

Meeting Minutes

Of the Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy Advisory Committee

Initiated & chaired from: LRGVDC Campus – 301 W Railroad St., Weslaco Tx 78596

Held in-person on Tuesday, June 24, 2025, at 2:00 P.M.

Building Location: Building B – Small Board Room

Presiding: Lieutenant Jesus Ortega

ITEM #1 – CALL TO ORDER

Training Coordinator Javier Solis makes an announcement prior to the commencement of the meeting. Mr. Solis explains Chief Robert McGinnis from the Elsa Police Department has expressed interest in participating on the advisory board, due to an unfilled position of Chief Representative under Hidalgo County. Mr. Solis further explains that the LRGVDC Executive Director Manuel Cruz has exercised his rights under the Academy Advisory By-Laws to appoint Chief McGinnis as our Chief Representative under Hidalgo County, which includes the status of a voting member.

Chair Lieutenant Jesus Ortega called the meeting to order at 2:32 P.M. Roll call was taken by LRGV Academy Staff Aillen Rodriguez, and a quorum of Advisory Committee member was attained.

ITEM #2 – ROLL CALL

| NAME | AGENCY / ORGANIZATION | ATTENDANCE |
|---------------------------|--|-------------|
| Asst. Chief Michael Cerda | Edinburg Police Department – Voting Member | Present |
| Chief Robert McGinnis | Elsa Police Department – Voting Member | Present |
| Lieutenant Jesus Ortega | Hidalgo Police Department – Voting Member | Present |
| Chief Robert Lopez | Port Isabel Police Department – Voting Member | Not Present |
| Chief Uvaldo Zamora | Raymondville Police Department – Voting Member | Present |
| Ronald Mills | Port of Mansfield – Board Appointee | Not Present |
| Daisy Lopez | Friendship of Women Inc. – Public Member | Not Present |
| Gloria Ocampo | Friendship of Women Inc. – Public Member | Not Present |
| Laura Soule | TX Tropical Behavior Health– Public Member | Present |
| Chief Jaime Ayala | Edinburg Police Department – Non-voting member | Not Present |
| Chief Michael Kester | Harlingen Police Department – Non- voting Member | Not Present |
| Albert Cruz | Hidalgo Police Department – Non-voting member | Not Present |
| Randy Davila | Mission Police Department – Non-voting member | Not Present |
| Julio Lopez | Harlingen Police Department – Non-voting member | Not Present |
| Manuel Cruz | LRGVDC Executive Director | Present |
| Javier Solis | Asst. Director / Training Coordinator | Present |
| Rolando Perez | Training & Development Specialist | Present |

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Sara Casares
Aillen Rodriguez

Project Management Specialist
Administrative Assistant

Present
Present

ITEM # 3 – PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Lieutenant Jesus Ortega moves to item number 3 – Public Comments.
Training Coordinator Javier Solis clarifies no public comments available.

ITEM #4 – APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Consideration and action to approve the meeting minutes from the LRGV Academy Advisory Committee Meeting on May 02, 2024

Chairman Lieutenant Jesus Ortega moves on to Item #4A - Consideration and action to approve the meeting minutes from the LRGV Academy Advisory Committee Meeting on May 02, 2024.

Training Coordinator Javier Solis provides a thorough reading of the previous meeting minutes. Executive Director Manuel Cruz points out a spelling error on page 2 of the meeting minutes. Mr. Solis acknowledges the mistake and instructs academy staff to make the corrections.

Chief Uvaldo Zamora makes a motion to approve the meeting minutes for May 02, 2025, as presented. Assistant Chief Michael Cerda seconds the motion and upon a vote the motion was carried unanimously.

ITEM #5 – TRAINING COORDINATOR REPORT

Training Coordinator Javier Solis provides the following report. Mr. Solis provides the following data which has been collected from May 02, 2024, through June 24, 2025. Mr. Solis explains the LRGV Academy has assisted the region with 66 new officers, instructed a total of 160 In-Service Courses, trained a total of 2,992 officers. Mr. Solis explains out of the 2,992 officers some of them were repeat officers which took multiple in-service courses. Mr. Solis provides further data of 72,614 total contact hours and the Initiation of a new ALERRT Training provided by the LRGV Academy which taught 433 total active officers. Mr. Solis advises a total of 58 current enrolled cadets, which include 24 mission full-time cadets, 18 Weslaco part-time cadets, and 16 Rio Grande City full-time cadets. The LRGV Academy has partnered with multiple conferences to provide TCOLE Credit for officers, some conferences include the LISTO RGV, STAHC and the South Texas HIDTA P.A.T. H. Conference. Mr. Solis continues to report that the LRGV Academy has added two new staff members to the department. The LRGV

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Academy has partnered with the Weslaco Police Department to host their first full-time academy. Testing for the academy site has been filled to capacity within a matter of three days. Due to the high demand for the academy, the department has agreed to open one more day of testing. Mr. Solis reports a maximum capacity of 30 cadets will be allowed for the full-time academy. Finally, Mr. Solis reports a 100% passing rate for the Mission Full Time academies cadets who took their final exam.

ITEM #6 – ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A. Consideration and action to establish a pilot program for the implementation of a mental health and HRV stress monitor training curriculum

Chairman Lieutenant Jesus Ortega moves on to Item 6A. Consideration and action to establish a pilot program for the implementation of a mental health and HRV stress monitor training curriculum.

Training Coordinator Javier Solis reports wanting a partnership with the Nueva Luz foundation, with Dr. Normal Villanueva, to establish a curriculum for the implementation of a Mental Health and HRV Stress Monitor. Mr. Solis clarifies this new program will monitor the mental health of incoming volunteer cadets. Mr. Solis reports the stigma against law enforcement officers and mental health, explaining the importance of awareness of techniques or officers seeking assistance when in crisis.

LRGV Academy Training & Development Specialist Rolando Perez explains he will be working in collaboration with Doctor Villanueva to build the program with the intent of creating a “train the trainer” curriculum. Ms. Villanueva reports the goal of this program; to help cadets learn basic skills to manage their stress level and inoculate themselves from traumatic experiences. Volunteers will provide us with baseline measurements and how they change according to different exposures during training.

Chief Robert McGinnis makes a motion to approve establishing a pilot program for the implementation of a mental health and HRV stress monitor training curriculum. Chief Uvaldo Zamora seconds the motion and upon a vote the motion was carried unanimously.

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B. Consideration and action to implement a curriculum for the Basic County Corrections Course

Chairman Lieutenant Jesus Ortega moves on to Item 6B. Consideration and action to implement a curriculum for the Basic County Corrections Course

Training Coordinator Javier Solis reports the continued turnaround in agencies vs the demand for detention officers. Mr. Solis continues to report the primary facility which hosts the corrections course is STC which hosts their academy once a semester. Mr. Solis explains his goal is to help neighboring agencies fill their spots, with one agency reporting over 50 available slots. The implementation of the corrections course will provide the county with a selection pool of certified detention officers and help the 18-20 years old demographic to enter a law enforcement career.

Chairman Lieutenant Jesus Ortega asks if Mr. Solis has communicated with the Sheriff's office to ensure our certification will allow applicants to apply to the Sheriff's Department. Training Coordinator Javier Solis explains he has not reached out to the Sheriff specifically but ensures the curriculum will reflect the same material taught at that academy excluding their policies and procedures. Additionally, Mr. Solis explains he has contracted two officers who are subject matter experts with the sheriff office who will assist in the LRGV Academy Peace Officer Course.

Chairman Ortega ask for a break down of hours. Training Coordinator Javier Solis explain the Basic County Corrections Course will consist of a minimum of 120 hours but will require additional hours to reflect Taser and OC Certifications.

Chief Uvaldo Zamora asks if this will be a cost to the student or a cost for the academy. Mr. Solis explains the cost of tuition will have the same parameters as the Peace Officer Academy. A self-sponsor and sponsor option will be available, tuition for the corrections officer academy will be \$1,500.

Chief Uvaldo Zamora makes a motion to approve implementation of a curriculum for the Basic County Corrections Course. Assistant Chief Michael Cerda seconds the motion and upon a vote the motion was carried unanimously.

C. Consideration and action to update & amend the BPOC Rules, Policies & Procedures Handbook

Chairman Lieutenant Jesus Ortega moves on to Item 6C. Consideration and action to update & amend the BPOC Rules, Policies & Procedures Handbook.

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Training Coordinator Javier Solis breaks down the corrections made to the BPOC Manual. One of the first changes to the manual is the name from Basic Peace Officer Course Rules, Policies, and Procedures Handbook to Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy (LRGV Academy) Cadet Rules, Policies and procedures handbook. Mr. Solis explains the verbiage throughout the manual has changed to reflect the new title and coverage of all programs within the LRGV Academy. Mr. Solis continues to explain age requirements for peace officer vs corrections academy. Mr. Solis verifies the new handbook will hold the same requirements as the previous manual as per TCOLE.

Chief Robert McGinnis directs the board attention to page 7 in reference to sponsored cadets. Chief McGinnis asks if the LRGV Academy will provide the testing results to the sponsoring agencies. Mr. Solis verifies the LRGV Academy will always work with our law enforcement partners.

Chairman Lieutenant Jesus Ortega asks when the new manual will take into effect. Mr. Solis clarifies the new manual will take effect with our new academy, which includes the upcoming Weslaco Full Time Academy, and will provide an updated copy to the current cadets in the academy. Chairman Ortega requests to check the TCOLE rules to ensure the LRGV Academy is allowed to update the manual during an academy.

Chief Robert McGinnis makes a motion to approve the updates & amendments made to the BPOC Rules, Policies & Procedures Handbook. Chief Uvaldo Zamora seconds the motion and upon a vote the motion was carried unanimously.

ITEM # 7 – OLD OR NEW BUSINESS ITEM

Training Coordinator Javier Solis directs the board's attention to the Advisory Committee Bylaw which pertains to absences. It reads as follows, "Any member missing three consecutive meeting will be reviewed for removal from the Advisory Committee...". Mr. Solis requests to remove the following members and send out notification of removal to Michael Kester, Randy Davila, Jaime Ayala, Julio Lopez and Monic Galvan. Mr. Solis explains Chief Kester is now retired and is no longer meets the requirements, Monic Galvan is no longer a staff member for the LRGV Academy, and the remaining members have missed three consecutive meetings. The board discusses the need for a letter since we do not have an action pertaining to the dismissal of a member. The board then agrees to send out a letter.

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Training Coordinator Javier Solis then moves on to the second order of new business, nominating an instructor for the instructor position. Mr. Solis nominated Alvino Flores. Alvino Flores introduces himself and his background to include 25 years at the Weslaco Police Department, higher level education, current adjunct instructor with the academy and is currently a Captain in the Investigations department. Captain Flores humbly asks for consideration for the instructor position.

Chief Robert McGinnis makes a motion to accept Captain Alvino Flores as the new Instructor Position for the LRGV Academy Advisory Board Committee. Chief Micheal Cerda seconds the motion and upon a vote the motion was carried unanimously.

Training Coordinator Javier Solis asks the board when they would like to meet for another meeting. Chairman Jesus Ortega suggests before November Holidays. The Board agrees and Mr. Solis advises he will send out invitations for that time frame.

ITEM # 8 - ADJOURN

Chairman Lieutenant Jesus Ortega moves to adjourn the meeting. Chief Robert McGinnis makes a motion to adjourn the meeting. Assistant Chief Michael Cerda seconds the motion and upon a vote the motions carried unanimously. Chairman Ortega adjourns the meeting at 3:29 P.M.