

City council discusses amendments to two ordinances

Written by By Cody Begaye Sun Correspondent
Friday, 22 February 2019 10:42



Two ordinances pertaining to delinquent accounts and penalties with potential amendments were discussed by the Gallup City Council at their Feb. 12 regular meeting.

The ordinance involving delinquent utility accounts was spoken for by City Attorney Curtis Hayes, who said that this amendment is being added for the sake of flexibility.

Hayes stated that the city needs more definitive policies and procedures on the collection process for delinquent utility accounts. While city staff is working on creating said policies and procedures, the current ordinance has language that does not provide the flexibility that they are seeking.

For instance, delinquent accounts that are too small, usually under \$500, are not worth pursuing a collection lawsuit for because the tenant has no assets. Yet, the current ordinance has a mandate for filing a lien and lawsuit for all delinquent accounts.

The amendment would authorize the City Manager to implement policies and procedures for the collections process.

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The council agreed that this move would make the collection process easier and sought additional incentives to motivate these account holders.

“It makes sense, it’s good for us,” Dist. 3 Councilor Yogash Kumar said. “[For example], delinquents would have to pay their balance to have city services done.”

The second ordinance amendment was described by Hayes as a correction for an oversight from last October, when the city adopted the New Mexico Uniform Traffic Ordinance Penalty Assessment Program.

One section of this ordinance made it a misdemeanor crime to fail to pay a citation, but did not specify how many days the person has to pay or set a schedule of fines.

The ordinance discussed at the meeting would correct the oversight by set a time limit of 30 days to pay a traffic violation.

Both items were approved with a 4-0-0 vote.

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