

MINUTES

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

12:00 PM WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2020
LRGVDC MAIN CAMPUS - 301 W. RAILROAD STREET, WESLACO, TEXAS
BUILDING B, KEN JONES EXECUTIVE BOARD ROOM

PRESIDING: MAYOR AMBROSIO "AMOS" HERNANDEZ, SECRETARY

Secretary Ambrosio Hernandez was asked to chair this meeting in the absence of President David Suarez, and the 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents. He called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared.

Chairman Hernandez then moved to item 2: Consideration and Action to Approve Meeting Minutes (January 29, 2020 Board, Membership, and Corporation Meeting)

Willacy County Commissioner Eddy Gonzalez made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 29, 2020 Board, Membership & Corporation Meeting as presented. Commissioner David Garza seconded, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Hernandez then moved to item 3: Public Comment and/or Report from Legislative Delegation.

Mr. Jaime Gutierrez, Grants Coordinator for the City of Elsa was recognized. He announced that the City of Elsa has scheduled a groundbreaking ceremony on Saturday, February 29 at 9:00 am at the Veterans Memorial Park for the Pacific Trails Nature Park project. He invited the Board of Directors and those in attendance to attend and thanked LRGVDC staff for distributing the invitation throughout the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

Mr. Greg Goodman was recognized next and informed the Board that the Goodman Corporation, which is based in Houston, provides grant writing services and has been encouraged by the EDA to come to the Valley to offer his services regarding disaster recovery support.

Upon conclusion of Public Comments Chairman Hernandez moved to item 4: Administration

- A. Consideration and Action to Approve Nomination of an Elected or Appointed Official of a Non-entitlement Community to be Considered for Appointment to the Unified Scoring Committee (USC) by the Agriculture Commissioner.

Executive Director Ron Garza was recognized and stated that the USC is responsible for determining objective scoring factors for all regions in accordance with the requirements of this section and the current TxCDBG Action Plan. The USC must establish the numerical value of the points assigned to each scoring factor as described in the Committee Guidelines provided by the department. Per state guidelines, a primary and alternate nominee shall be an elected or appointed official from the following entities:

Non-Entitlement Cities		
Indian Lake - Cameron	Los Fresnos - Cameron	Raymondville - Willacy
Laguna Vista - Cameron	Lyford - Willacy	Rio Hondo - Cameron
La Feria - Cameron	Palm Valley - Cameron	San Perlita - Willacy
Los Indios - Cameron	Port Isabel - Cameron	

USC replaces the Regional Review Committee. As per state guidelines, a primary and alternate (proxy) nominee shall be an elected or appointed official from the region's non-entitlement cities. He added that the nominee must pass a background check and be willing to travel. The first meeting will be scheduled in Corpus Christi. **Mayor Henry Hinojosa nominated Mayor Pro-tem Rick Salinas from Lyford. Commissioner David Garza nominated Mayor Gus Olivarez from Rio Hondo. Mayor Hinojosa amended his nomination to be a motion to appoint Lyford Mayor Pro-tem Rick Salinas as the Unified Scoring Committee appointee and Mayor Gustavo Olivarez as his proxy. Commissioner David Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

B. Consideration and Action to Approve Amendment of LRGVDC Procurement Purchasing Threshold

Mr. Garza informed the Board that LRGVDC's Procurement Policy states that all procurements above \$5,000 are required to complete a competitive bidding process. The \$5,000 threshold poses certain timeline and resource limitations on competition for purchases and contracts. An assessment of procurement policies of other councils of government was completed and it was determined that \$5,000 is *well* below the average threshold amount. Increasing the threshold will promote greater selection of potential vendors and streamline procurements. Raising procurement thresholds has also been undertaken by the federal government which raised and simplified the micro-purchase levels under the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). After completing an analysis of comparable organizations and internal resources, staff recommends an amendment to the LRGVDC Procurement Policy by raising the competitive bidding procedure threshold to \$15,000. Upon conclusion of discussion **Commissioner David Garza made a motion to approve the amendment of the LRGVDC Procurement purchasing threshold as presented. Commissioner Pilar Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously**

C. Consideration and Action on Resolution 2020-01 Regarding Internet Sales Tax Revenue

Mr. Garza stated that this resolution would express support to a proposed rule change regarding how internet sales tax is distributed. The Texas State Comptroller is considering rules revisions for the Texas Administrative Code, and these revisions will potentially change the rules so that local communities would get a portion of sales tax from online purchases. This resolution would be adopted on behalf of all the cities and jurisdictions in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Should the Board choose to adopt this resolution the RGV Partnership would help circulate a letter template for each jurisdiction to consider and modify for their community. The Comptroller's Office will accept public comments for 2-3 weeks.

Mayor Chris Boswell asked where the language for this resolution came from. Mr. Garza stated that it came from a letter Senator Juan Hinojosa wrote supporting this rules revision. Mayor Boswell was of the understanding that the comptroller was proposing that the sales tax be apportioned to the city where the goods are delivered and that is more specific than the wording in this draft resolution.

Mr. Garza stated that this resolution was generalized to be in support of the entire region. If the Board approves this resolution, it and a letter template will be sent to the 43 Valley cities for their consideration and modification. Mayor Boswell suggested adopting this resolution with added language proposed by the Comptroller. Upon conclusion of discussion **Mayor Chris Boswell made a motion to adopt Resolution 2020-01 with the added language as proposed by the comptroller. Mayor Henry Hinojosa seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

D. Consideration and Action on Resolution 2020-02 Regarding Rio Grande Valley Regional Hike & Bike Connectivity Network

Mr. Garza stated that this resolution is to formally support the many entities that are planning and building hike & bike trails and increase the infrastructure across the Valley. Being connected to existing hike & bike systems increases the weight of applications seeking to add new hike & bike infrastructure. This is a high-level resolution to help promote consideration of surrounding infrastructure when entities begin designing hike & bike trails. Upon conclusion of discussion, **Mayor Pro-tem Norie Gonzalez Garza made a motion**

to approve Resolution 2020-02 Regarding Rio Grande Valley Regional Hike & Bike Connectivity Network as presented. Mayor Henry Hinojosa seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

E. Executive Director Report

LRGVDC Updates & Activities

1. Introduction of New Staff Members

Executive Director Ron Garza was recognized and announced that Ms. Elvia Garcia Donaldson, Case Manager for Area Agency on Aging, and Mr. Manuel Cruz, Jr., Dispatcher for Valley Metro have joined the LRGVDC staff, but were in training and unable to attend the meeting.

2. Census 2020

Mr. Garza stated that the key dates for the census are March 12th, the first day for self-response, April 1st, Census day, and July 31st which is the last day to respond. Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation has provided a small grant to have ambassadors on busses to encourage the public to respond while riding Valley Metro busses. The ambassador program is called "Count Me RGV".

The recent Census Regional Marketing Campaign collected \$96,500 from the following entities: Cameron County, Hidalgo County, Willacy County, City of Brownsville, City of Edinburg, City of Harlingen, City of La Feria, City of McAllen, City of Pharr, City of San Benito, City of Weslaco, Futuro RGV, Lonestar National Bank, and the RGV Partnership. Our thanks to these contributors for their support of this regional effort. The funds will be used to create public service announcements for the Rio Grande Valley Region. Ms. Xochitl Zamora from the City of McAllen was recognized and stated that she and her staff are scheduled to be here at LRGVDC's Main Campus at 11:00 am on Friday, March 6th to film community representatives that contributed to this effort.

3. Mitigation & Disaster Recovery Funding

Mr. Garza provided a brief update noting that a call for projects will be forthcoming and a meeting to review all existing Hazard Mitigation Plan projects for prioritization is scheduled for March 11th. Commissioner David Garza was recognized and briefed the board on a visit from HUD Undersecretary Brian Montgomery. Undersecretary Montgomery visited the Valley without announcing it to the press; while here he requested a list of projects Valley entities have been requesting funding for, the Undersecretary was impressed with the regional approach Valley officials are taking.

Upon conclusion of the Disaster Recovery Funding report, Mr. Garza added that the next Road to Recycling event is scheduled for Saturday, April 26th and staff will use the same model of collection as in previous years. Each year this effort has averaged removing approximately 25,000 tires from the environment.

4. Real Estate Services RFQ

In the interest of time management this status report was not heard.

5. Explore RGV

In the interest of time management this status report was not heard.

6. RGV B-Cycle

In the interest of time management this status report was not heard.

7. 2020 It's Time Texas Community Challenge

Mr. Garza informed the Board that the challenge runs through March 1st, he showed the live leader board and announced that the LRGVDC will host the awards ceremony on March 27th.

Upon conclusion of the Executive Director report Chairman Hernandez moved to item 5: Department Reports.

A. Community & Economic Development

Director Blanca Davila was recognized to address the following:

Program Action Items:

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Regional Tourism & Travel Advisory Committee (RTTAC) Bylaws

The newly re-formed Regional Tourism & Travel Advisory Committee held their first meeting on February 11th. The committee reviewed and approved their newly drafted bylaws which were included in the meeting packet for review. All advisory committee bylaws must be presented for Board approval. ***Mr. Ronald Mills made a motion to approve the Regional Tourism & Travel Advisory Committee bylaws as presented. Mr. Javier Deleon seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.***

2. Consideration and Action to Approve Regional Tourism & Travel Advisory Committee (RTTAC) Chair and Vice-Chair

Ms. Davila reported that the RTTAC recommends Mr. Sergio Contreras, President/CEO of the RGV Partnership, and Ms. Barbara Garza, President/CEO of the Weslaco Area Chamber as the chair and vice chair of the RTTAC. ***Mr. Ronald Mills made a motion to approve Mr. Contreras and Ms. Garza as the Chair and Vice Chair of the RTTAC as recommended by the Advisory Committee. Commissioner Marco Villegas seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Program Status Reports

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

B. Health & Human Services

Director Jose Gonzalez was recognized to address the following items:

Program Action Items:

1. Consideration and Action to Authorize Issuing Special Request for Proposals for Special Projects Servicing the Elderly

Mr. Gonzalez stated that staff seeks authorization to issue a special request for proposals for the period from April 1, 2020 to September 30, 2020. The purpose of the RFP is to provide an opportunity to local organizations to apply for special projects serving the elderly. The source of funds are carryover funds in the amount of \$300,000.

Chairman Hernandez asked Mr. Gonzalez to send the rules to qualify for these projects to the board so they will have ample information to apply for them. Mr. Garza reminded the Board that the Area Agency on Aging is tasked with reviewing and ranking projects for these funds and will submit their recommendation to the Board for final approval. ***Commissioner Eddy Gonzalez made a motion to authorize issuing the Special Request for Proposals for Special Projects serving the elderly as requested. Ms. Celeste Sanchez seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.***

It was the consensus of the Board to act on items 5. B. 2. and 5. B. 3. together.

2. Consideration and Action to Authorize Staff to Acquire Medication Management Software for the Opioid Misuse Prevention for Older Texans Grant

Mr. Gonzalez stated that staff seeks authorization to contract with HomeMeds, a national evidence-based program utilized by many Area Agencies on Aging for medication reviews. Medication review is the major component of the Opioid Grant. The cost breakdown for the program is as follows:

Opioid Misuse Prevention for Older Texans Grant			
HomeMeds Cost	Cost	Units	Totals
Software Cost	\$332.00	6	\$1,992.00
Pharmacy Review	\$20.00	1,160	\$23,200.00
Webinar Training	\$3,000.00	1	\$3,000.00
			\$28,192.00

3. Consideration and Action to Authorize Entering into a Contract with Amigos Del Valle Regarding Opioid Misuse Prevention for Older Texans Grant

Mr. Gonzalez stated that staff seeks authorization to contract with Amigos Del Valle regarding the Opioid Misuse Prevention for Older Texans grant. The purpose of the contract is to have Amigos Del Valle staff gather medication lists from new home delivered meals clients and pay Amigos del Valle a \$15.00 stipend per client once the information is submitted to Area Agency on Aging staff. All data will be entered in the Medication management program to identify seniors that may be at risk. Upon conclusion of discussion ***Mr. Ronald Mills made a motion to authorize staff to acquire medication management software through HomeMeds and to authorize entering into a contract with Amigos del Valle for the Opioid Misuse Prevention for Older Texans Grant. The Hon. Norma G. Garcia seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Program Status Reports

The status reports on the Congregate Meal Project and the Home-Delivered Meals Project were available in the meeting packet for review.

C. Public Safety

It was the consensus of the Board to hear items 5. C. 1. – 5. and act on them in one motion.

Program Action Items:

Public Safety Director Manuel Cruz was recognized to report on the following:

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Purchase of Promotional Items for Telecommunicator Week

Mr. Cruz stated that staff requests approval to purchase \$38,864.49 of promotional items as part of LRGVDC's ongoing efforts to honor Telecommunicators during the 2nd week of April. LRGVDC's ECOMMS/911 Department will utilize an existing contract with Promo Direct to make this purchase, this is a budgeted and planned line item under Public Education.

2. Consideration and Action to Approve Regional Police Academy Advisory Board Nominations for Chair and Vice Chair

At their January 23rd meeting, the Regional Police Academy Advisory Board nominated Valley International Airport Police Chief Michael Sullenger as Chair, and Mission Police Chief Robert Dominguez as Vice Chair.

3. Consideration and Action to Approve Regional Police Academy Advisory Board members in the Law

Enforcement Category

The Regional Police Academy Advisory Board recommends the following new members: Combes Police Chief Patrick Quill, Hidalgo Police Chief Jesus Ortega, and Edinburg Police Lieutenant Michael Cerda.

4. Consideration and Action to Approve an Increase to Regional Police Academy Tuition

Mr. Cruz stated that over the past few years the RPA has taken on new costs with the addition of maintaining a fleet of four vehicles to be used for the Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC). The RPA conducts three (3) EVOCs a year. To prepare the units for the most recent academy, nearly \$8,000, last year almost \$14,000, was spent to ensure the units were in safe operational condition. With the cost of maintenance to keep the vehicles operating, additional funding is needed. The total additional costs incurred during the course of the academy consisted of the following items:

Taser cartridges – 3 @ \$35.00 ea.	\$105.00
Textbooks	\$65.00
CPR Certification	\$30.00
Vehicle Maintenance/Upkeep	\$100.00
Total	\$300.00

LRGVDC Regional Police Academy tuition is currently \$2,200 and the Regional Police Academy Board is recommending increasing it to \$2,500 to cover these expenses. The cost to attend other academies in the Lower RGV is over \$2,600, which makes the LRGVDC RPA the most cost-effective option.

5. Consideration and Action to Approve an Increase in Hourly Rate for Regional Police Academy Contract Instructors

The Academy proposed an increase in hourly rate from \$25 an hour to \$30 an hour for instructional staff. Contractual personnel that operate in a support function will remain at \$25 an hour. This will allow the LRGVDC RPA to remain competitive with rates other academies are paying their contract instructors. Should the Board approve, this rate increase would take effect March 2, 2020.

Upon conclusion of Mr. Cruz' description and requests for action, **Mr. Ronald Mills made a motion to approve items 5. C. 1. – 5. as presented. Commissioner Pilar Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

Program Status Reports:

The program status reports were in the meeting packet for review and Mr. Cruz reminded the Board that the 8th Annual South Texas All Hazards Conference is scheduled to begin on March 25th at the McAllen Convention Center.

D. Transportation

Program Action Items:

1. Consideration and Action to Revise Transit Service Department Drug & Alcohol Policy

Director Tom Logan was recognized and informed the Board that staff requests approval to incorporate revisions to the Drug and Alcohol Policy as recommended by their federal funding agency, the Federal Transit Administration, and to ensure program compliance with its regulations. **Commissioner Eddy Gonzalez made a motion to approve the Revised Transit Service Department Drug & Alcohol Policy**

as presented. Mayor Henry Hinojosa seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

Program Status Reports:

The Valley Metro program status reports were available in the meeting packet for review.

RGVMPO Executive Director Andrew Canon was recognized and announced that staff is moving forward with their 10 Year Plan and Mr. Luis Diaz has been promoted to Assistant Director of the RGVMPO, he has been with the MPO for 8 years.

Chairman Hernandez next moved to item 6. – Executive Session

- A. Personnel Matters pursuant to Section 551-074(1) to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officers or employee RE: Executive Director resignation and Interim Appointment

Commissioner Eddy Gonzalez made a motion to go into executive session; Commissioner David Garza seconded, and upon a vote executive session began at 12:58 pm.

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

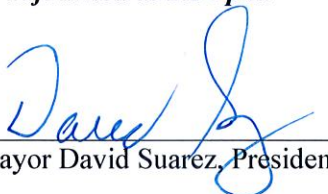
At 1:30 pm Chairman Hernandez reconvened open session.

Mayor Chris Boswell made a motion to accept the resignation of Executive Director Ron Garza effective today with his last day being March 13, 2020. Commissioner Eddy Gonzalez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Boswell made a motion to post the notice of vacancy as proposed by the Executive Director and appoint Mr. Kenneth N. Jones, Jr. as the Interim Executive Director effective March 9, 2020 under the terms discussed in executive session. The Hon. Norma G. Garcia seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Hernandez next moved to item 7. – New or Unfinished Business.

Staff surprised Executive Director Ron Garza with a slideshow of memorable moments of his time with the LRGVDC. Chairman Ambrosio Hernandez and the Board thanked him for his service and the Board gave him a standing ovation. There being no further business to come before the Board, *Commissioner David Garza made a motion to adjourn; Mayor Pro-tem Rick Salinas seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:34 pm.*



Mayor David Suarez, President

ATTEST:



Deborah Morales, Recording Secretary