

CITY OF BLOOMFIELD
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
January 23, 2019

The Special Meeting was held at 915 N. First Street, Bloomfield, NM. The meeting was in full conformity with the laws and rules of the Municipality.

In attendance were Mayor Cynthia Atencio, Councilors Sue Finch, Ken Hare, Matt Pennington and Curtis Lynch.

Also present were City Clerk Dorothy Nobis, Interim Police Chief Randon Matthews, Fire Chief John Mohler, and Parks Director Melinda Gomez.

The meeting was called to order at 5:58 p.m. by **Mayor Atencio**.

City Manager George Duncan offered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda:

Councilor Pennington moved to approve the Agenda and **Councilor Lynch** seconded. Approval was unanimous.

- A. Municipal Judge Sadie Smith McDaniel** gave an update on Senate Bill 173, "Transfer of Municipal Court Jurisdiction." The bill is currently being considered by the New Mexico Legislature and, if passed, would allow municipalities of any population to request transfer of jurisdiction of Municipal Courts to the Magistrate Court with the agreement of the Supreme Court. The bill is supported by the New Mexico Supreme Court. Judge McDaniel stated she does not support the bill for several reasons, including the need for those who are to appear in court having to drive to Magistrate Court in Aztec, which could be an inconvenience. Also, any revenue generated by Bloomfield law enforcement would then go to the state and not to the City of Bloomfield. **Mayor Atencio** offered her support of keeping Bloomfield's Municipal Court and **Councilor Finch** encouraged the public to consider the bill and call local legislators to share their opinion.
- B. Mayor Atencio** asked the Council to approve the appointment of **David Karst** as the new Bloomfield Police Chief. **Councilor Lynch** moved to approve the appointment and **Councilors Hare and Finch** seconded. Approval was unanimous. Mayor Atencio introduced **Chief Karst** and asked him to share his background with those present. Chief Karst is a veteran and served his country in Iraq. He has a Bachelor's Degree in aeronautical science and a Master's Degree in criminal justice. He has

been with the Farmington Police Department for 13 years. He is married and has two children. Chief Karst said he will be in his new office at the Bloomfield Police Department on February 4 and is excited to serve the citizens of Bloomfield and is dedicated to do everything he can in the best interests of the city. He also thanked Interim Police Chief Randon Matthews for his service as the chief.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Dwane Robinson offered his support of the Bloomfield Police Department and welcomed the new chief. Mr. Robinson also thanked Interim Police Chief Randon Matthews for all he has done for the community, citing several successful projects IPC Matthews implemented.

San Juan County Sheriff Shane Ferrari offered his appreciation to the Mayor and Council for a decision he knew was difficult. Sheriff Ferrari also said he believes the city made a good choice with Chief Karst and that the new chief will have a good team to support him. The Sheriff said he said the support of the San Juan County Sheriff's Office will continue and the department backs the city and it's Police Department.

Mayor Atencio thanked Interim Police Chief Randon Matthews for his leadership in the last six months and for giving his best to the City of Bloomfield. The Mayor thanked Sheriff Ferrari for serving on the Professional Panel during the assessment for the new chief. She also thanked the community for attending the meeting, adding the turnout is the kind the council likes to see at meetings. Mayor Atencio also thanked Sgt. Craig Barker for applying for the position. Nineteen applications were received for the Police Chief's position and the city interviewed six candidates.

City Manager Duncan thanked IPC Matthews for taking on a difficult job as the interim chief and for his receptive response to suggestions. He also said IPC Matthews shined in the assessment.

Councilor Lynch thanked everyone who attended the meeting and encouraged them to continue to participate in Council meetings.

Councilor Pennington commended IPC Matthews for doing a "phenomenal" job as the interim chief and for the support IPC Matthews gives to the city. Councilor Pennington also said that Chief Karst and Lt. Matthews will do a great job, that he's proud of the officers and is excited for the things to come. Councilor Pennington stated that he believes the community is behind the Police Department and everybody is on board.

Councilor Finch expressed her appreciation to IPC Matthews for the job he did, including the Neighborhood Watch program, the StopIt application and the 9 p.m. routine. She also thanked him for creating a department where the officers feel honored to serve the city's residents and to keep them safe, and for helping make the community a better place.

Councilor Hare stated the hiring process for the Police Chief's position included three panels, which had a set series of questions that were asked of each candidate. Each candidate interviewed with all three panels and, at the end of the assessment, each member of each panel rated each candidate on a scale of 1-100. Those 18 scores were then added, and the council agreed that the candidate with the highest score would be offered the position. Councilor Hare

said Chief Karst impressed him with his knowledge of the City of Bloomfield and his comprehensive resume. He said the assessment and hiring process was valid and thorough and Chief Karst is everything the Council likes in a police chief.

Mayor Atencio thanked everyone who had a part in the assessment process, including HR Director Donna Clifton, the Bloomfield Fire Department, which provided a room for one of the panels and its dining area for lunch, Parks Director Melinda Gomez and her staff for helping set up for the assessment, Payroll Specialist Evelyn Archuleta for being a facilitator and to all of the city employees who helped make the assessment happen.

Lt. Randon Matthews said it is an exciting time for the city and, by everyone working together, we can move forward. He encouraged everyone to support Chief Karst and thanked everyone for their support while he was the Interim Chief.

Mayor Atencio and City Manager Duncan said Chief Karst will be sworn in on February 4, 2019.

Mayor Atencio called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:46 p.m. **Councilor Pennington** made that motion and **Councilor Finch** seconded. Approval was unanimous.

Adjournment:

Mayor Atencio called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:46 p.m. **Councilor Pennington** made that motion and **Councilor Finch** seconded. Approval was unanimous.

Mayor Cynthia Atencio

ATTEST:

Dorothy Nobis, City Clerk