

MINUTES

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

12:00 PM WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26, 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 JIM DARLING, PRESIDENT

President Jim Darling, called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared.

President Darling then moved to item 2: Consideration and Action to Approve Meeting Minutes (June 24, 2020)

Commissioner David Garza made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 24, 2020 Board Meeting as presented. Mayor Pro-tem Norie Gonzalez Garza seconded; and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

President Darling then moved to item 3: Public Comment and/or Report from Legislative Delegation and recognized Mr. Pedro Cabral, Veteran's Outreach Specialist for Hidalgo County. Mr. Cabral informed the Board that a new grant has become available called the Broken Arrow Grant. This grant will provide mortgage assistance, vehicle repair assistance, even for vehicles damaged by flooding from Hurricane Hanna, it will also provide for assistance with utilities and funeral expenses.

Upon conclusion of Public Comments, President Darling moved to item 4: Administration.

A. Presentation on State Action Plans for FY 2018/19 Disaster Funding Allocations

Mr. Cruz was recognized and introduced Ms. Esmeralda Sanchez who is a part of the Texas General Land Office Community Development and Revitalization Program (GLO-CDR). This team is responsible for oversight and project implementation for all sub recipient housing, and infrastructure contracts. With that preface, Ms. Sanchez introduced Mr. Shawn Strange, Texas General Land Office (GLO) Manager of the Policy Development Team who gave a presentation titled "Texas General Land Office, Community Development and Revitalization Program (GLO-CDR).

B. Presentation and Consider Action on 2019 Annual Audit

President Darling introduced this item and asked the Board if there were any questions on the 2019 Annual Audit. There being none, he stated that there are two critical portions of the audit. The first is on page 2 that, in summary, states that the LRGVDC Financial records meet all accounting requirements and depict proper financial conditions of the organization. The other is on page 162, the last paragraph titled "Opinion on Each Major Federal and State Program". There it states that in the auditor's opinion the LRGVDC "complied in all material respects with the types of compliance requirements referred to above that could have a direct and material effect on each of its major federal and state programs for the year ended December 31, 2019".

The President then recognized Ms. Melissa Gonzalez, Oscar R. Gonzalez, CPA & Associates for her comments. She informed the Board that our Finance Department staff does an excellent job on keeping their records in order. After all the testing that was conducted, there were no findings as noted on page 165. Upon conclusion of the report, **Commissioner David Fuentes made a motion to accept the 2019 Annual Audit Report as presented. Councilman Johnny Garcia seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

C. Consideration and Action on Quarterly Investment Report

Finance Director Crystal Balboa stated that the report was provided in the meeting packet and that there were no items of note to report, she then opened the floor for questions. There being none, **Commissioner David Garza made a motion to accept the Quarterly Investment Report; Mayor Pro-tem Norie Gonzalez Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

D. Consideration and Action to Approve Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Trail Counter Project

Mr. Cruz was recognized and informed the Board that the LRGVDC was awarded a grant through the Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation to purchase 18 bicycle pedestrian counters to collect data. The data will be analyzed by staff from the RGVMPPO and shared with cities and the Texas Department of Transportation. The goal of this project is to create a methodology to collect data and use it to plan and prepare for trails and bicyclists and pedestrian facilities in the future. To date, this is the largest collective effort and partnership to collect bicycle and pedestrian data on trails in Texas.

Cities participating in the program were selected by partners and the LRGVDC for meeting various criteria including length, access to public transportation, public and state parks, connection to schools, residential, and civic services, and if the trails are promoted. Staff recommends approval of the MOU for the following cities:

- Brownsville (Southmost Hike and Bike Trail)
- San Benito (Heavin Resaca Trail)
- Harlingen (McKelvey/Arroyo Park Trail)
- McAllen (Bicentennial Hike and Bike Trail)
- Mission (Mission Hike and Bike Trail)

Mr. Cruz added that these are the initial participating cities and as this project progresses other cities will be invited to join this project. **Commissioner Eleazar Guajardo made a motion to approve the MOU for this Trail Counter Project as presented. Mr. Ronald Mills seconded the motion.** President Darling recommended to have legal counsel review this contract because there are many ongoing duties that have the potential for liability and obligations that flow back and forth between the LRGVDC and other member cities. He also advised the participating cities to have their own legal counsel review the document. There being no further questions or comments he called for a vote; **upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

E. Consideration and Action to Approve Interlocal Agreement for RGV B-Cycle Project

Mr. Cruz informed the Board that the LRGVDC was awarded a grant through the Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation and through the Transportation Alternatives Program through the RGVMPPO to create the RGV B-Cycle Program. The RGV B-Cycle Program is a regional bikeshare initiative which focuses on improving the quality of life for Valley residents by providing health and wellness options through active transportation, and “last mile” support for the various public transportation networks in the region. This program will allow residents to “rent” bicycles at a low-cost option for the purpose of recreation or transportation.

The interlocal agreement is required by the funding agency in order to move forward with the application process. At this time, the following cities are participants: Alamo, Edinburg, McAllen, and Pharr. Staff recommends approval of the Interlocal Agreement for the RGV B-Cycle project. Mr. Cruz noted that this

agreement will be a living document. Upon conclusion of discussion **Commissioner David Garza made a motion to approve the Interlocal Agreement for the RGV B-Cycle Project. Commissioner Eleazar Guajardo seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

F. Consideration and Action to Approve Interlocal Agreement for Hidalgo County Active Mobility Plan Project

Mr. Cruz informed the Board that the LRGVDC was awarded a grant through the Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (RGVMPO), formerly the HCMPO and through TxDOT through the Transportation Alternatives Program for the Hidalgo County Active Transportation Master Plan – This project will unify all trail and sidewalk systems in Hidalgo County and provide plans for opportunities of connection and highlight tourism destinations using active transportation. Components of active transportation include hiking, biking, horseback riding, kayaking, etc. The engineering and design firm that will be hired by the LRGVDC will be experts in bicycle and pedestrian planning, alternative transportation master plans, and tourism development plans. All cities/towns and public/private partnerships in Hidalgo County are invited to be a part of this plan and provide feedback as valuable stakeholders to ensure the most comprehensive plan is created.

Staff recommends approval of the Interlocal Agreement for the Hidalgo County Active Mobility Plan project. **Commissioner Eleazar Guajardo made a motion to approve the Interlocal Agreement for the Hidalgo County Active Mobility Plan Project as presented. Councilman Johnny Garcia seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

G. Executive Director Report

1. Introduction of New Staff Members

Mr. Cruz was recognized and announced our new staff members and staff who had been promoted; photos of the individuals were shown on screen along with their title and department.

2. Census 2020

Mr. Cruz stated that staff was as surprised as everyone else with the deadline for census reporting was shortened from the original deadline extension of October 30 to September 30. Staff regrouped and assessed our census efforts. He thanked the cities and agencies that contributed to the Census 2020 campaign for a total of \$34,500 and reported on efforts using iPads that were purchased specifically for Census enumerators to use while at public events and venues. Staff has provided these iPads to various cities at their request. Staff has also been sending weekly updates on Census count percentages, and unfortunately the current count is below the 2010 census numbers. Mr. Cruz is hopeful that with a great push forward we can count many more citizens of the RGV.

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

A. Community & Economic Development

Mr. Cruz was recognized to address the following:

Program Action Items:

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Acceptance of Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) Funding in the Amount of \$100,044.00, and Contingent upon TWDB Approval, Execute Subcontract with Research, Applied Technology, Education, and Services (RATES) to Conduct Freshwater Flow Monitoring and Reporting.

Mr. Cruz informed the Board that last December, under the direction of the Regional Water Resource Advisory Committee (RWRAC), the LRGVDC submitted an application for funding to the TWDB to conduct Real-time Hydrologic Fresh Water Monitoring in the International Boundary and Water

Commission (IBWC) Floodway, Hidalgo & Willacy Drains, and Raymondville Drain. Early this year staff received notice of the award and most recently submitted the Interagency Cooperation Contract to the TWDB and the Statement of Work for the project. As recommended by the RWRAC and contingent upon approval by the TWDB the LRGVDC will execute a subcontract with RATES to complete the Statement of Work. ***Commissioner Eleazar Guajardo made a motion to approve acceptance of TWDB funding in the amount of \$100,044.00 to execute a subcontract with RATES to conduct Freshwater Flow Monitoring and Reporting. Councilman Johnny Garcia seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

2. Consideration and Action to Approve Nominee to Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC)

Mr. Cruz reported that the SWAC unanimously recommends Mr. David Avila with RDA Technologies to fill the vacancy in the Private Sector category on the SWAC. ***Commissioner David Fuentes made a motion to approve Mr. David Avila's nomination to the SWAC. Commissioner Eleazar Guajardo seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

3. Consideration and Action to Approve Solid Waste Advisory Committee's (SWAC) Recommendation to Redistribute TCEQ Solid Waste Funds

Mr. Cruz informed the Board that no responses were received for the Request for Qualifications to do a Tire Study. Therefor the SWAC recommends redistributing the \$40,000.00 budget for this study to the 2021 Road to Recycling program events, and to hire one or more interns to research and gather data to update the Regional Solid Waste Management Plan. ***Commissioner Eleazar Guajardo made a motion to approve the redistribution of funds as recommended by the SWAC. Mayor Pro-tem Rick Salinas seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Program Status Reports

Mr. Cruz reported that this year's Road-to-Recycling event had 44 collection sites and resulted in the removal of 20,000 tires from the environment. Mr. Cruz then turned the floor over to Mr. Derek Katznelson. Mr. Katznelson reported that the Regional Water Resource Advisory Committee is considering the creation of an exploratory committee to investigate the process and capacity to operate a Clean Rivers Program for the Lower Rio Grande Valley Region. The proposed structure would be to have the LRGVDC as the administrative agent and partner with the Rio Grande Regional Water Authority. The RWRAC will discuss possible action at their September meeting and bring recommendations before this board. President Darling gave the reservoir level report and the status of the Mexican water debt. The remaining status reports are available for review in the meeting packet.

B. Health & Human Services

Director Jose Gonzalez was recognized to address the following items:

Program Status Reports

Mr. Gonzalez gave the status reports on additional food bags distributed in all three counties, the special initiatives, the Quality Assurance Survey, and the Telephone Reassurance Program. He added that the Quality Assurance Survey for the Home Delivered Meals will be available for the September Board meeting.

C. Public Safety

Program Action Items:

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Contract Extension to Next Generation 9-1-1 for Enterprise Geospatial Database Management System (EGDMS) Managed Service Project

Mr. Cruz was recognized and informed the Board that as part of the Emergency Communications 9-1-1

FY 20-21 Strategic Plan and as required by the Commission of State Emergency Communications (CSEC), our funding agency, the Next Gen 9-1-1 EDGMS managed service project will continue not only to improve the GIS data for 9-1-1 services but also to improve the current wireless 9-1-1 call mapping to provide accurate addresses. The vendor was selected by CSEC under Statement of Work No. 477.8.00127 as authorized by and subject to the terms and conditions of the contract with the Department of Information Resources Contract #DIR-TSO-3441. This is a CSEC and legislatively approved budget line item. GEO-Comm Inc. is the vendor and the cost will be \$116,887.42.

Commissioner Eleazar Guajardo made a motion to approve the contract extension to Next Generation 9-1-1 for EDGMS Managed Service Project as presented. Councilman Johnny Garcia seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

It was the consensus of the Board to take action on items 5.C.2-5 in one motion.

2. Consideration and Action to Approve Purchase of Server Networking Equipment and Accessories for emergency Communications/9-1-1 Division

In accordance with the Emergency Communications/9-1-1 FY 2020-21 Strategic Plan and the 10-year equipment replacement cycle, the new system and accessories will replace the current outdated systems. The estimated costs for a turn-key project is \$256,393.40. The current equipment has met its ideal life expectancy and this new server networking system is a critical component for day-to-day operations and the up-to-date hyper convergence technology will operate more efficiently and allow for future expansion. This is a CSEC approved budget item and the purchase will be made through Texas DIR #TS03763 with TransChes Global Management, Inc.

3. Consideration and Action to Approve Purchase of 9-1-1 Recording Equipment for Public Safety Answering Pointes (PSAPs) in Hidalgo & Willacy Counties

In accordance with the Emergency Communications/9-1-1 FY 2020/21 Strategic Plan and the 10-year equipment replacement cycle, the 9-1-1 recording equipment must be replaced at a total cost of \$196,922.00. The new equipment will replace equipment that has met its life expectancy. This equipment is used to record 9-1-1 emergency calls and text messages at all PSAPs. The new regional design proves to be more cost-effective when compared to the current traditional systems at each PSAP. This is a CSEC approved budget item and the purchase will be made through Houston-Galveston Area Council contract #RP07-20 with Vista Com as the vendor.

4. Consideration and Action to Approve Resolution for FY 2020-22 COG-21 Interoperable Communications Infrastructure Regional Project Grant

The LRGVDC's Homeland Security program applied for the Interoperable Communications Infrastructure Regional Project grant and is slated to receive \$1.1 million in funding. The grant will be used to purchase repeaters, and infrastructure hardware/software. The equipment will fill regional gaps in operable/interoperable communications identified in the LRGVDC's Regional Interoperable Communications Plan which include creating interconnectivity between bordering counties' radio communication systems and adding repeater capacity to radio sites.

5. Consideration and Action to Approve Entering into Interlocal Agreement with City of Weslaco

The LRGVDC Regional Police Academy (RPA) requests approval to enter into an Interlocal Agreement with the City of Weslaco. This agreement is for the use of the Weslaco Police Department Firing Range and will allow the RPA to utilize the facility for academy training purposes.

Upon conclusion of presentation of items 5. C. 2. - 5., Mayor Chris Boswell made a motion to approve these items as presented. Mayor Pro-tem Norie Gonzalez Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

Program Status Reports:

Upon conclusion of action Mr. Cruz noted that the status reports were available for review in the meeting packet.

D. Transportation

Valley Metro Program Director Tom Logan was recognized to report on the following items:

Program Action Items:

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Valley Metro/Hidalgo County MOU

Mr. Logan informed the Board that staff request approval to enter into an MOU with Hidalgo County Precinct 4 for the construction and installation of a bus stop at Health Education Center (HEC) Clinic in San Carlos. In accordance with the need for bus stop improvement to serve the patrons of the clinic, a cooperative effort was agreed upon involving UTRGV, Hidalgo County Precinct 4, and LRGVDC's Valley Metro. Valley Metro will provide the shelter, Precinct 4 will provide A & E and hire the contractor, and UTRGV will supervise operation of the clinic. Staff recommends approval for LRGVDC's authorized official to execute related documents. **Commissioner Eleazar Guajardo made a motion to approve the Valley Metro/Hidalgo County MOU as presented. Councilman Johnny Garcia seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

Hidalgo County Precinct 4 Commissioner Ellie Torres shared her enthusiasm for this project. Ms. Veronica Gonzalez, UTRGV thanked the LRGVDC and Commissioner Torres and stated that this bus shelter will improve access to health care and education.

2. Consideration and Action to Approve Procurement of Heavy-Duty Parts from Gillig Bus Manufacturing for Bus Fleet

Mr. Logan stated that staff requests Board approval to purchase Heavy-duty parts from Gillig Bus Manufacturer to refurbish Gillig busses in the Valley Metro fleet. These parts will be purchased using TxDOT grant #ICB-2018-LRGVDC-00031, the grant will cover this purchase at 100%, no local match is required. **Commissioner Eleazar Guajardo made a motion to approve procurement of heavy-duty parts from Gillig Bus Manufacturing for Bus Fleet as presented. Councilman Johnny Garcia seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

Program Status Reports:


Mr. Logan reported that Valley Metro is averaging approximately 15,000 passengers per month, when during normal operations the average is approximately 70,000. Staff noticed a decrease in July with the increased shelter in place mandates. Ridership is slowly increasing, and passengers are following our recommendations to wear face coverings and maintain social distancing.

Mr. Cruz attributed the success of LRGVDC programs to the cooperation and collaborative efforts of our partners, especially during this unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic and Hurricane Hanna. He expressed optimism for the future of the Valley with continued collaborative efforts.

Item 6. – New or Unfinished Business, there being none, **President Darling adjourned the meeting at 1:08 pm.**

ATTEST:


Deborah Morales, Recording Secretary


Mayor Jim Darling, President