

MINUTES

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

12:00 PM WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 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 12:09 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 (August 26, 2020)

Commissioner David Garza made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 26, 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; there being none he moved to item 4: Administration.

A. Consideration and Action to Approve Modification of Requirements for Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or Public Records Requests

Mr. Cruz was recognized and stated that this modification consists of establishing an official LRGVDC procedure to streamline processing requests for information and public records. The LRGVDC has followed the guidelines set forth by the Attorney General concerning requests for information, and upon Board approval will post the policy updates and requirements on the LRGVDC website. The instructions on how to make a Freedom of Information Request and File an Open Records Request from the LRGVDC were provided to the Board for review. President Darling agreed that this practice meets the Attorney General's guidelines. Upon conclusion of discussion ***Mayor Pro-tem Rick Salinas made a motion to approve the modification of requirements for Freedom of Information Act and requests for public records as presented. Commissioner David Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

B. Executive Director Report

1. Introduction of New Staff Members

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

2. Census 2020

Mr. Cruz provided the status of LRGVDC and our partners' Census 2020 outreach work and thanked the cities that contributed to this effort. These contributions funded geofencing outreach that was concentrated on census tracts with the lowest response rates. Through another funding source staff purchased 9 (nine) iPads that were lent to cities and counties for census takers to use one-on-one at various locations in low response areas.

3. RGV Day at the Capitol

Mr. Cruz reported that coordinating the RGV Day at the Capitol has been and will continue to be a fluid process due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and revisions to social distancing mandates. Staff is waiting to see if, and how, the capitol will allow public access during the 87th legislative session. He shared “Save the Date” information provided by the RGV Partnership who is coordinating the potential trip for the RGV Day at the Capitol as well as the 2021 Legislative Tour.

4. Upcoming 87th Legislative Session

Mr. Cruz presented the 87th Legislative Session Objectives that were developed by the Texas Association of Regional Councils (TARC) and highlighted some of the high priority items.

5. Agreement between Rio South Texas Economic Council and LRGVDC

Mr. Cruz reminded the Board that the LRGVDC has had a partnership with RSTEC since 2017 whereby we have provided office space, maintained their financial accounts, and provided administrative assistance. However, RSTEC has found an opportunity for further advancement with the Council for South Texas Economic Progress (COSTEP) in McAllen. Mr. Matt Ruszczak, Executive Director of the RSTEC stated that this is a modification of the original agreement, and since RSTEC has physically relocated from the LRGVDC to COSTEP the agreement needs to be updated. In this new agreement there is a continuation of our relationship that maintains the LRGVDC as a member of RSTEC and RSTEC’s involvement with the LRGVDC. It further stipulates the closing out of the accounting process for FY 2019/2020 which ends today. Therefore, starting on October 1, 2020, the beginning of the new FY 2020/2021 COSTEP will provide all services. Upon conclusion of discussion ***Mayor Chris Boswell made a motion to approve the Agreement between RSTEC and LRGVDC as presented. Mr. Javier De Leon seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

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

A. Community & Economic Development

Program Action Items:

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Creation of Regional Water Resource Advisory Committee Exploratory Sub Committee

President Darling reported that the Regional Water Resource Advisory Committee (RWRAC) recommends the establishment of the Clean Rivers Program Exploratory Subcommittee. The subcommittee will explore the establishment of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Clean Rivers Program (CRP) for the Rio Grande Valley Region. The goals of this subcommittee include assessing the technical capability of our region’s water testing capacity, petitioning the Texas state legislature, and scoping which organization would have the best capacity to assume CRP duties.

The RWRAC unanimously recommends the following six individuals as the initial subcommittee members:

- Commissioner David Garza, Cameron County Precinct 3
- Mr. Carlos Sanchez, City of Harlingen
- Mayor Jim Darling, City of McAllen
- Mr. Saul Garcia, Hidalgo County Precinct 1
- Ms. Melisa Gonzales, City of Alamo
- Dr. Chris Fuller, Research, Applied Technology, Education and Services (RATES)

Upon conclusion of discussion, Mayor Chris Boswell made a motion to approve the creation of the RWRAC Exploratory Sub Committee as presented. Commissioner Pilar Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

2. Consideration and Action to Approve Resolution Authorizing the Filing of a Flood Infrastructure Fund Application

President Darling reported that this application will be for financial assistance from the Texas Water Development Board for the Lower Rio Grande Valley Regional Flood Protection Planning Project. The project aims to accurately plan for flood infrastructure for the purpose of alleviating flooding issues within the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Project tasks will occur in two phases over 36 months: 1) a hydrologic and hydraulic (H&H) study, and 2) project identification and design.

The LRGVDC and RATES, Inc., also a non-profit, will cooperate on the project with their shared LRGVDC Regional Watershed Coordinator and LRGVDC's Regional Water Resource Advisory Committee. Further structural and engineering design assessments will be contracted after the H&H study is completed. To avoid duplication on this project, the 2012 plan titled, "Lower Rio Grande Valley Regional Economic Adjustment Plan for Building Disaster Resilient Communities" will be referenced during this process. \$7,983,000.00. will be requested from the TWDB and a 10% match will be from Cameron, Hidalgo, and Willacy Counties. Mr. Cruz added that Cameron County has approved the 10% match and passed a resolution for it, the resolutions from Hidalgo and Willacy Counties are pending. ***Commissioner David Garza made a motion to approve filing a Flood Infrastructure Fund application with the caveat that creating duplication on the flood studies will be avoided. Mayor Pro-tem Norie Gonzalez Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Program Status Reports

The Community & Economic Development Program 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 Item

1. Consideration and Action to Add Vendors (Contractors) to Vendor Pool

The Area Agency on Aging issued a vendor solicitation notice to add vendors to the existing vendor pool. This is an open solicitation with no deadline. As of July 31, 2020, six (6) applications were received. The Advisory Council recommends the addition of: Hands of Angels, Angeles Divinos, New life Home Health Services, All Generations Home Care, and Foot Solutions McAllen. ***Mayor Chris Boswell made a motion to approve adding these vendors to the Vendor Pool as recommended by the Advisory Council. Mayor Pro-tem Rick Salinas seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Program Status Reports

The Status Reports for the Area Agency on Aging were provided in the meeting packet for review.

C. Public Safety

Program Action Items:

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Century Link as the Vendor for Connectivity of Next Generation 9-1-1 for the Regional ESINet Project

As part of the Emergency Communications 9-1-1 FY 20-21 Strategic Plan and as required by the Commission on State Emergency Communications, staff requests approval to engage Century Link. Their task would be to reconfigure from Legacy 9-1-1 to Next Generation 9-1-1 for host sites at the McAllen PD and the Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office. The cost associated for this project is \$77,310.80 and the vendor is under H-GAC contract No. EC07-20. **Mayor Chris Boswell made a motion to approve Century Link as the Vendor for Connectivity of Next Generation 9-1-1 for the Regional ESINet Project as presented. Commissioner Pilar Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

2. Consideration and Action to Approve WSC Inc. as the Vendor for an Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) for McAllen Police Department

In the interest of providing continuous emergency communications/9-1-1 services, staff requests approval to procure WSC Inc. to provide the system and installation. A UPS provides a type of electricity bridge between the time the power goes out and an emergency back-up generator kicks in. The McAllen Police Department, one of our regional 9-1-1 host sites, was under stress when the power went out during Hurricane Hanna. This UPS system is designed to deliver continuous power and alleviate future strains to 9-1-1 infrastructure. WSC, Inc. is a licensed 9-1-1 vendor and the cost associated with this project will be \$32,344.08. **Commissioner David Garza made a motion to approve Century Link as the Vendor for Connectivity of Next Generation 9-1-1 for the Regional ESINet Project. Mayor Pro-tem Rick Salinas seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

3. Consideration and Action to Approve Entering into Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Cameron County

The Regional Police Academy (RPA) requests approval to enter into an MOU with Cameron County through the Cameron County Commissioner's Court. The purpose of this MOU is to allow the RPA the use of the Cameron County Airport located at 27617 Buena Vista, Los Fresnos for training purposes. This MOU will require an annual update. **Mayor Trey Mendez made a motion to approve entering into a MOU with Cameron County as presented. Mayor Chris Boswell seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

4. Consideration and Action to Approve Entering into an Agreement with Texas State Technical College

The RPA requests approval to finalize the proposed Letter of Agreement with Texas State Technical College (TSTC). The purpose of this agreement is to allow the RPA to continue use of the provided TSTC classroom for instruction and training. **Commissioner Pilar Garza made a motion to approve entering into an agreement with Texas State Technical College. Commissioner Rene Villafranco seconded the motion; Mr. Javier De Leon abstained. Upon a vote the motion carried.**

Program Status Reports:

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

D. Transportation

President Darling congratulated Valley Metro Director Tom Logan on the opening of the Edinburg Transit Terminal; he commented that it is a 1st class facility and the LRGVDC should be proud of this accomplishment. He then turned the floor over to Mr. Logan who thanked President Darling for the kind words and for speaking at the Ribbon Cutting on behalf of the LRGVDC. Mr. Cruz thanked the City of Edinburg for their hospitality and the Board Members and staff who were able to attend.

Mr. Logan then reported on the following items:

Program Action Items:

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Procurement of Revenue Vehicles for Valley Metro Rural Fleet

Mr. Logan stated that Valley Metro received close to \$1.3 million from the state to replace the rural fleet of busses. Staff requests approval to purchase up to twelve (12) busses, including seven (7) Type II busses and five (5) Type XI busses. These busses will be incorporated into the Valley Metro Rural Motor Bus Fleet and will replace units that have met the end of their useful life.

Purchase of these vehicles will be made using TxDOT grants with matching TDCs from TxDOT as local match. The cost of the seven Type II busses is \$532,000.00 and the cost of the five Type XI busses is \$750,301.00, for a total purchase of \$1,282,301.00. **Mayor Chris Boswell made a motion to approve the purchase of up to twelve busses as presented. Mayor Trey Mendez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

2. Consideration and Action to Approve Revisions to Valley Metro Operating Policies and Procedures

Mr. Logan stated that the revisions include changes to the department, changes in employee responsibility/titles and an updated organizational chart. Adoption of these revisions will ensure Valley Metro/LRGVDC remains in compliance with FTA regulations. **Mr. Javier De Leon made a motion to approve the revisions to the Valley Metro Operating Policies and Procedures as presented. Commissioner David Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

Program Status Reports:

President Darling asked if Valley Metro was experiencing any difficulty enforcing COVID-19 precautionary measures. Mr. Logan was happy to report that there have been no difficulties, that the public is complying. The full status reports were available in the meeting packet for review and Mr. Logan stated that ridership numbers were slowly increasing.

President Darling reminded the Board that the RGVMPPO meeting will begin at 1:30 pm.

Item 6. – New or Unfinished Business

Commissioner Garza reported that he attended the virtual TARC training last week along with Mr. Cruz and several LRGVDC staff members. He stated that the legislative agenda items that were presented earlier were approved by the TARC Board of Directors. As the alternate representative for the LRGVDC on the TARC Board of Directors he appreciated the opportunity to represent our region in this very different and informative arena.

Item 7. – Adjourn. There being no further business to come before the Board, **President Darling adjourned the meeting at 12:51 pm.**

ATTEST:


Deborah Morales, Recording Secretary


Mayor Jim Darling, President