

MINUTES

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

12:00 PM WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2020
GLOBAL GOTOMEETING VIDEO CONFERENCE PLATFORM
INITIATED AND CHAIRED FROM
LRGVDC MAIN CAMPUS - 301 W. RAILROAD STREET, WESLACO, TEXAS
BUILDING B, SMALL BOARD ROOM

PRESIDING: MAYOR DAVID SUAREZ, PRESIDENT

President David Suarez, called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared.

President Suarez then moved to item 2: Consideration and Action to Approve Meeting Minutes (February 26, 2020)

Hon. Norma G. Garcia made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 26, 2020 Board Meeting as presented. Commissioner Edward Gonzalez 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

A. Consider Ratification of Executive Committee Action on the Following Items:

1. Initial Purchase of Eco-Counters and Authorize Executive Director to Make any Future Purchase Regarding this Project

The LRGVDC was awarded a grant through the Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation to administer a regional trail counter project for the purpose of collecting and distributing bicyclists and pedestrian data totaling \$115,989, with no local match requirement. This purchase includes up to 18 bicyclist & pedestrian counters, a yearly license fee, and maintenance costs. The LRGVDC, along with the RGVMPPO will enter into agreements with cities to place the counters at facilities to collect data and refine a pedestrian and cyclist monitoring system of trail and sidewalk use in the Rio Grande Valley. All data will be uploaded to the RGVMPPO United Metropolitan Area Planning Map (UMAP), and the Texas Bicycle and Pedestrian Count Exchange. The recommendation from staff is to allow the Executive Director to make any further purchases as they see fit throughout the duration of this regional project.

The Executive Committee approved the purchase of the Eco-Counters and authorized the Executive Director to make any future purchases regarding this project.

2. Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) Funding Recommendations

The FY 2020/2021 Solid Waste grant opened on January 6 and closed on February 14. Staff received ten (10) applications that were reviewed by the SWAC Sub-committee on Tuesday, February 25. Of the ten (10) applications, six (6) moved forward and were scored and ranked by the SWAC on Wednesday, March 11. The Executive Committee approved the ranking as presented.

3. Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Area Plan

The Area Plan is the blueprint that the Area Agency on Aging submits to the State on how it will address and meet the needs of the elderly for the next two years. The plan is due Friday, March 27, and the Advisory Council recommends approval. The Executive Committee approved the FY 2021-2022 Area Plan as presented.

4. Homeland Security Advisory Committee Rankings of Conditionally Approved Projects for FY 2020-21 Homeland Security Grant funding

The Homeland Security Advisory Committee (HSAC) convened on March 13 in accordance with grant guidance. The HSAC reviewed and prioritized the FY 2020/2021 Homeland Security Grant program (SHSP-State Homeland Grant program/ LETPA-Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Activities) application. The Executive Committee approved the HSAC rankings of conditionally approved projects for FY 2020-21 HSG funding as presented.

5. Revised Department of Transportation (DOT) Physical Exam Policy to Ensure Compliance with Federal Transit Administration Regulations

Staff requested approval to incorporate revisions to the Department of Transportation Physical Exam Policy to ensure compliance with Federal Transit Administration's regulations. The Executive Committee approved the DOT Physical Exam Policy as presented.

Ms. Celeste Sanchez made a motion to ratify Executive Committee approval of items 4. A. 1. - 5. Commissioner Pilar Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

B. Consideration and Action to Set Date and Format for 2020 Nominating Committee Meeting

Mr. Ken Jones, Interim Executive Director, recommended scheduling the meeting on either Tuesday, May 12 or Wednesday, May 13. Out of an abundance of caution during the COVID-19 pandemic he recommended using the Global GoToMeeting online platform to provide a safe social distance for committee members. ***Hon. Norma G. Garcia made a motion to schedule the Nominating Committee meeting on Wednesday, May 13 at 2:00 pm using the GoToMeeting platform. Ms. Celeste Sanchez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

C. Presentation and Action to Accept Quarterly Investment Report

Finance Director Crystal Balboa presented the Quarterly Investment Report. ***Mayor Pro-tem Norie Gonzalez Garza made a motion to accept the Quarterly Investment Report. Mr. Troy Allen seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

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

Ms. Stacy McTaggart, Texas Gas Service Rate and Regulatory Director gave a presentation on the upcoming filing which is scheduled to be distributed via email tomorrow.

Mr. Jones explained that the action is not to approve or disapprove the filing, it is to approve the LRGVDC to work collaboratively with the TGS and the City of McAllen to hire a rate consultant at no cost to the cities. Upon conclusion of discussion, ***Hon. Norma G. Garcia made a motion to approve the LRGVDC to work collaboratively with the TGS and the City of McAllen to hire a consultant on behalf of all the cities within the TGS service area. Ms. Celeste Sanchez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion passed with one vote against.***

E. Executive Director Report

LRGVDC Updates & Activities

1. Status on LRGVDC Staff Shelter-in-Place/Working-from-Home

Mr. Jones informed the Board that staff is doing an excellent job with the transition of the Executive Director. Staff is also coping well with the mandates set by local, state, and federal governments for social distancing and to shelter-in-place in order to flatten the curve of the COVID-19 pandemic. Working with our Human Resources department staff has developed a valid accountability procedure for those Working-from-Home; at this time Working-from-Home is extended through May 15.

2. Executive Director Selection

Mr. Jones reported that the Executive Committee is the entity that will interview and make a recommendation for the new Executive Director. Over the past few weeks they have been reviewing applicants, and unfortunately the process has been slowed due to social distancing mandates. However, they have agreed to meet on May 6, either virtually or in-person with appropriate social distancing, to discuss interview procedures. If the interview process is successful there is a possibility that the Executive Committee could have a recommendation to fill this position by the May Board meeting scheduled for Wednesday, May 27.

Upon conclusion of the Executive Director report President Suarez 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 Letter to Legislative Representatives in Support of 120 Day Extension to Complete Census 2020 Questionnaire

Ms. Davila stated that due to the Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic the US Census Bureau has requested statutory relief from congress for 120 additional calendar days to deliver final apportionment counts extending the deadline to October 30, 2020. ***Ms. Celeste Sanchez made a motion to approve sending a letter to legislative representatives as requested. Mr. Javier Deleon seconded and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

2. Consideration and Action to Approve Resolution 2020-03 Proclaiming April as National Fair Housing Month

Ms. Davila stated that the LRGVDC supports awareness of April as National Fair Housing Month to raise awareness of fair housing rights and equal housing opportunities for people in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. ***Mr. Javier Deleon made a motion to approve resolution 2020-03 as presented. Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez 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. Ms. Davila highlighted the Region M Public Hearing on the 2021 Initially Prepared Plan. She also informed the Board that the annual tire collection event has been moved back to June because of the COVID-19 pandemic. An email with updated information will be sent to stakeholders in the next week.

B. Health & Human Services

Director Jose Gonzalez was recognized to address the following items:

Program Action Items:

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Contract Extensions for Title III Sub-recipients and Vendors

Mr. Gonzalez stated that staff requests authorization to extend current agreements with sub-recipients and vendors for one (1) year, the end period of this extension will be September 30, 2021. The rationale for such request is the current COVID-19 pandemic situation. The sub-recipients include Amigos Del Valle, senior centers, and caregiver education and training providers. The vendors are providers that case managers use to purchase such services as medication assistance, medical supplies, homemaker, and respite care.

2. Consideration and Action to Authorize Area Agency on Aging to Amend Senior center Contracts to Provide Additional Support for Emergency Services

Mr. Gonzalez stated that staff requests authorization to amend current senior center contracts to provide additional funds for emergency services such as telephone reassurance. Telephone reassurance is defined as “telephoning an older individual to provide regular contact and companionship or initiating necessary actions in the event the older individual cannot be reached by telephone”.

Hon. Norma G. Garcia made a motion to approve items 5. B. 1. & 2. As presented. Mayor Pro-tem Ricardo Salinas seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

Program Status Reports

The status reports on Operations was available in the meeting packet for review.

C. Public Safety

Program Action Items:

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

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Nominations for 9-1-1 Emergency Communications Advisory Committee (9-1-1 ECAC) Chair and Vice Chair

The 9-1-1 ECAC met on April 13 for the first time under its new structure and leadership. At this meeting the committee nominated City of Mission Chief of Police Robert Dominguez as Chair, and City of Alton Chief Jonathan Flores as Vice Chair. These nominations require Board approval. ***Hon. Norma G. Garcia made a motion to approve Chief Robert Dominguez as Chair and Chief Jonathan Flores as Vice Chair of the 9-1-1 ECAC. Commissioner David Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

2. Consideration and Action to Approve FY 2018/19 Use of Revenue Funding Recommendations from 9-1-1 Emergency Communications Advisory Committee (9-1-1 ECAC)

Mr. Cruz reported that in accordance with Health and Safety code §771.0751. Title 1 Part 12, Chapter 251, Rule §251.3, Use of Revenue in Certain Counties, the LRGVDC Public Safety Emergency Communications/9-1-1 Division is authorized to request Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) within Hidalgo County to make a formal written request for funding to continue enhancing PSAP operations at the end of the biennium.

The estimated amount of funding available from FY 2019 is \$800,000.00. Ultimately requests must enhance 9-1-1 operations and as approved on August 21, 2019 by the previous 9-1-1 committee, the following categories were priority:

1. Telecommunicator Salaries
2. Telecommunicator/PSAP Training
3. Software (must enhance 9-1-1 operations)

The 9-1-1 ECAC recommends approval of the projects and funding amounts. ***Hon. Norma G. Garcia made a motion to approve the use of FY 2018/2019 revenue funding as recommended by the 9-1-1 ECAC. Commissioner Edward Gonzalez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

3. Consideration and Action to Approve Criminal Justice Advisory Committee's (CJAC) Rankings and Resolution for FY 2020-2021 Criminal Justice Grant Conditionally Approved Projects.

Mr. Cruz explained that due to the ongoing Shelter-in-Place orders, the CJAC reviewed and scored the criminal justice grant applications remotely off-site during the week of April 13-17. The CJAC convened on April 22 via the GoToMeeting video conferencing website to review the scores and rankings of the five (5) criminal justice grant categories listed below:

- DJ-Edward Byrne Memorial Justice assistance Grant Program
- SF-State Criminal Justice Planning (421)
- TP-Truancy Prevention Grant Program
- VA-Victims of Crime Act Formula Grant Program
- WF-Violence Against Women Formula Grants

The CJAC recommends approval of the rankings and resolutions. ***Commissioner David Garza made a motion to approve the CJAC's rankings and resolutions for FY 2020-2021 Criminal Justice grant conditionally approved projects as presented. Mayor Pro-tem Ricardo Salinas seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Program Status Reports:

Mr. Cruz noted that the program status reports were available for review in the meeting packet.

D. Transportation


Program Status Reports:

The Valley Metro program status reports were available in the meeting packet for review. Valley Metro Director Tom Logan reported that in March Valley Metro Ridership has increased by 4%. Even though there is a slight increase, Valley Metro has realized a 39% decrease month-to-month due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff expects the same trend in April with a greater decrease because of the Shelter-in-Place mandates throughout the region. Staff has developed and implemented sanitation procedures to prevent the spread of the virus and have asked passengers to wear face coverings, board and exit busses from the rear door, and to practice social distancing.

RGVMPO Executive Director Andrew Canon reminded the Board that WebEx meeting for RGVMPO will be at 1:30 today. He added that staff did a program call for project updates for the new 4-year transportation cycle. Staff received 24 requests for increased funding and 28 new project requests regionally.

President Suarez next moved to item 6. – New or Unfinished Business.

There being no further business to come before the Board, *Hon. Norma G. Garcia made a motion to adjourn; Commissioner Edward Gonzalez seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:59 pm.*



Mayor David Suarez, President

ATTEST:



Deborah Morales, Recording Secretary