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

WEDNESDAY, MAY 25, 2016 - 12:00 P.M.
LRGVDC TRANSPORTATION CENTER
510 PLEASANTVIEW DR. - WESLACO, TEXAS

PRESIDING: MAYOR JIM DARLING, PRESIDENT

President Jim Darling called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m. and asked for the roll to be called for both the Board and Membership. Upon conclusion of roll call it was ascertained that a quorum of the Board and Membership were present. The President then moved to item 2. – Consider Approval of April 27, 2016 Meeting Minutes. The Hon. Norma G. Garcia made a motion to approve the April 27, 2016 meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Ronald Mills seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

Upon conclusion of action on the minutes President Darling moved to item 3.A. - Report from Legislative Delegation, however no legislators were present and no reports were provided. The President then moved to item 3.B. – Public Comment and noted that no public comment requests had been received.

President Darling then moved to item 3.C. – Presentation RE: Mayor’s Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness and recognized Ms. Melissa Escamilla, Program Manager for Family Endeavors. Ms. Escamilla gave a presentation on the supportive services for veteran families that Family Endeavors offers, and the Mayor’s Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness. The goals of this program are to rapidly re-house or prevent homelessness among veterans and their families, and to enhance independent living skills for low income veteran families. Their homelessness prevention and stabilization services include outreach, case management, help obtaining VA benefits, emergency financial assistance, and assistance obtaining other public benefits. The purpose of the Mayor’s Challenge is to eventually reach a point where there are no homeless veterans. Family Endeavors hopes to accomplish this goal by each city identifying every homeless veteran within its city limits and offering them access to permanent housing. Ms. Escamilla is asking for each mayor to publicly commit to ending veteran homelessness in their community by signing up in support of the challenge via email. Upon conclusion of discussion it was the consensus of the Board that instead of individual letters, a regional or combined resolution of support that includes all cities on the LRGVDC Board of Directors would be appropriate. Said draft resolution will be on the agenda for consideration at the next regular Board meeting.

Upon conclusion of discussion on the Mayor’s Challenge, the President moved to item 3.D. – Report on LRGVDC Community Partnership Forum & Regional Strategic Plan (RSP) and recognized LRGVDC Deputy Executive Director Ron Garza. Mr. Garza reported that at the Community Partnership Forum, “Collaborating to Increase Access to Services” was held on May 6; the natural theme of the day turned into “mobility” and included information on mobile services, including a mobile internet center called “The Tech Bus”. Regarding the 2017 - 2022 Regional Strategic Plan (RSP), Mr. Garza reported that the regular biennial update of this regional document has become much more than an update; LRGVDC staff has essentially rebuilt the document. At a recent public meeting many pertinent comments and suggestions were received. Staff is in the process of incorporating this information in the document, and a draft will be posted by the end of the week on lrgvdc.org for review; the deadline to receive comments on the RSP is June 12, 2016.

President Darling next moved to item 3.E. – Executive Session RE: Personnel. With the Board’s permission this item will be held until the end of the agenda.
Upon conclusion of Administration items President Darling moved to item 4. - Regional Police Academy and Training Center. Program Director Paul Williams was out of the region for training and Mr. Jones noted that the regular status report was in the Board folders for review.

President Darling next moved to item 5. - Report from Area Agency on Aging and recognized Program Director Joe Gonzalez. Regarding item A. - Act upon Area Agency on Aging (AAoA) Advisory Council Recommendations, Mr. Gonzalez addressed the following action items:

1. Consider Approval RE: Advisory Council on Aging Nominations
   Mr. Gonzalez stated that the Advisory Council recommends the following individuals as Cameron County representatives, and noted that these nominations are the result of the Area Agency on Aging's continued outreach efforts:
   - Veronica de Lafuente from Harlingen, Associate State Director for Advocacy and Outreach for AARP Texas assigned to the Lower Rio Grande Valley
   - Leslie D. Meyer from Brownsville, Program Manager with UT Health School of Public Health in Brownsville
   - Rose R. Trimmer from Brownsville, Executive Director for Healthy Communities of Brownsville and the Chair for the Brownsville Senior Advocacy Coalition

   **Mayor Pro-tem Esmeralda Lozano made a motion to approve the Advisory Council on Aging Nominations as presented. Mayor Henry Hinojosa seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

2. Consider Approval RE: Authorizing Staff to Initiate Annual Fan Drive
   Mr. Gonzalez stated that the Advisory Council recommends approval to authorize Area Agency on Aging staff to initiate an annual fan drive project entitled "Cool Community Initiative" that will provide fans to seniors, disabled individuals, and others in need. If approved, The Area Agency on Aging will initially provide Older American Act funds, and $5,000 in local funds to purchase approximately 250 box fans. Donations will be sought from local businesses and the public. Staff would like to coordinate this event with Cameron and Willacy Counties Community Projects, Inc. and Senior Community Outreach Services for Hidalgo County for drop off points and distribution. The initiative will kick off on June 1 for collections; with the Board’s approval distribution is scheduled to begin July
   1. **Mayor Pro-tem Norie Gonzalez Garza made a motion to authorize staff to initiate the Annual Fan Drive as presented. Mayor Henry Hinojosa seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.** Upon conclusion of action Mr. Gonzalez reported that the 19th Annual Centenarian Recognition was held on May 4 and was a great success. The oldest gentleman there was 104, and there were several ladies that were 103!

President Darling next moved to item 6. - Report from Economic Development Department and recognized Program Director Terrie Salinas who gave the current status of the Keeping PACE in the Valley Program. She noted that Hidalgo County is looking further into the program to determine if they will participate.

President Darling then moved to item 7. - Report from Valley Metro and recognized Program Director Tom Logan. Mr. Logan gave the status report on Ridership and noted that it continues to increase and staff monitors performance measures in the urban and rural areas.

President Darling next moved to item 8. - Report from Regional Planning & Services. Under item 8.A. Environmental Resources Mr. Ron Garza was recognized to address item 1. - Consider Executive Committee Recommendation RE: GLO Coastal Resiliency Advisory Group. Mr. Garza stated that the Executive Committee considered seven (7) applicants to fill three (3) categories and recommends the following:

   - Elected or Government Office from County or Municipality - Commissioner David A. Garza, Cameron County Precinct 3
   - Coastal Conservation or Regional Planning Organization – Mr. Ronald D. Mills, Port Director for Port Mansfield/Willacy County Navigation District
   - Regional Port or Member of Coastal Business Community – Mr. John Wood, JWA Realty
The Hon. Norma G. Garcia made a motion to approve the Executive Committee Recommendation for the GLO Coastal Resiliency Advisory Group as presented. Mayor Pro-tem Pilar Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

Upon conclusion of action Regional Planning Director Marcie Oviedo stated that the status reports for Environmental Resources, and HUD Disaster Recovery Funding were in the Board folders for review.

President Darling next moved to item 9.A. – Program Status Reports and recognized Director Manuel Cruz. In addition to the regular status reports, Mr. Cruz pointed out that the State of Texas plans to carry out the 2016 Rio Grande Valley Air Evacuation Full Scale Exercise June 2 – 8. The goal of this exercise is to determine the States overall ability to assist local communities in the evacuation from an impact area using air transportation for both general and medical population evacuees. The President next moved to item 9.B. – Criminal Justice Program Status Reports and Mr. Cruz noted they were in the Board folders for review.

President Darling next moved to item 10. - 9-1-1 Program and recognized Program Director Sergio Castro. Mr. Castro noted that the regular status reports were in the Board folders for review and added that Kari’s Law has gone through an evolution and is now at the federal law level.

President Darling recessed the meeting at 12:48 p.m. and convened the Membership Meeting. The Membership Meeting adjourned and the regular meeting reconvened at 1:02 p.m. The President then moved to item 3.E. - Executive Session RE: Personnel and so convened Executive Session. Regular session reconvened at 1:12 p.m. at which time the Hon. Norma G. Garcia made a motion to approve the appointment of Deputy Executive Director Ron Garza as the Executive Director upon Mr. Ken Jones’ retirement in August 2016. Mayor Pro-tem Norie Gonzalez Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

President Darling then moved to item 11. – Old or New Business; there being none, the meeting was adjourned at 1:14 p.m.

ATTEST:

Deborah Morales, Recording Secretary

Mayor Jim Darling, President