MINUTES

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

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2019 – 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 12:07 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was declared.

The President then moved to item 2: Consider Approval of Meeting Minutes (January 30, 2019 Board, Membership, Corporation Meeting). *Mr. Ron Mills made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mayor Pro-tem Norie Gonzalez Garza seconded and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*

President Garcia then moved to item 3: Public Comment and/or Report from Legislative Delegation and recognized Mr. Edgar Lopez, NPR (National Public Radio) Advisory Board. He informed the Board that NPR is aired on two stations owned by the Catholic Diocese of Brownsville, and that the Diocese is in the process of selling the stations to Immaculate Heart Media. Immaculate Heart Media is expected to air religious programming and drop the news component. The NPR Advisory Board is a grassroots organization and is in the process of setting up a nonprofit organization to raise money to create a new NPR station. He stated that a strong public radio station is an important element that provides unbiased local news and produces quality programs. He provided his contact information and stated he would appreciate comments and suggestions from the Board to bring this endeavor to fruition.

Upon conclusion of Public Input, the President moved to item 4: Administration and recognized Executive Director Ron Garza to address the following:

A. Executive Director Report

1. Introduction of New Staff Members
   Mr. Garza introduced Ms. Priscilla Trevino Case Manager for Area Agency on Aging. Ms. May Martinez-Baily is another new Case Manager for Area Agency on Aging but was out of town for training. Both Case Managers will be based at the Harlingen satellite office. The Board warmly welcomed our new staff members to the LRGVDC.

LRGVDC Updates & Activities

2. 2019 Annual Budget (Cognizant Agency Reporting)
   Mr. Garza reminded the Board that at last month’s meeting the General Membership, of which the Board of Directors is apart, approved the 2019 Annual Work Program and Budget. He stated that every year the LRGVDC must have a cognizant agency certify the indirect rate. The
LRGVDC uses a federal and state certifying cognizant agency as a failsafe. The FTA made a minor modification to calculations for the indirect rate, which did not change the budget. He wants the Board to be aware of this minor change before this final edition is posted on LRGVDC’s website, lrgvdc.org. Mr. Garza noted that state statute dictates that regional planning commissions cannot exceed an indirect rate of 15% of total cost; this recalculation slightly changed the indirect rate from 9.03% to 9.96%.

3. Census 2020
Mr. Garza informed the Board that staff is coordinating with the Census 2020 Complete Count Committee (CCC) media chairpersons to develop a unified message about the importance of the 2020 Census. Some CCCs have existing messages and staff will work to combine them in order to portray a regional message. Staff will work to have these messages completed by April 1, 2019 which will provide a twelve-month lead time up to April 1, 2020 which is the 2020 Census day.

Mr. Garza also updated the Board on the Participant Statistical Area Program (PSAP). This program updates the size of a Census Tract. The optimal size of a Census Tract population should be at 4,000, but with the growth in the Valley there are some Census Tracts that have exceeded the 8,000-population maximum. The Census Bureau has completed their own analysis of PSAPs, and the LRGVDC has agreed to be the administrator of our regional information. Mr. Garza thanked staff from the LRGDC 911 Department, Economic Development Department, and Community & Environmental Services Department who have worked hard to simplify the information and make it cohesive. He then displayed the LRGVDC website, lrgvdc.org, and demonstrated where this information can be found. Staff has sent email messages to the municipalities that would be affected by this and asked if they concur with the changes made by the Census Bureau. If a discrepancy is found, it will be analyzed, and a Regional Census Tracts Update Forum will be held. All data will be collected, and staff will submit any revisions by June 2019.

4. RGV 2020 – Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
Mr. Garza informed the Board that the CEDS Steering Committee met yesterday and that staff has recommended creating an initiative called RGV 2020 from the CEDS. The steering committee is comprised of fourteen individuals from diverse backgrounds across the region. Every year the LRGVDC Economic Development District is mandated to update the CEDS which contains economic development strategies for this region. It is published and made available for use by all municipalities and jurisdictions. Staff would like to take this process a step further this year by analyzing the strategies and selecting a regional project that can be accomplished by the year 2020. Mr. Garza will keep the Board informed on the progress of this project.

5. 2019 Mayors’ Walk for Wellness (It’s Time Texas Community Challenge)
Mr. Garza informed the Board that this is the third year for this challenge and it runs through March 3, 2019. He was pleased to announce that in just three years this program has had overwhelming growth. In the Rio Grande Valley alone 1,900 people participated in 2017, 5,200 people participated in 2018, and a whopping 11,000 people participated in 2019! Across this statewide challenge 48% of its participation came from the Rio Grande Valley. And more mayors from the Valley participated than in any other region in Texas. The LRGVDC feels it is important to spotlight this program because healthy activities and lifestyles are not what the Valley is known for. The Valley has also had more and more mayors commit to this challenge each year; and this year more mayors than in any other region in the State have signed the
Mayor’s Pledge. As of last month, 19 Valley mayors had signed the Mayor’s Pledge and Mr. Garza gave Mayor Dave Kusch, City of Primera, and Mayor Gilbert Gonzales, City of Raymondville the opportunity to sign. With their signatures a total of 21 mayors have accepted the challenge. The winners of the It’s Time Texas Community Challenge will be announced at the end of March or early in April.

It’s Time Texas provided Mr. Garza with the current leader board, which is a great example of how the Valley is fighting to change its image as one of the unhealthiest regions in Texas.

- In the Large Community category, the City of McAllen is in 1st Place and the City of Brownsville is in 2nd Place.
- In the Mid-sized Community category, the City of Harlingen is in 1st Place and the City of Pharr is in 3rd place.
- In the Small Community category, the City of Los Fresnos is in 1st Place and the City of Port Isabel is in 5th Place.
- In the Extra Small Community category, the City of Laguna Vista is in 4th Place.

He reiterated that we are doing amazing work across the RGV and thanked the mayors for their leadership in this effort.

6. RGV BCycle Bike Share Program
Mr. Garza reminded the Board that last fall he announced the delayed start of a regional dockless bike system. Today he is pleased to announce that the LRGVDC has now received funding for this project from three different entities:
   - $408,000 from HCMPO for infrastructure in Hidalgo County
   - $250,000 from Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation which will go to Cameron County
   - $500,000 from City of McAllen in the form of their infrastructure

With these awards and the partnership with the City of McAllen staff is excited to develop RGV BCycle, a regional fleet of rental bikes. Staff will work closely with cities to determine where docking stations will go across the Valley and hopefully by this summer the program will be rolled out.

7. RGV Day at the Capitol
Mr. Garza thanked Mr. Sergio Contreras, President & CEO of the RGV Partnership for coordinating this event. February 5, 2019 was designated as RGV Day at the Capitol and a delegation of over 200 people from the RGV attended this important event as a unified group. This was the largest group ever from the Valley to attend RGV Day at the Capitol. He showed the Board one of the information folders that was given to our state legislators. It has all categories of information about our region and includes a credit card shaped USB drive. The information on the USB drive is basically a digital packet with an abundance of information in a compact form; this unique USB was a big hit with all who saw it. He informed the Board that a digital version of the booklet with legislative priorities is available on the scrolling banner on the home page of LRGVDC’s website, lrgvdc.org, a video with regional highlights is also available there; he then played the video for the Board. He pointed out that representing the entire RGV is important and Starr County is included in this information. He invited the Board to download the booklet and the video to further promote the many great attributes the Valley has through their communities and organizations.
Upon conclusion of the reports on his agenda items, Mr. Garza announced that the Road to Recycling Tire Collection project will take place for the third year in a row on Saturday April 27, 2019. The Solid Waste Advisory Committee and the LRGVDC will cost share where needed. He informed the Board that TCEQ wrote an article on tire recycling and the LRGVDC Road to Recycling project was a marquis feature in a statewide publication used during the legislative session. He was proud to note that the Valley is making an impact with this project and it has a strong message that illegally dumped tires are a huge issue.

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

A. Economic Development

**Economic Development Status Reports**
Economic Development Director Terrie Salinas was recognized and reported on recent activities in the Texas PACE Program. She noted that the Regional Small Cities Coalition did not meet in February because its members were a part of the delegation that attended the Rio Grande Valley Day at the Capitol.

**Explore RGV Status Report**
Economic Development Assistant Director Blanca Davila was recognized and informed the Board that staff has requested a one-year extension from the Economic Development Administration to carry out the regional marketing campaign and ensure the LRGVDC secures Explore RGV’s intellectual property rights. The Explore RGV app is ready for download at the Apple Store and Google Play. Ms. Davila stated that a marketing campaign for the website and mobile app will begin soon. She was pleased to announce that RGVision Media won the Gold Addy (American Advertising) Award in the Cross Platform, Online/Interactive Campaign category for the Explore RGV project.

**RSTEC Update**
Mr. Matt Ruszczak was recognized and informed the Board that RSTEC hosted their 3rd Annual Site Selector Tour January 27-30 with individuals from Germany, Italy, and Denmark. Some were returning visitors that came on behalf of specific clients looking for business locations and for others it was their first trip to the Rio Grande Valley. He stated that the Valley left a good impression with them. He added that he will follow up on the Site Selector Tour by visiting several companies when he goes to Europe for the Hannover Messe (Tradeshow) in Germany at the end of March.

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 meeting packet for review.

**Environmental Resources Status Report**
Ms. Oviedo stated that the Solid Waste Program and Water Resources status reports were in the meeting packet for review and she stressed the importance of participation in this year’s Road to Recycling Tire Collection Project.
C. Health & Human Services

Area Agency on Aging Status Reports
Program Director Joe Gonzalez was recognized to address the following:

1. Consider Approval of Advisory Council Recommendations for Funding Allocations toward Senior Center Resources and Caregiver Services.

As per Area Agency on Aging’s Advisory Council recommendations, approval is requested to proceed with the purchase of additional support resources for area senior centers. This funding is a budgeted item and must be utilized by the end of the 2019 fiscal year. These services will provide additional resources such as transportation and operations support to regional senior centers. The amount of funding under support services is $260,000 and the amount of funding for caregiver services is $100,000. **Mayor Tony Martinez made a motion to approve the Advisory Council’s recommendation for funding allocations toward senior center resources and caregiver services as presented.** **Mayor Gilbert Gonzales seconded and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.** Upon conclusion of action Mr. Gonzalez informed the Board that the Health and Human Services Commission Office of Area Agencies on Aging will issue final instructions for the Area Plan on Aging for fiscal years 2021 and 2022. As part of the Area Plan development the Area Agency on Aging will conduct a regional needs assessment on the needs of the elderly. This plan will lay the foundation for how the Are Agency on Aging will address the needs of the elderly for the region.

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

Criminal Justice Program Status Reports
Mr. Cruz informed the Board that the Criminal Justice Program status report was in the meeting packet for review.

Emergency Communications Status Report

1. Consider Approval to Purchase Upgrade Services for Text-to-911 Platform for PSAPs in Hidalgo and Willacy Counties.

Mr. Cruz informed the Board that in accordance with Program Policy Statement (PPS) 36 from CSEC we must convert to Message Session Relay Protocol (MSRP) Text-to-911. Upgrades for this service must be purchased. Emergency Communications is requesting the new MSRP Text-to-911 Service at all 19 of LRGVDC’s PSAP locations. This will provide an additional feature for Text Calls that are necessary in NextGen911. West Safety Solutions is the sole provider of the Text-to-911 for the LRGVDC PSAPs. This is a CSEC approved budgeted line item. **Mr. Ron Mills made a motion for approval to purchase upgrade services for Text-to-911 Platform for PSAPs in Hidalgo and Willacy County.** **Commissioner David Garza seconded 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. Mr. Cruz announced that the 2019 South Texas All Hazard Conference is scheduled for March 27-28 and 2,000 individuals already registered, record-breaking attendance is expected for this year.
Homeland Security Status Report
Mr. Cruz noted that the Homeland Security Program status reports were in the meeting packet for review.

Regional Police Academy Status Report
The regular status reports for the Police Academy were also in the meeting packet for review.

E. Transportation
Mr. Garza was recognized and informed the Board that HCMPO Director Andrew Canon and Valley Metro Director Tom Logan were both in Austin providing testimony at a committee hearing for HB71 for the creation of a Regional Transit Authority.

Valley Metro Status Report

1. Consider Approval of Revisions to Vehicle Maintenance & Facility Maintenance Policy

Mr. Garza reported that the new addition to the vehicle maintenance policy is required because the LRGVDC has acquired several new Gillig busses that need to be added to this policy. The Gillig buses will be utilized primarily for rotation on the new RGV Metro Express service. These revisions should go into effect March 1, 2019. **Mr. Ron Mills made a motion to approve the revisions to the Vehicle Maintenance & Facility Maintenance Policy as presented. Mayor Pro-tem Pete Garcia seconded and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.** Upon conclusion of action Mr. Garza noted that the full ridership report is in the meeting packet for review. He and pointed out that due to enrollment the ridership for UTRGV route has spiked to over 22,000 for just the month of January.

Upon conclusion of action Mr. Garza acknowledge Mr. Dan Serna, Harlingen City Manager and thanked him, the City of Harlingen, and Cameron County for partnering with Valley Metro to move the Harlingen Base terminal from its downtown Harlingen location to the former Cameron County Precinct office on North “T” Street. Mr. Garza reminded the Board that they approved the $1.00 per year lease agreement for this facility during the January 2019 meeting. This location is well positioned logistically for travel in all directions for transit riders.

President Garcia next moved to item 6. – New or Unfinished Business. There being none, she called for a motion to adjourn. **Ms. Yvette Garza Garcia made a motion to adjourn, Mr. Ron Mills seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:51 pm.**

\[Signature\]
Hon. Norma G. Garcia, President

ATTEST:

\[Signature\]
Deborah Morales, Recording Secretary