

LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL



AGENDA  
ANNUAL ELECTIONS MEETING  
LRGVDC Main Campus, Building B  
301 W. Railroad Street  
Weslaco, TX 78596

---

---

Wednesday, May 29, 2019

12:00 pm

Ken Jones Executive Board Room

Presiding: Hon. Norma G. Garcia, President

---

---

**Item #1: Call to Order**

- A. Roll Call

**Item #2: Consider Approval of January 30, 2019 Board, General Membership and Corporation Meeting Minutes..... President**

ACTION ITEM

**Item #3: Caucus to Seat New Board Members ..... President**

- A. Three (3) Directors Representing Member Cities with Population from 10,000-24,999
  
- B. Three (3) Directors Representing Member Cities with Population under 10,000
  
- C. Two (2) Directors Representing Educational Institutions
  
- D. Two (2) Directors Representing Special Governmental Units
  
- E. One (1) Director Representing the Poor and Underprivileged (Grassroots Organizations)

**Item #4: Act on Recommendations of Nominating Committee ..... President**

A. Election of Five Members-at-Large to Serve on General Membership for the 2019-2020 Term

**ACTION ITEM**

B. Election of Officers for the 2019-2020 Term

**ACTION ITEM**

**Item #5: New or Unfinished Business ..... President**

**Item #6: Adjourn..... President**

**ITEM #2.**

**MINUTES**

# MINUTES

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

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

PRESIDING: HON. NORMA G. GARCIA, PRESIDENT

- DRAFT-

President Norma G. Garcia called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m. Roll call was taken for the Board of Directors, General Membership and Corporation and a quorum was declared for all organizations.

The President then moved to item 2: Consider Approval of Meeting Minutes

A. May 30, 2018 Annual Elections Meeting

*Willacy County Commissioner Eddy Gonzales made a motion to approve the May 30, 2018 Annual Elections Meeting Minutes as presented. Mayor Cyndie Rathbun seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*

B. December 5, 2018 Board of Directors Meeting

*Mayor Pro-tem Pete Garcia made a motion to approve the minutes from December 5, 2018 as presented. Commissioner Veronica Whitacre seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*

President Garcia then moved to item 3: Public Comment and/or Report from Legislative Delegation, there being none she moved to item 4: Administration and addressed the following:

A. Act on Recommendations from Annual Work Program & Budget Committee RE: Adoption of FY 2019 Annual Work Program & Budget

Committee Chair Mayor David Suarez was recognized and stated that the Annual Work Program & Budget Committee met on Wednesday, January 16 to consider the 2019 Annual Work Program & Budget, and that the Committee recommended no revisions. He then turned the floor over to Mr. Ron Garza, Executive Director, who summarized the changes to the budget and thanked the committee for their time and commitment to consider these important operational tools. Upon conclusion of the summary *Mr. Ronald Mills made a motion to approve the 2019 Annual Work Program & Budget as presented. Mayor Pro-tem Norie Gonzalez Garza seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*

B. Consider Approval of Quarterly and Annual Investment Report

Finance Director Crystal Balboa was recognized and presented the investment reports to the Board. *Mr. Troy Allen made a motion to accept the Quarterly and Annual Investment Reports as presented. Mayor Pro-tem Pete Garcia seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*

## C. Executive Director Report

### 1. Introduction of New Staff Members

Mr. Garza was recognized and introduced the following new staff members: Luis Escalera, Intern for Community & Environmental Services; Angela Hernandez, Customer Service Representative for Health & Human Services; Jorge Castillo and Jose Juan, Motor Vehicle Technicians for Valley Metro. The Board warmly welcomed our new staff members to the LRGVDC.

### 2. LRGVDC Updates & Activities

Before moving to LRGVDC Updates & Activities Mr. Garza made the following announcements:

Regarding the federal government shut down, Mr. Garza stated that there had been growing concern because some of LRGVDC's programs are funded in large part by federal grants, but luckily the federal government reopened last week. He thanked Mayor Amos Hernandez for the offer of a loan from the City of Pharr if the shutdown had continued and he is relieved the LRGVDC was able to continue normal program activities.

Mr. Garza announced that Mr. Matt Ruszczak, Executive Director of the Rio South Texas Economic Council, was currently hosting a site selector tour that spans from one end of the Valley to the other. There are approximately ten guests, mostly from Europe, that are touring all four counties of the Rio Grande Valley with Mr. Ruszczak and RSTEC Members. The purpose of this tour is to discern the suitability of locations for the site selectors' clients to establish industrial businesses here.

Mr. Garza informed the Board that over the past few months he has worked with staff to customize a training program called "People First" for LRGVDC's 28 staff members that are managers and have supervisory duties. The first session took place January 17 -18 and staff was very engaged in the process. Mr. Garza highly recommended Mr. David Biemer and Mr. Rolando Garza as training presenters and added that they are able to customize their training to an organization's specifications. The second part of the training will include an anonymous survey of employees and reoccurring topics that the Management Team needs to address. He emphasized the importance of investing back into an organization's leaders.

### 3. Census 2020

Mr. Garza informed the Board that there was a Regional Census 2020 Taskforce meeting on December 11, 2018 and a Census Tract Workshop on January 27, 2019. He emphasized that the 2020 census will be *the* most important thing that we will do as a region and he highly encouraged all present to continue training and discussions about how to get the most accurate count for the 2020 census. The current focus for the census is on media and messaging and he stated that there are plans to create commercials with multiple elected officials to promote the importance of everyone completing their census forms. He also announced that the Census Bureau is currently hiring in all three counties.

### 4. RGV Day at the Capitol

Mr. Garza informed the Board that RGV Day at the Capitol was being coordinated by the RGV Partnership. He congratulated Sergio Contreras, President & CEO of the RGV Partnership, on a successful legislative tour this past week. Over 130 key individuals participated in the tour and the input garnered from it helped clarify and unify the Valley's regional priorities.

A delegation of over 150 Valley representatives will go to Austin for RGV Day at the Capitol on February 5. A lot of time and effort has been put in by the Large and Small Cities Coalitions, from stakeholder input sessions, and from the RGV 2020 process to develop regional priorities to take to the capitol. Those involved are confident that the delegation will be unified in terms of regional priorities and support.

5. 2019 Mayors' Walk for Wellness (It's Time Texas Community Challenge)

Mr. Garza reported that the Mayors' Walk for Wellness was held on the morning of Saturday, January 5 and he thanked Texas Gas Service and Citizens Against Lawsuit Abuse for their voluntary sponsorship of this important health awareness event. He announced that the following mayors signed the Mayor's Pledge that day and participated in the walk:

1. City of Combes, Mayor Marco Sanchez
2. City of Edinburg, Mayor Richard Molina
3. City of Granjeño, Mayor Yvette Cabrera
4. City of Harlingen, Mayor Chris Boswell
5. City of Laguna Vista, Mayor Susie Houston
6. City of Los Indios, Mayor Rick Cavazos
7. City of McAllen, Mayor Jim Darling
8. City of Mission, Mayor Armando O'Caña
9. City of Palmhurst, Mayor Ramiro J. Rodriguez
10. City of Palmview, Mayor Ricardo Villarreal
11. City of Progreso, Mayor Gerardo Alanis
12. City of San Benito, Mayor Ben Gomez
13. City of Weslaco, Mayor David Suarez

Mr. Garza was delighted to announce that our 13 mayors at this regional event was the largest gathering of mayors in the entire state of Texas. He added that a challenge was issued to all 42 Valley mayors in the hope that the remaining 29 will also sign the pledge to improve the health of the citizens in their communities.

He then turned the floor over to Ms. Cindy Salazar-Collier, Manager for It's Time Texas Community Challenge. Ms. Salazar-Collier thanked the LRGVDC for our engagement with It's Time Texas. She informed the Board that the It's Time Texas Board of Directors recognizes the healthy activities in the Valley and announced that as of this past Sunday over 6,500 people have registered for the It's Time Texas initiative across nearly 30 Valley communities. She stated that this kind of engagement does a lot to change the perspective about the health and wellness in the RGV. She proudly announced that those 6,500 people have collectively reported weight loss of over 3,400 pounds and have uploaded over 7,800 "healthy selfies" which are pictures of them engaging in physical activity or eating healthy food. She also announced that approximately 2/5, or 40%, of the engagement in this challenge across the state of Texas is coming from the Rio Grande Valley! She sincerely thanked the mayors that have already signed the Mayor's Pledge.

Next Ms. Salazar-Collier provided an updated of the standings for the Rio Grande Valley communities in the It's Time Texas leader board across the State of Texas:

- In the Large Community category, the City of McAllen is in 1<sup>st</sup> Place and the City of Brownsville is in 2<sup>nd</sup> Place.
- In the Mid-sized Community category, the City of Harlingen is in 1<sup>st</sup> Place and the City of Pharr is in 4<sup>th</sup> place.

- In the Small Community category, the City of Los Fresnos is in 1<sup>st</sup> Place and the City of Port Isabel is in 5<sup>th</sup> Place.
- In the Extra Small Community category, the City of Laguna Vista is in 4<sup>th</sup> Place.

It's Time Texas also recognizes top performing school districts throughout Texas and currently the Valley school districts on the state-wide leader board are as follows:

- In the Large category, P-SJ-A ISD is in 4<sup>th</sup> Place.
- In the Mid-sized category Harlingen CISD is in 1<sup>st</sup> Place and McAllen ISD is in 2<sup>nd</sup> Place.
- In the Small category Los Fresnos CISD is in 1<sup>st</sup> Place and San Benito ISD is in 5<sup>th</sup> Place.
- In the Extra Small category Point Isabel ISD is in 1<sup>st</sup> Place.

Mr. Garza added that Hidalgo County Precinct 1 Commissioner David Fuentes was also at the Mayors' Walk for Wellness, but It's Time Texas currently does not have a category for counties. The suggestion of including a category for counties has been brought to the attention of the It's Time Texas Board of Directors and Ms. Salazar-Collier stated that they appreciate the feedback.

He next showed a video of highlights from the 2019 Mayor's Walk for Wellness and the RGV Fit 5K. At the conclusion of the video Mr. Garza invited all the mayors present who have not yet done so, to sign the pledge. Ms. Salazar-Collier took photos of each mayor as they signed and will upload them to the It's Time Texas website in order for their communities to earn points associated with signing the Mayor's Pledge. Five more mayors signed the pledge this day:

14. City of Brownsville, Mayor Tony Martinez
15. City of Mercedes, Mayor Henry Hinojosa
16. City of Palm Valley, Mayor George Rivera
17. City of Pharr, Mayor Ambrosio "Amos" Hernandez
18. City of Rancho Viejo, Mayor Cyndie Rathbun

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

#### A. Economic Development

##### Economic Development Status Reports

1. Consider Approval of Regional Small Cities Coalition (RSCC) Officers  
Economic Development Director Terrie Salinas was recognized and informed the Board that at their January 10 meeting the RSCC nominated the following officers:
  - Chair – Rolando Vela, Laguna Vista City Manager
  - Secretary/Treasurer – Lydia Moreno, Lyford City Secretary
  - Member-at-Large #2 – Pete de la Cruz, Edcouch Planning director
  - Member-at-Large #1 – Mayor George Rivera, City of Palm Valley

***Mayor Henry Hinojosa made a motion to approve the slate of officers as presented. Willacy County Commissioner Eddy Gonzales seconded the motion, and upon a vote the***

***motion passed unanimously.*** Upon conclusion of action Ms. Salinas brought the Board's attention to flyers on the LoanSTAR Program and the Texas PACE Program.

#### Explore RGV Status Report

Economic Development Assistant Director Blanca Davila was recognized to address the following:

1. Consider Approval to Enter into Contractual Agreement for Intellectual Property Legal Services. Ms. Davila informed the Board that after conducting research and gathering legal expertise, the law firm of Gunn, Lee, and Cave, P.C. was found to provide the necessary legal services to secure intellectual property protections to the content associated with the ExploreRGV project (website, app, logo, etc.). Approval is requested to authorize Executive Director, Ron Garza, to execute a contract for legal services. ***Mr. Ronald Mills made a motion to authorize LRGVDC Executive Director Ron Garza to execute a contract for legal services for Intellectual Property. Mayor Pro-tem Pete Garcia seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*** Upon conclusion of action Ms. Davila provided an update on activity on the new Explore RGV mobile app and facebook page. Staff is very pleased with the organic growth for this new program.

#### B. Community & Environmental Services

##### Community Development Status Report

Program Director Marcie Oviedo was recognized and informed the Board that the status reports on the HUD Disaster Recovery Housing Program were in the meeting packet for review.

##### Environmental Resources Status Report

Ms. Oviedo stated that the Solid Waste Program status report was in the meeting packet for review.

- Water Resources

1. Consider Approval to Create Regional Water Resource Advisory Committee  
Ms. Oviedo informed the Board that the LRGVDC's TCEQ Water Quality 604(b) contract will include an additional task in its Scope of Work. The task states that we will support Watershed Protection Plan Development for the Region. LRGVDC staff is already involved and attends these meetings as part of our education and outreach efforts. LRGVDC is currently meeting routinely with UTRGV, all three counties, and other water resources stakeholders to address water issues for the region as an informal workgroup. As a result of the additional TCEQ task and the need to effectively advocate for additional resources, a Regional Water Resource Advisory Committee is requested. Ms. Oviedo assured the Board that all information relevant to the Advisory Committee will be presented to them. ***Willacy County Commissioner Eddy Gonzales made a motion to approve the creation of a Regional Water Resource Advisory Committee. Councilman Gilbert Enriquez seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*** Upon conclusion of action Ms. Oviedo informed the Board that the next Region M meeting is scheduled for March 20, 2019.

#### C. Health & Human Services

##### Area Agency on Aging Status Reports



Program Director Joe Gonzalez was recognized and gave the status reports on the Texas Silver Haired Legislature and Housing Bond Funding being Approved.

1. Presentation on Accessing Secondary Health Care

Mr. Salomon Torres, Member of the Equal Voice Network Health Working Group, was recognized and informed the Board about the findings of the White Paper he wrote in October 2018 for Equal Voice Health Working Group titled “Health Care Access in the Rio Grande Valley: The Specialty Care Challenge”.

D. Public Safety

President Garcia next recognized Public Safety Director Manuel Cruz to address the following items:

Criminal Justice Program Status Reports

Mr. Cruz informed the Board that the Criminal Justice Program status report was in the meeting packet for review.

Emergency Communications Status Report

1. Consider Approval to Purchase New Computer Workstations for Emergency Communications 9-1-1

Mr. Cruz informed the Board that in accordance with the program’s equipment replacement schedule the computer workstations will replace existing employee workstations. The estimated cost for the 20 workstations is \$321,000.00. Emergency Communications staff is requesting new workstations because the current machines have met ideal life expectancy, are malfunctioning, and are no longer able to keep up with current software. This is a budgeted item previously approved by the funding agency, Commission on State Emergency Communications (CSEC). ***Mayor Henry Hinojosa made a motion to approve the purchase of new computer workstations for Emergency Communications 9-1-1 as presented. Mayor Rick Cavazos seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*** Upon conclusion of action Mr. Cruz noted that the Emergency Communications program status reports were in the meeting packet for review.

Homeland Security Status Report

1. Consider Approval of Resolutions for Grant Applications for FY 2019-20 Homeland Security Grant Program (LETPA/SHSP) Funding Cycle

Mr. Cruz stated that in accordance with the Office of the Governor’s Homeland Security Grant Division, the LRGVDC is required to submit a resolution for each of the five (5) grant applications. ***Mayor Henry Hinojosa made a motion to approve the resolutions for grant applications for FY 2019-20 Homeland Security Grant Program (LETPA/SHSP) funding cycle as presented. Mr. Ronald Mills seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*** Upon conclusion of action Mr. Cruz noted that the Homeland Security Program status reports were in the meeting packet for review.

Regional Police Academy Status Report

Mr. Cruz stated that the regular status reports for the Police Academy were in the meeting packet for review.

E. Transportation

Hidalgo County Metropolitan Planning Organization Status Report

HCMPO Director Andrew Canon was recognized and brought the Board's attention to the list of Bills for the 86<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature that pertain to transportation. He also provided a list showing which committees Valley representatives will serve on during this legislative session.

Valley Metro Status Report

Program Director Tom Logan was recognized and addressed the following items:

1. Consider Approval of Revisions to Drug and Alcohol Policy

Mr. Logan reported that these revisions are minor changes to the Drug and Alcohol Police that pertain to staff changes. These changes are required in order to be in compliance with the Federal Transit Administration and the Texas Department of Transportation. ***Mr. Ronald Mills made a motion to approve the revisions to the Drug and Alcohol Policy as presented. Mayor Pro-tem Pete Garcia seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.***

2. Consider Approval of Zero Dollar Lease Agreement between Cameron County and LRGVDC

Mr. Garza made a correction that this is actually a \$1.00 lease, not a \$0 lease.

Mr. Logan informed the Board that the purpose of this lease agreement is to transition the operations of Valley Metro public transportation service from the existing downtown Valley Transit terminal to the previous location of the Cameron County Precinct 4 offices at 201 N. T Street in Harlingen. It is projected that transit services and intercity mobility will be improved for bus riders because this location will serve as a more efficient north/south and east/west route hub. He added that this lease agreement was presented to the Cameron County Commissioners Court and approved on January 22, 2019. ***Mr. Troy Allen made a motion to approve the lease agreement between Cameron County and LRGVDC at \$1.00 per year. Mayor Henry Hinojosa seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.*** Upon conclusion of action Mr. Logan gave the ridership report.

Upon conclusion of departmental reports President Garcia moved 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 RE: Executive Director Annual Performance Evaluation. ***Mayor David Suarez made a motion to go into executive session. Mayor Pro-tem Norie Gonzalez Garza seconded the motion and executive session began at 1:08 pm.***

At 1:17 pm ***Mayor Pro-tem Norie Gonzalez Garza made a motion to close Executive Session; Mayor Rick Cavazos seconded the motion*** and regular session was reconvened. ***Mayor David Suarez then made a motion to approve a merit raise of 3.5% for Executive Director Ron Garza. Mr. Ronald Mills seconded the motion, President Norma G. Garcia abstained, and upon a vote the motion carried.***

President Garcia next moved to item 7. – New or Unfinished Business. There being none, President Garcia called for a motion to adjourn. ***Ms. Veronica Gonzales made a motion to adjourn, Willacy County Commissioner Eddy Gonzales seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:19 pm.***

---

Hon. Norma G. Garcia, President

ATTEST:

---

Deborah Morales, Recording Secretary

**ITEM #3.**

**CAUCUSING**

**Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council  
Annual Elections Meeting**

May 29, 2019

**Item #3: Caucus to Seat New Board Members ..... President**

- A. Three (3) Directors Representing Member Cities with Population from 10,000-24,999
- B. Three (3) Directors Representing Member Cities with Population under 10,000
- C. Two (2) Directors Representing Educational Institutions
- D. Two (2) Directors Representing Special Government Units
- E. One (1) Director Representing the Poor and Underprivileged (Grassroots Organizations)

As per LRGVDC Bylaws, composition categories of the Board shall be selected from and by those members representing those categories.

- One (1) member of each composition category will vote on behalf of that category.
- City categories shall be selected by one (1) elected official per representing city.
- Members with past due membership fees subject to suspension of voting privileges. (board eligibility).

**ITEM #4.**

**NOMINATING  
COMMITTEE  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council  
Annual Elections Meeting**

May 29, 2019

**Item #4: Act on Recommendations from**

**Nominating Committee.....Hon. Norma G. Garcia  
Committee Chair**

**A. Election of Five (5) Members-at-Large to Serve on General Membership for the 2019-2020 Term**

The Nominating Committee met on Wednesday, May 22, 2019 in Weslaco and nominated individuals to be considered as At-large Members to the LRGVDC General Membership.

The nominees are as follows:

<b>NAME</b>	<b>CITY</b>	<b>COUNTY</b>
Hon. Norma G. Garcia	Donna	Hidalgo
Ms. Ann Cass	McAllen	Hidalgo
Mr. David Penoli	McAllen	Hidalgo
Commissioner Ben Neece	Brownsville	Cameron
Ms. Celeste Sanchez	San Benito	Cameron

**ACTION ITEM**

**Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council  
Annual Elections Meeting**

May 29, 2019

**Item #4: Act on Recommendations from  
Nominating Committee.....Hon. Norma G. Garcia  
Committee Chair**

**B. Election of Officers for 2019-2020 Term**

The Nominating Committee recommends the following slate of officers for the 2019-2020 term:

OFFICE	NAME	COUNTY
President	Mayor David Suarez	Hidalgo
1st Vice President	Mayor Jim Darling	Hidalgo
2nd Vice President	Judge Aurelio Guerra	Willacy
Secretary	Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez	Hidalgo
Treasurer	Mayor Chris Boswell	Cameron
Immediate Past President	Hon. Norma G. Garcia	Hidalgo

**ACTION ITEM**