

## **Gallup Council passes rodeo agreement**

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent  
Friday, 03 March 2017 11:37

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### **Veterans Cemetery easement finalized**

The Gallup City Council unanimously passed an agreement Feb. 28 that relates to the High School and Junior High School rodeo associations. The action took place at the regular city meeting and was not met with opposition.

The agreement was introduced by City Attorney George Kozeliski.

“This is only our second year in hosting it,” Kozeliski explained. “Many years ago the city hosted the state high school finals, but this is the joint finals and our second go-round.”

Kozeliski told council members that the city was successful in its response to a Request for Proposals from the High School Rodeo and Junior High School rodeo associations and, as a result, was awarded the state high school and junior high school state finals. The terms of the contract are identical to last year’s dual hosted championships, Kozeliski said.

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The State Rodeo Finals (organization) does not pay the city a fee for the use of Red Rock Park, which is where the event is held, Kozeliski said.

“They do not pay,” he said. “We co-host the state final and part of our hosting is to provide the facility. The state organization and the city split the income from stall rentals and recreational vehicle space rentals.”

There are about 125 contestants from around New Mexico that participate in the rodeo finals, Kozeliski said. Kozeliski said the contestants have to qualify in locally hosted rodeos around the state in the fall and spring and then the top contestants qualify for the state finals, he explained.

On another rodeo note, Gallup hosted the annual Junior High Finals Rodeo for nine years, but things got to a point whereby Gallup couldn't meet the organization's minimum requirements with respect to horse stalls and RV spaces with water, electric and sewer, Kozeliski said.

“The bottom line is they just outgrew us and Red Rock Park simply is not big enough in square footage to meet their minimum requirements,” Kozeliski said.

## **UTILITY EASEMENT RELOCATED**

At the same council meeting, the Gallup City council accepted a public utility easement pertaining to the planned \$6 million Veterans Cemetery.

“The city is moving overhead electrical lines that presently cross the center of the new veterans' cemetery,” Kozeliski explained to council members. “The state of New Mexico is granting the new easement along the south side of the cemetery and once the lines are moved and placed underground, the city will vacate the present easement.”

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Kozeliski noted that the cemetery land, which is located off Hasler Valley Road, was donated to the state by the city for the sole purpose of the construction of the cemetery.

“It’s very appropriate that we’re keeping things (electrical lines) underground,” Councilor Fran Palochak, a Gallup native and a U.S. Navy veteran, said.

## **PUEBLO OF ZUNI AGREEMENT FINALIZED**

The Gallup City Council unanimously agreed to an amendment agreement between the city of Gallup and the Pueblo of Zuni. The amendment changes the requirement for a conservation easement to be placed on property the city purchased as part of a settlement to a deed with restrictions which Zuni and the city agreed would work better in transferring the property to a state agency.

*The matter is part of a bigger settlement regarding G-22 water rights litigation that has been pending for 37 years and which has been in active litigation for the past seven years, Kozeliski said.*

***By Bernie Dotson  
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