

MINUTES

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

12:00PM WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 2024

HELD IN-PERSON AND VIA THE GLOBAL GOTOMEETING VIDEO CONFERENCE
PLATFORM INITIATED AND CHAIRED FROM
LRGVDC MAIN CAMPUS - 301 W. RAILROAD STREET, WESLACO,
TEXAS BUILDING B, KEN JONES EXECUTIVE BOARD ROOM

PRESIDING: Mayor Norma Sepulveda

Mayor Norma Sepulveda called the meeting to order at 12:18 p.m. Roll Call was taken, and quorum was not attained at that moment. They then moved on to Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance. After that was complete quorum was attained.

Present: Mayor Norma Sepulveda

Mayor Norie Gonzalez Garza, City of Mission
Mayor Ramiro Garza, City of Edinburg
Commissioner Ellie Torres, Hidalgo County
Mayor Alma Salinas, City of Sullivan City
Mayor George Guadiana, City of San Perlita
Mayor Alejandro Flores, City of Los Fresnos
Commissioner Edward Gonzales, City of Raymondville
Ms. Veronica Gonzales, UTRGV Edinburg
Mr. Troy Allen, Delta Lake
Mr. Ronald Mills, Willacy Co. Navigation Dist.
Mr. Tony Chavez, Member at Large
Ms. Ann Williams Cass, Member at Large
Ms. Lupita Sanchez Martinez, Grassroots

Absent :

Judge Aurelio Guerra, Willacy County
Mayor John Cowen, City of Brownsville
Mayor Adrian Gonzalez, City of Weslaco
Commissioner David Garza, Cameron County
Mayor JR Garza, City of Alamo
Mayor David Moreno, City of Donna
Mayor Javier Villalobos, City of McAllen
Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez, City of Pharr
Mayor Ricardo Guerra, City of San Benito
Commissioner Marco Villegas, City of San Juan
Mr. Paul Hernandez, South Texas College
Mr. Luke Lucio, TSTC
Mr. Jim Darling, Member at Large

Without no questions from the board, Mayor Sepulveda moved on to Item #2

Item #2 Consideration and Action to Approve Meeting Minutes for May 26, 2024. ***Troy Allen made a motion to approve the meeting minutes for May 26, 2024. Mayor Ramiro Garza seconded the motion, and the motion was carried unanimously upon vote.***

Item #3: Public Comment: No Public Comment, Mayor Norma Sepulveda moved on to the next item.

Item #4: Administration

4A. Presentation was provided for AltaCair Foundation by Dr. Rashmi Chandran on the services they provide.

4B. Presentation was provided for Easter Seals by Mrs. Patricia Rosenlund the Executive Director for Easter Seals on the services they provide.

No further discussion or comments. Mayor Sepulveda moved on to Item 4C Executive report.

4C. Executive Report.

Mr. Cruz began by introducing all new hires and promotions. He then provided a brief update on the Rio Grande Valley 2024 RGV 2 DC trip with the RGV Partnership. He highlighted the valuable information shared during the trip and noted the presence of several legislators, including Congressman Gonzales, Congresswomen De La Cruz, Senator Ted Cruz, and Representative Colin Aldred.

Mr. Cruz emphasized that the board is aware of the Valley's numerous needs, which include economic development, transportation and infrastructure, broadband, education and workforce, and water resources. He assured the board that these issues are being looked at by our legislators. Specifically, as it related to the water debt, discussions are ongoing with the Mexican government concerning water resources and most importantly the delivery of water owed to the U.S. One of the strategies from the U.S. is to hold funding to the Mexican government until they fulfill their obligations regarding the water situation. Mr. Cruz also mentioned that, entering the fifth year of the cycle, Mexico has provided less than 400-thousand-acre feet of the required 1.7 million acre-feet of water. This shortfall is significant and challenging to remedy within the current cycle. Consequently, new legislation is being considered to enhance oversight and management of water resources, ensuring more consistent monitoring and accountability.

Additionally, Mr. Cruz highlighted the participation of staff from various funding agencies, including the Bureau of Reclamation, IBWC, Federal Transit Administration, Health and Human Services, and the North American International Trade Administration. Mr. Cruz reported on the recent South Texas Days event in Washington that was also taking place, noting both events success and encouraging attendance for next year events.

Regarding recent rainfall, Mr. Cruz noted that water levels were critically low at 17 percent before the rain, and the recent precipitation has only slightly alleviated the situation. The reservoirs remain in urgent need of additional rain.

Ms. Ann Cass also contributed to the discussion, clarifying that, according to Jim Darling from the Regional Water Advisory Group, Mexico will not be considered out of compliance with the International Treaty of the IBWC until the end of the fifth year. Ms. Cass mentioned that similar situations in the past have been mitigated by tropical storms or hurricanes. She confirmed that Mexico is also experiencing a water shortage.

No further questions or discussion Mayor Norma Sepulveda moved on to Item #5

Item #5 Department reports

A. Community & Economic Development

Ms. Melisa Gonzales started off with the first of 4 Action items she had on the agenda.

1. Consideration and ACTION to Approve Reappointment for Even Number Year Regional Water Resource Advisory Committee (RWRAC) Members. Mayor Norie Garza made a motion to approve and ***accept the reappointment for Even Number Year Regional Resource Advisory Committee (RWRAC) Members. Mayor Ramiro Garza seconded the motion and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.***
2. Consideration and ACTION to Approve updated Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) Bylaws. ***Troy Allen made a motion to approve the Updated Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) Bylaws. Mayor Norie Garza seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion was carried unanimously.***
3. Consideration and ACTION to approve Reappointment for Even Number Year Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) Members. ***Mayor Alma Salinas made a motion to approve Reappointment for Even Number Year Solid Waste Advisory Committee. (SWAC) Members. Ms. Veronica Gonzalez seconded the motion and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.***
4. Consideration and ACTION to approve the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) Grant. ***Mayor Alma Salinas made a motion to approve the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) Grant. Mayor Ramiro Garza seconded the motion and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.***

One announcement that Ms. Melisa Gonzales wanted to make was to remind everyone that on July 25, they will be hosting the 1st Annual Regional Small Cities Coalition Conference. Ms. Melisa Gonzales wants to encourage all small cities to register staff to join. She mentioned that it will take place in the Ken Jones Board room from 9-2pm. Lastly Ms. Gonzales mentions that on July 16th the next Economic Development Advisory Committee Meeting will take place at 10am.

No further questions or concerns Mayor Norma Sepulveda moved on to Health and Human Services.

B. Health and Human Services Action Item:

Mrs. Margarita Lopez was recognized and started with her Program Status Reports.

Program Status Reports

Ms. Margarita Lopez began with her status reports. Detailed Program Status Reports are available for review in the packet provided. Lastly, Ms. Lopez mentioned that they will be having a Workshop on Ethical Practices. It would be for Social Workers, Mental Health Professionals or in those related fields, and that will take place on August 9th. Lastly, Ms. Lopez stated that if anyone had any questions, they could reach out to her at any time.

With no further questions or comments, Mayor Norma Sepulveda moved on to C Public Safety.

C. Public Safety

Criminal Justice and Homeland Security Program Action Items.

Mr. Cesar Merla had no action items, but he did want to mention the Readiness Training Identification and Preparedness Planning that HLS/CJ will be hosting on September 19-20, 2024, in the Ken Jones Board Room. Mr. Cesar Merla explained a little on that topic.

No further Questions or Comments Mayor Norma Sepulveda than moved on to Police Academy.

Mr. Javier Solis with the Police Academy had 3 Action items on the agenda. He started off with the first action item.

1. Consideration and ACTION to accept the donation of two surplus police vehicles to be utilized for law enforcement training as part of an interlocal agreement between the Hidalgo County Constable Precinct 4 office and the Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy. **Mayor Alma Salinas made a motion to approve the donation of two surplus police vehicles to be utilized for law enforcement training as part of an interlocal agreement between the Hidalgo County Constable Precinct 4 office and the Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy. Mayor Ramiro Garza seconded the motion and upon vote, the motion was carried unanimously.**

2. Consideration and ACTION to approve an interlocal agreement, as authorized by the interlocal Cooperation Act Chapter 791 Texas Government Code, with the City of Donna, Texas by and through the Donna Police Department, to Utilize the El Indio Law Enforcement Gun Range for Law enforcement firearms training and with the Authority to have LRGVDC Executive Director Manuel Cruz sign and finalize the agreement. **Mayor Ramiro Garza made a motion to approve an interlocal agreement, as authorized by the interlocal Cooperation Act Chapter 791 Texas Government Code, with the City of Donna, Texas by and through the Donna Police Department, to Utilize the El Indio Law Enforcement Gun Range for Law enforcement firearms training and with the Authority to have LRGVDC Executive Director Manuel Cruz sign and finalize the agreement. Mayor Alma Salinas seconded the motion and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.**

3. Consideration and ACTION to Approve an interlocal agreement, as authorized by the Interlocal Cooperation Act Chapter 791 Texas Government Code, with the City of La Joya, Texas by and through the La Joya Police Department to utilize the La Joya Shooting Range for Law Enforcement firearms training, and with authority to have LRGVDC Executive Director Manuel Cruz sign and finalize the agreement. **Mayor Alma Salinas made a motion to approve an interlocal agreement, as authorized by the Interlocal Cooperation Act Chapter 791 Texas Government Code, with the City of La Joya, Texas by and through the La Joya Police Department to utilize the La Joya Shooting Range for Law Enforcement firearms training, and with authority to have LRGVDC Executive Director Manuel Cruz sign and finalize the agreement. Mayor Norie Garza seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion was carried unanimously.**

With no further comments or questions Mayor Nora Sepulveda moved on to Rio Grande Emergency Communication District.

Program Status Reports

Mr. Dennis Moreno started by letting the Board know that there were no Action Items and then proceeded to the GIS Division, 911 and Information Technology, and community Engagement reports that were all in the packet provided to everyone for review.

With No Further Comments or concerns, Mayor Norma Sepulveda then moved to Item D Valley Metro

D. Transportation Valley Metro Action Item:

Mr. Tom Logan was recognized for the action items on the agenda.

1. Consideration and ACTION to approve Hardware Acquisition for the LRGVDC Valley Metro. ***Mayor Alma Salinas made a motion to approve Hardware Acquisition for LRGVDC Valley Metro. Mayor Ramiro Garza seconded the motion and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.***
2. Consideration and ACTION to Approve the Acquisition of Miscellaneous and Shop Equipment for LRGVDC Valley Metro. ***Mayor Alma Salinas made a motion to approve the Acquisition of Miscellaneous and shop equipment for LRGVDC Valley Metro. Mayor Norie Garza seconded the motion and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.***
3. Consideration and ACTION to approve the request to submit the proposal to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) notice Funding Opportunity (NOFO) application for Transit -Oriented Development (TOD) Planning Discretionary Grant. ***Mayor Alma Salinas made a motion to approve the request to submit the proposal to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) notice Funding Opportunity (NOFO) application for Transit -Oriented Development (TOD) Planning Discretionary Grant. Mayor Ramiro Garza seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion was carried unanimously.***

Program Status Reports

Mr. Logan then moved on to the Ridership Report. Tom Logan stated that they have transported 619,000 passengers with an increase of 145,000 passengers from the previous year. Mr. Logan wanted to mention that UTRGV and Students are over 60% of their Ridership.

With no further comments or concerns, they then moved on to RGVMPO.

Rio Grande Valley MPO Action Items


Nothing to Report for RGVMPO.

Item #7 New & Unfinished Business

There being no further business to come before the board, Mayor Norma Sepulveda made a motion to adjourn at 12:57 PM

ATTEST


Liza Alfaro, Recording Secretary


Mayor Norma Sepulveda