MINUTES

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

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2018 – 12:00 PM
LRGVDC MAIN CAMPUS - 301 W. RAILROAD ST., WESLACO, TEXAS
BUILDING B, KEN JONES EXECUTIVE BOARD ROOM

PRESIDING: HON. NORMA G. GARCIA, PRESIDENT

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

The President then moved to item 2: Consider Approval of Meeting Minutes (August 29, 2018). Mr. Ronald Mills made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mayor Dave Kusch seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

President Garcia then moved to item 3: Public Comment and/or Report from Legislative Delegation, there being none she moved to item 4: Administration and recognized Executive Director Ron Garza to address the following:

A. Executive Director Report

1. Introduction of New Staff Member
   Mr. Garza announced that Mr. Steve Maldonado, Motor Vehicle Technician, Valley Metro is our newest staff member.

2. Consider Approval of Resolution 2018-05 Requesting Further Consideration from FEMA Regarding Damage Assessment from June 2018 Flooding Events
   Mr. Garza informed the Board that Valley leaders conducted an analysis that contains a great deal of data and information. FEMA damage estimates have not been consistent with local estimates. This supports a request for another, more comprehensive assessment. There was a forum on August 31 with FEMA at which they released an assessment of $18MM in damages, which is a shortfall of the $36MM threshold for FEMA assistance for damage to public property. The purpose of this resolution is to spotlight this information so that the Valley can have a venue to further explore damage assessments. Mayor David Suarez made a motion to approve Resolution 2018-05 as presented. Mayor Henry Hinojosa seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

3. American Electric Power (AEP) Rate Case
   Mr. Garza stated that as mentioned at the August meeting and with assistance from the City of McAllen’s legal team, staff has drafted a memo regarding this $415MM rate case. AEP seeks compensation for repair costs from damage caused by Hurricane Harvey. The City of McAllen
has offered to intervene for this case by referring it to the law firm of Lloyd Gosselink Rochelle & Townsend, P.C.; the estimated cost for legal fees is approximately $45,000. As the LRGVDC has done in the past, we will communicate and help facilitate an assessment for a cost share for the legal fees. This cost share, which is based on TML population estimates, will include the City of Corpus Christi which will somewhat ease the financial burden from Valley cities. Upon conclusion of discussion Mayor Henry Hinojosa made a motion to approve the memo and rate chart as presented and to send these documents to the cities effected by this rate case. Mayor Pro-tem Norie Gonzalez Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

LRGVDC Updates & Activities

4. Census 2020
   Mr. Garza reported that more cities, counties, and jurisdictions are forming their own Complete Count Committees (CCC). The Taskforce is developing a fact sheet and a list of general activities to assist cities in sharing a unified message. A regional logo and a regional marketing packet are also being developed. An additional Complete Count Committee 101 training is scheduled for November 6 to help CCCs distribute a unified message.

5. Animal Control Roundtable
   Mr. Garza reported that the Animal Control Roundtable group has brought together community leaders to discuss animal control best practices to mitigate the severe pet overpopulation issue in the Rio Grande Valley. Mr. Garza will report further progress of this initiative as discussions develop.

6. BikeShare RGV
   Mr. Garza reminded the Board that in order for a city to participate in the BikeShare program, they should pass an ordinance allowing LimeBike to operate in that city. The draft ordinance has been reviewed by legal counsel from the City of Harlingen and LimeBike and will be distributed to Valley cities for consideration by their city commissions.

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

A. Economic Development

   Economic Development Status Reports
   Mr. Garza reported that the status reports on Kari’s Law Business Project and the Hidalgo County Small Town Economic Development (STED) grant program were in the meeting packets for review.

   Explore RGV Status Report
   Mr. Garza announced that the Launch Reception for the Explore RGV website and mobile app is scheduled for Wednesday, November 14, 2018 from 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm at the LRGVDC Main Campus.
B. Community & Environmental Services

Community Development Status Report
Program Director Marcie Oviedo was recognized and informed the Board that the status reports on the HUD Disaster Recovery Housing Program were in the Board packet for review.

Environmental Resources Status Report
Ms. Oviedo stated that the Solid Waste Management Program status report was in the meeting packet for review. She announced that the next Rio Grande Regional Water Planning Group meeting is scheduled for November 7. She also reminded the Board about the importance of submitting any water related projects to the Planning Group for inclusion in the Regional Water Plan in order to increase their opportunities for state funding.

C. Health & Human Services

Area Agency on Aging Status Reports
Program Director Joe Gonzalez was recognized and stated that the status reports on Medicare Part D Enrollment Period and the Benefits Counseling and Enrollment Assistance Project were in the meeting packet for review. He informed the Board that Area Agency on Aging staff are available to come to individual communities to present information on the Medicare Part D Enrollment process.

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

Criminal Justice Program Status Reports
Mr. Cruz stated that the status reports for the Criminal Justice Program were available for review in the meeting packet.

Emergency Communications Status Report

1. Consider Approval to Purchase 9-1-1 Promotional Material
Mr. Cruz informed the Board that as a part of the requirement for ongoing educational awareness, additional promotional items are needed to distribute to the public. Distributing promotion items with slogans and wording for ongoing 9-1-1 campaigns assist in promoting important information to the public. The cost estimate for this purchase is $198,703.10 and ECOMMS has an existing contract with Promo Direct for this purchase. This is a budgeted item previously approved by the Commission on State Emergency Communications (CSEC). Mr. Ron Mills made a motion for approval to purchase 9-1-1 promotional material as requested. Mayor Henry Hinojosa seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously. Upon conclusion of action Mr. Cruz noted that the Emergency Communications program status reports were in the meeting packet for review.

Homeland Security Status Report
Mr. Cruz noted that the Homeland Security Program status reports were in the meeting packet for review and added that September is National Preparedness Month and that the “Ready RGV”
website is up and running with information on how to prepare for disasters.

Regional Police Academy Status Report
Mr. Cruz noted that the Regional Police Academy status report was in the meeting packet for review.

E. Transportation

Hidalgo County Metropolitan Planning Organization Status Report
There were no significant reports at this time.

Valley Metro Status Report
Program Director Tom Logan was recognized and addressed the following items:

1. Consider Approval to Authorize the Purchase of Transit Revenue Vehicle through Texas Smart Buy
Mr. Logan stated that Valley Metro recommends the purchase of a transit revenue vehicle through Texas Smart Buy, contract #071-A1. The vehicle price is $70,492. This is a Type II Cutaway Bus with 24 passenger seats and is ADA accessible. Funds received through the Texas Department of Transportation from Section 5339 Funding will support the purchase of this vehicle. This unit will be placed in service within the rural Willacy County Demand Response service area. Mr. Eddy Gonzalez made a motion to authorize the purchase of a Transit Revenue Vehicle through Texas Smart Buy as requested. Mr. Troy Allen seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

2. Consider Approval to Authorize Agreement between LRGVDC and the City of Brownsville for Administration of Metro Connect Transit Services
Mr. Logan recognized Mr. R. J. Garza, Assistant Director of Brownsville Metro, and Mr. Mario Delgado, Transit Director for the City of McAllen, as partners in this agreement. He informed the Board that the purpose of this agreement is to establish a cooperative and mutually beneficial relationship between the parties and to set forth the relative responsibilities of the parties to disseminate information and make appropriate referrals. The City of Brownsville has received funding from the Texas Department of Transportation to provide transportation services through the Intercity Bus Program for the Metro Connect Services. Metro Connect established three (3) new routes: the Green Line, the Red Line, and the Blue Line, which will feed directly into the two (2) regional hubs at La Plaza and Central Station. The proposed routes will provide limited-stop intercity service from UTRGV Edinburg to McAllen, from McAllen to Brownsville, and from Brownsville to Port Isabel. Connecting regional hubs in the area and commitment to seamless transportation are the primary driving forces for this project. Mayor David Suarez made a motion to authorize the Agreement between LRGVDC and the City of Brownsville for Administration of Metro Connect Transit Services as presented. Mayor Henry Hinojosa seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously. Upon conclusion of action Mr. Logan reported that Valley Metro’s ridership for the state fiscal year has reached 675,000 passengers, which is a milestone. He credited this achievement to the Fare Free program and Valley Metro’s partnerships with UTRGV, STC and TSTC. He also reported that the newly established Hidalgo County Courthouse Circulator (Route 16) is being fully utilized and has averaged 200 passengers a day within the first month of being in service.
Mr. Logan announced that Valley Metro, in partnership with UTRGV, applied for a grant through the FTA’s Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities Program. 339 projects with requests totaling $2B across the nation competed for the available $366MM. The Valley Metro/UTRGV project was 1 of 107 projects selected and $660K was secured for projects across the Valley.

President Garcia next moved to item 6. – New or Unfinished Business; there being none, Mr. Ronald Mills made a motion to adjourn; Mayor Henry Hinojosa seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 12:36 pm.

ATTEST:

Deborah Morales, Recording Secretary

Hon. Norma G. Garcia, President