

MINUTES

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

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2017 - 12:00 P.M.
LRGVDC MAIN CAMPUS - 301 W. RAILROAD ST., WESLACO, TEXAS
BUILDING B, KEN JONES EXECUTIVE BOARD ROOM

PRESIDING: MAYOR AMBROSIO "AMOS" HERNANDEZ, PRESIDENT

President Ambrosio "Amos" Hernandez called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum declared.

The President then moved to item 2: Consider Approval of Board Meeting Minutes (October 25, 2017). ***Mayor Jim Darling made a motion to approve the Board Meeting Minutes of October 25, 2017 as presented. Commissioner Pilar Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

President Hernandez then moved to item 3: Public Comment and/or Report from Legislative Delegation and noted that there were no neither and moved to item 4: Administration. He recognized Executive Director Ron Garza to address the following items:

A. Consider Date and Time for Annual Work Program & Budget Committee Meeting

Mr. Garza stated that all Members of the Board of Directors are on this committee, and there is no quorum requirement. He then proposed a few different date and time options to hold the Annual Work Program & Budget Committee Meeting. Upon conclusion of discussion ***Mayor Jim Darling made a motion to schedule the Annual Work Program and Budget Committee meeting on Tuesday, January 23, 2018 at 12:00 pm at Arturo's Restaurant in Weslaco. The Hon. Norma G. Garcia seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

B. Executive Director Report

• 2018 Board Meeting Calendar/Schedule

Mr. Garza proposed that the Board of Directors continue to meet at 12:00 noon on the last Wednesday of the month and that no meeting be scheduled in July. Further, he proposed a holiday schedule with no meeting in November and the last meeting of the year to be scheduled on December 5. Upon conclusion of ***discussion Mr. Ron Mills made a motion to approve the 2018 Board Meeting Calendar/Schedule as presented. Councilwoman Catarina Alvarado seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

• Explore RGV Grant

Mr. Garza informed the Board that the Explore RGV project has officially begun; Ms. Blanca Davila has been hired as an Economic Development Specialist and will serve as the project manager. Social media accounts and a website domain have been secured for the project and

an initial agreement has been made with the RGV Partnership to publish the project. The Partnership will expand and align their official “Guide to the RGV” as a hard copy version of Explore RGV. Mr. Garza was excited to announce that to create awareness of this project there will be a photo contest in February 2018 with submissions from the community.

- RGV 2020 (CEDSD)

Mr. Garza stated that the initial meeting of the RGV 2020 (2018-2020 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy) was held on November 20, 2017 with the RGV 2020 Executive Steering Committee to discuss project scope, process, and overall strategy. The committee made the determination that the next steps would include a series of SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat) forums in each county in January 2018 that are modified to encompass current goal topics such as workforce development, international competitiveness, marketing regional assets and quality of life. Unfortunately Mr. Alex Meade, Mission EDC, is unable to accept a seat on the committee, and Dr. Art Cavazos, Harlingen CISD Superintendent, is considering this position.

- Road-to-Recycling

As a means to express our gratitude to Cameron, Hidalgo, and Willacy Counties for their contributions to the 2017 Road-to-Recycling project, the LRGVDC has been placed on all three commissioner’s court agendas to present the current outcome of the project and a token of our appreciation.

Additionally, a visit to the South East Arkansas Planning & Development District has been scheduled for January 2018. They have been identified as a national leader in Government support tire recycling and reclamation efforts. As our region moves towards long-term solutions, observing and bench-marking successful programs will provide best-practices as we develop our regional solution strategies.

Mr. Garza next brought up the topic of bike share programs in the region noting that there are a few different companies currently providing bike rental service. This is a great amenity for the public; however there is a connectivity issue because riders need to return their bikes to the company from which they are rented. Because of this, there are times when riders are not able to continue their journey seamlessly from town to town. He also mentioned the exploring the possibility of having a “dock-less” bike share system. Those involved in this program would like to create a committee to address these issues and help coordinate a seamless bike share program in the region. Mr. Garza asked the Board for approval to adopt “Bike Share RGV” as a Transportation Advisory Committee of the LRGVDC, and have Mr. Rodney Gomez, UTRGV Director of Parking & Transportation, as the 2018 Committee Chair. Upon conclusion of discussion, ***Mayor Henry Hinojosa made a motion to adopt Bike Share RGV as a Transportation Advisory Committee of the LRGVDC and have Mr. Rodney Gomez chair the committee in 2018. Mr. Eddy Gonzalez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

Upon conclusion of Administration item, President Hernandez moved to item 5: Department Reports.

A. Economic Development

Program Director Terrie Salinas was recognized and gave the status report on the 2018-2020 EDA District Partnership Planning Grant, which is the primary source of funds to administer the Economic Development Program for three years. She also reported on the Regional Small Cities

Coalition Meeting that took place in Laguna Vista in November.

Mr. Matt Ruszczak was recognized next and gave an update on the Rio South Texas Economic Council (RSTEC) activities including the recent International Council of Shopping Centers conference in Dallas. He announced that RSTEC has joined the German American Chamber and hosted one of their delegates, and that RSTEC has also joined the European American Investment Council and in February 2018 they will host a delegation of their site selectors. In April a RSTEC delegation is scheduled to go to Germany for the Hanover Messe (Trade Fair).

B. Community & Environmental Services

Director Marcie Oviedo was recognized and gave updates on the HUD Disaster Recovery Housing Program, Solid Waste Management Program grant opportunities, and water resources. She emphasized that the Request for Applications for Solid Waste Program funds has begun and the submission deadline is Friday, January 12, 2018 at 12:00 noon. Mayor Jim Darling added that the Mexican Water Debt has been paid and a new five-year water payment cycle has begun in accordance with the 1944 Water Treaty.

C. Health & Human Services

Area Agency on Aging Director Joe Gonzalez was recognized and addressed item 5.C.1. – Consider Approval to Submit a Proposal to the National Council on Aging to Establish a Benefits Enrollment Center. He informed the Board that the National Council on Aging has issued a request for proposals to establish assistance and Medicare beneficiaries to access Medicare cost savings programs and other services such as SNAP (Food Stamps). ***The Hon. Norma G. Garcia made a motion to approve submission of a proposal to the National Council on Aging to establish a Benefits Enrollment Center. Mayor Henry Hinojosa seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*** Upon conclusion of action Mr. Gonzalez noted that Medicare Part D Open Enrollment will end on December 7, 2017.

D. Public Safety

President Hernandez next moved to item 5. D. - Public Safety and recognized Director Manuel Cruz to address the following:

Criminal Justice Program Status Reports

Mr. Cruz informed the Board that the CJD continues the notification of awards for fiscal year 2017/2018 funding cycle, and that recipients have up to 45 days to accept their grant award on eGrants and begin requesting reimbursements.

Emergency Communications Status Report

1. Consider Approval to Purchase and Add 9-1-1 Call Taking Workstations

Due to the increase in call volume throughout the years, staff requests one (1) additional call taking workstation position at several Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP), and three (3) additional call taking workstation positions at the Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office. A request was submitted and approved at the Commission on State Emergency Communications (CSEC) Board meeting in September. In accordance with CSEC Program Policy Statement (PPS) 026 - Adding a PSAP or 9-1-1 Call Taking Workstation Position, these PSAPs meet and/or exceed the ten (10) 9-1-1 calls per day, per 9-1-1 call taking workstation position minimum requirements as outlined in PPS 026. With the exception of Hidalgo County, each site will receive equipment

totaling \$27,000 and the total project costs will be \$299,521.97. **Mayor Henry Hinojosa made a motion to approve the purchase and adding 9-1-1 Call Taking Workstation Positions as requested. Mayor Pro-tem Norie Gonzalez Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.** Upon conclusion of action Mr. Cruz gave the program departmental status updates.

Homeland Security Program Status Report

1. Consider Approval of Homeland Security Advisory Committee Policy Manual

Mr. Cruz stated that in accordance with the 2017/2018 LRGVDC Intercooperative Agreement with the Office of the Governor's Homeland Security Grant Division (OOG-HSGD), staff is recommending Board review and approval of the HSAC Policy Manual. This policy manual was developed by staff and will govern the LRGVDC's Homeland Security Advisory Committee's application review and prioritization process for designated funding sources. In addition, these policies and procedures will govern the operation of LRGVDC's Homeland Security Planning as outlined in the Intercooperation Agreement between the OOG-HSGD and the LRGVDC. These policies will be reviewed annually to align with regional and state guidelines and priorities. **Mayor Henry Hinojosa made a motion to approve the Homeland Security Advisory Committee Policy Manual as presented. Mr. Eddy Gonzalez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.** Upon conclusion of action Mr. Cruz gave programmatic updates.

Regional Police Academy Status Report

1. Consider Approval of Interlocal Cooperation Act Agreement Between City of Sullivan City and LRGVDC Regional Police Academy for Equipment Services Donation

Mr. Randall Snyder, Training Coordinator was recognized and reported that in accordance with TCOLE regulations and the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) 215.2(c)(5), the Regional Police Academy Basic Peace Officer Course must have sufficient law enforcement automobiles for training purposes. After an extensive search, staff was able to secure two used law enforcement vehicles from the City of Sullivan City Police Department. Only the Regional Police Academy program and cadets will utilize this equipment solely for training purposes during the vehicle operator's course. In addition, acquiring these assets will satisfy TCOLE's Comprehensive Academy Program Evaluation requirements. **Mr. Ronald Mills made a motion to approve the Interlocal Cooperation Act Agreement Between the City of Sullivan City and the LRGVDC Regional Police Academy for Equipment Services Donation as presented. Mr. Troy Allen seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.** Upon conclusion of action Mr. Snyder gave updates on the Regional Police Academies and was proud to announce that 107 cadets were recently graduated from the 194th BPOC Night Academy and the 195th BPOC Day Academy, and all 107 cadets passed their TCOLE state licensing exam on the first attempt.

E. Transportation

Hidalgo County Metropolitan Planning Organization Status Report

No report was available at this time.

Valley Metro Status Report

1. Consider Approval of An Indefinite System-wide Fare Free Initiative

Program Director Tom Logan was recognized and reported that the main goal of this initiative is to continue to improve performance measures for Passengers/Hour and Passengers/Mile to increase ridership while remaining cost effective. The Fare Free Initiative was implemented on March 1, 2017 and was slated to end on August 31, 2017. Staff requested and the Board unanimously approved to extend the initiative until December 31, 2017. Upon conclusion of discussion **Mayor Jim Darling made a motion to approve continuation of the System-wide Fare Free Initiative on an annual basis effective until December 31, 2018. Ms. Veronica Gonzalez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

2. Consider Approval of Revisions to ADA Policy Procedures

Mr. Logan stated that the policy revisions are minor in nature and are intended to reflect changes in State and FTA guidelines. Other changes include non-critical language such as grammar corrections, names, and titles within the policy. **The Hon. Norma G. Garcia made a motion to approve the revisions to the ADA Policy Procedures as presented. Mayor Jim Darling seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.** Upon conclusion of action Mr. Logan gave the ridership report and the report on the Regional Transportation Advisory Panel activities.

Upon conclusion of action Ms. Veronica Gonzales requested a moment of personal privilege to address the UTRGV issue of accreditation related to the consolidation of Valley universities. She stated that while UTRGV has been placed on probation for 12 months by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, UTRGV remains accredited.

President Hernandez next move to 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. **At 12:41 pm Mr. Eddy Gonzalez made a motion to go into Executive Session; Mayor David Suarez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously. At 1:11 pm The Hon. Norma G. Garcia made a motion to return to regular session; Mayor Jim Darling seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.** President Hernandez stated that no action is required from discussions during Executive Session.

President Hernandez next moved to item 13. – New or Unfinished Business; there being none, **Mayor Henry Hinojosa made a motion to adjourn; the Hon. Norma G. Garcia seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 1:12 pm.**



Mayor Ambrosio "Amos" Hernandez, President

ATTEST:



Deborah Morales, Recording Secretary