JOE WARDY
MAYOR

JOYCE WILSON
CITY MANAGER

CITY COUNCIL

SUSAN AUSTIN
DISTRICT NO. 1

ROBERT A. CUSHING, JR.
DISTRICT NO. 2

JOSE ALEXANDRO LOZANO
DISTRICT NO. 3

JOHN F. COOK
DISTRICT NO. 4

PRESI ORTEGA, JR.
DISTRICT NO. 5

PAUL J. ESCOBAR
DISTRICT NO. 6

VIVIAN ROJAS
DISTRICT NO. 7

ANTHONY W. COBOS
DISTRICT NO. 8

SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE
CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS
AND THE
CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO

EL PASO COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES CENTER
BUILDING A, ROOM #A200
9050 VISCOUNT, EL PASO, TEXAS 79915

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2005
10:00 A. M.

The City Council met at the above place and date at approximately 10:06_ a.m. Mayor Joe Wardy present and the following Council Members answered roll call: Susan Austin, Robert A. Cushing, Jr., Presi Ortega, Jr., and Paul J. Escobar. Absent: John F. Cook. Late arrivals: Jose Alexandro Lozano at 10:20 a.m. and Vivian Rojas at 10:31 a.m.

The following Las Cruces City Council members answered roll call: Mayor Pro Tem Dolores Archuleta and City Councillors Ken Miyagishima, Wesley Strain, Jose Frietze, Dolores Connor. Late arrival: Steven Trowbridge at 10:16 a.m.

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AGENDA

1. Welcome remarks by El Paso Community College President Dr. Richard M. Rhodes and Mayor Joe Wardy.

2. Presentation and discussion on regional transportation and infrastructure issues.
   Presentations by both El Paso and Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organizations.

3. Presentation and discussion on regional military and Base Realignment And Closure (BRAC) issues.
   Presentation by Dave Armor of Cypress International and Alliance for Regional Military Support (ARMS) Committee.

4. Discussion regarding the agendas for future joint meetings and naming items that should be placed on these agendas, to include items that are of importance to the region and collaboration efforts.

5. Discussion and action on setting a follow-up joint meeting.

6. Adjournment.

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Item 1: Welcome remarks by El Paso Community College President Dr. Richard M. Rhodes and Mayor Joe Wardy.

Dr. Rhodes and Mayor Wardy welcomed the Las Cruces City Council and Mayor Wardy introduced the El Paso City Council Members. Mayor Pro Tem Dolores Archuleta spoke for Las Cruces and introduced the members of the Las Cruces City Council and the Las Cruces City staff.

Ms. Joyce Wilson, City Manager, introduced City staff members.

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Item 2: Presentation and discussion on regional transportation and infrastructure issues.
Presentations by both El Paso and Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organizations.

Mr. Roy Gilyard, El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization and Ms. Christine Ochs, Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization, gave Powerpoint presentations regarding regional transportation and infrastructure issues. (on file in the City Clerk's office)

Councillor Strain commented.

Councillor Miyagishima questioned Mr. Adrian Apodaca, New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT), on I-10 construction projects.

Mr. Chuck Barry, District Engineer, Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), answered questions on construction dates for expansion of I-10 from a Texas perspective.

Councillor Frietze commented on the need for regional cooperation to accomplish transportation projects.

Mayor Pro Tem Archuleta expressed that she foresees a Las Cruces staff member as part of the El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Representative Rojas commented on the underutilization of the Border Highway.

Mr. Gilyard explained current obstacles in the design of the Border Highway project.

Mr. Barry explained the Border Highway project is not included in the 10-year funding cycle for TxDOT and added that the $300 million project is equivalent to a complete three year construction budget for the El Paso area.

Representative Ortega asked Mr. Gilyard whether or not the Northeast Parkway will be a toll road.

Mr. Gilyard explained that the State board decided that we will decide which roads will become toll roads in El Paso.

Mayor Wardy commented and stressed to Las Cruces Councillors that El Paso recognizes the problem with I-10 and its affects on future commerce in Las Cruces and the State of New Mexico.

Representative Lozano commented on the Airway connection to Delta Drive and the Border Highway.

Mayor Wardy explained that as soon as the feasibility study was complete, the City will be lobbying for funding for the Airway connection.

Representative Cobos thanked the Las Cruces City Council for traveling so far to meet with the Council Members. He spoke on safety issues on I-10 and the Northeast Parkway.

Representative Escobar spoke on anticipated increases in traffic on Border Highway and asked Mr. Gilyard if plans exist to widen the Border Highway.

Mr. Gilyard responded yes, from Zaragosa to downtown El Paso, there are plans to add a lane, and additionally, plans to extend the Border Highway westward.

Representative Cushing expressed his pleasure that this meeting, once only a dream, has taken place. He stated the State line should not divide joint efforts regarding regional issues.

Mayor Wardy compared El Paso and Las Cruces to Dallas-Ft. Worth and added that both cities are growing toward each other. He hoped that through planning, both cities avoid some of the problems that have occurred with the Dallas-Ft Worth metroplex.

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Item 3: Presentation and discussion on regional military and Base Realignment And Closure (BRAC) issues.
Presentation by Dave Armor of Cypress International and Alliance for Regional Military Support (ARMS) Committee. (on file in the City Clerk's office)

Mr. Dave Armor, Cypress International and Alliance for Regional Military Support (ARMS) Committee representative, gave a Powerpoint presentation (on file in the City Clerk's office). He noted that White Sands and Fort Bliss are the top largest installation sites for the United States Army.

Mayor Wardy explained that Mr. Armor represented Cypress International as a private sector initiative.

Representative Austin asked if the BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) process will include realignment transfers along with Army base closures. She asked about modular brigades and would BRAC determine the placement or displacement of those.

Mr. Armor explained BRAC will deal only with those modular brigades that may be moved from existing sites due to base realignments.

Representative Cobos asked Mr. Armor regarding General John Coburn (USA, Ret) and his knowledge of Fort Bliss, White Sands and Holloman Air Force Base. He asked what the cities of Las Cruces and El Paso need to be doing regarding lobbying.

Mr. Armor responded Senatorial and Congressional delegates are actively advocating for the region, individually and collectively. He believes it is too late now to achieve any traction on new lobbying efforts, but that regional efforts have been energetic for some time.

Mayor Wardy commented on lobbying efforts.

Councillor Frietze asked what bases are being considered for realignment.

Mr. Armor responded that all bases are being considered for realignment.

Councillor Miyagishima asked Mr. Armor how the cities of Las Cruces and El Paso could demonstrate that they are working with the bases.

Councillor Strain commented on base closures he experienced in Colorado Springs and on the need to tackle small, negative rumors immediately before they become an obstacle to retention efforts.

Mayor Pro Tem Archuleta asked Mr. Armor for hard copies of his presentation and she praised the favorable weather of Las Cruces for military exercises and training. She commented on the region's strengths and desire to retain our military bases.

Mayor Wardy asked if foreign military bases were included in the BRAC process.

Mr. Armor responded that foreign bases are not covered under BRAC legislation. He commented on the need for geographic distribution.

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Item 4: Discussion regarding the agendas for future joint meetings and naming items that should be placed on these agendas, to include items that are of importance to the region and collaboration efforts.

Councillor Connor encouraged both City Councils to look at furthering regional economic initiatives.

Councillor Trowbridge stated that he would like to look at ways to bring the Las Cruces and El Paso MPOs together to handle population growth density. He would like future meetings to include staff briefings on how the two MPO plans can come together. He also would like to see El Paso bring forward environmental concerns since El Paso is downstream from Las Cruces.

Councillor Strain commented on the need for Park and Ride to accommodate people working in either City. Additionally, he spoke on transportation issues and the roll of fixed rail regarding transportation planning. He commented on the need by both Councils to find alternative solutions to road problems.

Mayor Pro Tem Archuleta suggested Las Cruces staff meet with El Paso MPO Board Members and additionally Council meetings to discuss ongoing BRAC issues. She recommended initiating a Memorandum of Understanding between the Fire and Police Departments. She asked that Council Members bring forward ideas on preventing child abuse and suggested combining resources and energy to address child safety issues.

Representative Cushing summarized the list of issues brought forward by the Las Cruces Councillors and asked that future joint meetings address one or two items at a time.

Representative Rojas praised the economic vitality of Las Cruces.

Representative Escobar spoke on tourism matters.

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Item 5: Discussion and action on setting a follow-up joint meeting.

Mayor Wardy suggested that he would like to schedule quarterly joint meetings.

Mayor Pro Tem Archuleta asked whether or not the Las Cruces Councillors objected to the Mayor's suggestion.

Mayor Wardy designed Representative Cushing to organize future joint meetings.

Mayor Pro Tem Archuleta concurred and assured the Mayor that Ms. Shirley Clark, Las Cruces City Clerk, and City Manager, Mr. Terrence Moore, would assist on the Las Cruces side. She asked that the City of Alamogordo be included in the next joint meeting.

Motion made by Representative Cushing, seconded by Representative Escobar and unanimously carried to schedule joint meetings at least once a quarter on a rotating basis with the next meeting to be held in Las Cruces.

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Las Cruces Councillors then passed the Motion.

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Motion made by Representative Cushing, seconded by Representative Rojas and unanimously carried to adjourn this meeting at 12:20 p.m.

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

Richarda Duffy Momsen, City Clerk