MINUTES
MEETING OF THE
LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28, 2018 - 12:00 P.M.
LRGVDC MAIN CAMPUS - 301 W. RAILROAD ST., WESLACO, TEXAS
BUILDING B, KEN JONES EXECUTIVE BOARD ROOM

PRESIDING: MAYOR AMBROSIO “AMOS” HERNANDEZ, PRESIDENT

President Ambrosio Hernandez called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was declared.

President Hernandez then moved to item 2: Consider Approval of Meeting Minutes (February 28, 2018 Board & LRGVDC Corporation). The Hon. Norma G. Garcia made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Pilar Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

President Hernandez then moved to item 3: Public Comment and/or Report from Legislative Delegation and noted no one had signed up for Public Comment and no reports from the Legislative Delegation were available. He then moved to item 4: Administration and recognized Mr. Ron Garza, Executive Director to address the following items:

A. Consider Ratification of Executive Committee Action on Resolution 2018-03 Supporting the Consideration of Eligible Census Tracts of the RGV for the Opportunity Zones Program

Mr. Garza stated that Executive Committee approval was required to submit this resolution on the Opportunity Zones Program because of the very tight deadline. Staff found out about the program at the end of February and it was discussed at the February 28 Board meeting. He explained that this is a different kind of program because little technical assistance was given, and the deadline to submit was March 5. Mr. Garza invited all city managers and economic development entities to contribute information on their Low Income Community (LIC) Census Tracts; and a packet with the resolution and collected supporting documentation was submitted by the deadline to the Office of the Governor on behalf of this region and advocating for the Valley.

Submissions from all three counties were received as follows:
Cameron County – 15 out of 79 (19%) eligible Census Tracts were submitted
Hidalgo County – 23 out of 98 (24%) eligible Census Tracts were submitted
Willacy County – all 5 (100%) of their eligible Census Tracts were submitted

The Valley rallied together as a region to submit this packet, and Mr. Garza thanked everyone for their diligence and technical work to meet the very short deadline. President Hernandez asked if a response has been received from the state. Mr. Garza stated that during his trip last week to Washington DC he visited the Treasury Department and confirmed that what the State
of Texas submitted to the federal government will most likely be accepted as long as the threshold was not exceeded. Texas submitted 628 census tracts (25.7%) so they might be asked to remove one in order to be under 25%, but most likely those will be the official census tracts. Upon conclusion of this report the Hon. Norma G. Garcia made a motion to ratify Executive Committee Approval of Resolution 2018-03 Supporting the Consideration of Eligible Census Tracts of the RGV for the Opportunity Zones Program. Mr. Eddy Gonzalez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

B. Consider Ratification of Executive Committee Action RE: Explore RGV Request for Proposals (RFP) Threshold Amount

Mr. Garza informed the Board that after consulting with the EDA, as well as conducting further market analysis, staff revised the Scope of Work discussed at the February meeting. There are now four parts to the RFP which are: 1) the website creation, 2) the app development, 3) a digital media library, and 4) social media marketing. Staff considered issuing separate RFPs for these items; however, doing them together would garner additional value and cost savings by utilizing the same vendor for integrated services. Because these elements have been added to the RFP, the threshold was raised to an amount not to exceed $100,000. This RFP has been issued as per Executive Committee approval and the invitation to bid closes on April 6. Mayor David Suarez made a motion to ratify Executive Committee Approval of the Explore RGV RFP threshold amount. Commissioner Pilar Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

C. Executive Director Report

1. Introduction of New Staff Members

   Mr. Garza introduced:
   - Jose S. Rodriguez, Valley Metro Vehicle Driver II
   - Fernando Martinez, Valley Metro Vehicle Driver II
   - Roberto Mejia, Valley Metro Vehicle Driver II
   - Juan F. Perez, Valley Metro Vehicle Driver II
   - Antonio Leija, Valley Metro Motor Vehicle Technician II
   - Edgar Martinez, Valley Metro Motor Vehicle Technician II
   - Cynthia Y. Chavero, Valley Metro Vehicle Driver (Non-CDL)
   - Erika Ramon, Area Agency on Aging Case Manager II – Benefits
   - Maricela Oliverez, Area Agency on Aging Case Manager II – CTI
   - Mary Torres, Area Agency on Aging CSR II – IR&A

   The Board warmly welcomed our new employees to the LRGVDC.

2. LRGVDC Updates & Activities

   - NADO Policy Conference

   Mr. Garza informed the Board that during the NADO (National Association of Development Organizations) Policy Conference he learned that this administration will turn programs over to states to facilitate the technical aspects. There will probably not be as much dissemination in terms of federal or even state programs as there has been in the past. Two things will be very important: 1) more technical expertise will be necessary, and 2) entities will need to rely more on each other to share and understand information.
Another item that keeps coming up in different programmatic issues is that the definition of “rural” seems be changing. It used to be more standardized, but now when looking at specific programmatic functions it is defined differently. Our region needs to be aware of this since the geography of the Rio Grande Valley includes many rural areas. Some of the new policies and technical guidance are precise and are deeply imbedded in large documents, so all of our entities need to be aware of these changes.

Mr. Garza reported that an 11th question regarding citizenship will be added to the 2020 Census form. Many congressmen are writing position papers regarding concern for resources to properly educate ground census counters. He suggested the Board may want to consider drafting a resolution creating a unified position on this matter. Additionally, there has been miscommunication of 2020 Census information with some of our jurisdictions. One way to stay in front of this issue is to create a Regional 2020 Census Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee. This could be a formal structure to make the best effort to ensure all entities are educated and receiving the proper information and technical expertise needed to have a successful census count. This type of structure would be a great benefit to smaller communities with limited resources. Upon conclusion of discussion it was the consensus of the Board to include formation of a Regional 2020 Census Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee on the next agenda.

- BikeShare RGV
  Mr. Garza informed the Board that the BikeShare RGV Committee received a presentation from Zagster, which is the current bike rental system used at UTRGV, Harlingen, Edinburg, and Brownsville. A recommendation on a region-wide service will likely come to the Board in May.

- Explore RGV
  To create awareness for this project, a photo contest is underway! It started on February 28 and goes through April 18. Mr. Garza will ask members of the Executive Committee to judge the contest. The project is moving along nicely and staff has identified over 700 destinations, not including historical markers. Pictures and video of many of them are posted on the projects Facebook page “Go Explore RGV”.

- RGV 2020 (CEDS)
  RGV 2020 is our Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Mr. Garza informed the Board that stakeholder forums were held in February, and in April staff will organize focus groups for in-depth discussions. Focus group participants will include: college students, private sector, education, the Regional Small Cities Coalition, and a Large Cities Coalition meeting will be coordinated specifically to discuss this topic.

1. Consider Approval to Participate in 2nd Annual RGV to DC 2018 Event
   Mr. Garza announced that the RGV Partnership is coordinating the 2nd Annual RGV to DC trip and the RGV Day at the Capitol. The RGV 2020 Plan will have the basis for our priority proposals so the Valley can present a unified strategy that is data driven and fact driven; he asked for Board approval to participate in both events. *Mr. Ron Mills made a motion to approve participation in the 2nd Annual RGV to DC 2018 Event and the RGV Day at the Capitol. Ms. Veronica Gonzalez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*
• RGV Fit 5k and Mayors’ Walk for Wellness (It’s Time Texas Community Challenge)
  The event was a success! The It’s Time Texas team informed Mr. Garza that they have hosted events like this across the state, but this was the first event where multiple jurisdictions came together to participate. Mr. Garza was pleased to announce that ten (10) mayors from across the Valley participated in the Mayors’ Walk for Wellness. In addition, the City of McAllen and the City of Harlingen each won their divisions in the State of Texas Community Challenge! It’s Time Texas staff created a video of this event and Mr. Garza shared it with the Board. He thanked the LRGVDC staff for the hard work put into coordinating this event in just five weeks.

2. Consider Approval to Coordinate Event on an Annual Basis
   Upon conclusion of the video presentation and discussion Mayor Hernandez asked for a motion to coordinate this event on an annual basis. **Mayor David Suarez made a motion to approve that LRGVDC coordinate the RGV Fit 5K and Mayors’ Walk for Wellness on an Annual Basis. Mayor Pro-tem Norie Gonzalez Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

Upon conclusion of Administration items, President Hernandez moved to item 5: Department Reports.

A. Economic Development
   Ms. Terrie Salinas, Economic Development Director was recognized and gave a brief report on the recent Regional Small Cities Coalition Meeting, the Kari’s Law Project & Rio Grande Valley Livestock show, and the Weslaco EDC & UTRGV Center for Innovation and Commercialization.

B. Community & Environmental Services

   **Community Development Status Report**

   1. Consider Approval of Resolution 2018-04 Proclaiming April as Fair Housing Month
      **The Hon. Norma G. Garcia made a motion to approve Resolution 2018-04 as presented. Mr. Arturo Ramirez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

   **Environmental Resources Status Report**
   Director Marcie Oviedo stated that the status report on the Solid Waste Management Program and Water Resources were in the meeting packet for review.

C. Health & Human Services

   **Area Agency on Aging Status Reports**

   1. Consider Approval of Advisory Council Recommendation RE: Appointment of New Member
      Director Joe Gonzalez informed the Board that the Advisory Council recommends Dr. Sudershan Pasupuleti from the UTRGV School of Social Work as a member of the Council. **Mr. Eddy Gonzalez made a motion to approve Dr. Sudershan Pasupuleti as a member of the Area Agency on Aging’s Advisory Council as recommended by the Council. Mayor David Suarez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.** Upon conclusion of action Mr. Gonzalez announced that the Annual Centenarian
Recognition is scheduled on May 3, 2018 at the Weslaco Community Service Center.

D. Public Safety
President Hernandez next recognized Public Safety Director Manuel Cruz to address the following items:

Criminal Justice Program Status Reports

1. Consider Approval of Criminal Justice Advisory Committee Nominations for Vacant Disciplines
Mr. Cruz informed the Board that the CJAC Convened on March 20 to review recommendations on vacancies and recommend the following nominations:
   - Mr. Tom Hushen, Cameron County Emergency Management Coordinator/Fire Marshal to fill the Cameron County Law Enforcement vacancy.
   - Mr. Michael Vela, Palmhurst Police Chief, to fill one of the Hidalgo County Law Enforcement vacancies.
   - Mr. Robert Lopez, Weslaco Police Captain, to fill one of the Hidalgo County Law Enforcement vacancies.

Commissioner Danny Guzman made a motion to approve the nominations to the CJAC as presented. Commissioner Pilar Garza seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously. Upon conclusion of action Mr. Cruz stated that the status reports on the Criminal Justice Division grant Opportunity for FY 2018 and the Regional Crime Victim’s Liaison Program were in the meeting packet for review.

Emergency Communications Status Report

1. Consider Approval of Designated Executive Committee Members to Sign Required Texas Comptroller Form for Eligibility to Purchase Diesel Fuel Tax Free
Mr. Cruz informed the Board that the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts office requires designated members of an organization to fill out and sign form AP-197 (Texas Dyed Diesel Fuel End User Signed Statement Number Registration) to be eligible to purchase diesel fuel tax free. The diesel fuel will be purchased for PSAP and Emergency Communications/9-1-1 location generators. Completing this form will result in significant cost-savings due to not paying state taxes on fuel use. Mr. Eddy Gonzalez made a motion to approve Designated Executive Committee Members to sign the required Texas Comptroller form for eligibility to purchase diesel fuel tax free. Mr. Ron Mills seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously. Upon conclusion of action Mr. Cruz noted that the status reports were available in the meeting packet for review.

Homeland Security Program Status Report

1. Consider Approval of Prioritized List of Grant Projects for FY 2018 Homeland Security Grant Program (LETPA/SHSP) Funding
Mr. Cruz stated that in accordance with the Office of the Governor’s Homeland Security Grant Division (OOG-HSGD) applications from jurisdictions were submitted for OOG-HSGD Preliminary review. The OOG-HSGD released the applications to the LRGVDC on March 15 and due to the stringent deadline, the HSAC convened on March 22 to review and recommend the LETPA/SHSP grant priority listing. The deadline to upload the final prioritization is March 31. Commissioner Danny Guzman made a motion to approve the
prioritization list as presented. Mr. Ron Mills seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously. Upon conclusion of action Mr. Cruz noted that the status reports were in the meeting packet for review.

Regional Police Academy Status Report

1. Consider Approval of Civilian Member to the Regional Police Academy Advisory Board Committee

Training Coordinator Randall Snyder was recognized and reported that in accordance with TCOLE regulations and the Texas Administrative Code, Title 7, Part 37, Chapter 215, Rule 215.7, Training Provider Advisory Board requires one-third of the members be public members as defined in 1701.052 Texas Occupations Code. Staff located and confirmed a nominee, Ms. Kassandra T. Valadez, to fill the vacant seat on the Regional Police Academy Advisory Board Committee. In addition, this new member will assist in satisfying TCOLE’s Rules and Comprehensive Academy Program Evaluation requirements. Mr. Ron Mills made a motion to approve Ms. Kassandra T. Valadez as the civilian member of the Regional Police Academy Advisory Board Committee. Commissioner Pilar Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously. Upon conclusion of action Mr. Snyder noted that the status report was in the meeting packet for review.

E. Transportation

Hidalgo County Metropolitan Planning Organization Status Report

Andrew Canon, Director of the HCMPO, was recognized and announced that the 30 year anniversary of the HCMPO is coming up. He reported that the Expressway Illumination project is 89% complete with August of this year as the official completion date. Omni bus bill was signed last week and provides $4.4 billion in discretionary funds toward transportation projects. The amount each state will receive has not yet been decided.

Valley Metro Status Report

Assistant Director Sarah Dierlam recognized and gave the status reports for ridership; she noted that year to date for this fiscal year there has been a 28% increase in ridership.

President Hernandez next moved to item 7. – New or Unfinished Business; there being no further new business, Mayor David Suarez made a motion to adjourn; Mayor Pro-tem Norie Gonzalez Garza seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 12:46 pm.

[Signatures]

Mayor Ambrosio “Amos” Hernandez, President

ATTEST:

[Signature]

Deborah Morales, Recording Secretary

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