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

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2019 – 12:00 PM
LRGVDC MAIN CAMPUS - 301 W. RAILROAD ST., WESLACO, TEXAS
BUILDING B, KEN JONES EXECUTIVE BOARD ROOM

PRESIDING: MAYOR DAVID SUAREZ, PRESIDENT

President David Suarez called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was declared.

He then moved to item 2: Consider Approval of Meeting Minutes (August 28, 2019). Mayor Jim Darling made a motion to approve the August 28, 2019 Board Meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner David Garza seconded, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

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

A. Executive Director Report

LRGVDC Updates & Activities

1. Introduction of New Staff Members

   Mr. Garza announced that the following individuals have recently joined the LRGVDC staff:
   - Ms. Crystal Reyna, Area Agency on Aging Case Manager
   - Ms. Priscilla Trevino, Area Agency on Aging Case Manager
   - Mr. Benjamin Simancas, Custodian at LRGVDC Transportation Center
   - Mr. Jared Valdez, Valley Metro Customer Service Representative
   - Mr. David Rodriguez, Valley Metro Motor Vehicle Technician
   - Mr. Federico Ibarra, Valley Metro Motor Vehicle Technician
   - Mr. Osvaldo Lopez, Valley Metro Motor Vehicle Technician
   - Mr. Jose Sustaita, Valley Metro Motor Vehicle Technician

   The Board warmly welcomed our new staff members.

2. Community Loan Center Partnership

   Mr. Garza informed the Board that the Community Loan Center of the Rio Grande Valley (CLC) is a non-profit organization that offers a low-cost alternative to payday and car title loans. If approved, this would be offered as an optional resource to LRGVDC employees. CLC also offers financial literacy training programs to their partners which could serve as a topic for our ongoing staff Lunch & Learn events hosted by the HR Department. CLC currently partners with 22 municipalities, all 3 counties, and 8 school districts as well as many other organizations in the Valley. Mayor Henry Hinojosa made a motion to approve the LRGVDC entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Community Loan Center of the Rio Grande Valley. Commissioner David Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.
3. Census 2020
Mr. Garza informed the Board that on September 17 the LRGVDC hosted a Census Taskforce meeting for stakeholders and Complete Count Committee (CCC) Chairmen. He announced that on October 10 there will be a grand opening for the RGV Census office in Edinburg. Mr. Wilmer Rovelo has been hired as the Area Census Office Manager and Mr. Garza welcomed him and Ms. Ana Leonard who has been the primary Partnership Specialist with the US Census Bureau. Mr. Garza added that 23 CCCs have been formalized and have been meeting quarterly; after November they will start meeting monthly in order to keep the momentum going. March 12, 2020 is the date individuals across the nation can self-respond to the Census, so the CCC is working backward from that date to spread the word and importance of the census count. He thanked the CCC’s for all the preparation work they are doing.

The LRGVDC will take part in the Census 2020 Information Forum that Futuro RGV will host on November 18 at 6:00 pm at the McAllen Convention Center. A Chief Administrator from the US Census Bureau will be one of the speakers for this event.

4. Disaster Mitigation Forum (Sept. 26th)
Mr. Garza announced that the Disaster Mitigation Forum was rescheduled to October 3, 2019 at 9:30 am because the original September 26 date conflicted with the Texas General Land Office (GLO) Public Hearing in Austin which was scheduled on the same date and at the same time. The Disaster Mitigation Forum is a part of the LRGVDC Regional Water Resource Advisory Committee and has been tasked with gathering data that will be included in a formal report which will be a part of the GLO Action Plan. Information in the Action Plan will be submitted so the Valley will be considered in the distribution of the $4.3 billion in disaster recovery funds. These funds will be available via HUD through the GLO for recent natural flooding disasters due to Hurricane Harvey, the June 2018, and the June 2019 storms.

5. Explore RGV (Regional Marketing, Featured Cities & Birding Guide)
Mr. Garza shared recent updates to the Explore RGV project and stated that the advantage of the gexplorenergyv.com website is that by using the “Map Your Adventure” and the “Featured Destination” tabs, a person can see what the entire Rio Grande Valley has to offer on one website and plan a visit from anywhere they are in the world. The “Adventure Guides” tab is a new addition that features “Bird Watching” and “Bicycling” locations. “Bicycling” information is coming soon and will be an interactive comprehensive resource for bicycling trails across the Valley. Mr. Garza announced that today the LRGVDC will formally launch the “Bird Watching Adventure Guide”. The launch coincides with the City of Harlingen’s 26th Annual Birding Festival which is scheduled from November 6–10 at the Harlingen Convention Center. Birding is a huge part of the Valley’s economy and Bird Watching is available throughout the Valley, even here at the LRGVDC Main Campus.

The Regional Marketing Plan is another new addition to Explore RGV. A current list of “Partner Cities” can be found under that tab. Clicking on a city’s name opens a link to their website and provides an additional platform for that city to inform the public of entertainment, exploring, and adventuring opportunities they offer.

Partner cities will also have access to a new feature called “Events Calendar” which is coming soon. This is a “one-stop-shop” portal where visitors can see events hosted by our partner cities. Mr. Garza thanked the fifteen cities who have become the first partners in the Explore RGV project for their participation: Alamo, Brownsville, Edinburg, Elsa, Harlingen, Los Fresnos, Lyford, McAllen, Mission, Palm Valley, Pharr, San Benito, South Padre Island, Sullivan City, and Weslaco, and he encouraged other cities to join the Regional Marketing Plan.
President Suarez next moved to item 5: Department Reports.

A. Community & Economic Development
   Assistant Director Blanca Davila was recognized to address the following:

   Program Action Items:

   1. Consideration and Action to Approve the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Solid Waste Management Resolution
      Ms. Davila informed the Board that as per the Regional Solid Waste Grants Program application for FY 2020/2021, a signed resolution from the LRGVDC governing body must accompany the application. The LRGVDC will submit the signed resolution with the application and the project implementation budget workbook as recommended by the Solid Waste Advisory Committee. Mr. Ronald Mills made a motion to approve the TCEQ Solid Waste Management Resolution as presented. Mayor Pro-tem Norie Gonzalez Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

      Upon conclusion of action Mr. Garza congratulated the City of Brownsville for being awarded a $900,000 EDA grant, the City of Weslaco for being awarded an $850,000 EDA grant, and the Town of Laguna Vista in partnership with Cameron County for also receiving an EDA grant. The LRGVDC Economic Development department is providing administration for these newly awarded grants.

   Program Status Reports
   The status reports were provided in the meeting packet for review.

B. Health & Human Services

   Program Action Items:
   Area Agency on Aging Director Joe Gonzalez was recognized to report on the following:

   1. Consideration and Action to Approve Direct Purchase Service Contractors
      Mr. Gonzalez stated that there are 14 applications for the Direct Purchase Service Contractor Pool for Fiscal Year 2020. The services provided by these contractors include home modifications, medication assistance, medical supplies and equipment, homemaker services, and caregiver respite care. These contractors will be utilized by case managers for purchasing services for their clients. They were selected as per LRGVDC’s competitive bidding process in response to the 2nd round of solicitations for eligible and qualified contractors. Mayor Pro-tem Norie Gonzalez Garza made a motion to approve the Direct Purchase Service Contractors as presented. Commissioner Pilar Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

   Program Status Report
   The status reports were provided in the meeting packet for review.

C. Public Safety

   Program Status Reports:
   Public Safety Director Manuel Cruz stated that there were no action items to consider this month and that the program status reports were in the meeting packet for review. He also provided a schedule of National Night Out events and other events through October 31, 2019.
D. Transportation

Program Action Items:
President Suarez next recognized Valley Metro Director Tom Logan to address the following:

1. Consideration and Action to Purchase IT Software
   The Information Technology Software requested by the Valley Metro division is proprietary software that will be used to conduct daily operations and report program requirements. It will replace software that has met its useful life and will ensure information processing systems are reliable, safe, and up-to-date. If approved, the purchase will be made using FTA grant (#TX-2019-042-00) and TxDOT Transportation Development Credits approved by LRGVDC Procurement through Remix, a sole-source, for IT Software at a cost of $26,980. Commissioner David Garza made a motion to approve the purchase of IT software as presented. Mayor Jim Darling seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

Program Status Reports:
Mr. Logan informed the Board that the Valley Metro status reports were provided in the meeting packet for review. He added that at the close of the state fiscal year Valley Metro provided 821,000 passenger trips which reflects a 19\% increase in ridership over last year.

Program Status Reports:
Mr. Andrew Canon, HCMPO Director, was recognized and announced that tomorrow, September 26, at 5:30 pm the last Hidalgo County MPO meeting will be held. The HCMPO has served Hidalgo County for 36 years, and as of October 1, 2019 the RGVMPO, a merger of the Brownsville MPO, the Harlingen-San Benito MPO and the Hidalgo County MPO, will officially begin serving the Rio Grande Valley region as the 20th largest MPO in the State of Texas.

President Suarez next moved to item 6. – Executive Session

A. Deliberation Regarding Real Property (LRGVDC Program Staff Office) in accordance with the Texas Government code, Section 551.072, the Board reserves the right to retire into executive session for deliberation regarding real property.

Executive Session was not held at this meeting.

B. Reconvene into Open Session to Consider Action on Items Related to Executive Session as Described above.

No action was taken.

President Suarez next moved to item 7. – New or Unfinished Business.
There being no further business to come before the Board, President Suarez called for a motion to adjourn.
Commissioner Rick Guerra made a motion to adjourn, Mayor Jim Darling seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:25 pm.

ATTEST:

Deborah Morales, Recording Secretary