

**Observer Corps Report – Albuquerque City Council meeting  
17 June 2024  
Mary Mulvany/Janet Kirkpatrick**

All nine councilors were present at the and May 20 and June 3: Louie Sanchez – District 1, Joaquin Baca – District 2, Klarissa Peña – District 3, Brook Bassan – District 4, Dan Lewis – District 5, Nichole Rogers – District 6, Tammy Fiebelkorn – District 7, Dan Champine – District 8, Renée Grout, District 9.

The June 17, 2024 Albuquerque City Council meeting had a lengthy agenda, including final action on ballot propositions and changes to the Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO). The council limited public comment to one minute for the ballot propositions and to two minutes on the IDO changes. The meeting lasted for over eight hours, adjourning at 1:40 am. Some commenters greeted the councilors with “Good morning.”

**General Public Comment Items:**

- Four speakers pointed out that there is a lack of transparency when issues are discussed late in the night when many citizens are unable to attend.
- Seven speakers spoke in favor of adopting ranked choice voting.

**Proposed Changes to City Charter: Election Thresholds and Hiring/Firing of Certain City Officials**

During the June 17 meeting the council considered several bills putting propositions to the voters changing portions of the City of Albuquerque Charter. Proposed changes to the city charter can only be passed by a vote of a majority of the council plus one. Confusion reigned with multiple amendments (some contradictory), amendments to amendments, votes, reconsideration of votes, and more votes. Councilors frequently relied on staff to keep them on track with procedures, amendment numbers, etc. Twenty-five citizens spoke against the change to voting thresholds in P-24-1, including one woman who pointed out that this was decided by the voters in 2013.

- [P-24-1](#) As amended, would remove the required minimum number of votes required for election of a mayoral or council candidate. A runoff would be held only in the case of a tie. **The proposal passed** on a vote of six in favor (Bassan, Champine, Grout, Lewis, Peña, Sanchez) and three opposed (Baca, Fiebelkorn, Rogers.)
- [P-24-2](#) As amended, would change the hiring and firing of the City Attorney and City Clerk. This proposal was amended and reconsidered so many times, it was unclear to this writer which was the final version. **The proposal failed** on a vote of five in favor (Bassan, Champine, Grout, Lewis, Sanchez) and four opposed (Baca, Bassan, Fiebelkorn, Peña.)
- [P-24-3](#) As amended, would change the appointment and firing of the Police Chief and the Fire Chief. The mayor would appoint the police and fire chiefs and the city council would vote to confirm. The mayor would reappoint at the beginning of a new term. The chiefs would have an employment contract which spells out that the terms of termination: the mayor could terminate chief’s employment at any time for cause and the city council could

terminate by a vote of two-thirds + one. **The proposal passed** on a vote of six in favor (Bassan, Champine, Grout, Lewis, Peña, Sanchez) to three opposed (Baca, Fiebelkorn, Rogers.)

- [P-24-4](#) As amended would change the procedure for appointing members of the conference committee that resolves disputes between the mayor and the city council. **The proposal passed** on a vote of seven in favor (Baca, Bassan, Champine, Grout, Lewis, Peña, Sanchez) to two opposed (Fiebelkorn, Rogers.)

### **[O-24-13](#) Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO) Annual Update**

The annual IDO update included many changes in one measure. One commenter noted there were 159 footnotes and protested that multiple changes were made in one vote. Another speaker pointed out the lack of transparency when these many changes were made late in the night.

Councilor Fiebelkorn proposed an amendment to the IDO annual update which would allow **duplexes** in certain areas. Citizens spoke in favor of this amendment, citing the need for more housing. Citizens also spoke against the amendment stating that homes would be bought by out of state investors for conversion to duplexes which would be used as short-term rentals and not help the housing supply. This amendment failed by a vote of three in favor (Baca, Fiebelkorn, Rogers) to six opposed (Bassan, Champine, Grout, Lewis, Peña, Sanchez.)

The IDO annual update passed unanimously.

### **[O-24-11](#) Amending IDO Allowing Drive-Through's in Volcano Heights Urban Center**

The Volcano Heights Urban Center is a development near the Petroglyphs National Monument. This development is designated as a walkable pedestrian area. The city council voted to remove the prohibition to drive-throughs in this mixed-use zone, despite the Environmental Planning Commission's recommendation to keep the prohibition. Five speakers spoke against this change, citing concerns that measures put in place to protect the petroglyph area are being removed. Commission President Lewis stated that there was a petition with 160 signatures supporting drive-throughs. The amendment passed on a vote of six in favor (Baca, Bassan, Champine, Grout, Lewis, Peña) to three opposed (Fiebelkorn, Rogers, Sanchez.)

### **[O-24-12](#) Amending IDO Requiring Referrals of Applications to Tribal Representatives**

This amendment designates Indian Nations, Tribes, and Pueblos as commenting agencies for development in the Northwest Escarpment. The city's Environmental Planning Commission recommended this measure not pass, stating that there was no value to it when the public comment process was available. Commission President Lewis stated he did not support the amendment, finding it "duplicative" because tribes have input on what happens at Petroglyphs National Monument. (However, he voted for the measure). Eight members of the public spoke in favor of the amendment. None spoke against. The measure passed unanimously.

### **[R-24-58](#) City Charter Task Force**

Councilors Rogers, Baca, and Fiebelkorn proposed a resolution creating a task force to review the city's charter and propose revisions. One speaker spoke in favor of this stating a thorough review would be better than the piecemeal changes discussed in "the dead of night." The

resolution failed on a vote of three in favor (Baca, Fiebelkorn, Rogers) to six opposed (Bassan, Champine, Grout, Lewis, Peña, Sanchez.)

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