

# MINUTES

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

12:00 PM WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29, 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 AMBROSIO "AMOS" HERNANDEZ

President Ambrosio "Amos" Hernandez called the meeting to order at 12:04 pm. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared.

President Hernandez then moved to item #2: Consideration and Action to Approve Meeting Minutes (May 25, 2022). *Commissioner David Garza made a motion to approve the May 25, 2022, Meeting Minutes as presented. Mayor Rick Salinas seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*

Upon conclusion of action on the minutes, President Hernandez moved to Item 3: Public Comment and recognized Dr. David Luna, Executive Director of the Rio Grande Valley Chapter of the Red Cross. Dr. Luna informed the Board that their current lease for office and storage space in McAllen is ending soon. He has contacted Hidalgo County Judge Richard Cortez, and the city managers in Hidalgo County cities in his search for a new location; he came today in an effort to widen his search for 150-200 sq feet of office space and parking for one vehicle and one trailer.

Upon conclusion of public comment, President Hernandez moved to Item 4: Administration.

### A. Consideration and Action to Appoint Board Designee and Alternate to Texas Association of Regional Councils (TARC)

Executive Director Manuel Cruz was recognized and informed the Board that Commissioner David Garza is the current designee and Mr. Jim Darling is his alternate; and they have indicated their willingness to continue to serve in this capacity should the Board Approve. *Mayor Rick Salinas made a motion to reappoint Commissioner David Garza as the TARC designee and Mr. Jim Darling as his alternate. Commissioner Ellie Torres seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*

### B. Presentation on AmeriCorps VISTA Program

Mr. Cruz was recognized and informed the Board that the LRGVDC applied for and was awarded a \$200,000 grant from the AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America) program. He introduced Mr. Daniel Jones and Mr. Chris Verdin, Portfolio Managers for AmeriCorps who gave a presentation on the VISTA program. They informed the Board that AmeriCorps is a federal agency charged with mobilizing people across the United States to fight poverty. They do this by empowering low-income communities, building capacity for communities and organizations, and creating sustainable solutions. VISTAs help organizations by performing indirect services such as grant writing, building curriculum, or recruiting volunteers. The benefits for AmeriCorps VISTA Members receive are a living allowance, end of service award, professional development, and non-competitive eligibility. The experience VISTAs receive from this program help them increase their employment opportunities. Upon conclusion of the presentation Mr. Jones and Mr. Verdin provided their contact information and opened the floor for a brief question and



answer period.

### C. Consideration and Action to Approve Procurement of Payroll and Human Resources System

Mr. Cruz was recognized and stated that the LRGVDC requests approval to purchase and upgrade to a current and more efficient Payroll and Human Resources management software & service system. The cost of the management software and service for the system staff recommends is \$55,614.75 initially with a one-time implementation fee of \$15,901.00. Subsequently, the annual cost is estimated at \$60,843.25 annually, however, that annual estimate is forecasted based on a 175 headcount of employees, so the monthly billing will fluctuate based on the total employees on a yearly basis.

He explained that the current payroll and Human Resource system is practically nonexistent, and a new more efficient system is needed. A cost analysis was conducted with two vendors submitted quotes. The vendor selected was Automatic Data Processing, Inc. (ADP), which is under a purchasing cooperative that the LRGVDC is eligible to use, National IPA Technology Solutions (Omnia Partners) Contract # 200701, and this vendor will meet all of our needs and procurement requirements. This was a budgeted item under LRGVDC indirect costs. ***Mayor Oscar Montoya made a motion to approve the procurement of the payroll and Human Resources system as presented. Mr. Ronald Mills seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

### D. Executive Director Report

#### 1. Introduction of New Staff Members

Mr. Cruz informed the Board that eight (8) new staff members have recently joined the LRGVDC:

- Mr. Jimmy Garza, CSR I – Mobility
- Ms. Elizabeth Aguirre, CSR I – Mobility
- Ms. Stacy Garcia CSR I – Mobility
- Mr. George Huerta, Grant Specialist I
- Ms. Diana Castillo, CSR II – RGV9-1-1
- Ms. Ruby Garza, CSR II – RGV9-1-1
- Ms. Maria Posadas – Martinez, Program Supervisor II – Area Agency on Aging
- Mr. Cesar Merla, Program Supervisor II, Area Agency on Aging

#### 2. Staff Recognition for Years of Service

Mr. Cruz informed the Board that traditionally we recognize staff who have completed 5, 10, 15, etc. years of service once a year. Like many annual events, this special presentation has been delayed for the past two years because of the COVID-19 pandemic, so we have not celebrated these milestones since April of 2019. Today we celebrate staff from the following departments: Administration, Community & Economic Development, Health & Human Services, and Public Safety. Of note among the 18 staff members who were recognized are Mr. Jaime Garza who has served 20 years as a Case Manager for the Area Agency on Aging, and Ms. Crystal Balboa who has served 25 years in our Finance Department. At the August meeting, staff from our Transportation Department (Valley Metro and the Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization) will be recognized for their years of service.

#### 3. Update on Regional News, Funding Opportunities, Trainings, and Legislation

Mr. Cruz informed the Board that a report on these topics was in the meeting packet for review. He brought the Board's attention to the report on the Broadband Development Office (BDO) releasing the State Broadband Plan, the TDA extending the 2022 Grant Application Deadlines, and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) recently publishing the 2022 Compliance Supplement which outlines information on how to conduct Single Audits for federal programs. He noted that the report contains



hyperlinks to specific reports. There was general discussion on the State Broadband Plan and the issues the Rio Grande Valley face in providing this service to its residents.

Upon conclusion of the Executive Director Report, President Hernandez 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 is required for his department's programs this month. He elaborated on the broadband discussion and provided some details on how broadband service is defined by census tracts. But the more successful strategy on determining connectivity is for BDO staff to literally drive through communities to figure out where connective areas begin and end. He announced that the Watershed Protection Plan meeting is scheduled for June 30 and will be a workshop format and that the Resources for Community Economic Recovery workshop is scheduled for July 14 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. He announced that the May 28, 2022, Road-to-Recycling event was successful again this year, and the final tally of tires collected is pending but it is estimated that over 13,000 tires were removed from our environment and properly disposed. At the end of his programmatic reports, Mr. Carrera turned the floor over to Mr. Jim Darling. Mr. Darling is Chair of the Region M Water Planning Group who informed the Board that the combined reservoir level is below 30% which triggers conservation measures in most Water Conservation and Drought Contingency plans. He encouraged cities to check to make sure they follow their plans. He stated that the historical drought of records for Falcon and Amistad Reservoirs was in 1998 when the combined reservoir storage was at 19.06%, and hopes the watershed receives significant rain before the levels drop that low again.

#### B. Health & Human Services.

Ms. Margarita Lopez, Director of Area Agency on Aging was recognized to address the following:

##### Area Agency on Aging Program Action Items

##### 1. Consideration and Action to Approve Contractor for Direct Purchase Services

Ms. Lopez informed the Board that the Advisory Council recommends approval to add San Jose Health Care LLC to the Area Agency on Aging's contractor pool for Homemaker and Respite services. Case Managers utilize these contractors to purchase services for their clients. ***Mr. Ronald Mills made a motion to approve adding San Jose Health Care LLC to the Direct Purchase Service contractor pool as presented. Commissioner David Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

##### 2. Consideration and Action to Add Respite Services to Current Contractor

Ms. Lopez stated that the Advisory Council recommends approval to add Respite Service to the services Americare Home Services, Inc. already provides. Case Managers utilize this contractor to purchase Respite Services for caregiver support. ***Mr. Troy Allen made a motion to approve adding Respite Services to Americare Home Services Inc. as presented. Mr. Ronald Mills seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

##### 3. Consideration and Action to Amend Contractor Rates for Stay Healthy Home Care, Inc.

The Advisory Council recommends approval to amend the rates for Stay Healthy Home Care, Inc. from \$11.00 to \$11.35 for respite care and from \$10.00 to \$11.35 for Home Maker services. Amending these rates as requested would bring the cost of these services to the standard rate. ***Commissioner Ellie Torres made a motion to approve amending the contractor rates for Stay Healthy HomeCare, Inc. as***

***presented. Mayor Rick Salinas seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

#### Program Status Reports

Upon conclusion of action, Ms. Lopez provided the status on the CDC Vaccine Outreach Project, Care Coordination, Caregiver Support Services, Benefit Counseling, Information, Referral, and Assistance, Subrecipient Report, Senior Center Operations, Community Partnerships, Staffing, and the Harlingen Satellite Office.

#### C. Public Safety

##### Program Status Reports

Criminal Justice & Homeland Security Program Supervisor Rene Perez gave the status reports on training, meetings, and events for both of these programs. He announced that an Active Shooter Informational Seminar is tentatively scheduled for August 4, 2022, that will focus on teachers and school staff that will last 4-6 hours.

Regional Police Academy Director Randall Snyder provided the program status reports on Back the Blue 5K run, new Basic Peace Officer curriculum, results of the annual VA Compliance Survey, In-service training opportunities throughout the region. Upon conclusion of the Police Academy status report there was discussion regarding past personnel issues.

Program Supervisor for RGV9-1-1 Dennis Moreno was recognized and gave the status reports on the GIS Division, Public Education Activities and the Systems and Public Safety Answering Point Operations.

#### D. Transportation

##### 1. Consideration and Action to Approve Addition of Fuel Card Use Procedure Section to Transit Operating Policies & Procedures Manual

Ms. Maribel Contreras, Director of Valley Metro requested approval to add Section 4.20 Fuel Card Use Procedures to the Transit Operating Policies & Procedures Manual. She informed the Board that this section will outline the fuel card authorization, assignment, use, fuel log, fueling approved locations, and documentation procedures. ***Mr. Ronald Mills made a motion to approve the addition of a Fuel Card Use Procedure Section to the Transit Operating Policies & Procedures Manual as presented. Mr. Troy Allen seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

##### Valley Metro Program Status Reports

The Valley Metro status reports were available for review in the meeting packet.

##### RGVMPO Status Report

RGVMPO Executive Director Andrew Canon was recognized and informed the Board that staff are in the process of finalizing Memorandums of Understanding from Brownsville and McAllen for a transit study. He reported that Tx DOT statement of Electric Vehicles is out and includes having electrical vehicle charging stations every 50 miles, however further environmental studies will be needed. Staff have released Complete Street grants, and the RGVMPO will seek the Complete Streets Program with a region-wide Complete Street Plan.



Item 6. – New or Unfinished Business

President Hernandez recognized Mayor Norie Gonzalez Garza as the new Mayor of Mission and welcomed her back to the Board.

Mr. Cruz recognized new Board Member Mayor Gus Olivarez from the City of Rio Hondo, today is his first Board Meeting.

Commissioner David Garza noted that the rate of COVID-19 infections is on the rise again and cautioned the public that there is a new variant that is more infectious; he encouraged those eligible to get vaccine boosters.

Rio Hondo Mayor Gus Olivarez thinks it's important to have open discussion on the agenda. There being no further business to come before the Board, President Hernandez called for a motion to adjourn. ***Commissioner David Garza made a motion for adjournment; Commissioner Ellie Torres seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:34 pm.***



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Mayor Ambrosio "Amos" Hernandez, President

ATTEST:



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Deborah Morales, Recording Secretary