



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
TOWN OF MESILLA
WORK SESSION**

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2015
4:30 P.M.

TRUSTEES: Nora L. Barraza, Mayor
Linda L. Flores, Mayor Pro Tem
Carlos Arzabal, Trustee
Sam Bernal, Trustee
Stephanie Johnson-Burick, Trustees

STAFF: Cynthia Stoechner-Hernandez, Town Clerk/Treasurer
Kevin Hoban, Fire Chief
Chris Mangusing, Marshal
Irene Parra, Special Event Coordinator
Gloria Maya, Recorder

PUBLIC:

1. Discussion on the Town of Mesilla's preliminary 2015-2016 Budget due to DFA by June 1, 2015.

Ms. Stoechner-Hernandez reviewed the Town of Mesilla's preliminary 2015-2016 budget.

Mayor Barraza stated the budget reflects the first half of the property taxes. The second half of the property taxes is due in May.

Trustee Johnson-Burick referred to the decrease in "Other" line item from \$245,368.00 to \$89,863.00.

Ms. Stoechner-Hernandez responded the DWI seizures are down.

Mayor Barraza asked if any of these are the grants.

Ms. Stoechner-Hernandez responded no but she will look into it and get back to Trustee Johnson-Burick.

1 Trustee Arzabal stated he is concerned with the town fronting money and having to wait 6 to 7 months to
2 recoup the funds. The Town of Mesilla is not in a position to do that. The trustees have a chance to
3 review the budget on a monthly basis so these are not a surprise.

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5 Mayor Barraza stated we will not be able to give employees an increase but the town is picking up the
6 10% increase in benefits so that it does not come out of the employee's paycheck. Those grants are on a
7 reimbursement basis. Ms. Stoechner-Hernandez has frozen all of Groundwork Dona Ana finances. The
8 difference in the "Other" line item referenced by Trustee Johnson-Burick may be that we did not include
9 taxes and other fees. Building Permits will remain the same due to the limited amount of construction.
10 There is little difference in terms of operation which remains the same. Ms. Parra has worked diligently
11 with the Department of Tourism and it is paying off. Businesses have seen an increase in foot traffic
12 around the plaza. We have to promote our community in order to bring people in. Ms. Parra has done an
13 awesome job.

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15 Ms. Stoechner-Hernandez stated Ms. Parra is looking at making a commercial for the town to tap into
16 another group of people.

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18 Trustee Bernal asked if Ms. Parra's budget is remaining the same.

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20 Mayor Barraza responded it will be increased by \$11,250.

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22 Ms. Stoechner-Hernandez responded Ms. Parra's budget is the Community Program.

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24 Trustee Arzabal asked where Molzen/Corbin is in the budget.

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26 Ms. Stoechner-Hernandez responded Molzen/Corbin is paid out of grants.

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28 Mayor Barraza responded Molzen/Corbin is on a retainer for the town.

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30 Trustee Bernal stated he understands we cannot give staff an increase but would like to see if we can give
31 the employees time-off awards. This would be approved by the board to insure that all employees are
32 treated equally.

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34 Mayor Barraza stated this would need to go through Department of Finance to ensure that it is legal. Ms.
35 Stoechner-Hernandez will have an answer at the next meeting.

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37 Trustee Bernal stated we need to show the employees that we are working with them.

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Mayor Barraza stated we need to show the employees that they are appreciate them.

Trustee Bernal stated he will work with Mayor Pro Tem Flores to put something together for the staff; moral buster.

Mayor Barraza stated Ms. Stoechner-Hernandez did a good job in showing the comparisons between the years.

Trustee Johnson-Burick indicated she is ultra conservative. She is looking at the situation the surrounding entities and school districts are in. She gave kudos to the Department Heads who working within their budget. She asked if the increase in Enterprise Fund revenues will be due to CPI increase. Ms. Stoechner-Hernandez responded the CPI increase is at 1%. We are starting to see more revenue and less expenditure which is helpful.

Trustee Arzabal indicated it is all about checks and balances. The Town of Mesilla has the lowest rates in the county. In the past this water fund was a mess and we are not there anymore. The town cannot give an increase but does have the means to provide health insurance but at the same token the employee has the right to seek other insurance.

Mayor Barraza stated the town does a wonderful job in paying a good percentage of medical coverage which offsets us not being able to give increases. We keep staff informed on what is going on with the budget so they are not caught off guard. We are going to have to put our heads together to come up with a plan with regards to the infrastructure. Several unexpected situations have been happening which we are not prepared for.

Trustee Johnson-Burick stated we need to have money to keep operating and providing services.

Mayor Barraza reiterated we need to address the several needs of the town. Department Heads do a wonderful job in searching for grants. She needs to commend Ms. Stoechner-Hernandez and her staff for researching and ensuring that all the money is due to the town is coming in.

Mayor Pro Tem Flores stated we need to have an extra line item to cover some of these expenses.

1 Mayor Barraza stated residents have offered money to be used where it is needed. She thought of the
2 playground equipment that is greatly needed.

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4 Mayor Pro Tem Flores indicated the donors should be asked if they would like to be recognized in the
5 next newsletter.

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7 Trustee Bernal stated everything starts at the top. The board and staff have followed Mayor Barraza's
8 guidance.

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10 Mayor Barraza stated she feels very confidence on what is being proposed. She feels very confident on
11 the work that Ms. Stoechner-Hernandez and Ms. Maya are doing to address the audit findings.

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13 Trustee Arzabal stated he is happy that the budget is not a secret. The board is provided the information
14 on a monthly basis.

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16 Mayor Barraza stated everything is open and above board. Ms. Stoechner-Hernandez and Ms. Maya can
17 answer questions with regard to the budget. She asked Ms. Stoechner-Hernandez to place the budget on
18 the next meeting's agenda for approval. She asked the trustees to contact Ms. Stoechner-Hernandez with
19 any questions.

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21 **MEETING ADJOURNED AT 5:25 P.M.**

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24 **APPROVED THIS 26TH DAY OF MAY, 2015.**

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29 Nora L. Barraza
30 Mayor

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32 **ATTEST:**

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37 Cynthia Stoechner-Hernandez

1 Town Clerk/Treasurer

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