

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE
LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL ANNUAL ELECTIONS / BOARD OF
DIRECTORS

12:00PM WEDNESDAY, May 29, 2024

HELD IN-PERSON AND VIA THE 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: Mayor Norma Sepulveda

Mayor Norma Sepulveda called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m. Roll Call was taken and a quorum was attained. They moved on to Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance. Without questions from the board Mr. Cruz then moved on to Consideration and Action to Approve January 31, 2024, Meeting Minutes. ***Ann Cass motioned to approve meeting minutes from January 31, 2024. Jim Darling seconded the motion, and the motion was carried unanimously.***

Item #2 Consideration and Action to Approve Meeting Minutes for April 24, 2024. ***Troy Allen made a motion to approve the meeting minutes for April 24, 2024. Mayor Ramiro Garza seconded the motion, and the motion was carried unanimously upon vote.***

Item #3: Public Comment: No Public Comment, Mayor Norma Sepulveda moved on to the next item.

Item #4: Administration

4A-1. Consideration and Action on Recommendations from Nominating Committee. The 5 persons for Members at Large to General Membership. ***Troy Allen made a motion to Approve 5 persons for Members at Large to the General Membership. Ernie Garcia seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.***

Name	City	County
Ms. Ann Williams Cass	McAllen	Hidalgo
Mr. David Penoli	McAllen	Hidalgo
Mayor Pro-Tem Rene Estrada	Combes	Cameron
Mr. Jim Darling	McAllen	Hidalgo
VACANT		

Mr. Cruz then stated that it was a whole combination of the whole membership and the board of directors. The LRGVDC general Membership is nominating the following individuals. Mr. Cruz mentioned one item to point out that there is a vacancy because, on the General Membership, it is five Members at Large, with one vacancy available and the discussion from the May 9th meeting was for that open spot to nominate someone today. Mr. Cruz did mention that they try and keep it as even as possible to include the three counties. Mayor Sepulveda then asked if anyone from Willacy was willing to nominate. Commissioner Edward Gonzales then stated that Mr. Eleazar Garcia Jr wouldn't be serving another term anymore Judge Guerra recommended Tony Chavez who was a former City Commissioner but is also city Manager for Raymondville as Mr. Garcia from Willacy County. Commissioner Edward Gonzales then stated that he would like to nominate Mr. Chavez for this vacancy with the board's indulgence and approval. Mr. Gonzales also stated that he had spoken to Mr. Chavez who was currently out of town and could not join the meeting. ***Commissioner Gonzales nominated Tony Chavez from Willacy County to fill the vacancy;***

Minutes Board of Directors, May 29, 2024

Commissioner David Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously. The final slate of members-at-large selected by the Board of Directors is as follows.

Name	City	County
Ms. Ann Williams Cass	McAllen	Hidalgo
Mr. David Penoli	McAllen	Hidalgo
Mayor Pro-Tem Rene Estrada	Combes	Cameron
Mr. Jim Darling	McAllen	Hidalgo
Mr. Tony Chavez	Raymondville	Willacy

4A.2. Selection of Three (3) at Large members to be elected to the 2024-2025 Board of Directors.

Name	City	County
Mr. Jim Darling	McAllen	Hidalgo
Mrs. Ann William Cass	McAllen	Hidalgo
Mr. Tony Chavez	Raymondville	Willacy

4A-2. Consideration and Action to approve the 3 at Large members to be elected to the 2024-2025 Board of Directors. **Troy Allen made a motion to approve 3 at Large Members for the 2024-2025 term. Mayor Ramiro Garza seconded the motion, and the motion was carried unanimously upon a vote.**

4B. Consideration and ACTION to approve the LRGVDC's Participation in the Texas Passenger Rail Advisory Committee and sign the committee's charter. Mr. Cruz introduced Javier Dominguez to give a summary of the action Item. Javier started by letting the board know that at the beginning of April Travis County Judge Andy Brown reached out across the state inviting stakeholders to join his Travis County Passenger Rail Advisory committee to kind of kick-start or restart the initiative of the Lone Star Rail District and to connect Austin to San Antonio. In that meeting, essentially everyone from the state to the feds told him that if he's only interested in doing something like that, he's essentially not going to get any funding from the state or the feds. And so, they tasked him with creating a statewide passenger rail advisory committee, and as part of that committee, we all provided feedback on charters, and bylaws, possibly having a seminar in San Antonio sometime soon, bringing all these stakeholders from across the state for this initiative. So, for this action item, we're seeking your approval to sign the charter and be a founding member of this statewide passenger advisory committee so that we can attend monthly meetings and be able to provide that feedback. The cool fact is that in August he's already agreed to come down and host one of those meetings here at the LRGVDC. So, we're looking at the first week of August. So right now, his current mission is to get as many elected officials as possible, state legislators, and county judges to all sign letters of support. Although we can't individually sign them here, we can get a LRGVDC letter of support signed. So that we can go around the region and try to collect as many letters of support at your city or county Commissioner's court meetings as well. So that is what that action item is for and I'm ready for any questions if you have any at this time. If I may add something quickly, I forgot to bring up that the TXDOT Rail Division is going to be reapplying for the corridor identification program. In the first wave of the funding cycle for that program, we did get them to include us in their letter of intent or their public comment for the requisition of information or comments for that application. **Troy Allen made a motion to approve LRGVDC's Participation in the Texas Passenger Rail Advisory Committee. Mayor Ramiro Garza seconded the motion, upon a vote the motion was carried unanimously.**

No further discussion or comments. Mayor Sepulveda moved on to Item 4C Executive report.

4C. Executive Report. Mr. Cruz introduced all new hires as well as promotions. He mentioned that LRGVDC currently has 181 employees. Mr. Cruz mentioned that he hoped to reach at least 200, and the LRGVDC has never had more than 150 to 160 in the past. This demonstrates to you that we're growing and seeking more funding as well to continue our efforts to improve this region.

Mr. Javier Dominguez then wanted to mention to the board an update on the RMAC meeting that took place. As some of you may remember at our February Board meeting, we provided an update about our presentation, on House Bill 71 which was signed by the governor in 2019 after the 86th legislative session. The feedback that we received from our board of directors, that being you all, is that we created a committee to research the funding mechanisms, so we went ahead and we did that. We recently had that this past week and had a great turnout, about 30 or so people attended. We've had about 14 to 15 individuals who have signed up, we provided feedback. We did have a guest speaker from the Laredo Transit Authority, El Metro as well, Mr. R.J. Garza, who has experience here in the Valley as well. We want to extend an invitation to any elected officials to be a part of that committee or send a representative who can vote or provide feedback on your behalf, especially the counties. Like the Mayor of Edinburg said, the bridge and the port operating entities as well, just because HB 71 does lay out some funding mechanisms for that. Hopefully, soon we will schedule a second meeting where we can start coming up and charter bylaws and sort of redefine those goals so that we can come up and provide those updates here to the larger board of directors. We had a great presentation and we kind of did a more in-depth report on House Bill 71 and some of the things that we can hopefully see with economic impact analysis and that feasibility study.

No further questions or discussion Mayor Norma Sepulveda moved on to Item #5

Item #5 Department reports

A. Community & Economic Development

Ms. Melisa Gonzales started by mentioning the first of six Action items she had on the agenda.

1. Consideration and ACTION to approve RGV Economic Development Advisory Committee (RGV EDAC) Bylaws. We had our first EDAC meeting back on April 30th, we had a Zoom follow-up on the 23rd to ensure that all the changes from the members were made to the bylaws. So those bylaws were approved by all the members on the 23rd, and so I'm asking for board approval today. ***Commissioner Ellie Torres made a motion to approve RGV Economic Development Advisory Committee Bylaws. Mayor Rick Guerra seconded the motion, and upon vote, the motion was carried unanimously.***
2. Consideration and ACTION to Approve RGV Economic Development Advisory Committee (RGV EDAC) membership. ***Troy Allen made a motion to approve the RGV Economic Development Advisory Committee (RGV EDAC) membership. Commissioner Ernie Garcia seconded the motion and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.***
3. Consideration and ACTION to Approve EDAC Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) elections of officers. As per the RSCC EDAC Bylaws, the advisory Committee shall consist of the Chair and Vice Chair. ***Commissioner Ernie Garcia made a motion to approve the EDAC Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) elections of officers. As per the RSCC EDAC Bylaws, the advisory Committee shall consist of the Chair and Vice Chair. Ms. Veronica Gonzales seconded the motion and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.***
4. Consideration and ACTION to Approve Texas Community Development Block Grant Priorities for 2025-2026. ***Commissioner Edward Gonzales made a motion to approve Texas Community Development Block Grant Priorities for 2025-2026. Mayor Rick Guerra***

Minutes Board of Directors, May 29, 2024

seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

5. Consideration and ACTION to approve Rider 7 PM 2.5 Local Air Quality Planning Grant Between LRGVDC and TCEQ. The LRGVDC was one of four COGs allocated funds for this planning grant. LRGVDC will conduct air quality planning activities in accordance with Rider 7 of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's (TCEQ) Legislative Appropriation from the 88th Legislature. ***Mayor Oscar Montoya made a motion to approve Rider 7 PM 2.5 Local Air Quality Planning Grant between LRGVDC and TCEQ. Mayor Alma Salinas seconded the motion and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.***
6. Consideration and ACTION to Approve the Interlocal Agreement of Contracting Services Agreement between Cameron County and the LRGVDC and Hidalgo County and the LGVDC. ***Mayor Oscar Montoya made a motion to approve the Interlocal Agreement of Contracting Services Agreement between Cameron County and the LRGVDC and Hidalgo County and the LRGVDC, Mayor Alma Salinas seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.***

B. Health and Human Services Action Item:

Mrs. Margarita Lopez was recognized and started with her Program Status Reports.

Program Status Reports

Ms. Margarita Lopez began with her status reports. Detailed Program Status Reports are available for review in the packet provided.

With no further questions or comments, Mayor Norma Sepulveda moved on to C Public Safety.

C. Public Safety

Criminal Justice and Homeland Security Program Action Items.

Mr. Cesar Merla was recognized and started by thanking Mayor Norma Sepulveda and everyone and all departments who participated in the Ready RGV Conference that took place in South Padre Island in May. Mr. Merla also mentioned that they have received very good feedback from other COGS, the main one would be from the North Central Texas Council of Governments out of Dallas Texas. Mr. Merla stated that they would like to have one like the Ready RGV Conference. He mentioned that he would say that the LRGVDC is a trendsetter for the rest of the State on conferences like these. Mayor Norma Sepulveda stated that it was a very incredible event and that she was very impressed lots of folks attended. Mayor Sepulveda also stated that having it on the island was a very good attraction

No further Question Mayor Sepulveda moved on to Police Academy.

Mr. Javier Solis started with Academy Action Items.

1. Consideration and ACTION to accept the appointment of all current LRGV Academy Advisory Committee members as of March 20, 2024. The LRGV Academy Advisory Committee met on March 20th, 2024. LRGVDC Executive Director Manuel Cruz re-appointed all current members of the Advisory Committee as recommended by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement. The effective date of re-appointment is March 20th, 2024. The term of said re-appointments shall remain in effect as set forth by the LRGV Academy Committee Bylaws. ***Troy Allen made a motion to approve and accept the appointment of all current LRGV Academy Advisory Committee members as of March 20,***

2024. Mayor Oscar Montoya seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

2. Consideration and ACTION to accept Raymondville Chief of Police Uvaldo Zamora as Vice Chair for the LRGV Academy Advisory Committee. There was a need to fill in the vacant Vice Chair seat on the LRGV Academy Advisory Committee. The Committee met on March 20, 2024. The Advisory Committee nominated and voted to have Raymondville Chief of Police Uvaldo Zamora serve as Vice Chair for the committee. There was a need to fill in the vacant Vice Chair seat on the LRGV Academy Advisory Committee. The Committee met on March 20, 2024. The Advisory Committee nominated and voted to have Raymondville Chief of Police Uvaldo Zamora serve as Vice Chair for the committee. **Mayor Oscar Montoya made a motion to approve and accept Raymondville Chief of Police Uvaldo Zamora for the LRGV Academy Advisory Committee. Commissioner Ellie Torres seconded the motion and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.**

3. Consideration and ACTION to amend the updated sections in the LRGV Academy BPOC Rules, Policies, and Procedures Handbook. Constant revision and updating of the BPOC Handbook are required by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement. LRGV Academy staff have identified four areas that require change. **Commissioner Ellie Torres made a motion to approve and amend the update sections in the LRGV Academy BPOC Rules, Policies, and Procedures Handbook. Mayor Alma Salinas seconded the motion and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.**

4. Consideration and ACTION to amend the requirements for the documentation and retention of all LRGV Academy police in-service training files. These items are legally mandated by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement and are to be kept on file for no less than 5 years. Currently, the LRGV Academy requires the submission of nonessential materials such as power points, written notes, and copies of every individual examination which are not required by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement. Amending the requirements for documentation to only require the legally mandated items will create space both physically and electronically for the retention of mandated files thus keeping our storage expenses relatively low. **Mayor Rick Guerra made a motion to approve and amend all requirements for documentation and retention of all LRGV Academy policies in-service training files. Commissioner Ellie Torres seconded the motion and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.**

5. Consideration and ACTION to approve an Interlocal Agreement, as authorized by the Interlocal Cooperation Act Chapter 791 Texas Government Code, with the City of Alton Texas by and through the Alton Police Department, to report law enforcement training to the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement and with the authority for the LRGVDC Executive Director Manuel Cruz to sign and finalize the agreement. **Commissioner Ellie Torres made a motion to approve the Interlocal Agreement, as authorized by the Interlocal Cooperation Act Chapter 791 Texas Government Code, with the City of Alton, Texas, by and through the Alton Police Department, to report law enforcement training to the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement and with the authority for LRGVDC Executive Director Manuel Cruz to sign and finalize the agreement. Mayor Rick Guerra seconded the motion and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.**

Lastly, Mr. Solis wanted to announce that on August 3rd LRGV Academy will be hosting the Police K9 Competition, the Rio Grande Valley South Texas Police K9 Competition. Mr. Solis mentioned that it will take place in the City of Edinburg at the Parks and Recreation Center. He mentioned that he would like to extend a Welcome to all.

With no further comments or questions from the Board Mayor Norma Sepulveda moved on to RGV Emergency Communications.

Program Status Reports

Mr. Dennis Moreno started by letting the Board know that there were no Action Items and then proceeded to the GIS Division, 911 and Information Technology, and community Engagement reports that were all in the packet provided to everyone for review.

With No Further Comments or concerns, Mayor Norma Sepulveda then moved to Item D Valley Metro

D. Transportation Valley Metro Action Item:

Mr. Tom Logan was recognized for the action items on the agenda.

1. Consideration and ACTION to approve Software Subscription renewal for LRGVDC Valley Metro. The staff seeks the Board's approval to renew the software subscriptions, encompassing any forthcoming renewals related to the Hardware or Software, as long as funding or equipment remains necessary. ***Mayor Ramiro Garza motioned to approve Software subscription renewal for LRGVDC Valley Metro. Commissioner Edward Gonzales seconded the motion and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.***

Program Status Reports

Mr. Logan then moved on to the Ridership Report. Tom Logan stated that they have transported 619,000 passengers with an increase of 145,000 passengers from the previous year. Mr. Logan wanted to mention that UTRGV and Students as a whole are over 60% of their Ridership.

With no further comments or concerns, they then moved on to RGVMPPO.

Rio Grande Valley MPO Action Items

1. Consideration and ACTION to Approve the procurement of replacement loggers, batteries, and software subscription for the Rio Grande Valley Bicycle & Pedestrian Counter program. ***Mayor Alma Salinas motioned to approve the Procurement of replacement loggers, batteries, and software subscriptions for the Rio Grande Valley Bicycle & Pedestrian Counter Program. Commissioner Ellie Torres seconded the motion and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.***

Item #7 New & Unfinished Business

There being no further business to come before the board, Mayor Norma Sepulveda made a motion to adjourn at 12:57 PM



Mayor Norma Sepulveda

ATTEST:


Liza Alfaro, Recording Secretary