

## City council is on board with Hydrogen Hub Development Act

Written by By Molly Ann Howell Sun Correspondent  
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New Mexico is currently trying to throw its hat in the ring to become one of the four potential locations of hydrogen hubs across the nation.

According to a Jan. 25 news release, Gov. Michelle Lujan-Grisham announced the introduction of House Bill 4, the Hydrogen Hub Development Act, which will expand the clean energy economy in New Mexico while lowering greenhouse gas emissions through incentivizing low-carbon hydrogen production and export.

During the Feb. 8 city council meeting, Gallup's city manager Maryann Ustick explained why it would be a good idea for the city to support the bill.

"This would certainly help us with good-paying jobs and diversifying our economy, and [I] see a lot of potential investments not only in our community, but in some other areas across the state

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of New Mexico,” Ustick said.

The governor’s news release also addresses President Biden’s administration plans to invest \$8 billion to encourage the development of the four regional Hydrogen Hubs to produce and use low-carbon hydrogen in manufacturing, heating, and transportation.

The bill has seen some changes since it was first introduced. The latest changes were made on Feb. 8, and with those, the bill is now House Bill 228. A board would be put together to see how the Hub was used and if it was being used correctly.

Ustick told the council that one of the key changes includes the authorization of public-private partnerships. This allows municipalities and counties to become partners. She said that doing this would guard the municipalities against some of the risks.

“... [The] municipalities and counties are also protected from any adverse financial impact as a result of the partnership,” Ustick explained.

The council unanimously approved a resolution that showed their support for the governor’s decision regarding the Hydrogen Hub.

### ***RED ROCK PARK IMPROVEMENTS***

Red Rock Park is in need of some maintenance work and repairs, so Gallup’s Park Director Vincent Alonzo came in front of the city council during the Feb. 8 meeting. He requested \$500,000 from the lodger’s tax reserve and \$7,500 from general funds.

Before the council approved the resolution, Alonzo thanked them for their support.

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"I want to thank you ... for realizing the needs at Red Rock and helping us hopefully find this money, and hopefully it works out," he said.

Alonzo went on to say that the money will be used to buy kitchen equipment for the park, put new doors in the convention center, help with restroom repairs and plumbing in the arena and the amphitheater, and fix the floor drain in the arena.

"We need money to take care of it, and I'll do what I can on our end to make sure we get as much of this done as possible before [the 100<sup>th</sup> Intertribal Ceremonial]," Alonzo said.

The 100<sup>th</sup> Intertribal Ceremonial is slated for Aug. 4-14.

Councilor Linda Garcia, Dist. 1, asked Alonzo if he would need extra employees to complete all of the work, but he told the council that it would all be contracted out, even the electrical work.

"...[Our] electrical department, they have the skills and the know-how, but ... they can't dedicate the time."

Councilor Fran Palochak, Dist. 4, asked Alonzo if the parks department would need more money for things like painting. She even offered up assistance.

"I would like to see some of that cosmetic stuff done, especially with our 100<sup>th</sup> year Ceremonial Ceremony [coming up], and if you're in need of funds I'm willing to give some of my discretionary funds," Palochak offered.

Alonzo said that painting is on the maintenance list and is already covered.

## ***LIBRARY GRANT***

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Tammi Moe, Octavia Fellin Public Library's executive director, shared about a recent grant that the library received: The American Rescue Plan Act grant for just over \$26,000.

"[OFPL} intends to use [the] funds to expand services to underserved populations for learning and access to information and educational resources for individuals of all ages in order to support such individuals" needs for education, life-long learning, workforce development and digital inclusion," Moe explained.

The council accepted the grant, and approved the library's budget adjustment.

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