

MINUTES

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

12:00 PM WEDNESDAY, APRIL 28, 2021
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: JUDGE AURELIO GUERRA, 1ST VICE PRESIDENT

Vice President Aurelio Guerra called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m. Roll call was taken but a quorum had not yet been attained. It was the consensus of the Board to hear non-action items until a quorum was attained; he then moved to item 3. – Public Comments and/or Report from Legislative Delegation. There being none, he moved to item 4. D. – Presentation from Texas GLO on Community Development and Revitalization and recognized Ms. Donna Johnson, GrantWorks-Vendor Vice President, State Run Housing Program. She stated that GrantWorks has been hired by the GLO to Administer the HARP (Homeowner Assistance and Reimbursement Programs). She then introduced Elijah Casas as the new point of contact with the Texas GLO for the Valley. Ms. Johnson began the presentation by stating that the HARP recently launched on Saturday, April 24, she then proceeded with a comprehensive presentation on this new program.

Upon conclusion of the GLO presentation a quorum had been attained. Vice President Guerra went back to item 2 - Consideration and Action to Approve Meeting Minutes (March 31, 2021). ***Councilwoman Norie Garza made a motion to approve the March 31, 2021 minutes as presented. Commissioner Edward Gonzalez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Vice President Guerra next moved to Item 4: Administration.

A. Consideration and Action to Set Date and Format for 2021 Nominating Committee Meeting

Vice President Guerra informed the Board that President Jim Darling and staff recommend scheduling the Nominating Committee Meeting on Wednesday, May 12, 2021 at 12:00 noon. They recommend that it be a hybrid virtual/in-person meeting held in the Ken Jones Executive Board Room with no more than 20 Board Members present. ***Ms. Maricela De Leon made a motion to approve scheduling a hybrid virtual/in-person Nominating Committee meeting on May 12 at 12:00 noon. Commissioner Edward Gonzalez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

B. Presentation and Action to Accept Quarterly Investment Report

Finance Director Crystal Balboa presented the Quarterly Investment Report. ***Commissioner Edward Gonzalez made a motion to accept the Quarterly Investment Report as presented. Councilwoman Norie Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

C. Consideration and Action to Approve Amendment to LRGVDC Procurement Policy

Executive Director Manuel Cruz was recognized and informed the Board that the proposed amendment will include the addition of the Code of Federal Regulations which references the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA). This amendment is necessary to remain in compliance with all FHWA activities including the procurement, management, and administration of engineering and design related services.

Specifically, the Procurement Policy should now include the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 172 (23 CFR 172.5 (c)) and include the responsibilities of the LRGVDC and guidelines on procurement methods and procedures, project management, etc. He stated that this amendment will not interfere with the standard operating procedures of the LRGVDC. The proposed amendment will go in the Procurement Policy manual under Article III, PART B, section 3-208, letter D, pages 44-45. The proposed amendment was provided in the meeting packet for review. **Commissioner Rick Salinas made a motion to approve the amendment to the LRGVDC Procurement Policy as presented. Mayor Rick Guerra seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

D. The presentation from Texas GLO was given at the top of the agenda.

E. Presentation and Possible Action on Texas Gas Service Cost of Service Adjustment

Vice President Guerra recognized Ms. Stacey McTaggart, Texas Gas Service Rates and Regulatory Director to provide a presentation on the Rio Grande Valley Cost of Service Adjustment. Ms. McTaggart stated that at the conclusion of this presentation she will ask for action to authorize Mayor Jim Darling to hire a utility attorney and consultant to review the Cost of Service Adjustment (COSA) filing. She stated that every city in the Valley Cities Gas Coalition will have time to review the filing and the opportunity to vote on the COSA. She gave a comprehensive presentation detailing the reasons for this year's COSA. The anticipated filing date is April 29, 2021, the deadline for cities to take action on the COSA is July 28, 2021 and any COSA increases will take effect in August 2021. Upon conclusion of the presentation and discussion **Commissioner Rick Salinas made a motion to authorize President Jim Darling to hire a utility attorney and consultant to review the COSA and advise the Valley Cities Gas Coalition so they are prepared to take action by the July 28 deadline. Mayor Pro-tem Michael Galvan seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

F. Consideration and Action to Approve Estimated Local Contributions for Hidalgo County Active Transportation & Tourism Plan

The LRGVDC Hidalgo County Active Transportation & Tourism Plan Contributions 2021 chart provides a breakdown of local cash match contributions for cities in Hidalgo County to participate in this project. This formula breakdown uses populations of each incorporated city and unincorporated areas in Hidalgo County to ensure the most equitable option for participation in this project. This projected local match is determined by a grant through the Texas Department of Transportation and is 25% of the estimated total project cost of \$379,500.00.

The scope of the Hidalgo County Active Transportation & Tourism Plan will be to seek a qualified firm to provide consultation services to provide a detailed strategic plan leading to the development and implementation of an active, seamless multimodal transportation network in Hidalgo County. This plan will unify all efforts of current bicycle and pedestrian facilities while identifying new opportunities for this network in areas lacking the necessary infrastructure. This plan will highlight the efforts of the larger cities with current plans and allow for smaller cities to have a framework for developing connective facilities for their communities. Upon conclusion of discussion, **Commissioner Rick Salinas made a motion to approve the estimated local contributions for the Hidalgo County Active Transportation & Tourism Plan as presented. Commissioner Edward Gonzalez seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

G. Executive Director Report

Vice President Guerra recognized Executive Director Manuel Cruz to address the following:

1. Introduction of New Staff Members

Mr. Cruz announced that Ms. Elsy Silva joined Valley Metro as a Bus Driver and Mr. Nicholas Cousineau joined the RGVMPPO as a GIS Specialist.

2. 87th Legislature Updates
Due to time constraints, this information was not presented, and Mr. Cruz noted that legislative updates are available on various state websites and will be shared as information is received from the Texas Association of Regional Councils.
3. American Rescue Plan Act of 2021
Mr. Cruz provided a brief summary of the information currently available on this funding.
4. It's time Texas Community Challenge
Mr. Cruz proudly announced that Valley Cities once again were prominent on the leader board for this state-wide competition. The 2021 results for Valley cities are as follows:
 - Large Cities - McAllen came in 1st, Edinburg came in 3rd, and Brownsville came in 4th.
 - Medium Cities - Pharr came in 1st, Harlingen came in 2nd, and Weslaco came in 5th.
 - Small Cities - Los Fresnos came in 1st, San Juan came in 2nd, Alamo came in 4th, and Hidalgo came in 5th.
 Mr. Cruz congratulated the cities and the participants and looks forward to next year's challenge.

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

A. Community & Economic Development

Director Rick Carrera was recognized to address the following:

Program Action Items

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Regional Water Resource Advisory Committee (RWRAC) Nomination

Mr. Carrera informed the Board that during their March 10, 2021 meeting a vacancy was announced for the Large City position within the committee. At the April 21, 2021 meeting, the members of the RWRAC recommended Ms. Carol Vasquez to serve as a Large City representative. She is employed as the City of Brownsville's Environmental Coordinator/Stormwater Manager. Board action is needed to confirm this nomination. ***Commissioner Rick Salinas made a motion to approve Ms. Carol Vasques to serve as a Large City representative on the RWRAC. Commissioner Edward Gonzalez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

2. Consideration and Action to Approve Regional Water Resource Advisory Committee (RWRAC) Bylaws Amendment

Mr. Carrera stated that at the April 21, 2021 RWRAC meeting the committee discussed amending their bylaws. Concern had been raised in previous meetings regarding member terms terminating at the same time which would jeopardize continuity. Initially the member terms were two (2) years, and the proposed bylaws would include staggered terms. All members would draw lots to determine whose terms would end after two years, in May of 2021, and whose terms would continue to complete 4 years.

In addition, a member had vacated their position without a letter of resignation due to disqualification of representation. As a result, RWRAC members suggested that vacancies be announced at LRGVDC Board of Director meetings to solicit nominations and that nominees provide a resume and complete a nomination form. The proposed amended bylaws were provided for review. ***Councilwoman Norie Garza made a motion to approve the amended bylaws as presented. Commissioner Edward Gonzalez seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

3. Consideration and Action to Approve Interlocal Agreement between City of Edinburg and LRGVDC

Mr. Carrera stated that this interlocal agreement would allow the City of Edinburg to provide tire disposal services for the Road to Recycling event. Community and Economic Development staff recommend inclusion of the City of Edinburg as it will allow for greater participation and efficiencies for the event by including additional communities in the area. Great participation will help ensure that the event is as effective as possible in collecting improperly disposed of or kept tires and removing them from critical and problematic areas. ***Ms. Maricela De Leon made a motion to approve the Interlocal Agreement between the City of Edinburg and the LRGVDC as presented. Commissioner Rick Salinas seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Program Status Reports

Mr. Carrera noted that 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 Add Vendors (Contractors) to the Vendor Pool

Mr. Gonzalez informed the Board that in response to the open enrollment for the Direct Purchased Services contractor pool, the Area Agency on Aging received an application for Transportation Services. The Advisory Council recommends the addition of MEDEX Transportation Services from McAllen to provide Ambulatory and Wheelchair transportation services. ***Commissioner Edward Gonzalez made a motion to approve the addition of MEDEX Transportation Services to the vendor pool as recommended by the Advisory Council. Commissioner Rick Salinas seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Program Status Reports

Upon conclusion of action Mr. Gonzalez stated that the status reports on Expanding Caregiver Programming, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Funding, and the Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council member vacancies were available for review in the meeting packet.

C. Public Safety

Program Action Items

Director of Public Safety Randall Snyder was recognized to report on the following items:

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC) Priority List of FY 2021-22 Criminal Justice Grants Division Regional Grant Applications and Conditionally Approved Amounts

Mr. Snyder informed the Board that the CJAC was given two weeks to review and score the grant applications. On April 14, the CJAC convened via GoToMeeting to review the rankings and amounts. The CJAC recommends approval of the rankings and conditionally approved amounts as presented. ***Mayor Pro-tem Michael Galvan made a motion to approve the rankings and resolutions for FY 2021-2022 Criminal Justice grant conditionally approved projects as presented. Ms. Maricela De Leon seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

2. Consideration and Action to Approve Resolution to Apply for Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding (CESF)

Mr. Snyder stated that as part of the Office of the Governor, Public Safety Office's Criminal Justice Division grant guidelines, applications must include a resolution that contains information such as authorization by its governing body for the submission of a project application, Coronavirus Equipment & Supplies for the LRGVDC. The intent of this application is to purchase an updated phone system; thermal image temperature detection system; masks and sanitizing items. This equipment will help enhance the capacity of the LRGVDC to function at full capacity to conduct meetings with regional stakeholders and update annual threat and hazards assessments, one of them being the pandemic. **Commissioner Rick Salinas made a motion to approve the resolution to apply for Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding (CESF) as presented. Commissioner Edward Gonzalez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

3. Consideration and Action to Approve Resolution to Apply for Regional Law Enforcement Training Academy FY 2021-FY 2023

Mr. Snyder informed the Board that as part of the Office of the Governor, Public Safety Office's Criminal Justice Division grant guidelines, applications must include a resolution that contains information such as authorization by its governing body for the submission of a project application for a Regional Law Enforcement Training Academy. **Ms. Maricela De Leon made a motion to approve the resolution to apply for Regional Law Enforcement Training Academy FY 2021-FY 2023 as presented. Mayor Pro-tem Michael Galvan seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

Program Status Reports

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

D. Transportation

Program Status Reports

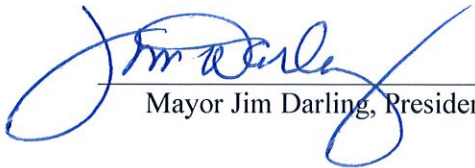
The Valley Metro Program status reports were available in the meeting packet for review.

Item 6. - New or Unfinished Business

There was no new or unfinished business to come before the Board.

Item 7. – Adjourn.

Commissioner Edward Gonzalez made a motion to adjourn, Mayor Oscar Montoya seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:17 pm.



Mayor Jim Darling, President

ATTEST:



Deborah Morales, Recording Secretary