

MINUTES

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

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2019 – 12:00 PM
LRGVDC MAIN CAMPUS - 301 W. RAILROAD ST., WESLACO, TEXAS
BUILDING B, KEN JONES EXECUTIVE BOARD ROOM

PRESIDING: MAYOR JIM DARLING, 1ST VICE PRESIDENT

Vice President Jim Darling called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was declared.

He then moved to item 2: Consider Approval of Meeting Minutes (September 25, 2019). *Commissioner David Garza made a motion to approve the September 25, 2019 Board Meeting minutes as presented. Judge Aurelio Guerra seconded, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.*

Vice President Darling then moved to item 3: Public Comment and/or Report from Legislative Delegation and recognized Josue Ramirez, Mi Casita Program Coordinator for Community Development Corporation of Brownsville. Mr. Ramirez informed the Board that Somos Vecinos has scheduled a housing fair at the Knapp Conference Center in Weslaco on November 16 from 8:30 am – 2:00 pm. He encouraged Board Members to attend and spread the word about this event.

Upon conclusion of public comment, Vice President Darling moved to item 4: Administration and recognized Executive Director Ron Garza. Mr. Garza acknowledged that October is Breast Cancer awareness month, an annual campaign to increase awareness of this disease, and noted that many staff members wore pink in recognition of this important health message.

Vice President Darling then moved to item 4. A. and recognized Mr. Garza to address the following:

- A. Consideration and Action to Adopt Annual Investment Policy and Accept Quarterly Investment Report. Finance Director Crystal Balboa was recognized and stated that staff recommends the adoption of the Annual Investment Policy and acceptance of the quarterly investment report. *Mayor Henry Hinojosa made a motion to adopt the Annual Investment Policy and accept the quarterly investment report as presented. Mr. Troy Allen seconded the motion; and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.*
- B. Executive Director Report

LRGVDC Updates & Activities

1. Introduction of New Staff Members

Mr. Garza announced that the following individuals have recently joined the LRGVDC staff:

Ms. Melany Rodriguez, Intern for Community & Economic Development

Ms. Maribel Alonzo, Customer Service Rep for 9-1-1

Valley Metro has two new drivers: Mr. Alfonso Garza and Mr. Daniel Hernandez who were in training and unable to attend. The Board warmly welcomed our new staff members.

2. Copier Renewal Agreement for 9-1-1/ECOMMS and RGVMPPO

Mr. Garza informed the Board that the XEROX V180B, VERSANT 180 PRESS copier renewal lease agreement in the amount of \$3,684.09 is for 36 months and is for the 9-1-1/Emergency Communications Division. The total value of the contract is \$132,627.24. This renewal will be made through a cooperative purchasing contract, Omnia Partners Contract #R150302 satisfying requirements for formal competitive solicitation and bidding.

The Xerox C70Pro with Fiery E300 efi copier renewal lease agreement for 36 months in the amount of \$1,231.86 is for the RGVMPPO. Mr. Garza explained that there was a typo in the board report and that the total value of the contract is \$44,346.96, and not \$444,346.96. This renewal will also be made through the cooperative purchasing contract, Omnia Partners Contract #R150302, satisfying requirements for formal competitive solicitation and bidding. Upon conclusion of discussion ***Mayor Henry Hinojosa made a motion to approve the contracts with the correction in price for the Xerox C70Pro for RGVMPPO from \$444,346.96 to \$44,346.96. Mr. Ronald Mills seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.***

3. Texas Gas Service (Energy Efficiency Program)

Mr. Garza reminded the Board that Texas Gas Services (TGS) offers customers an equipment rebate program to encourage the use of energy efficient natural gas appliances. TGS works with Hidalgo County Community Services and Cameron/Willacy County Community projects to find eligible applicants. In 2018 TGS offered \$159,000 in commercial and residential rebates to customers in the Valley. To continue to fund this program, TGS has filed a proposed 8¢ increase per month. The TGS tariff states that the LRGVDC is the regulatory body for the Valley Cities Gas Coalition (34 city members).

There are three (3) options moving forward to fund the Energy Efficiency Program:

1. Deny Action. This would begin an appeal process and remove the RGV from eligibility of the Rebate program
2. Approve Action. Approving would increase the rate effective November 19, 2019. This would NOT allow a city to deny.
3. Take no action. Taking no action would increase the rate effective November 19, 2019 and would still allow a city to deny.

Taking no action is the recommended course as it provides cities with the most flexibility. ***Mr. Ron Mills made a motion to approve option #2 approving the rate increase effective November 19, 2019, and not allowing VCGC cities to deny. Mayor Henry Hinojosa seconded the motion. Upon a vote, the motion failed.***

Ms. Celeste Sanchez made a motion to approve option #3 to take no action therefore making the rate effective November 19, 2019 and allowing VCGC cities to deny. Commissioner Rick Salinas seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion passed.

4. Powering Texas Wind Energy Alliance

Mr. Garza stated that he would like the Board to consider action on this item. It is an alliance to advocate for economic policies that support the wind energy industry. There is no financial commitment to joining this alliance, and their current partners are the South Padre Island Chamber of Commerce, the RGV Partnership, and the Pharr Economic Development Corporation.

He added that Texas is the #1 wind energy generator in the country. Texas produces ¼ of the national total of wind energy and nearly 19% of all in-state electricity generation. This industry employs over 25,000 Texans, has invested over \$46.5 billion across the state revitalizing rural communities, generates more than \$237 million in state and local taxes each year, and powers over 7.3 million Texans' homes. Mr. Garza asked for Board approval to join an alliance for being partners in this initiative, allow the initiative to use the LRGVDC logo. *Ms. Celeste Sanchez made a motion to approve LRGVDC joining the Powering Texas wind Energy Alliance. Commissioner David Garza seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.*

5. Mitigation Forum / GLO Feedback Report

Mr. Garza informed the Board that the Stakeholder & Public Feedback Report was developed from input from participants at the Regional Water Resource Advisory Committee Special Meeting held on October 3, 2019. The RWRAC and LRGVDC stakeholders held this forum and gathered this input and make sure the Valley was represented in the Texas General Land Office's State Action Plan. He reported that the forum was well attended by over 50 individuals representing more than 25 different stakeholder organizations. The Action Plan will include how \$4.3 billion will be allocated for mitigation activities, and the Valley is eligible for a portion of that funding. There is another appropriation for \$43 million specific to disaster recovery that will soon be available. He assured the Board that staff is on top of these activities and actively engaged with the GLO.

Commissioner David Fuentes added that the GLO encouraged input from multiple entities because the more often they hear the same comments from many different sources, the more likely they will heed those comments. He recommended developing unified comments to be submitted by individual cities, municipalities, counties, drainage districts, etc. and follow that up through the LRGVDC.

6. Regional Watershed Coordinator (Memorandum of Agreement)

Mr. Garza stated that the goal of this proposal is to develop a regional watershed protection plan program and establish a coordinator. The coordinator would oversee and provide regional leadership to the Lower Rio Grande Valley watershed including, but not limited to the Lower Laguna Madre and Brownsville Ship Channel, Arroyo Colorado, Hidalgo/Willacy Floodway, U.S. International Boundary & Water Commission (IBWC) Floodway/Pilot channel, Rio Grande River, and the Raymondville Drain Floodway.

He asked the Board to consider action to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Research, Applied Technology, Education & Service (RATES) for in-kind support of the Regional Watershed Coordinator.

The RATES organization has applied for a grant for this position and all three (3) counties have contributed. This individual could serve as a resource for the entire region and be housed at the LRGVDC main campus with an in-kind rate of \$10,000 per year for 3 years for office space, administrative support, and access to meeting areas, there will be no cash commitment. Commissioner David Garza stated that there are 5 watershed studies going on now. 3 counties have committed to funding this position, and the consensus of all involved is that this is a good decision, a regional decision.

Commissioner David Fuentes stated that this makes sense from a regional stance. There is going to be a requirement to have a statewide flood plan in the next 5 years, moving forward with this MOU would be proactive instead of reactive. Upon conclusion of discussion *Commissioner David Fuentes made a motion to approve entering into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Research, Applied Technology, Education & Services (RATES) for in-kind support of the Regional Watershed Coordinator. Ms. Celeste Sanchez seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.*

7. RGV 2020

Mr. Garza announced that as a part of the RGV 2020, a regional, collaborative effort delivering positive action by the year 2020, the LRGVDC scheduled a workshop focused on “Workforce Systems Alignment” on Friday, November 8 at 9:00 am.

8. RGV B-Cycle

Mr. Garza informed the Board that on Monday, October 28, the McAllen City Commission approved the agreement to pass their McAllen B-Cycle infrastructure to RGV B-Cycle. The next step is for the participating cities to receive interlocal agreements, provide their matching funds and submit their fully executed agreements. The matching cost per unit is \$9K which includes one 10-bicycle docking station and four bicycles; the six open docks will be used by cyclists coming and going. Mr. Garza asked the Board to take action and approve the purchase of the initial 50 bicycles, required equipment, and subsequent bicycles and equipment hereafter as cities take action to participate. ***Mayor Pro-tem Norie Gonzalez Garza made a motion to approve the purchase of bicycles, docking stations, and required equipment for RGV B-Cycle initially and hereafter as cities formally take action to participate in the RGV B-Cycle Program. Mr. Ronald Mills seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.***

9. Census 2020

March 12, 2020 is the first date that households will be able to respond to the census. A 2020 U. S. Census Forum is scheduled on Monday, November 18 at 6:00 pm at the McAllen Convention Center with Mr. Timothy Olson, Associate Director of U.S. Census Field Operations as the keynote speaker.

10. Texas Walks (It’s Time Texas)

“It’s Time Texas” is a statewide health initiative and “Texas Walks” is a 10-minute walking event scheduled for 10:00 am on November 8 that leads up to the 3rd Annual Mayor’s Walk for Wellness which will be scheduled in January 2020.

11. Explore RGV (Adventure Guide)

Mr. Garza thanked the 18 Explore RGV partner cities for their participation. These cities will become members of the new Tourism & Travel Advisory Committee. Their responsibility will be to issue governance recommendations for the marking campaign. Copies of the updated Birding Adventure Guide was distributed to Board Members, and the new Bicycling Adventure Guide was introduced and also distributed. Mr. Garza thanked the Explore RGV partners that helped develop content for these adventure guides and he proudly announced that this project has received the NADO Innovation Award!

Vice President Darling next moved to item 5: Department Reports.

A. Community & Economic Development

Assistant Director Blanca Davila was recognized to address the following:

Program Action Items:

1. Consideration and Action to Approve the Professional Services Agreement by and between Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council (LRGVDC) and Texas Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Authority

Ms. Davila informed the Board that this professional services agreement reflects a recent reduction in Texas PACE Authority project fees to make PACE projects less expensive and makes the LRGVDC fees consistent with fees in the rest of the state. This agreement also increases the percentage of administrative fees shared with the LRGVDC from 10% to 25%. LRGVDC’s education and outreach of the PACE program is also added into the agreement.

Commissioner David Garza made a motion to approve the Professional Services Agreement

by and between the LRGVDC and the PACE Authority as presented. Mr. Javier Deleon seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Program Status Reports

The status reports were provided in the meeting packet for review.

B. Health & Human Services

Program Action Items:

Area Agency on Aging Director Joe Gonzalez was recognized to report on the following:

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Direct Purchase Service Contractors

Mr. Gonzalez informed the Board that following the second round of competitive bid procedures, staff submitted for consideration four (4) additional applicants for the Direct Purchase Service Contractor Pool for Fiscal Year 2020. Services under these contractors include medication assistance, medical supplies and equipment, homemaker services, caregiver respite care, and medical transportation.

These contractors are utilized by case managers for purchasing services for their clients. The names of the contractors are:

- Mia Transportation – Medical Transportation for a cost of \$25.00 per one-way trip in Hidalgo County and \$35.00 for Cameron County
- Med-Care Transportation – Medical Transportation for a cost of \$25.00 per one-way trip
- Protonic Home Health – Homemaker and Respite Care for a cost of \$12.05 per unit of service
- Pete's Pharmacy #2 and #3 – Medications and Medical Supplies – variable rate depending on the cost of the item.

Mr. Ronald Mills made a motion to approve the Direct Service Contractors as presented. Commissioner David Fuentes seconded, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Program Status Report

The status reports were provided in the meeting packet for review.

C. Public Safety

Program Action Items:

Public Safety Director Manuel Cruz was recognized to report on the following:

1. Consideration and Action to Approve Revisions to the following Criminal Justice Advisory Committee Documents:

- Regional Criminal Justice Strategic Plan
- Policy Manual
- Committee Bylaws
- Application Score Sheet

Reviewing and revising these four (4) documents annually is required by the Interlocal Cooperation Agreement entered into with the Public Safety Office within the Office of the Governor. A copy of each document was provided in the meeting packet for Board review.

Commissioner David Fuentes made a motion to approve the revised Regional Criminal Justice Strategic Plan, the Policy Manual, Committee Bylaws, and the Application Score Sheet as presented. Mr. Troy Allen seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.

2. Consideration and Action to Approve the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee's Biennial (2-Year) Term appointments
Mr. Cruz stated that the following current CJAC members have completed their 2-year term. As per the bylaws the committee recommended reappointing them for an additional 2-year term. ***Mayor Pro-tem Norie Gonzalez Garza made a motion to approve the CJAC's Biennial (2-year) Term appointments as recommended. Ms. Veronica Gonzales seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.***

3. Consideration and Action to Approve Nominee to Fill Vacancy on the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee
Mr. Cruz informed the Board that the CJAC recommends appointing Mr. Antonio Ricard Gonzalez to fill the vacancy in the Hidalgo County – Law Enforcement Discipline. Mr. Gonzalez' 31 years of experience in law enforcement qualifies him to serve in this capacity. ***Mr. Ronald Mills made a motion to approve the appointment of Mr. Antonio Ricardo Gonzalez to the CJAC. Mayor Chris Boswell seconded, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.***

Program Status Reports:

Mr. Cruz reported that staff is scheduled to begin implementing NexGen systems in February 2020 and finish by August 2021. The department status reports were provided in the meeting packet for review.

D. Transportation

Program Action Items:

Valley Metro Director Tom Logan was recognized to address the following:

1. Consideration and Action to Enter into a Contract for Diesel and Gas Engine Repair
Mr. Logan informed the Board that staff requests approval to enter into a contract with Superior Oil Express for diesel and gas engine repair. Superior Oil Express was selected through a formal Request for Proposals (RFP) process and was the sole bidder. Superior Oil Express representatives were interviewed, and the selection was made based on their qualifications and proposal. This contractual service is required for the transit fleet to minimize downtime of fleet buses and to operate bus routes as scheduled. ***Mayor Henry Hinojosa made a motion to approve entering into a contract for diesel and gas engine repair as presented. Ms. Celeste Sanchez seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.***

2. Consideration and Action to Revise Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy
Mr. Logan stated that staff requests approval to incorporate revisions into the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy to ensure compliance with Federal Transit Administration regulations. ***Commissioner Rick Salinas made a motion to approve the revised EEO Policy as presented. Mayor Dave Kusch seconded, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.***

Program Status Reports:

Mr. Logan informed the Board that Valley Metro has closed FY 2019 with over 125,000 more riders which reflects a 21% increase in ridership and continues their 12-year trend of increasing ridership.

Vice President Darling next moved to item 6. – Executive Session

- A. Deliberation Regarding Real Property (LRGVDC Program Staff Office) in accordance with the Texas Government code, Section 551.072, the Board reserves the right to retire into executive session for deliberation regarding real property.

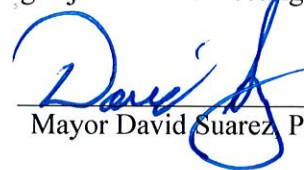
Executive Session was not held at this meeting.

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

No action was taken.

Vice President Darling next moved to item 7. – New or Unfinished Business.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Vice President Darling adjourned the meeting at 1:00 pm.



Mayor David Suarez, President

ATTEST:



Deborah Morales, Recording Secretary