



# CITY OF ROCKY FORD – CITY COUNCIL MEETING

**April 23, 2024**

**WORK SESSION: 6:00 p.m.**

Interim City Manager Stacey Milenski, City Attorney Nathan Shultz, Mayor Duane Gurulé, Councilmembers Larry Herrera, Robert Barron, Nicholas Martinez, Sherry Cordova and Nicole Roberts met with VEREGY representatives Oscar Rangel and Brandon Morhous. Rangel and Morhous gave a presentation to Council regarding energy savings. A discussion regarding an improvement plan for the City streets and sidewalks was also scheduled for this work session, but due to time constraints, this discussion will be scheduled for the work session on Tuesday, May 14, 2024.

Others present (in person): J. R. Thompson, Public Works Foreman Cuco Ruiz and Public Works Director Rick Long

**REGULAR MEETING: 7:00 p.m.**

Rocky Ford City Council met in Council Chambers on Tuesday, April 23, 2024. Mayor Gurulé called the meeting to order. Those present at roll call were:

Mayor: Duane Gurulé

Councilmembers: Larry Herrera, Robert Barron, Nicholas Martinez, Sherry Cordova and Nicole Roberts

Staff: Interim City Manager Stacey Milenski, City Attorney Nathan Shultz, City Clerk Rebecca Korinek, Public Works Director Rick Long and Public Works Foreman Cuco Ruiz

Others present (in person): J. R. Thompson, Gary Reed, Sharon Aragon, Gloria Jaramillo, Susan Jung, Diane Marshall, Jennifer Vigil, Danny Garcia Wendy Hoar and Dan & Beth Williams

Mayor Gurulé led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilmember Nicole Roberts read aloud the City of Rocky Ford's Mission Statement

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

During the first public comment session many residents addressed Council to express their concerns, fear, killing of smaller dogs, and their frustration of various dogs in their vicinity running loose. The following persons addressed Council: Gloria Jaramillo, 401 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Jennifer Vigil, 804 N. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Danny Garcia, 807 N. 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Wendy Hoar, 812 N. 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Sharon Aragon, 408 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street and Wendy Hoar, 812 N. 13<sup>th</sup> Street.

Council thanked all for attending tonight's meeting.

## **ANY CHANGES TO, OR REMOVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEM**

None

## **APPROVAL CONSENT AGENDA**

Mayor Gurulé explained the agenda and consent agenda to all. Councilmember Herrera moved to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Cordova. Voting results were:

YES	Barron, Martinez, Cordova, Roberts, Herrera, Gurulé
NO	None
ABSENT	Mullins

Motion carried 6-0

Consent Item(s) approved:

1. Approval of previous meeting minutes for April 9, 2024
2. Application for Renewal of Liquor License – **Jodi's Grill, LLC, 209 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Rocky Ford**
3. Application for Special Event Permit – **City of Rocky Ford sponsoring the Rocky Ford Wrestling Foundation – Railroad Park, 105 N. Main Street, Rocky Ford for Saturday, June 1, 2024 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. – "Cruisin' into Fun**
4. Application for Renewal of Liquor License – **Rocky Ford Food Market, LLC, 800 Chestnut Ave., Rocky Ford**

## **ANY CHANGES TO AGENDA**

No changes were requested. Councilmember Roberts moved to approve the meeting agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Herrera. Voting results were:

YES	Martinez, Cordova, Roberts, Herrera, Barron, Gurulé
NO	None
ABSENT	Mullins

Motion carried 6-0

## **PRESENTATIONS, AWARDS, PROCLAMATIONS**

President of the Rocky Ford Tree Board Diana Marshall requested that Council authorize Mayor Gurulé to sign the "Arbor Day Proclamation". General consensus of Council was given authorizing Mayor Gurulé to sign. Mayor Gurulé read aloud the Proclamation designating April 25, 2024 at Arbor Day in the City of Rocky Ford.

Chris Lowe with Government Professional Solutions gave Council information regarding his company and spoke of how their company could help Council to fill the vacant City Manager position. Lowe gave Council the opportunity to ask questions. Council had many questions and discussion was held.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

Interim City Manager Stacey Milenski had previously submitted her report with the Council packet by email but asked Council if they had any questions. Milenski thanked Council for allowing her to attend the CCCMA Conference in Glenwood Springs. Milenski said that "it was an amazing experience". Milenski also informed Council that she had made contact with the Sugar City Trash Department and all is good to go for the clean-up days.

City Clerk Rebecca Korinek gave a report to Council. Korinek also gave an update of plans and preparations for the upcoming Colorado Municipal League (CML) District 6 Spring meeting on May 29<sup>th</sup>.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Continuance of Discussion – Municipal Code §7-2-170 – Refuse, Waste and Junk and §7-2-210 – Dangerous Structures**

This matter was tabled from April 23, 2024 to tonight's meeting. Much discussion was held and questions were asked of City Attorney Nathan Shultz regarding the abatement processes. It was the general consensus of Council to suggest that an additional code enforcement officer be staffed. No further action was taken at tonight's meeting.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Stacy Ayala – 4-H Summer Project – Request Permission to Paint a Wall (public service project)**

Stacy Ayala with the La Junta Art Project. Ayala's project is geared toward outreach to youth and to revitalize the area. President of the youth 4-H John West gave Council information about the project and the mural that they would like to paint at the Arkansas Valley Fairgrounds. West requested permission from Council to paint at the Fairgrounds and also for some possible funding.

After much discussion, it was the general consensus of Council to table this matter to the next regular meeting on Tuesday, May 14, 2024, to allow time for Ayala and 4-H youth to talk to the Arkansas Valley Fair board members and to determine an amount of funding that they would request of Council.

## **Selection of Proposal – Search Firm for City Manager Candidate**

Mayor Gurulé gave the audience a refresher on this matter and informed all that Council had scheduled the matter for tonight's meeting. Gurulé informed Council that he would entertain a motion. Councilmember Martinez made a motion to “cut through the red tape” and appoint Interim City Manager Stacey Milenski as City Manager. Councilmember Barron commented that he agreed with Councilmember Martinez and seconded the motion made by Martinez. Gurulé asked for any discussion. Much discussion was held.

Former Mayor Susan Jung addressed Council to relate that during her tenure, Council hired a search firm for a few City Manager hires. Jung commented that the City does not really have the funds to hire a firm and when a City Manager was hired locally, the City Manager stayed for five years.

Councilmember Martinez withdrew his previous motion and Councilmember Barron withdrew his previous second of the motion.

Councilmember Roberts moved to table this matter to the next regular meeting on Tuesday, May 14, 2024. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Herrera. Voting results were:

YES	Herrera, Barron, Martinez, Cordova, Roberts
NO	Gurulé
ABSENT	Mullins

Motion carried 5-1

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Beth Williams, 917 S. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, commented to Council that she had previously talked to Stacey Milenski on the phone, with an issue they had. Milenski was very helpful to Williams and Williams reported that she was very grateful for Milenski's care and concern in trying to find a solution. Williams requested that Council hire Milenski and not hire a non-local person.

## **MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL REPORTS**

Councilmember Herrera reported the following:

- Herrera reported that he attended the Rocky Ford Country Club (golf course) meeting.
- Golf greens are being cared for. The pond is finished. The Board has been having issues with people walking on the golf course. Signs will be posted to prevent hazards.
- May 2, 2024 the Club will host a tournament for the girls' golf club and May 4, 2024 will be the Rod Hoffmeyer golf tournament.

Councilmember Barron reported the following:

- Barron reported on upcoming movies that will play at the Grand Theater.
- Barron thanked all who helped, in many ways, with the recent fire.
- Barron reminded everyone about the community clean-up days

Councilmember Martinez reported the following:

- Martinez reminded all about the Fireside Chats. The next meeting is May 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.
- The Tree Board will be getting trash cans out in the downtown area.

Councilmember Cordova reported the following:

- Cordova reported that the library summer reading program will start in June. The next meeting for the library board will be on May 14<sup>th</sup>.

Councilmember Roberts reported the following:

- Roberts reported that the Chamber of Commerce held a board meeting last Friday.
- The Chamber will host a “Grown Ups Who Love Us” barbeque from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on May 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Freedom Fest and Duck Race will be on July 4<sup>th</sup>.

- Chamber is working on their membership drive and is looking for new board members.

Mayor Gurulé reported the following:

- Gurulé reported that the Otero County Landfill will be open regular hours on Wednesday, April 24<sup>th</sup>.
- Gurulé thanked everyone for their help in the recent fire.
- The Fireman’s Ball was held the night after the fire.
- Gurulé gave additional information regarding the clean-up days.
- Washington Ice Cream Social is on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Cinco de Mayo Fiesta will be on May 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Small Town Project will give the first 50 kids free admission at the Grand Theater on May 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Gurulé will attend the Pension Board meeting on May 8<sup>th</sup>.
- Graduation will be on May 10<sup>th</sup>.

**UPCOMING COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Tuesday, May 14, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. for Work session and 7:00 p.m. for Regular Council meeting

Tuesday, May 28, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. for Work session and 7:00 p.m. for Regular Council meeting

***EXECUTIVE SESSION*** - *For a conference with the City Attorney for the purpose of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions under C.R.S. §24-6-402(4)(b); Regarding Internal Investigation*

It was moved by Councilmember Roberts and seconded by Councilmember Cordova to go into executive session. Voting results were:


YES	Herrera, Barron, Martinez, Cordova, Roberts, Gurulé
NO	None
ABSENT	Mullins

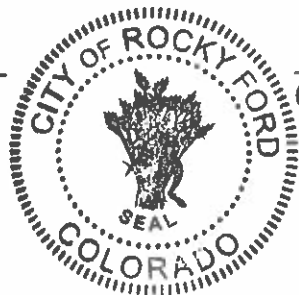
Motion carried 6-0

Those going into executive session were City Attorney Nathan Shultz, Mayor Duane Gurulé, Councilmembers Larry Herrera, Robert Barron, Nicholas Martinez, Sherry Cordova and Nicole Roberts. Mayor Gurulé announced that no further action would be taken after executive session. Gurulé recessed the regular meeting at 9:40 p.m. to go into executive session. Executive session ended at 10:41 p.m. Mayor Gurulé resumed the regular meeting at 10:42 p.m. Gurulé reported, for the record, that if any person who participated in the executive session believed that any substantial discussion of any matters not included in the motion to go into the executive session occurred during the executive session. Or that any improper action occurred during the executive session in violation of the Open Meeting Law, that they should please state their concerns for the record. There were none.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, Mayor Gurulé adjourned the regular meeting at 10:43 p.m.

  
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 Mayor Duane Gurulé



 Attest  
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 City Clerk Rebecca Korinek