

**Observer Corps Report – Albuquerque City Council meeting  
19 Aug/9 Sept 2024  
Mary Mulvany/Janet Kirkpatrick**

All nine councilors were present at the Aug 19 Sept 4 meetings: 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.

**General Public Comment Items:**

Speaking opportunity limited. Several members of the public mentioned difficulties with signing up online to speak at the August 19 meeting. Mr. Padilla, Director of City Council Services, stated that General Public Comment was limited to 30 speakers.

**Albuquerque Minimum Wage Ordinance**

At a previous council meeting Councilor Grout proposed an amendment to the Albuquerque Minimum Wage Ordinance to reduce the city’s minimum wage for tipped employees to \$3. The Albuquerque Minimum Wage Ordinance was proposed by Councilor Rogers on behalf of the city administration. Decision on the ordinance was deferred to the August 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. However, prior to August 19<sup>th</sup> meeting Councilors Grout and Bassan issued a press release stating they were withdrawing the \$3 tipped employee minimum wage amendment. In addition to setting minimum wage, the ordinance provided for the city to investigate wage theft claims.

Despite the withdrawal of the \$3 tipped employee minimum wage amendment, 29 people spoke against the amendment. Several speakers cited incidents of wage theft.

Councilor Bassan commented that our city has “much bigger fish to fry when it comes to crime and problems” than to enforce wage theft by “going after hardworking business owners”. See her comments at the 4-hour 25-minute mark of the video. [8.19.24 Council Video](#)

Other councilors asked for clarification and expressed that the bill needs to be fine-tuned. They also discussed whether the city’s enforcement of wage theft duplicates efforts by the State. Councilor Grout apologized to anyone she may have offended in proposing the \$3 minimum and stressed that she does not want to take wages away from anyone.

The Albuquerque Minimum Wage Ordinance failed by a vote of three in favor (Baca, Fiebelkorn, Rogers) to six opposed (Bassan, Champine, Grout, Lewis, Peña, Sanchez).

[O-24-21](#)

**Balloon Fiesta/Soccer Stadium Appeal Denied**

Several neighborhood associations and neighbors of Balloon Fiesta Park had appealed the Environmental Planning Commission’s decision to development of seven acres of the park for the soccer stadium. At the August 19<sup>th</sup> meeting the council voted to deny the appeal. Although they denied the appeal, they agreed that additional traffic mitigation measures must be taken. Development of the soccer stadium will proceed. Eight councilors voted to deny the appeal, with one voting in support of the appeal (Bassan).

[AC-24-15](#)

### **Affordable Housing**

At the September 4 meeting, the city council voted unanimously to pass redevelopment tax abatement on three affordable housing projects:

[R-24-75](#) Park Central Apartments developed by Route 66 Multifamily LLC. The project converts an office tower, located at 300 San Mateo Blvd NE, into 101 apartments.

[R-24-76](#) Somos Affordable Housing project developed by SOL Housing. This 70-unit multi-family project is located at 7200 Central Ave SE.

[R-24-78](#) Garfield Townhomes project developed by Garfield Townhomes LLC and Sunlight Properties LLC. This project adds 16 units at 2404 Garfield Ave SE.