

# MINUTES

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

12:00 PM WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25, 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: SECRETARY JIM DARLING

Mr. Jim Darling, Board Secretary called the meeting to order at 12:05 pm. Roll call was taken for both the Board and Membership and a quorum of both entities was attained.

Chairman Darling moved to item #2: Consideration and Action to Approve Meeting Minutes.

A. Annual Elections Meeting of May 25, 2022

*Mr. Ron Mills made a motion to approve the Annual Elections Meeting Minutes from May 25, 2022, as presented. Mayor Oscar Montoya seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*

B. Board of Directors Meeting of December 14, 2022

*Mayor Oscar Montoya made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2022, Board of Directors meeting as presented. Commissioner Ellie Torres seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*

Upon conclusion of action on the minutes, Chairman Darling moved to Item 3: Public Comment, there being none, he moved to Item 4: Administration.

A. Consideration and General Membership Action on FY 2023 Annual Report and Budget

Mr. Manuel Cruz, LRGVDC Executive Director was recognized and informed the General Membership that the Annual Report & Budget Committee met on Thursday, January 12, 2023, to discuss and make a recommendation on the FY 2023 Annual Report and Budget. He summarized the purpose of the Annual Report and the changes in the budget from last year. Chairman Darling added that the LRGVDC does a very good job representing this region and all the projects they are tasked with. *Mr. Troy Allen made a motion to approve the FY 2023 Annual Report & Budget as presented. Mr. Ron Mills seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*

B. Consideration and Action to Accept the Quarterly and Annual Investment Reports

Ms. Crystal Balboa, Finance Director, was recognized and provided a brief summary of both reports. *Mayor Norie Gonzalez Garza made a motion to accept the Quarterly and Annual Investment Reports as presented. Mayor Oscar Montoya seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*

C. Presentation on Port of Brownsville

Mr. Eduardo Campirano, Port Director and CEO was recognized and gave a presentation on the port's current projects. Some of the projects are deepening the channel, and the LNG Project-Rio Grande LNG that will take place in the next decade. He also informed the Board that the port has opportunities with a \$14.5 M grant awarded by MARAD, a \$32 M investment with Forza Steel, a \$55 M investment with Sunoco for a refined products terminal, and the Pesqueria Project which began operation last spring. A copy of his presentation is available at <https://www.lrgvdc.org/meetings.html>.

D. Presentation on Unidos Contra la Diabetes

Mr. Moises Arjona, Jr., Collective Impact Director was recognized and gave the Annual Update on Unidos Contra La Diabetes (UCD). The presentation included a brief history of UCD, statistics on adults with diabetes in the RGV, the growing number of children with diabetes, causes and reducing type 2 diabetes through education and awareness. He showed a list of UCD's partners and community resources, their social media accounts, and contact information for UCD staff. A copy of his presentation is available at <https://www.lrgvdc.org/meetings.html>.

E. Presentation on U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)

Ms. Norma Limon, Harlingen Field Office Director was recognized and gave a presentation that began with Executive Order 14012 on Restoring Faith in Our Legal Immigration Systems and Strengthening Integration and Inclusion Efforts for new Americans which was created on February 2, 2021, by President Joe Biden. Ms. Limon summarized the Executive Order, a part of which is the creation of an Interagency Naturalization Working Group (NWG). She presented a list of current NWG members and summarized their goals and strategy for promoting naturalization. A copy of her presentation is available at <https://www.lrgvdc.org/meetings.html>.

Upon conclusion of the presentations Chairman Darling moved to Item 5. Department Reports.

A. Community & Economic Development

Program Action Items

Mr. Rick Carrera, Director of Community & Economic Development, was recognized and addressed the following item:

1. Consideration and Action to Approve 2022 Scrap Tire Management and Available Alternatives in Texas' Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council Region

Mr. Carrera informed the Board that the attached summary highlights findings and recommendations related to data quality, scrap tire generation, processing, end uses, and transportation. The purpose of this report is to identify the economic costs and benefits of diverting scrap tires from landfills within the region.

***Mayor David Suarez made a motion to approve the 2022 Scrap Tire Management and Available Alternatives in Texas' Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council Region as presented. Mayor Oscar Montoya seconded, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Upon conclusion of action, Mr. Carrera stated that the findings from this study will be presented as part of a TCEQ webinar that many councils of governments/regional planning commissions are promoting throughout the state.

Program Status Reports



Mr. Carrera then yielded the floor to Chairman Darling to give the reservoir level report. Chairman Darling stated that the combined storage is 32.16% as of December 14, 2022, which is very low, but an improvement over last summer when the levels were at 20%. Chairman Darling also informed the Board that there was an article in the paper about the condition of the Amistad Reservoir. He encouraged Board Members who go to Austin on behalf of their cities to meet with our representatives to talk to the IBWC, the US Federal Government, and the Mexican Government to fix the reservoirs. He added that both reservoirs have had sink holes for years that cost the Valley water.

Chairman Darling then informed the Board that the detailed Community & Economic Development department program status reports are available in the meeting packet for review.

## B. Health & Human Services

### Program Status Reports

The detailed program status reports are available for review in the meeting packet.

## C. Public Safety

### Program Action Items

Mr. Rene Perez, HLS/CJD Program Supervisor was recognized to address the following items:

#### 1. Consideration and Action to Approve Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC) Recommendation on Appointment of New Committee Members

Mr. Perez informed the Board that the CJAC has one (1) vacancy in the Juvenile Justice discipline, and one (1) vacancy in the Prosecutor/Courts discipline. The CJAC convened earlier this month to consider nominations. The nominees recommended by the committee are:

- Ms. Maryanne Denner for the Juvenile Justice discipline
- Mr. Toribio "Terry" Palacios for the Prosecutor/Courts discipline.

Mr. Perez added that CJAC terms are for two (2) years and this recommendation requires Board approval. ***Mr. Ron Mills made a motion to approve Ms. Maryanne Denner and Mr. Terry Palacios CJAC membership as recommended. Mr. Paul Hernandez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

#### 2. Consideration and Action to Approve Purchase of Regional Project Equipment for Interoperable Communications Infrastructure Expansion

Mr. Perez informed the Board that the LRGVDC region is home to regional special response teams including state and federal partners that deploy at the city, county, and state level. Therefore, it is critical that communication capabilities are enhanced and sustained. Tri-County communications is an approved vendor through BuyBoard and has been selected for this purchase. The purchase will be made through #BuyBoard Contract#603-20/604-20, under Grant #4527601. The price quoted is \$99,984.00, and this is a budgeted item under the Homeland Security Grants Program. This quote is to purchase:

- 10 Radios model #TCC-P25P P25 Portable with/AES ENC
- 17 Radios model #TCC-P25P P25 Portable – No AES/ENC
- 7 Radios model #TCC-P25M P25 Mobile Radio – No AES/ENC
- Programming Fees for 34 Radios throughout the Region

This purchase requires Board approval. ***Commissioner Nurith Galonsky made a motion to approve the purchase of Regional Project Equipment for Interoperable Communications Infrastructure Expansion as presented. Mayor Oscar Montoya seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***



3. Consideration and Action to Approve Resolutions for FY 2023-24 Homeland Security Grants Funding

Mr. Perez informed the Board that as part of the Public Safety Office's Homeland Security Grants Division (JSGD) grant guidelines, applications must include a resolution that contains information such as authorization by its governing body for the submission of an application. The LRGVDC Homeland Security program will manage the following grant projects:

- a) COG-21 Homeland Security Regional Planning
- b) Coordinator for Regional Fire Academy

***Mayor Gus Olivarez made a motion to approve the resolutions for FY 2023-24 Homeland Security grants funding as presented. Councilman Johnny Garcia seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Upon conclusion of action on CJD/HLS program items; Mr. Manuel Cruz, Executive Director was recognized to address the following:

4. Consideration and Action to Approve Resolution for FY 2023-25 Regional Law Enforcement Academy Project

Mr. Cruz was recognized to report on behalf of Mr. Gilbert Luna, RPA Assistant Director, who is currently conducting training. He informed the Board that as part of the Office of the Governor, Public Safety Office's Criminal Justice Division grant guidelines, applications must include a resolution that contains information such as authorization by its governing body for the submission of a project application Regional Law Enforcements Training Academy. ***Mr. Ron Mills made a motion to approve the resolution for FY 2023-25 Regional Law Enforcement Academy Project as presented. Councilman Johnny Garcia seconded.*** Mayor Oscar Montoya enquired about the structure of the Regional Police Academy Advisory Committee. Mr. Cruz stated that the membership of the Regional Police Academy Advisory Committee is made up of different disciplines such as citizens and law enforcement personnel as well as others. He stated that some committee members have retired since the last annual meeting, and membership will be an item on the agenda at the upcoming meeting. Upon conclusion of discussion, Chairman Darling called for ***a vote and the motion carried unanimously.***

Program Status Reports

The Public Safety program status reports are available in the meeting packet for review.

D. Transportation

Ms. Sarah Dierlam, Assistant Executive Director was recognized to address this item.

Valley Metro Action Item

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Procurement of Farebox Collection System

Ms. Dierlam informed the Board that staff requests approval to purchase seven (7) fareboxes and associated equipment for new busses in Valley Metro's Rural System. The purchase of these fareboxes and associated equipment will be made with 100% TxDOT funding along with Transportation Development Credits. The purchase will be made as follows:

Grant number:	5339-R-2022-LRGVDC-00052
Awarded funding:	\$158,857.00
Description:	To be used towards the acquisition of fare box collection system and/or any other related expenses or activities associated with such project.

Procurement: 7 Fareboxes, 2 universal data probes, and freight. Any balance remaining will be used for future purchases.

***Mayor Oscar Montoya made a motion to approve the purchase of fareboxes as presented. Commissioner Ellie Torres seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Valley Metro Program Status Reports

The status reports are available in the meeting packet for review.

RGVMPO Status Report

No report was given 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


***Chairman Darling called for a motion to convene into executive session, Mayor David Suarez so moved, Mayor Oscar Montoya seconded, and upon a vote, executive session convened at 1:14 pm.***

- B. Reconvene into Open Session to Consider Action, if any, on Items Related to Executive Session as Described above


Regular session reconvened at 1:28 pm. Chairman Darling stated that it is the consensus of the Board that Mr. Cruz is doing a great job as the Executive Director and through his leadership, so is his staff. ***Mayor Oscar Montoya made a motion to approve the salary increase for Mr. Manuel Cruz, LRGVDC Executive Director, as proposed during executive session. Commissioner Sofia Benavides seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.***

Item 7 - New or Unfinished Business

There being no further business to come before the Board, ***Chairman Darling adjourned the meeting at 1:29 pm.***

  
Mayor Ambrosio "Amos" Hernandez, President

ATTEST:

  
Deborah Morales, Recording Secretary