Upon calling the roll, the following Commissioners were reported present.

Hon. Steve Green  
Hon. Sandra Whitehead  
Hon. Kathy Clark, Commissioner  
Hon. Rolf Hechler, Commissioner  
Hon. Paul Baca, Commissioner

Also Present: Juan Fuentes, City Manager  
Renee Cantin, City Clerk-Treasurer

There being a quorum present, the Commission proceeded with the business at hand.

Mayor Green read a statement for any public who attended stating they are here to work on Future Goals, there would be no public comment allowed at this Work Session, but public comment will be encouraged at the Regular Meeting where this strategic plan will be acted on.

**C. WORK SESSION**  
**1. Future Goals Planning Session**

Mayor Green made some opening comments and turned it over to Commissioner Hechler.

Commissioner Hechler posted some notes from the Public Forum in a Story Board format. Green is Public, yellow is Commission, and today the blue will be what the Commission adds. This is what's called a Story Board and it's a frame to develop a plan for the direction they want the City Manager to go. Some of this will last three to five years and the City Manager and staff will still have direction on where to go.

**Golf Course:** It was once an asset and we need to look at it what it does for Truth or Consequences. Commissioner Hechler asked if they are all on board for keeping it in the capacity we have it. Mayor Green said we need to keep in mind the things we are hearing from comments and complaints received. These comments are the perception of the public and things we should be dealing with.

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Commissioner Clark suggested working on the irrigation, regular hours they will actually be open, and adding Frisbee Golf.

Commissioner Hechler said there are a few ways we can go. Do we want to continue with Mr. Taylor or do we go out for RFP for a new one, or maybe use Howie Tucker. There was discussion on which way to go. City Manager Fuentes gave an overview of where the Golf Course is, he reported the Sulfur Filtration System, and drainage both need to be addressed. The question is how much resources we want to invest in the Golf Course. He also suggested winter grass or seeding for the winter. We need to plan for better operational hours. City Manager Fuentes said right now the Parks Department staff is not adequate to take care of the maintenance.

Commissioner Clark said the irrigation needs to be the priority. Commissioner Hechler asked if we are required to go out for RFP? City Manager Fuentes let them know that if we extend the current contract, we would not need to go out for RFP. Commissioner Hechler asked if we have a general consensus to keep the current contractor and work with him on a new plan with direction. If we keep him, we will have to have a plan to substantiate doing so because of those who have complained about him. Mayor Pro-Tem Whitehead wondered if we go out for RFP in hopes that the current contractor would also submit a proposal and if it would help with the decision for the selection. Mayor Green mentioned there may be a possibility of using Lodger's Tax money for a one time shot to get it up to par for use. Commissioner Hechler said the investment up front has got to have a payoff at the end or somewhere. Commissioner Baca feels we need to spend the money to keep the Golf Course. It's important for Property Values and bringing people in. Commissioner Clark suggested we look at the 2004-2006 budget versus the recent budget for it.

City Manager Fuentes sees that we need to determine if there is an interest on the current contractor's part to take care of the issues discussed and if there is not, then we will go out for RFP as our plan B. Commissioner Hechler also sees that we need to work on bringing all departments together to work on it.

**Commission Meeting time:** Commissioner Hechler has seen the meetings being held on Tuesday and on Wednesday, and in the morning and in the evening. He sees more participation at the morning meetings, he opened it for discussion. Some of the comments included: People are sharper and focused in the morning, than they are in the evening; not worth the overtime for staff; a similar amount of the public attend even after they were changed to the mornings.

**City Manager Goals:** Commissioner Hechler read the goals that were given. He was happy to report 5 of 7 of them have been substantially addressed.

**City staffing and Salaries:**

Uniforms were discussed and there was a consensus for the desire to have shirts that are more uniformed for all departments.

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**Staffing & Salaries:** We need to have better qualified staff. Salaries need to be a priority. City Manager Fuentes mentioned when they review the budget and department requests, they will have a better idea of what is needed and how they can get there to provide that. Commissioner Hechler explained a time when they had to have a reduction in the number of employees and paid others more because they would be responsible for more work. More cross training was discussed and offering more money for entry level staff. City Manager Fuentes explained the changes that are being made with Water and Wastewater and moving them closer together to assist with both departments. Mayor Green agreed with having the philosophy of helping other departments whether it's their job or not. It was suggested to resurrect the city awards program. Commissioner Hechler said we could do something like a Employee of the Quarter Award; a City Manager award; a Citizen selected award; a Commissioner's award. He would be willing to work on that. Commissioner Baca would like to see a Summer Picnic be done for the employees. Commissioner Hechler agreed and said he envisioned a banquet to include the awards ceremony with possible safety training or presentation on something, i.e., an informal state of the city.

Recessed at 11:30 a.m. and reconvened at 11:40 a.m.

They continued with City Staffing and Departments.

Commissioner Clark discussed putting a new landing page on the home page of the website which she would like to see added. Mayor Green also mentioned adding a link for the Welcome Packet on the website and offering a request to have it mailed. There was a consensus to upgrade it on a continuing basis and add the Landing Page and Relocation Package.

Commissioner Baca wanted to discuss The Club (Boys & Girls Club) who are looking at purchasing the building next door and he wondered if the city could support or help them in some way. Mayor Green mentioned a USDA grant that could help them purchase a building. City Manager Fuentes explained the Anti-Donation clause that we are under and cannot benefit an organization with the taxpayer's money. Commissioner Hechler suggested doing a fundraiser to help.

**Code Enforcement Ordinance:** Mayor Green is working on a response for the Public Forum comments that were made about cleaning up the city. He wants to include the process for enforcement and how it works. The Green Motorhome with 6 tires, just licensed was discussed. Look at ways to revise the ordinance and take a look at this section. City Manager Fuentes said there is a balance between people who collect classic cars and old green motorhomes.

Mayor Green would also like to respond to the questions about recycling and redistricting.

**Districts:** City Manager Fuentes explained the issue with Districting. It's not required for a Commission-Manager with less than 10,000 population. It would be a requirement for a Commissioner to live in their District in order to run. Mayor Green talked to a representative from a company who handles the Districting for municipalities who confirmed it's not required for under 10,000, the cost would be no less than \$10,000, and if you want public hearings

on the districting plans it could be up to \$25,000; it is required to be redistricted every ten years after the census is done; voters only get to vote on the candidates in their district and not other districts. City Manager Fuentes brought up if the Commission wanted to consider doing away with Positions, they can decide to do that for the next election. The consensus is to leave it the way it is and not remove the positions.

Recessed for lunch at 12:57 p.m. and reconvened at 1:38 p.m.

**Infrastructure:**

**Storm Drainage:** Areas to focus on would be Brewery and Bullocks. Commissioner Baca talked to someone about doing a CDBG Grant for storm drainage. City Manager Fuentes reported there are some spots around town that could still be done and the downtown still needs to be done including Clancy and other streets that can carry it to the river. But you can't just dump it in the river. Commissioner Clark spoke about the ADA sidewalks project that was done and the drilling to allow water to flow. The consensus was to look into getting a planning grant and check on the vacant property across from the Police Department to use as a catchment basin.

**Signage:** Mayor Green said there are some Street signs that are missing and we need to update our Tourism related signs. It was suggested to look into the Rural Pathway Grant for New Mexico which means we would have to commit \$100,000 from Lodger's Tax.

**City Hall:** It was agreed that they like the historical look of it. It was discussed to design and construct a new drive through and upgrade the offices. City Manager Fuentes mentioned we need to see if we want to build a five year plan to acquire property and look at building a New City Hall. Commissioner Hechler mentioned considering the Law Enforcement Complex, he doesn't think the community has a stomach for a new building. Mayor Green doesn't think there is any harm in presenting a building plan for the future. City Manager Fuentes said there is plenty that can be done to beautify the building which are small things we can do in-house and the Commission needs to think about how much money they want to put into the updating of the old building. And in the meantime, we could have a long term goal to acquire property and look into a new building to use. City Manager Fuentes has asked for a conceptual landscape design for the City Official Parking on McAdoo next to the Admin. Building. This is a part of all of the downtown beautification that had been suggested in the past. Mayor Green mentioned the problem with staff having to walk down the street for different reason to and from City Hall in order to get paperwork signed or delivering documents, etc. City Manager Fuentes feels it could completely transform the downtown area. We also need to make sure the grocery store survives and keep them there. The Brewery is bringing in so much business and has been a great asset. Revitalizing the downtown area will bring more people in.

**Streets/Sidewalks:**

Commissioner Clark wondered how hard it would be to vacate Clancy and the Street by Bank of the Southwest. Mayor Green mentioned the walking path from Sims to Clancy to help beautify downtown and City Hall and would help direct the Water onto Sims instead of Foch. Discussion was held about the infrastructure under the road before repaving or

resurfacing it. Commissioner Hechler suggested getting a waterline assessment under the pavement.

**Buildings:** Civic Center Parking Lot resurfacing and striping was discussed and is already being worked on internally. Also some of the buildings like the Golf Course Clubhouse; and the little house there; the Water Department Building and acquiring the property next to it from the Public Schools. There are so many potential uses for the property which could be used once we clean it up.

**Meter Upgrades, Water/Electric:** Commissioner Hechler asked if the Roadrunner System we have can be upgraded to something compatible with our system. City Manager Fuentes responded the Roadrunner System is not an automated system. The biggest benefit is when you are able to do the drive-by meter readings. Mayor Green preferred to postpone this discussion because it would be an unfair advantage for Mr. Klaus Wittern to have inside information if he plans to put a proposal in.

**Streets/Sidewalks:** Discussion was held regarding the Movie Theater Street sidewalk and MainStreet getting additional grants for downtown. The MAP Grant program from 3<sup>rd</sup> St. Mayor Pro-Tem Whitehead also asked for Gold St. from the Hospital to 3<sup>rd</sup> St. is a rough road and should be included for improvements. It has been brought to her attention numerous times.

**Economic Development:** More Car Shows with Mustang, Corvettes, and Camaros; attract & keep winter visitors; Promote and welcome ESRA Event; develop/find manufacturing jobs; improve the tourism signs; and stop population loss.

Mayor Pro-Tem Whitehead brought up losing Burkes and what can we do to bring in more jobs for people. City Manager Fuentes suggested we market ourselves as a tourist and retirement community. In turn, those markets will come in with more disposable income. But you have to figure out how to bring people in and keep them. Mayor Green said we don't really have a functioning Chamber or a SCEDO and it's hard without those. City Manager Fuentes mentioned the Middle Rio Grande Economic Development Association that Bruce Swingle is the Chair of. Do we want to become more of a part of that? Mayor Green thinks that's a good idea and we should jump on it. City Manager Fuentes said if the Commission wants them to be more active in this it could be a good avenue for us to have another resource. Mayor Green said we can also ask Carol Tavis from SJOA if we could have a forum with the Snowbirds to see what would entice them to have a future home here.

**Grants:** YCC is the Youth Conservation Corps which is a project to hire the youth to do projects, for example the fencing or other improvements at Louis Armijo Park. Then also they feel there needs to be more research for additional grants. Mayor Green feels we should task Jay Armijo from the SCCOG to help find additional grants. Commissioner Hechler asked for a list of the grants that are going on right now. City Manager Fuentes mentioned we have about \$11 million in grants right now and he requested a list from the Finance Director. Mayor Green would like to see City Manager Fuentes brag on our projects every quarter to communicate our accomplishments.

**Communications – Commission, City Manager, and Public:** Semi-Annual Reports from Department Heads; more meetings like the Town Hall set up; Better response to the public; and possibly putting together a Newsletter, etc.

Commissioner Hechler suggested having Town Hall meetings where the Commission is not always the main target. Mayor Pro-Tem Whitehead feels they were elected to do the business of the city and if they don't like it, then they can show up to vote at the next election. City Manager Fuentes suggested we could give the public dots to select projects they are more interested in. Commissioner Hechler went back to changing the format of the Town Hall meetings. Also discussed was doing better at responding to complaints or inquiries, not only to the Commission, but to the citizens. Commissioner Hechler called about an issue and it's still there and he never received a response. Mayor Pro-Tem Whitehead had a similar problem where it wasn't taken care of for three weeks. Commissioner Hechler had another incident that was taken care of very quickly. So it varies at best.

Discussion was held about communication with the City Manager. Commissioner Baca feels he's been very responsive. Mayor Green mentioned he would rather see him share the ongoing information rather than spending time at the end of the week compiling a report.

**Parks:** Address the sticker's situation at Armijo Park: trash at the Shooting Range; Armijo Park needs new fencing and modernizing watering systems; ADA accessibility; and Vista Memory Gardens needs to be replotted. Mayor Pro-Tem Whitehead wondered if we could look at prohibiting dogs in the parks since we have a new Dog Park. City Manager Fuentes mentioned we can but it needs to be done by ordinance. Mayor Green suggested that we work on getting recycling capability at Armijo Park; Ralph Edwards Park; and other major parks.

**Administration:** Needs to have a more reliable vehicle for travel. City Manager Fuentes said they already have the New Electric Dept. car which is being used for travel. Having petty cash was discussed. City Manager Fuentes brought up making changes during the legislative issue for emergency purchases when you have to get quotes. It can be cumbersome trying to get the justification and paperwork before you can just purchase something that you need right now. A discussion was held about expediting procurement issues and allowing Open Purchase Orders for ongoing budgeted items. Discussion was also held about credit cards and the capability to use one at all other city sites that don't already have it in place.

**Better Interaction with Legislators:** Support Gas Tax for Roads.  
The C & D Landfill was discussed and whether we want to leave it on the table. Mayor Green commented on some information he found. City Manager Fuentes is not sure we should keep that on the table. Commissioner Hechler asked where we take our C & D now. City Manager Fuentes responded either to Socorro or Las Cruces. He's not sure what their rates are or whether the rate would be less if we took it ourselves. They have already looked and there is still not a viable solution to the problem. He can check with Patrick Peck to see if there might be any new alternatives they can look into.

**Utility Rates:** Do we want to explore anything with our utility rates?

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Mayor Green would like to promote recycling as a way to challenge the citizens to help recycle to possibly reduce the Solid Waste rates. City Manager Fuentes suggested for us to start picking up the bigger items to help with having the illegal drop offs. He said we have so many needs on the infrastructure that we are limiting the ability and resources if we start cutting the resources off. And once you start cutting, there's no way to go back. Mayor Green suggested we work on giving an incentive elsewhere when the rates are looked at. Commissioner Clark wondered if there is something we can do for the Winter visitors to charge less or nothing for trash because they won't even be here.

Discussion was held about the enterprise funds and how the Wastewater Dept. recently increased their rates because of the USDA grant requirements and recommendation.



Discussion was also held about how to fund some of the projects and ideas that were presented and discussed today. Commissioner Hechler would like to see them getting something done that's tangible, which they can see, and they can benefit from. The Golf Course was mentioned.

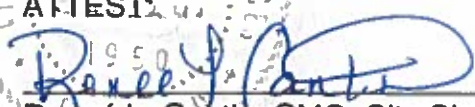
Mayor Green wanted to mention one more thing that was not presented at the Forum, he visited Las Cruces and they put in a new Sprinkle Park for \$25,000 that would be good to include in our future discussions for the Pool. It would be a nice addition to our New Resurfaced Pool

**D. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Passed and Approved this 25th day of April, 2018.

  
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Steven Green, Mayor

ATTEST  
  
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Rereé L. Cantin, GMC, City Clerk