

MINUTES

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

12:00 PM WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2023

HELD IN-PERSON AND VIA 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: CHAIRMAN TROY ALLEN

Many members of the Board were in Austin to attend RGV Day at the Capitol, roll call was taken and a quorum was attained. No Executive Committee members were in attendance in person to preside over the meeting, and it was the consensus of those members present that Mr. Troy Allen take the gavel. Chairman Allen called the meeting to order at 12:17 pm.

Chairman Allen moved to item #2: Consideration and Action to Approve Meeting Minutes (January 25, 2023) ***Mr. Ron Mills made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 25, 2023, Board of Directors meeting as presented. Commissioner Frank Morales seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Upon conclusion of action on the minutes, Chairman Allen moved to Item 3: Public Comment and recognized Mr. Raul Gonzalez, Jr. from Communities Unlimited (CU). Mr. Gonzalez informed the Board about the opportunities CU provides with financing to help rural communities access State Revolving Funds (SRF) by financing pre-development expenses.

Mr. Michal Rivera, also from CU, was recognized next and informed the Board about low interest finance opportunities CU provides for home improvements.

Upon conclusion of Public Comments, Chairman Allen moved to item 4. Administration

- A. Consideration and Action to Allow LRGVDC Executive Director to Act on behalf of the LRGVDC Board of Directors to Accept the Assignment of and to Execute a Contract to Purchase Real Property for the Construction of a Multi-Modal Transportation Terminal and Related Services

Mr. Manuel Cruz, LRGVDC Executive Director was recognized and stated that as the Board is aware, LRGVDC has been in negotiations to purchase real property. As LRGVDC's lawyers do their due diligence, every step of the process needs to be accounted for. To date, a contract with the seller has been secured, and approval of this action would allow Mr. Cruz the authority to sign any contracts to transfer the property to the LRGVDC and move forward to build on the site. ***Mayor Alma Salinas made a motion to approve the LRGVDC Executive Director to act on behalf of the LRGVDC Board of Directors to accept the assignment of and execute a contract to purchase real property for the construction of a multi-modal transportation terminal and related services. Commissioner Jacob Howell seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

- B. Consideration and Action to Approve Grant from American Flood Coalition

Ms. Sarah Dierlam, Assistant Executive Director, was recognized and introduced Mr. Chase Kronzer, Texas

Director of the American Flood Coalition (AFC). Mr. Kronzer gave a presentation that includes a summary of the AFC including their members, their mission, what AFC offers, and the tools they use. This presentation is available for review at: <https://www.lrgvdc.org/meetings.html>. Upon conclusion of the presentation, Mayor Alma Salinas asked if their program is for a particular flood event. Mr. Kronzer clarified that the purpose of AFC is to put together partnerships and bring together programs and leaders from various agencies on how to address flooding. AFC does not address specific projects but brings to light solutions on how to seek funding for certain projects. ***Mayor Alma Salinas made a motion to approve the grant from the American Flood Coalition. Commissioner Jacob Howell seconded.***

Before a vote was called, Commissioner David Garza asked for clarification on how AFC will work with organizations that have flooding issues. Mr. Kronzer explained that the convening aspect is a big part of their work to create a network of flooding champions and finding a way to connect local leaders in this region. Commissioner Garza stated that the LRGVDC has been proactive regarding flooding for a number of years and their Regional Water Resource Advisory Committee (RWRAC) does a lot of work regarding flood mitigation and resiliency.

Commissioner Garza asked Mr. Cruz how he sees the AFC helping with what is already being done. Mr. Cruz replied that he, Mr. Kronzer, and Ms. Dierlam went through the AFC grant details and can see that it could support what the LRGVDC is already doing by bringing other committees together to put flooding issues in the forefront since many areas of the RGV are prone to flooding. Having more opportunities to meet and discuss potential solutions and identify potential funding sources is a great idea. Commissioner Garza suggested presenting this information to the RWRAC so they can see how this grant fits into their mission and what is already being done. He added that he had never heard of the AFC but is interested in what they do and what end result they could offer. Mr. Kronzer stated that AFC has a team that is constantly reaching out to philanthropists seeking donations for their work, and they have a strong donor network throughout the country. He stated that their mission is simple, they aim to make sure that the issue on flooding and rising sea levels, is a priority for our elected officials and community leaders throughout Texas and the country.

Ms. Dierlam stated that she and Mr. Cruz had the same questions regarding the expectations for this grant award. \$31,000 will not help in terms of infrastructure, but it can plan a series of events between now and May 21, 2023, that will provide the opportunity to coordinate collectively, on a regional level, to ensure that our strategies are all of the same mindset regarding flooding issues. There has been significant flood mitigation work by our organizations and Valley cities; this grant would provide the opportunity to coordinate large events that includes every entity that has something to say about flooding and include them in the conversation. An opportunity like this would accomplish much to determine what our next steps should be as a region. Mr. Cruz agreed that presenting this information to the RWRAC next week at their March 1, 2023, meeting is a great idea. The members of the RWRAC are subject matter experts and the input will be valuable. Upon conclusion of discussion ***Mayor Alma Salinas withdrew her motion to approve; Commissioner David Garza seconded the withdrawal and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously. Mr. Ron Mills then made a motion to table this item until after the RWRAC meeting of March 1, 2023. Commissioner Frank Morales seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Upon conclusion of Administration action, Chairman Allen moved to item 4. C. Executive Director Report and recognized Mr. Cruz to address the following:

1. Introduction of New Staff Member

Ms. Virginia Torres joined the Area Agency on Aging as a Contract Technician.

2. Updates on Regional News, Funding Opportunities, Trainings, and Legislation

Mr. Cruz informed the Board that “The Wall that Heals”, a replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial &

Mobile Education Center, will be in Edinburg from April 20 – 23, 2023. It will be located at the Ebony Hills Golf Course and will be open 24 hours a day.

Next, Mr. Cruz congratulated the cities and county that received grant funds from the Texas GLO. On February 15, 2023, GLO Commissioner Dawn Buckingham, M.D. announced that the GLO approved \$12.5M in disaster recovery funds for infrastructure projects to help Texas communities recover from the 2018 South Texas Floods. Commissioner Buckingham stated she is hoping to announce grant awards for recovery from the 2019 flood events.

Upon conclusion of the Executive Director report, Chairman Allen moved to Item 5. Department Reports.

A. Community & Economic Development

Program Status Reports

Ms. Sarah Dierlam, Assistant Executive Director was recognized and informed the Board that no action is required for Community & Economic Development Programs this month, and that the program status reports were available for review in the meeting packet.

B. Health & Human Services

Ms. Margarita Lopez, Director of Health & Human Services was recognized to address the following:

Program Action Items

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Citizen Advisory Council Membership

Ms. Lopez informed the Board that the Advisory Council recommends approving membership applications from Dr. John Gonzalez and Dr. Lin Jiang. ***Mr. Ron Mills made a motion to approve Dr. John Gonzalez and Dr. Lin Jiang as members of the Advisory Council. Councilmember Johnny Garcia seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

2. Consideration and Action to Approve Direct Purchased Services (DPS) Contractor Timeline for FY 2023-2024

Ms. Lopez informed the Board that the Area Agency on Aging's fiscal year begins on October 1, 2023. In order to have vendors in place to provide services to clients, at their February 14 meeting the Advisory Council approved the Contractor Solicitation Timeline detailed in the meeting packet. ***Councilman Johnny Garcia made a motion to approve the DPS Contractor Timeline for FY 2023-2024 as presented. Mayor Rick Guerra seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Program Status Reports

Ms. Lopez stated that the detailed program status reports are available for review in the meeting packet.

C. Public Safety

Program Status Reports

Mr. Rene Perez, CJD/HLS Program Supervisor was recognized and stated that no action was required for his programs this month. He announced that CJD and HLS grant applications closed on February 9 and 105 applications were submitted. However, some applicants did not complete the application process resulting

in a total of 98 applications being submitted; 68 to CJAC and 30 to HSAC. The detailed program status reports were available in the meeting packet for review.

Mr. Gilbert Luna, Regional Police Academy Assistant Director was recognized and stated that no action was required for the RPA this month and that the program status reports were in the meeting packet for review. He pointed out that the start date of the Hidalgo Night Academy has been delayed pending an update to the interlocal agreement.

Mr. Joe Garcia, RGV9-1-1 Assistant Director was recognized and stated that the detailed program status reports are in the meeting packet for review. He highlighted that the GIS Team has uploaded several public access maps to <https://www.rgv911.org/>. The Community Engagement team has attended several events in both Hidalgo and Willacy Counties including the RGV Police Canine Competition, the Willacy County Human Trafficking Awareness Event, and Career Day for McAllen ISD. He added that the IT Team has implemented proactive maintenance initiatives to ensure that all 9-1-1 equipment is maintained in all their managed facilities.

Mr. Cruz announced that the “9-1-1 Goes to Washington” event is scheduled for February 25 through March 2. The RGVECD will send a contingent to advocate for our 9-1-1 programs, provide valuable information and insight on the continued evolution of 9-1-1. The Cameron County Emergency Communication District has confirmed they will also send staff, so the RGV will be well represented in our nation’s capital.

D. Transportation

Mr. Rick Carrera, Director of Regional Transit was recognized to address this item.

Valley Metro Action Item

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Procurement of CradlePoint Routers, Antennas, and Associated Equipment for Valley Metro

Mr. Carrera informed the Board that staff requests approval to purchase CradlePoint routers, antennas, and associated equipment for Valley Metro’s Rural and Urban System. The purchase of this equipment will be made through RCN Technologies using TX DIR State Contract with 100% FTA and TxDOT funding along with Transportation Development Credits.

Company	RCN Technologies
Grants:	Correlation of FTA and TxDOT grants
Estimated Cost:	\$41,145.00
Description:	The CradlePoint routers, antennas, and associated equipment will replace outdated Pepwaves routers and will provide wireless connectivity on Transit Routes.
Quantity:	13 Urban, 10 Small Urban, 13 Rural.

Mr. Ron Mills made a motion to approve the purchase of CradlePoint routers, antennas, and associated equipment for Valley Metro as presented. Councilman Johnny Garcia seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

2. Consideration and Action to Approve Procurement of Fuel Management System Upgrade and Associated Equipment for Valley Metro

Mr. Carrera stated that staff requests Board approval to purchase a fuel management system upgrade and associated equipment for Valley Metro’s maintenance and fueling system. The purchase of this equipment upgrade will be made with 100% FTA federal funds and Tx DOT Transportation Development Credits.

Grant: Tx-2020-126 FTA federal funding
Estimated Cost \$64,841.75
Description: Fuel Management System Upgrade for Valley Metro's maintenance and fueling system.

Commissioner Omar Quintanilla made a motion to approve the procurement of the fuel management system upgrade and associated equipment for Valley Metro as presented. Commissioner Frank Morales seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

Valley Metro Program Status Reports

Mr. Carrera summarized the ridership report and noted that the full program status reports are available in the meeting packet for review.


Mr. Cruz announced that as of January 23, 2023, Mr. Carrera has taken the reigns of Valley Metro and will be the Point of Contact for Transit. Mr. Cruz added that he and Ms. Dierlam will oversee Community & Economic Development for the foreseeable future.

RGVMPO Status Report

No report was available at this time.

Item 6. - New or Unfinished Business

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Allen called for a motion to adjourn. ***Mr. Ron Mills made a motion to adjourn; Councilman Johnny Garcia seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:07 pm.***



Mayor Ambrosio "Amos" Hernandez, President

ATTEST:



Deborah Morales, Recording Secretary