

**Observer Corps Report – Albuquerque City Council meeting
21 February/3 March/18 March/3 April 2024
Mary Mulvany/Janet Kirkpatrick**

All nine councilors were present at the February 21, March 4, March 18, and April 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.

Human Waste Disposal [R-24-3](#)

At the February 21 meeting the City Council voted unanimously to approve a proposal by Councilors Fiebelkorn and Rogers directing the administration to create a program for the disposal of human feces. The resolution provides for set-up of a reporting system through 311 for citizens to call and report areas for cleanup; contracting with a private company to perform the cleanup; creation of a system for tracking the locations of requests; and appropriating \$100K for the remainder of FY24. The resolution passed unanimously. The mayor did not approve or veto the bill within the required 10 days and as a result came into full force and effect, in accordance with Article XI, Section 3 of the Charter of the City of Albuquerque. [Article XI Section 3](#)

Downtown Priority Corridor Projects [R-24-10](#)

At the February 21 meeting the City Council voted unanimously to approve a proposal by Councilor Baca to establish two priorities for downtown traffic:

- 1.) improvements to the Central Ave right of way between 1st and 8th Streets, and
- 2.) improvements to Tijeras and Marquette Avenues between 2nd and 6th Streets and the conversion of the intersection of 3rd St and Silver to a four-way stop.

The second priority would result in conversion of Tijeras and Marquette Avenues between 2nd and 6th Streets from one-way to two-way roads. The resolution was signed by the mayor.

The funding is managed by expanding the scope of work appropriated through the 2013 GO Bond and the 2021 GO Bond.

Albuquerque Police Department/Chief Medina Crash Incident

[R-24-24](#) At the March 4 meeting, the City Council voted on a resolution to direct the Administration to request a multi-agency investigation into the February 17 incident involving Chief Medina. The resolution failed by a vote of four in favor (Champine, Grout, Lewis, Sanchez) and five against (Baca, Bassan, Fiebelkorn, Pena, and Rogers).

During the March 4 meeting Eric Garcia, Albuquerque Police Department Superintendent of Police Reform, presented a brief overview about the process for investigating misconduct. He stressed that Police Reform Bureau does not report to the Chief. During questioning by Council President Lewis, it was clarified that there are 23 investigators in APD's Police Reform Bureau, but only 16 detectives in the homicide unit.

Councilor Rogers inquired about the investigation into Chief Medina's crash. Per Superintendent Garcia it is being investigated as two components:

- 1.) the crash goes before the Crash Review Board;

2.) the possible On Body Recording Device violation is investigated by Internal Affairs Professional Standards part of the Police Reform Bureau.

When asked by Councilor Sanchez if he thought he could be objective in reviewing the Chief's case, Superintendent Garcia said he could and pointed out that although he is the first reviewer of the case, the Chief Administrative Officer would be making any final decisions.

At the April 3 City Council meeting the Administration presented the findings of the Crash Review Board's investigation in the February 17 incident involving Chief Medina. Superintendent Garcia stated the FCRB ruled the accident as unpreventable. He also provided an update to the separate Internal Affairs investigation. The investigation is ongoing and has been expanded to include two additional complaints.

Councilor Sanchez questioned how the accident could have been considered non-preventable. He further stated that since the incident is not being investigated by an outside entity it is not getting the scrutiny it should get. Chief Administrative Officer Sengel stated that the Administration is inviting the State Police to review the investigation file and that the file has been provided to the District Attorney.

At the April 3rd City Council meeting members of the Crash Review Board appeared before the Council to explain the Crash Review Board process. They explained the definition of a preventable and non-preventable crash from the APD standard operating procedures. They further stated the vote of the CRB was unanimous in its determination that the crash was not preventable. Councilors Sanchez and Lewis pointed out that members of the Crash Review Board report to Chief Medina which could jeopardize the independence of the review.

[OC-24-7](#) At the April 3rd City Council meeting Councilor Sanchez proposed OC-24-7, a declaration of no-confidence in Chief Medina. Councilor Champine seconded the motion. He then moved for a deferral of a vote in order to get more questions answered. The motion for deferral failed with four councilors voting for (Champine, Grout, Lewis, Sanchez) and five councilors voting against (Baca, Bassan, Fiebelkorn, Pena, Rogers). Councilor Sanchez then moved to withdraw the declaration. The withdrawal was unanimously approved.

Funding Request for Immigrant Services [EC-35-24](#)

At the March 18 meeting the City Council voted to approve the mayor's request for additional \$50K funding for immigrant services as a stop-gap pending FEMA funding. The vote was eight in favor (Baca, Bassan, Fiebelkorn, Grout, Lewis, Pena, Rogers, and Sanchez) and one against (Champine).

Homelessness

During the April 3 Administration Question and Answer Period Councilor Rogers inquired about the process for dealing with encampments. She cited an incident in which there were multiple police officers, two solid waste vehicles dealing with two tents on Zuni, in her district. She noted that ACS (Albuquerque Community Services) was not present. She talked with the individuals at the encampment to find out if proper processes had been followed and determined that they had not. (The individuals had not been offered a bed, had not been offered storage, and had not been provided the proper notification.)

Presentations and Proclamations

During the February 21 meeting Timothy Green IV, CABQ Cultural Change Leader and PhD candidate presented “Albuquerque Black History”, highlighting contributions of Black citizens. See the presentation beginning at minute 8:45 of the February 21, 2024 City Council meeting:

[YouTube Feb 21 Council Meeting](#)