

**Observer Corps Report – Albuquerque City Council meeting
16 Sept/7 Oct 2024
Mary Mulvany/Janet Kirkpatrick**

All nine councilors were present at the Aug 19 Sept 4 meetings: 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.

General Public Comment:

The Public Comment section of the 16 September agenda was pushed to the end of the meeting and did not begin until 10:20 pm. Many speakers who had signed up to speak were no longer online at their time to speak.

At the 16 September meeting two members of the public spoke about the lack of an Americans with Disability Act accommodation policy at the Albuquerque Fire Department, particularly concerning the issue of PTSD.

Public comments at the 7 October meeting included keeping climate change at the forefront of all council actions, reinstating the plastic bag ban, the need for continued Covid awareness, an Israel arms embargo, and the limitation of general public comment to 30 individuals.

Downtown Vacant Buildings and Properties Ordinance

A majority of time at both the 16 September and 7 October meetings was devoted to discussion, public comment, and multiple amendments of a proposal by Councilor Baca which addressed chronically vacant buildings and people obstructing sidewalks. The ordinance penalized sleeping, sitting, kneeling, crouching, or lying down on the sidewalk. It also prohibited forming a cordon or line of persons along the sidewalk and carrying banners or signs that create an obstruction. It also penalized owners for allowing property to become or remain dilapidated.

Despite multiple amendments clarifying and softening the various provisions, the proposed ordinance failed on a vote of one in favor (Baca) and eight opposed (Bassan, Champine, Fiebelkorn, Grout, Lewis, Peña, Rogers, Sanchez).

[O-24-42](#)

Local Economic Development Act Funding (16 September Meeting)

The council unanimously authorized issuance of Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) funds to two entities listed below. Both items were moved from later in the agenda and were actually heard prior to General Public Comments, which is a deviation from the usual procedure. The mayor signed both bills on September 26.

Ebon Solar LLC received \$11million in LEDA funds (\$1M from the city and \$10M from the state) for their project to build a solar panel manufacturing plant at Mesa Del Sol. They plan to hire 911 employees at this plant for an annual payroll of

\$73M, once the project is complete. There were no public comments on this bill. [O-24-43](#)

Mesa Film Studios LLC received \$7million in LEDA funds (\$1M from the city and \$6M from the state) for their project to build sound studios near Double Eagle Airport. Representatives of the company said the project would create 230 construction jobs and the operation of the facility would create 500 “indirect” or “induced” jobs. One member of the public spoke in favor of the bill. Three members of the public spoke in opposition, citing a need for better consultation with tribes since this project borders the Petroglyphs National Monument. Councilor Fiebelkorn gave the city administration involved with this project an opportunity to explain their efforts to consult with the Native American community. They stated they have provided notification to tribal governments as part of a government-to-government requirement. They also detailed efforts to work with Native American organizations outside a tribal government structure. [O-24-44](#)

Industrial Revenue Bond (16 September meeting)

The council voted to authorize issuance of an Industrial Revenue Bond (IRB) on behalf of Kairos Power LLC to expand its operations at Mesa Del Sol. The IRB, to be repaid by Kairos, is for \$300M to construct a fluoride salt production facility. The fluoride salt is for use as part of the nuclear reactor coolant process. There will be no reactor at Mesa Del Sol; speakers indicated the reactor research portion will be conducted at Oak Ridge Tennessee. The bond issuance passed with eight councilors in favor (Baca, Bassan, Champine, Grout, Lewis, Peña, Rogers, Sanchez) and one opposed (Fiebelkorn). [O-24-45](#)

City Charter Review Task Force

Councilor Champine proposed an amendment to the City Charter which would create a task force to periodically review the City Charter to identify necessary changes. (It should be noted that Councilor Rogers made a similar proposal during the summer which was not passed). The resolution passed by a vote of seven in favor (Bassan, Champine, Grout, Lewis, Peña, Rogers, Sanchez) and two opposed (Baca, Fiebelkorn). [R-24-85](#)