

# MINUTES

## MEETING OF THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS, GENERAL MEMBERSHIP & CORPORATION

12:00 PM WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2022

VIA GLOBAL GOTOMEETING VIDEO CONFERENCE PLATFORM & IN-PERSON  
INITIATED AND CHAIRED FROM  
LRGVDC MAIN CAMPUS - 301 W. RAILROAD STREET, WESLACO, TEXAS  
BUILDING B, KEN JONES EXECUTIVE BOARD ROOM

PRESIDING: JUDGE AURELIO GUERRA, PRESIDENT

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Chris Boswell called the meeting to order at 12:06 p.m. pending the arrival of President Aurelio Guerra. Roll call was taken for the Board of Directors and the General Membership, and a quorum was declared for both entities. President Guerra arrived during roll call and proceeded to preside over the meeting.

President Guerra then moved to item 2 - Consideration and Action to Approve Meeting Minutes

A. Annual Elections Meeting of May 26, 2021

*Commissioner Eleazar Guajardo made a motion to approve the May 26, 2021, Annual Elections meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Jim Darling seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*

B. Board of Directors Meeting of December 15, 2021

*Mr. Ronald Mills made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2021, Board of Directors meeting as presented. Mayor Rick Guerra seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*

President Guerra next moved to Item 3: Public Comment and/or Report from Legislative Delegation, there being none he moved to Item 4: Administration and addressed the following:

A. Consideration and Action by General Membership Regarding FY 2022 Annual Report and Budget

Mayor Chris Boswell, Chairman of the Annual Report and Budget Committee reported that the committee met on January 11, 2022, to review and discuss the 2022 Annual Report and Budget which includes the LRGVDC 2021 Performance Outcomes, the 2022 Performance Goals and the 2022 Budget. This document offers the General Membership, Board of Directors, and members of the public a detailed outline of the LRGVDC's composition, organizational structure, and programmatic responsibilities.

Mayor Boswell provided the following summary of the 2022 Budget:

- 2022 Annual Budget is \$34,120,344; reflecting an increase of \$289,148 from the 2021 budget due to additional funding awards; such as, EDA, FTA, TxDOT, and HHS.
- 2022 Annual Budget does not reflect an increase in Membership Dues.

- 2022 Fringe Benefit rate is 48.97% and reflects a decrease of 0.50% over the 2021 fringe benefit rate of 48.47%.
- 2022 (Total Budget Expenditure) Indirect Rate is 14.31%; reflecting the State's revised guidance for calculation. Utilizing the revised calculation method, the 2022 indirect rate reflects an increase of 2.93% from the 2021 amount of 11.38%. As per Texas Local Government Code (Sec. 391.0115.e), an RPC may not spend an amount more than 15% of the commission's total expenditures, less capital expenditures and any subcontracts, pass-throughs, or subgrants.
- 2022 Salary Recommendations for staff includes a 3% performance-based salary increase for those employees who have successfully achieved all standards per the annual evaluation process.

Upon conclusion of his summary, *Mayor Boswell stated that the Committee approved the 2022 Annual Report and budget as presented, he then moved that the General Membership approve the 2022 Annual Report and Budget as presented. Mayor Rick Salinas seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*

B. Consideration and Action to Accept Quarterly and Annual Investment reports

Finance Director Crystal Balboa was recognized and informed the Board that both reports were included in the meeting packet. There being no questions or discussion, *Commissioner Eleazar Guajardo made a motion to accept the Quarterly and Annual Investment reports. Commissioner Edward Gonzales seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*

C. Executive Director Report

Mr. Cruz was recognized to address the following:

1. Introduction of New Staff Members

Mr. Cruz informed the Board that six (6) new staff members have recently joined the LRGVDC:

- Ms. Cindy Lopez, Project Management Specialist for Valley Metro
- Mr. Ezequiel Mata, Non CDL Driver for Valley Metro
- Mr. Edward Gil, Network Specialist for both RGVDC and Administration
- Ms. Nicole Quinones, Maintenance Customer Service Rep for Valley Metro
- Ms. Clarissa Nieto, Case Manager for Area Agency on Aging
- Mr. Nicholas Grijalva, Custodian for Valley Metro

Upon conclusion of the new staff introductions, Mr. Cruz encouraged Board Members to review the Annual Report and advise staff if there were any questions on the goals and objectives for 2022. He noted that there were some significant accomplishments in 2021, one of which was the creation of the Rio Grande Valley Emergency Communication District. The efforts to create the District began in June of 2020 and was achieved August 31, 2021.

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

A. Community & Economic Development

Director Rick Carrera was recognized to address the following:



### Program Action Item

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

Mr. Carrera informed the Board that at their January 5, 2022 meeting, the RWRAC recommended Ms. Maribel Bermudez Guerrero from the City of Brownsville as a representative in the Large City category. A large city is defined by having a population of over 25,000. Ms. Guerrero serves as the Assistant Director for Engineering and Public Works at the City of Brownsville and also serves as the Mayor of the Town of Rancho Viejo. ***Mayor Rick Salinas made the motion to approve Ms. Maribel Bermudez Guerrero as a Large City Representative on the RWRAC. Commissioner David Garza seconded, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

### Program Status Reports

Mr. Carrera reported that the next RWRAC meeting is scheduled for February 16, 2022, at 10:00 am. The Regional Small Cities Coalition did not meet as scheduled on January 20 due to inclement weather conditions. This meeting has been rescheduled and will be held virtually on February 3, at 11:30 am.

Mr. Cruz announced that the launch of the South Texas Ecotourism Center has been postponed. Commissioner David Garza stated that the launch has been rescheduled to February 22, 2022, at 10:00 am.

## B. Health & Human Services

Director Joe Gonzalez was recognized to report on the following:

### Area Agency on Aging Program Action Item

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Budget Amendment for Mission Housing Authority

Mr. Gonzalez informed the Board that the Advisory Council recommends approval of the Mission Housing Authority's request for additional funding to provide transportation services. The amount requested is \$6,000. This funding will afford them the assistance needed to provide this much needed service. ***Commissioner Eleazar Guajardo made a motion to approve the budget amendment for Mission Housing Authority as presented. Mr. Ronald Mills seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

### Program Status Reports

Upon conclusion of action, Mr. Gonzalez noted that the status reports on the End of Medicare Part D Enrollment, Medicare Cost Savings Program, and the Advisory Council Membership were in the meeting packet for review.

## C. Public Safety

### Program Action Items

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

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Resolutions for FY 2022-23 Homeland Security Grants Funding

- a. COG-21 Homeland Security Regional Planning Resolution
- b. Coordinator for Regional Fire Academy Resolution
- c. Hidalgo County Interoperable Communications Expansion Project Resolution
- d. Statewide Emergency Radio Infrastructure Program Resolution

***Commissioner Eleazar Guajardo made a motion to approve the four (4) resolutions for FY 2022-23 Homeland Security Grants Funding as presented. Mr. Troy Allen seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

2. Consideration and Action to Approve Increasing Purchasing Threshold for Purchases by and for the Rio Grande Valley Emergency Communication District (RGV9-1-1)

At the December 15, 2021, LRGVDC Board of Directors meeting, the RGV9-1-1 District requested increasing the threshold to make purchases that would require their approval from \$25,000 to \$50,000. During discussion on this item, the LRGVDC Board approved the recommendation as presented and further recommended increasing that threshold to \$100,000 due to the District's unique and important role. The members of the RGV9-1-1 Board of Managers that were present agreed. The conclusion of that discussion was for staff to take this revised request back to the RGV9-1-1 District Board of Managers for their consideration and approval.

The RGV9-1-1 Board of Managers met on Wednesday, January 19, 2022, and approved the recommended threshold increase from \$50,000 to \$100,000 specifically for purchases made by and for the RGV9-1-1. District purchases frequently exceed the current threshold. The majority of the equipment and services necessary for the day-to-day operation of RGV9-1-1 District exceed the current threshold and it is often an impediment to obtaining time sensitive and necessary purchases to maintain 9-1-1 operational readiness and capabilities.

LRGVDC Administration will amend the LRGVDC Procurement Policy to include that purchases in the amount of \$100,000 and higher will require approval from the RGV9-1-1 District Board of Managers. ***Commissioner Eleazar Guajardo made a motion to approve increasing the purchasing threshold for purchases by and for the Rio Grande Valley Emergency Communication District (RGV9-1-1) to \$100,000 as requested. Commissioner Edward Gonzales seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

#### Program Status Reports

Mr. Snyder stated that the status reports for Public Safety programs and the Rio Grande Valley Emergency Communication District were available in the meeting packet for review and he highlighted the recent Regional Police Academy graduation activities.

#### D. Transportation

Valley Metro Director Maribel Contreras was recognized to report on the following items:

#### Program Action Items

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Revised LRGVDC Regional Transit Service Department's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy



Ms. Contreras informed the Board that Valley Metro's EEO Policy is designed to support efforts to provide quality service, enhance efficiency, and cultivate a thriving internal environment that embraces workforce diversity. Updates have been made to change the following:

- a. Designation of Personnel EEO Officers
- b. Management/Supervisor/Professional Responsibilities

***Mr. Troy Allen made a motion to approve the revised LRGVDC Regional Transit service Department's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy as presented. Mr. Ronald Mills seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

2. Presentation and Action to Approve LRGVDC Regional Transit Services Department's Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan

Ms. Contreras informed the Board that the LRGVDC served as the lead agency for the Regional Coordination Transportation Plan. The LRGVDC's Regional Public Transportation Advisory Panel (RTAP) functioned as the project steering committee. Moore & Associates, Inc. was selected to prepare the update. The Five-Year Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan consists of three core components: Transportation Resources Inventory, Needs Assessment, and Gap Analysis. These project components are supplemented by additional materials required by TxDOT which examine Planning Region 21's goals, assess its ability to implement recommendations, and set forth performance measures by which progress can be measured. A meeting of the RTAP committee was held on January 14, 2022, to discuss and take action on approval of the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan. The Plan was approved contingent upon additional comments and revisions. ***Commissioner Edward Gonzales made a motion to approve the LRGVDC Regional Transit Services Department's Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan as presented. Councilman Johnny Garcia seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Program Status Reports

Ms. Contreras gave the ridership report which was also provided in the meeting packet.

RGVMPO Status Report

No report was available at this time.

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 officer or employee RE: Executive Director Annual Performance Evaluation

It was the consensus of the Executive Committee to report on the annual evaluation of Executive Director Manuel Cruz directly during open session and not adjourn into Executive Session.

President Guerra stated that the evaluation of LRGVDC Executive Director Manuel Cruz is favorable, and the Executive Committee is suggesting a 5% salary increase. ***Commissioner David Garza made a motion to increase the annual salary of Executive Director Manuel Cruz by 5%. Commissioner Eleazar Guajardo seconded the motion.***

Mayor Rick Salinas reminded the Board that in the past there have been questions on how to equate the compensation of the LRGVDC Executive Director as it relates to Executive Directors in other regions. He asked to see how the salaries for LRGVDC personnel are consistent with those in other Regional

Councils of Governments. President Guerra stated that this could be a line item for discussion and informational purposes.

Mr. Cruz thanked the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors for their favorable evaluation, and he assured them he is up to the continued challenges of leading the LRGVDC through this pandemic and beyond, and to continue to move forward with efforts to improve life in the RGV. Upon conclusion of discussion, President Guerra called for a vote, *and the vote was unanimous.*

Item 8. – Adjourn.

There being no further business to come before the Board, President Guerra called for a motion to adjourn. *Commissioner Eleazar Guajardo made a motion to adjourn, Mr. Ronald Mills seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:41 pm.*

ATTEST:

  
Deborah Morales, Recording Secretary

  
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Judge Aurelio Guerra, President