

JOHN F. COOK  
MAYOR

JOYCE WILSON  
CITY MANAGER



CITY COUNCIL  
ANN MORGAN LILLY, DISTRICT 1  
SUSANNAH M. BYRD, DISTRICT 2  
J. ALEXANDRO LOZANO, DISTRICT 3  
MELINA CASTRO, DISTRICT 4  
PRESI ORTEGA, JR., DISTRICT 5  
EDDIE HOLGUIN JR., DISTRICT 6  
STEVE ORTEGA, DISTRICT 7  
BETO O'ROURKE, DISTRICT 8

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
HISTORIC MONUMENT 1  
MAY 31, 2007

The City Council met at the above place and date. Meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. Mayor John Cook present and presiding and the following Council Members answered roll call: Ann Morgan Lilly, Susie Byrd, Jose Alejandro Lozano, Melina Castro, Eddie Holguin, Jr., Steve Ortega, and Beto O'Rourke. Absent: Presi Ortega, Jr. requested to be excused.

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**AGENDA**

1. Call to order by Mayor John F. Cook.
2. Introduction of members of the El Paso City Council by Mayor John F. Cook.
3. Introduction of members of the Sunland Park City Council by Mayor Ruben Segura.
4. Introduction of members of the Juárez City Council by Mayor Héctor "Teto" Murguía.
5. Recognition of elected officials and special guests.

Ciudad Juarez Mayor Murguía introduced the Juarez City Council.

Sunland Park Mayor Segura introduced the Sunland Park City Council.

Mayor Cook introduced the El Paso City Council.

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6.

**RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, in 1971 an El Paso investigation found that in one year ASARCO spewed 1,012 tons of lead, 508 tons of zinc, 11 tons of cadmium, and 1 ton of arsenic into our border region;

**WHEREAS**, in the City of El Paso 1,097 residential homes have been found with lead contamination exceeding 500 parts per million, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has found ASARCO to be the potential responsible party;

**WHEREAS**, according to a 1998 EPA memorandum, ASARCO violated its permit in the past by illegal treatment and disposal of more than 5,000 tons of hazardous waste, thereby posing other health risk to our border region;

**WHEREAS**, according to ASARCO's permit application, a re-activated ASARCO will admit nearly 7,000 tons of pollutants into El Paso's, Ciudad Juárez's, and Sunland Park, New Mexico's environmental air shed;

**WHEREAS**, said pollutants will include 7.69 tons of lead, 230 tons of oxides of nitrogen, 287 tons of carbon monoxide, 7.66 tons of volatile organic compounds, 6,673 tons of sulfur dioxide, and 16.21 tons of sulfuric acid;

**WHEREAS**, El Paso, Ciudad Juárez, and Sunland Park, New Mexico, would also face other air quality concerns if ASARCO is reopened, including elevated levels of airborne particulate matter and ground-level ozone pollution, which will negatively effect our environment;

**WHEREAS**, for over a century, residents of El Paso, Ciudad Juárez, and Sunland Park, New Mexico, have been exposed to high levels of air pollutants, contaminated soil, and a contaminated Rio Grande river, which has resulted in the development of serious health conditions;

**WHEREAS**, the ASARCO plant located in El Paso is less than a mile from the borders of Mexico and New Mexico and has posed a transborder health concern for over a century and continues to pose a health concern because of the contaminated soil that remains in all three of our border cities;

**WHEREAS**, lead, arsenic, and cadmium are toxic to humans and are responsible for very serious health issues, including nerve disorders, reproductive problems, and cancer, and that these substances are especially harmful to children, affecting their physical and mental development;

**WHEREAS**, children with blood lead levels above 10 micrograms per deciliter have demonstrated severe and permanent injury to brain and neurological functions that include learning disabilities, decreased growth, hyperactivity, and impaired hearing; and that such high levels of lead has been found in a large number of children living in the surrounding area of ASARCO;

**WHEREAS**, human exposure to arsenic and cadmium creates a lifetime cancer risk, since both contaminants are carcinogenic;

**WHEREAS**, it is well known that serious medical conditions require medical care and treatment, which results in thousands of dollars in related health-care costs that are borne by the individual and the community;

**WHEREAS**, a dirty industry such as ASARCO, with its 828-foot and 615-foot smokestacks, jeopardizes economic development because clean businesses do not want to invest or move into our communities, thereby negatively affecting future jobs and the long-term growth of our communities' tax bases;

**WHEREAS**, ASARCO is a polluting vestige of a 19th-century environmentally negligent industry that detract from the development of tourism throughout this border region;

**WHEREAS**, the EPA has been using Superfund money to remove contaminated soil from some of the affluent residences near the smelter, the contamination problem has yet to be addressed in the poor areas of El Paso, Ciudad Juárez, and Sunland Park, New Mexico; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of El Paso, Ciudad Juárez, and Sunland Park, New Mexico, are firmly committed to attracting clean 21st century industries that are mindful and respectful of our region, health, and environment.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO, THE CITY COUNCIL OF CIUDAD JUÁREZ, AND THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SUNLAND PARK, NEW MEXICO:**

That the City of El Paso, Ciudad Juárez, and the City of Sunland Park, New Mexico, and their duly elected Mayors and Representatives, oppose the renewal of the air permit that would allow the reopening of ASARCO in El Paso, and find that it would be detrimental to our border communities' environment, health, and economic prosperity.

Mayor Cook, Mayor Murguía, and Mayor Segura commented.

Texas Senator Eliot Shapleigh commented.

Mayor Cook recognized the Border Relations Committee.

Dr. John Haynes, Texas Tech Medical School, commented.

Motion made by Representative Byrd, seconded by Representative Holguin, and unanimously carried to **APPROVE** the above Resolution.

7.

**R E S O L U T I O N**

**WHEREAS**, the communities of El Paso, Texas, Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua and Sunland Park, New Mexico are all located on the banks of the Rio Grande River;

**WHEREAS**, the condition of the Rio Grande River, the levies, channels and other infrastructure designed to regulate the flow of water through the three communities must be properly maintained in order to avoid flooding and potential property damage and loss of life within the communities that abut the river;

**WHEREAS**, the flooding events that occurred during 2006 have highlighted the need for additional resources to conduct maintenance on a regular basis to remove silt and other debris from the riverbed, fortify the levies and inspect and repair infrastructure intended to protect the three communities from flooding.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the communities of El Paso, Texas, Ciudad Juarez Chihuahua and Sunland Park, New Mexico that the three communities will work together to secure adequate funding from both the United States and Mexican and Federal Governments to make the repairs to the Rio Grande River and its appurtenant infrastructure and levies necessitated by Storm 2006; and to increase the annual budgets of the agencies charged with the responsibility of maintaining the Rio Grande River to allow for more extensive and regular river maintenance.

Mayor Cook, Mayor Murguía, and Mayor Segura commented.

Mr. Paul Dugie, Flood Commission Director of Dona Ana County, commented.

Mr. Pat Gordon, Rio Grande Compact Commissioner, commented.

Motion made by Representative Byrd, seconded by Representative Lozano, and unanimously carried to **APPROVE** the Resolution.

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8. Discussion and action regarding the creation of Committees for Border Relations by the City of Sunland Park and the City of Juárez and future activity.

Mayor Cook, Mayor Murguía, and Mayor Segura commented.

Motion made by Representative Lilly, seconded by Representative Lozano, and unanimously carried to **APPROVE** the item.

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Motion made by Representative Byrd, seconded by Representative Holguin, and unanimously carried to **ADJOURN** this meeting at 11:50 a.m.

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APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:



Richarda Duffy Morsen, City Clerk