

MINUTES

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

12:00 PM WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 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: PRESIDENT AURELIO GUERRA

President Aurelio Guerra called the meeting to order at 12:06 pm. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared.

President Guerra then moved to item #2: Consideration and Action to Approve Meeting Minutes (March 30, 2022). ***Commissioner Edward Gonzales made a motion to approve the March 30, 2022, Meeting Minutes as presented. Commissioner Ellie Torres seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

President Guerra then moved to Item 3: Public Comment and/or Report from Legislative Delegation. There being none, he moved to Item 4: Administration and recognized Executive Director Manuel Cruz to address the following:

A. Consideration and Action to Set Date and Format for 2022 Nominating Committee Meeting.

Mr. Cruz summarized the responsibilities of the Nominating Committee and suggested scheduling the meeting during the second week of May. Upon conclusion of discussion ***Mayor Rick Salinas made a motion to schedule a "hybrid" in-person/virtual meeting on Wednesday, May 11 at 12:00 noon. Commissioner Ellie Torres seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

B. Presentation and Action to Accept Quarterly Investment Report

Finance Director Crystal Balboa was recognized and informed the Board that the report was provided in the meeting packet for review prior to the meeting, and that this item requires Board action. ***Mr. Troy Allen made a motion to accept the Quarterly Investment Report. Commissioner J.R. Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

C. Consideration and Action to Recommend Three (3) Nominees to General Land Office (GLO) Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Citizen Advisory Committee

Mr. Cruz informed the Board that the Texas GLO notified the LRGVDC that they have had a resignation from one of their committees and they have asked the LRGVDC for input on finding a replacement. They have asked for an ordered list of the top three (3) individuals that the LRGVDC would recommend from the list they provided.

The list of possible replacements included Ms. Laura de la Garza and Commissioner Ellie Torres who have applied for this position. The GLO staff suggested the following individuals:

- Mr. Eddy Gonzales

- Judge Aurelio Guerra
- Mr. Alan Moore
- Sunny K. Phillip
- Mr. Eleazar “Yogi” Garcia
- Dr. Dean Kyne

Upon conclusion of discussion, **Mr. Jim Darling made a motion to nominate, in this order: Mr. Sunny K. Philip, Commissioner Ellie Torres, and Mr. Eleazar “Yogi” Garcia. Mayor Rick Salinas seconded, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

D. Presentation and Possible Action on Texas Gas Service Cost of Services Adjustment (COSA) Filing

Ms. Stacy McTaggart, Texas Gas Service/One Gas Rates & Regulatory Director was recognized to give a presentation on the 2022 COSA filing. The presentation covered the customer assistance TGS provides and explained what a COSA is. The anticipated filing date is April 28, 2022, the deadline for cities to take action on the COSA is July 27, 2022, and the rate increase could take effect in August of 2022. Upon conclusion of the presentation, **Mr. Jim Darling made a motion to send a letter to the Valley Cities Gas Coalition members and hire a rate case consultant that will be reimbursed and proceed from there. Mayor Chris Boswell seconded and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

E. Presentation on Homeowner Assistance and Reimbursement Program (HARP)

Mr. Elija Casas, Texas General Land Office (GLO) Outreach Coordinator was recognized and introduced himself and Ms. Shana Dewitt from Grant Works. He informed the Board that the GLO has renewed their outreach efforts to encourage homeowners that were affected in the 2018 or the 2019 storms to start their applications as soon as possible. He explained a variety of ways that community members can apply and stated that they will guide applicants through the process at every step. He informed the Board about the services that the HARP program provides and stated that the GLO is seeking assistance from stakeholders in the three-county area to get information on the HARP program and application process out to the communities.

F. Executive Director Report

1. Introduction of New Staff Members

Mr. Cruz informed the Board that Ms. Samantha Araiza recently joined Valley Metro as a Payroll Specialist.

2. 88th Legislative Updates

Mr. Cruz stated that Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick released the 2022 Interim Legislative Charges on April 4, 2022, and he noted that many of the topics will affect Councils of Government. There are 600 policy recommendations to study before the 88th legislative session begins on January 10, 2023. The legislative committees will meet prior to the opening of the session and Mr. Cruz offered to take suggestions from Board Members to relay to the committees.

3. AmeriCorps VISTA Funding Program

Mr. Cruz informed the Board that the LRGVDC was awarded a grant from AmeriCorps VISTA of over \$277K. He then turned the floor over to Ms. Sarah Dierlam, Executive Analyst who stated that this grant award is a collaborative effort with all LRGVDC departments. The AmeriCorps VISTA grant will allow the LRGVDC to have 12 VISTAs (Volunteers In Service To America). The volunteers will address needs such as: Transportation/mobility/accessibility; health for aging and at-risk populations; economic development and job access, and public safety. Staff will coordinate with Hidalgo County to ensure there is no duplication of services.

Upon conclusion of the Executive Director Report, President Guerra then moved to item 5: Department Reports.

A. Community & Economic Development

Mr. Rick Carrera Director of Community & Economic Development was recognized and noted that no action was needed for his programs this month. He stated that the program status reports were provided in the meeting packet for review, and he highlighted the outreach efforts being made under the Economic Development Administration program.

B. Health & Human Services

Mr. Joe Gonzalez, Director of Area Agency on Aging was recognized to report on the following:

Area Agency on Aging Program Action Item

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Contractors for Direct Purchase Services Pool

Mr. Gonzalez stated that the Advisory Council recommends approval to add contractors to the Area Agency on Aging's contractor Pool. Case Managers utilize these contractors to purchase services such as homemaker and respite for their clients. The contractors are: Tesoros De La Fe Home Health LLC, American Medical Home Health Services, and several Saenz Pharmacy locations. ***Mr. Jim Darling made a motion to approve adding the Direct Purchase Service contractors as presented. Mayor Rick Guerra seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

2. Consideration and Action to Approve Contractor's Request for Rate Change

Mr. Gonzalez informed the Board that the Advisory Council recommends approval of the request from All Texas Health care to amend their current homemaker and respite rate of \$9.50 per hour to \$13.25. He explained that the \$9.50 rate is not sufficient to hire qualified providers, thus the request for this increase. ***Mr. Troy Allen Made a motion to approve the contractor's request to increase the hourly rate to \$13.25. Mayor Chris Boswell seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.***

Program Status Reports

Upon conclusion of action, Mr. Gonzalez gave the status report on the CDC Vaccine Outreach Project. President Guerra asked Mr. Gonzalez to remain at the podium and invited 2nd Vice President Mayor Chris Boswell and Immediate Past President Mr. Jim Darling to join him there. President Guerra announced that Mr. Gonzalez has served the LRGVDC and the Rio Grande Valley for 42 years and as of this Friday, April 29, 2022, Mr. Gonzalez will retire. A slide show of photos of Mr. Gonzalez throughout his career was shown, and President Guerra, Mayor Boswell, and Mr. Jim Darling presented Mr. Gonzalez with an award in recognition his long career.

C. Public Safety

Program Action Items

Program Supervisor Rene Perez was recognized to address the following Action items for the Criminal Justice Program. It was the consensus of the Board to hear each item and take action on all four (4) in one motion. For the record, President Guerra proceeded to read each item out loud.

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Criminal Justice Advisory Committee's (CJAC) Recommendation

for the FY 2022-2023 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program Rankings and Resolution

The CJAC was given two weeks to review and score grant applications. On April 14, 2022, the CJAC convened via GoToMeeting to review the rankings and amounts for the JAG Grant application. The committee recommends approval of the resolution, rankings, and conditionally approved amounts provided for review in the meeting packet.

2. Consideration and Action to Approve FY 2022-2023 State Criminal Justice Planning (SF) 421 Program Rankings and Resolution

The CJAC was given two weeks to review and score grant applications. On April 14, 2022, the CJAC convened via GoToMeeting to review the rankings and amounts for the SF 421 grant program. The committee recommends approval of the resolution, rankings, and conditionally approved amounts provided for review in the meeting packet.

3. Consideration and Action to Approve FY 2022-2023 Violence Against Women Formula (WF) Grant Program Rankings and Resolution

The CJAC was given two weeks to review and score grant applications. On April 14, 2022, the CJAC convened via GoToMeeting to review the rankings and amounts for the WF grant program. The committee recommends approval of the resolution, rankings, and conditionally approved amounts provided for review in the meeting packet.

4. Consideration and Action to Approve FY 2022-2023 Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery (VC) Program Rankings and Resolution

The CJAC was given two weeks to review and score grant applications. On April 14, 2022, the CJAC convened via GoToMeeting to review the rankings and amounts for the VC grant program. The committee recommends approval of the resolution, rankings, and conditionally approved amounts provided for review in the meeting packet.

Mr. Jim Darling made a motion to approve items 5 C 1-4 as presented. Mayor Rick Guerra seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

Program Status Reports

It was noted that the status reports for the Criminal Justice & Homeland Security Programs were available for review in the meeting packet.

Mr. Randall Snyder, Director of the Regional Police Academy was recognized and provided the status on the 212th and 213th academies and the programmatic activities.

Mr. Hector Chapa, Assistant Director of the RGV9-1-1 was recognized to give a presentation on Next Generation 9-1-1 – New Technology and the Effects on the Future for Emergency Communication.

Upon conclusion of the presentation, Mr. Chapa stated that the status reports, including recognition of Telecommunicator Appreciation week, were available for review in the meeting packet.

D. Transportation

Program Status Reports

Valley Metro Director Maribel Contreras was recognized and provided the current status of the Valley Metro program. She stated that ridership in March was down slightly by 5% due to schools being closed for spring break. She reported that as a result of a recent court order, effective as of April 18, 2022, Valley Metro will not enforce its mask-related directives as outlined by the Transportation Security Administration mask-related security directives. However, Valley Metro continues to recommend that passengers wear masks in indoor public transportation route systems.

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, President Guerra adjourned the meeting at 1:22 pm.



Judge Aurelio Guerra, President

ATTEST:



Deborah Morales, Recording Secretary