

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF SILVER CITY  
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING  
Grant County Administration Center, 1400 Hwy. 180, Silver City, NM  
July 10, 2017, 6:00 p.m.**

**Present:**

Ken Ladner, Mayor  
Cynthia Ann Bettison, District 1  
Lynda D. Aiman-Smith, District 2  
Jose A. Ray, Jr., District 3  
Guadalupe E. Cano, District 4

**Also Present:**

Alex C. Brown, Town Manager-Finance Director  
Robert L. Scavron, Town Attorney  
Ann L. Mackie, Town Clerk  
Erika Martinez, Purchasing Agent

**1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Mayor Ladner called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**2. NEW BUSINESS -**

**A. Approval / Disapproval of Request for Proposal #16/17-2P: Community Promotions.** Mayor Ladner asked Manager Brown to comment. Manager Brown said lodgers tax was authorized by the State of New Mexico and gave local governments the authority to impose lodgers tax in addition to the required gross receipts taxes. He said the Town of Silver City adopted a local ordinance that imposed a five percent lodgers tax that the lodging establishments paid to the Town of Silver City. He stated the lodgers tax revenues could be used for tourist promotions, police, fire, sanitary services, and for tourist operations and maintenance of tourist-related facilities. He said the Town always put by far the largest amount of tax received out for promotions. He said he kept some money back for the following: the operation of the Silver City Museum which paid about 18 percent of the Museum's budget, overtime funds for police and fire for tourist events, port-a-potties, and for promotions to help start-up events. He said the promotional funds were awarded through the Request for Proposal process. He answered questions from the Council and provided the following information: how over the last two years they were down 14-15 percent in lodgers tax revenues which contrasted with information they heard from the Visitor Center about tourism increasing; and how the Town and County had applied for and received funding from Freeport McMoRan for a tourism coordinator that would gather information about different tourism events which would be made available to the Lodgers Tax Advisory Board, the Town Council, the County Commission, and the County Lodgers Tax Board, the next year so they could make better informed decisions.

Mayor Ladner recognized each of the Lodgers Tax Advisory Board (LTAB) members that were present: Sandra Hicks, Chair, Mitch Hellman, Vice-Chair, Janey Katz, and Michelle Carrillo. He asked Ms. Hicks to make her presentation. Ms. Hicks reviewed the LTAB's recommendations as follows: how much funding each organization was awarded in lodgers tax funding the previous year; how much they requested this year; how much the LTAB recommended to be awarded this year; comments regarding each organization's proposals; and how the amount of available lodgers tax funding was down from previous years with a total amount of \$180,000.00. The LTAB's recommendations for awards follows:

Gila River Festival	\$ 3,000.00
Silver City MainStreet Project	\$ 8,700.00
Fort Bayard Historic Preservation	\$ 1,300.00
Blue Sky	\$ 0.00
Silver City Arts Association	\$ 8,000.00
Grant County Rolling Stones	\$ 3,000.00
Southwest Festival of the Written Word	\$ 3,000.00
Mimbres Region Arts Council	\$ 24,000.00
Tour of the Gila	\$ 25,000.00
Silver City Arts and Cultural District	<u>\$104,000.00</u>
<b>Total of Lodgers Tax Funding</b>	<b>\$180,000.00</b>

Mayor Ladner thanked the members of the LTAB and the members of the Council for their hard work and for the time they spent going through the proposals. He asked each of the organizations that submitted a proposal to make their presentation and stand for questions from the Council. With each organization Councilor Bettison commented on how important it was for them to include the Town of Silver City as one of their marketing partners when preparing their proposals, and Councilor Aiman-Smith reviewed with each one how the LTAB's recommended award amount would translate to dollars for hotel revenue, and the number of hotel nights (at \$100.00 per night ) those dollars represented for heads in beds.

A summary of the discussion by the Council regarding each organization's proposal follows: how the Gila River Festival's proposal was excellent and truly an effort to promote Silver City and how their attempt to track how hotel occupancy was a result of their event was appreciated; how the Silver City MainStreet Project would look into moving their Taste of Downtown event to another weekend as recommended by the LTAB, but would need to check with the restaurateurs; concern for the MainStreet's budget because it showed no relationship between the total costs and their matching funds and how there was not sufficient detail to understand what the contract labor was that was listed; how MainStreet's Appendix C needed to be more clarifying on where the funds were coming from and how they did not include samples of their advertising to show how they used the lodgers tax funding in the past; questions about MainStreet's advertising on the Live in Silver City webcam; how MainStreet's marketing plan was not well developed and the same comment had been made the previous year, and how they needed to be more detailed and include analytics and statistics; Fort Bayard Historic Preservation was reminded to include a total amount for events on Appendix A and to show their statistics and how effective it was; how Fort Bayard Historic Preservation should be sure to include their operating budget form, and to include copies of advertising without invoices and checks; how Fort Bayard Historic Preservation could work with the entity hired by the Town that would work with folks on tourism research; how Blue Sky's proposal recommended that people stay for one or two months, but the Town did not get any lodgers tax money for lodging that was 30 days or more; how Blue Sky's proposal would have to promote tourism not retirement or relocation; how lodgers tax was for the promotion of tourism for people to stay with heads in beds; how the Blue Sky proposal was thinking beyond for markets not tapped in to and they were applauded for trying to get into the process and that they could meet with the Chair of the LTAB for ideas; how the Silver City Arts Association's proposal was outstanding and their presentation in the art guide was impeccable and the grammar was great; how their art guide was everywhere in the state; and how the Silver City Arts Association should show more statistics and should work with the new tourism researcher.

Councilor Bettison moved for a short break at 6:50 p.m. Councilor Aiman-Smith seconded. Mayor Ladner asked all those in favor to say aye, and all four Councilors said aye. Motion carried. The Mayor called the meeting back to order at 7:02 p.m.

The discussion continued as follows: how the Grant County Rolling Stones looked forward to working with the tourism coordinator for statistics and how they did a great job on their presentation and their budget; how the Southwest Festival of the Written Word should be more clear about actually how they used lodgers tax funds by showing it in their budget; the Mimbres Region Arts Council was asked again not to put their proposals in large binders and their handwritten application was said to be unacceptable and sometimes not legible; how the LTAB would like to see the Print Fiesta moved to a different weekend; how Mimbres Region Arts Council's proposal had discrepancies in Appendix A and C with regard to matching funds, etc.; how the lodgers tax money was not to increase the coffers of the Mimbres Region Arts Council and their budget looked like they had an overwhelming amount of money; how the Mimbres Region Arts Council proposal did not show how the money was acquired and how it was used for the Print Fiesta; the Mimbres Region Arts Council was strongly encouraged to work with the tourism coordinator and they were thanked for their many events; the Tour of the Gila's marketing plan was really well put together and they were asked to split out their events on the Appendix A cover sheet so they could be tracked better; how the Tour of the Gila's totals did not match up; how the Gran Fondo race would be great and would attract different kinds of bicycle riders than the Tour of the Gila race did; how the enhanced plan for the Gran Fondo was a direct response to the work on bicycle tourism and outdoor recreational tourism that was important for the area; how the Gran Fondo race would provide an opportunity for more hotel occupancy; concerns that the Silver City Arts and Cultural District's advertising still lacked diversity; how their multi-day prebuilt Silver City travel itineraries may bring people to stay longer; how they should work with the tourism researcher; how they would strive to get more

photography; and thanks for the things they were doing and that their proposal showed a mixture of outdoor and in-town activities.

Mayor Ladner stated that concluded all of the presentations and he asked for a motion. Councilor Bettison moved to approve the Request for Proposal #16/17-2P: Community Promotions per the Lodgers Tax Advisory Board's recommendations. Councilor Aiman-Smith seconded. There was no discussion. Mayor Ladner asked for a roll call vote. Councilor Bettison voted aye; Councilor Aiman-Smith voted aye; Councilor Ray voted aye; and Councilor Cano voted aye. Motion carried.

**3. ADJOURNMENT** – Mayor Ladner concluded by thanking all of the organizations that were present, and for all of the great work they did. He expressed his appreciation and said one of the things that made Silver City such a great place to be was all of the volunteers and all of the thousands of volunteer hours made many of the events possible. There was further discussion. The Mayor asked for a motion to adjourn. Councilor Aiman-Smith moved to adjourn at 7:41 p.m., and Councilor Bettison seconded. Mayor Ladner asked all those in favor to say aye, and all four Councilors said aye. Motion carried.

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Ken Ladner, Mayor

Attest:

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Ann L. Mackie, Town Clerk