

Meeting of the Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (RGV MPO) Policy Committee

Wednesday, January 27, 2021

At
1:30 pm

Microsoft Teams Meeting **MINUTES**

Presiding: Chairman Ambrosio “Amos” Hernandez (Mayor City of Pharr)

I. Call to Order

Vice Chairman Eddie Trevino called the meeting to order at 1:34 PM, a quorum was established. The Rio Grande Valley MPO Policy Committee Meeting was held as a Microsoft Teams Meeting with members present.

II. Roll Call

Roll call was taken, and present were representatives from each respective entity:

Members Present:	
Entity	Individual
City of Pharr	Chairman Ambrosio “Amos” Hernandez (Absent)
Cameron County	Judge Eddie Treviño, Jr. (Vice Chairman) Com. David A. Garza (Alternate)
Hidalgo County	Com. Eddie Cantu
City of Brownsville	Mayor Trey Mendez Nurith Galonsky-Pinana (Alternate)
City of McAllen	Mayor Jim Darling
City of Edinburg	Mayor Richard Molina
City of Mission	Mayor Armando O’Caña
City of Harlingen	Mayor Chris Boswell
City of San Benito	Manuel De La Rosa (Alternate)
Cameron County RMA	Frank Parker, Jr.
Hidalgo County RMA	S. David Deanda, Jr. /Ramon Navarro, V
Valley Metro	Tom Logan
TxDOT Pharr District	Pedro “Pete” Alvarez
GUEST	
EX-OFFICIO	
RGV Partnership	Sergio Contreras
LRGVDC	Manuel Cruz
Others Present:	
RGVMPO	Andrew Canon
RGVMPO	Staff

III. Public Comment
NONE

IV. Presentation, Discussion and Action Items:

**A. Consideration and Action to Approve the Minutes From:
December 12, 2020**

Vice Chairman Treviño asked if there were any corrections to the minutes of December 12, 2020. No corrections noted, Mayor O’Caña (City of Mission) made a motion to approve the minutes of December 12, 2020; as presented by staff. Mr. Logan (Valley Metro) seconded the motion; and upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

B. Consideration and Concurrence on FY 2022 UTP Submittal (Tabled 12/21/20)

Vice Chairman Treviño noted that the next item, **Consideration and Concurrence on FY2022 UTP Submittals** was tabled at the last Policy Meeting. Mayor Boswell (City of Harlingen) made a motion to remove this item from being tabled. *Mayor O'Caña (City of Mission) seconded the motion; and upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.*

Vice Chairman Trevino noted that he had a couple of questions for Andrew and Pete Sepulveda as follows: 1) the reason this item was tabled at the December 12, 2020 Policy Meeting were concerns regarding the fact that there were cuts being made in State Funding in several categories and 2) the impact it was going to have on some projects throughout the RGVMPPO. It was with an understanding that this item was going to be considered at a Special Meeting before the deadline to make sure it was addressed by the State. It was also the understanding, that despite the fact, that the RGVMPPO had not discussed to approve or disapprove the FY2022 UTP Submittals, Mr. Alvarez submitted it to the State without RGVMPPO action.

Andrew response was "Yes" that is correct, District submitted it to TP&P.

Vice Chairman noted he understands that sometime these situations arise if there is a deadline, however; TxDOT can appreciate that both the TAC and Policy Boards do not consider themselves as "Rubber Stamps" for whatever the Districts are going to do or not do. That is the whole purpose of these discussions by both boards and if the communications need fixing, then it needs to be done on both sides. But most important when dealing with issues where there are cuts that are affecting the local projects throughout the valley, both the TAC and Policy Boards voice/concerns should be addressed. Aside from that, were there phone calls made out to Andrew or Pete Sepulveda or anyone on the Policy Board before going to the State saying we (TxDOT) is going to submit the paperwork with or without Policy Approval or Dis-Approval.

Mr. Alvarez explain that a Special Meeting was held on December 10, 2020, and efforts were made by the Pharr District to let the Policy board know that an email had being submitted to the RGVMPPO, which was forward to both the TAC and Policy Board, of a deadline of January 11, 2021, to submit the Draft Category 2, 4 and 12 Project Call. Discussions in the December Policy meeting was if a Special Meeting needs to be held so be it, December 2020 came and went, and no Special Meeting was held. However, January 11, 2021 deadline was still imposed, not only in the Pharr District, but in all the other Districts to submit a Draft of the Category 2, 4 and 12 listings, so that preliminary analysis could be done at the Administration Level in Austin. A TxDOT Commission Meeting will be held to start looking at funding levels for all various 12-funding categories. Mr. Alvarez concluded by letting Policy members know that his intentions were not meant for this to be "Rubber Stamp" or disrespectful in any shape or form. TxDOT – Pharr District made a sub-conscious effort back in December 2020 to make this happen to have a discussion, with a deadline to meet. At that meeting it was voted to table this item, and a Special Meeting to be held, but no Special Meeting was scheduled, and a deadline had to be met. Now in today's Policy Board meeting, any questions or concerns for Cat 2 Projects will be addressed. If this was taken as being disrespectful or not following protocol, this was never the intent. Mr. Alvarez agreed that, yes there is always room for improvement for both RGVMPPO and TxDOT and vice versa. If the Policy board can refer to Ms. Butlers' email, where it states clearly this Draft had a deadline of January 11, 2021.

Vice Chairman Trevino ask both Andrew and Mr. Alvarez where there any calls or email done to Policy Board before January 11, 2021 that a Special Meeting need to be held prior to the deadline.

Andrew let Policy Board know that he did reach out to Chairman Ambrosio on January 4, 2021, and the Chairman had no desire to hold a Special Meeting.

Mayor Boswell noted that his motion was to table this item and to hold a Special Meeting prior to the deadline.

Vice Chairman Trevino finally asked Mr. Alvarez what the impact and intentions are going to be moving forward with these projects without RGVMPPO action.

Mr. Alvarez emphasize that (TxDOT) submitted only a Draft of the FY 2022 UTP -Candidate Projects, so that it can be evaluated in a Statewide process. The process is in place and data collected by TxDOT Head Quarters at this time has no impact. The table being submitted to show what estimates changes have occurred and why (See Tabled Attached). The intention for this meeting is to inform the Policy Board what the updated Draft estimates and project candidate listings were and hopes to get an approval for these candidate projects to be submitted. Finally, if the Policy Board were to approve this today, this will still be in compliance and with no risk.

Mr. Sepulveda noted that this item was discussed at the November 19, 2020 TAC Meeting, and discussion was made clear to Staff and TxDOT, the accountability that the TAC Committee has to the Policy Board. At both TAC meetings it was made very clear by the TAC Committee that clear answers need to be related to the Policy board when it comes to projects and meeting deadlines. Also discussed by TAC Members at their meetings is being accountable and having better communication by both Staff and TxDOT to the Policy Board.

Andrew noted he had received a text from the Chairman, and it was his best recollection and understanding that TxDOT was not prepared to call for a Special Meeting, because the material and supported numbers were not ready.

Mayor Boswell disagreed with that, if a Special Meeting is needed, then that's the motion of the Policy Board.

Mr. Sepulveda for the record did note that this item was recommended for approved at the TAC meeting to the Policy Board. **No further discussion took place on this item, Mr. Parker (Cameron County RMA) made a motion to approve the FY 2022 UTP Submittal. The motion was seconded by Mr. Alvarez (TxDOT); and upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

C. Consideration and Action on TIP and MTP to Achieve Fiscal Constraint Targets

Staff noted that the TIP and MTP Fiscal Constraints Targets requires action by the Policy Board. This information was available for public review and for the public to leave comments on the RGVMPPO Website's News Section effective December 23, 2020 thru January 22, 2021. Staff noted that in order to maintain a Fiscally Constrain document, there was a need to shift projects throughout the 2021-2024 TIP.

Staff noted that the following documents were/are posted within the RGVMPPO News Section for Policy/TAC Members' and for Public viewing:

- Public Notice (Attached)
- Highway TIP 2021-2024
- Summary of Changes (Attached)
- MTP 2020-2045
- Transit 2021-2045
- 5307 Programs of Projects

Finally, Staff noted that a link was also provided as follows for easy access on the documents as listed above. <https://www.rgvmpo.org/news/displaynews.htm?NewsID=214&TargetID=1>

After some discussion on this item, Mayor Boswell (City of Harlingen) made a motion to approve the TIP and MTP to Achieve Fiscal Constraint Targets as presented by staff. The motion was seconded by Mayor O'Caña (City of Mission); and upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

D. Update and Possible Action with Regards to Functional Classification Status

Staff noted that the RGVMPPO is continually working with Local Governments to assure that the need for Federal Functional Classification of Roadways continue with the MPO Plans. As per Vice Chairman Trevino's request, included in the packet for review is a listing of all Functional Classifications and their status.

Mr. Navarro ask if there was a turnaround time and date. Staff reply was "NONE". TxDOT did note they will continue to submit information and work closely with Partners to make sure all communication is related.

No discussion took place on this item, Policy members present acknowledged information as presented by staff.

E. Discussion of Category 7 Targets Scoring Initiatives

Staff noted that they continue working on scoring CAT 7/Off-System Projects to fulfill Performance Measures Requirements. Staff has diligently worked to apply available in-house Data to each Project's scoring criteria. On December 29, 2020, an email was sent out to local governments who encompass CAT 7/Off-System Projects to request additional supportive input for this scoring process. To facilitate this initiative, Staff provided (three TAC Workshops were held and was approved at the May 27, 2020 Policy Board) an Off System Project Evaluation Form and an Online Project Scoring Tool.

Staff concluded by letting Policy Members know that staff will continue initiative efforts to project accurate scores for each Project.

No discussion took place on this item, Policy members present acknowledged information as presented by staff.

F. Discussion Regarding City Limit and ETJ Boundary GIS Data Update

Staff noted that it is the beginning of the New Year, and time to collect and update the RGVMPD GIS Data. Staff are looking to updating the City Limit and ETJ Boundary Data. Staff would like to take this opportunity to request from all our Planning Partners to provide the most up to date Data, preferably in a GIS Format, but staff can also work with PDF format. These vital data sets will allow the RGVMPD to plan for the RGV's future transportation needs.

Staff concluded by reminding Policy Members that an Online Interactive Mapping tool "RGVMPD UMAP" is available and encourages everyone to review/visit the online UMAP. If any discrepancies data is identified, please notify staff immediately, so that amending data is reflected most accurately.

Manuel Cruz, LRGVDC Director did inform Policy Board and Staff, that 911 Data is available as well through their department.

Vice Chairman Trevino asked if there was a deadline for this information being requested by staff. Staff noted that this item would be re-visited again in February with the TAC Members.

No further discussion took place on this item, Policy members present acknowledged information as presented by staff.

G. RGVMPD Bike / Ped Program Presentation

Mr. Canon introduced Eva Garcia the newly hired Bike / Ped Program Specialist to Policy Members present. Ms. Garcia provided a brief insight to Policy Members on years of experience while working with Brownsville and the Caracara Trails and neighboring cities. Ms. Garcia noted in her presentation, key recommendations, and goals that she will be working towards from the recently adopted RGVMPD Active Transportation Plan (ATP), activities of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and other efforts to build a safe and seamless Regional Active Transportation Network.

Policy members present thanked Ms. Garcia for a very well put together presentation and welcome her to the RGVMPD Team. No further discussion took place on this item, Policy members present acknowledged information as presented by staff.

V. 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

Vice Chairman Treviño noted that Chairman Hernandez had requested that this item be tabled due to his absence and it be placed at the next Policy meeting for consideration and action. Mayor Boswell (City of Harlingen) made a motion to table this item, regarding the "Executive Director" as requested by the Chairman. The motion was seconded by Mayor Darling (City of McAllen); *and upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.*

VI. RGVMPD Executive Directors Reports and Updates

A. Directors Update

- **Cameron County Office Space** – Andrew notified Policy members of possibly having an office in the Cameron County area and staff to serve that area. More information will be provided as it develops. Vice Chairman Treviño agreed with staff, about possibly having an office in the Cameron County area, thought it was a very good idea.
- **RGVMPD Logo** – Staff provided samples of the current logos within the various LRGVDC Departments:

CED – Community & Economic Development
VM - Valley Metro
PS – Public Safety
HH – Health and Human Services

Staff would like to follow suit with those Logos, by having the rim that indicates "Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council" for the RGVMPD Logo. Vice Chairman Trevino requested staff submit other samples with "more color", before changing or agreeing to the new logo.

B. Financial Update

Staff provided the Financial Summary to members present; staff noted budget continues to be (96%) under budget. (Report filed with RGVTPB Packet)

VII. Status Report

A. TxDOT Project Status Report (Action Taken as Required)

Both Dan Perales and Carlos Ceballos with (TxDOT) provided an updated presentation Via Teams on current projects and activities within the Hidalgo and Cameron Counties. All projects are continuing to move forward as scheduled. **(Report filed with RGVTPB Packet)**

B. Cameron County RMA

Mr. Sepulveda (Cameron County RMA) provided an updated presentation Via Teams on projects that are currently within the Cameron County RMA. Vice Chairman Trevino emphasized the importance of the West Rail Trails, keep this project moving forward with a completion date of Summer 2021. **(Report filed with RGVTPB Packet)**

C. Hidalgo County RMA

Mr. Navarro provided an updated presentation Via Teams on projects that are currently within the Hidalgo County RMA. All projects are continuing to move forward. **(Report filed with RGVTPB Packet)**

D. Regional Transit (Metro)

Mr. Jaramillo provided an updated report for all (3) Three Transit Providers Via Teams that are currently within the Hidalgo/Cameron Regions. Details values on ridership could be found within the RGVTPB Packet.

Micro-Transit – Mr. Jaramillo noted that Micro-Transit is a form of demand-responsive transport. This transit service offers flexible routing and/or flexible scheduling of minibus vehicles. Micro-Transit providers build routes to match demand (trip) and supply (driven vehicle) and extend the efficiency and accessibility of the transit service. Possible pick-up/drop-off stops are restricted (usually within a geofenced area), and transit can be provided either as a stop-to-stop service or curb-to-curb service. Conceptually, Micro-Transit fits somewhere between private individual transportation (cars or taxicabs or Uber) and public mass transit (buses).

This service will directly connect with existing service at the **Edinburg Transit Terminal** allowing transfers to **RGV Metro Express, Valley Metro, and Intercity** bus service. The intent would be to provide advance-reservation service and premium same-day service from core areas in Edinburg to access further transit systems, local businesses, higher learning, medical facilities and employment destinations.”

VIII. New or Unfinished Business

Star County Merger – Mayor O’Caña (City of Mission) noted that now that the new Mayors for Star County are in place, further discussion will be held regarding possible merger with the Region (RGVMPO). Discussions will continue to move forward and as information develops, Mayor O’Caña (City of Mission) will provide updates to the Policy Board.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

No further items were discussed, Vice Chairman Trevino called for a motion to adjourn at 2:25 PM. Mr. Parker (Cameron County RMA) made a motion to adjourn. Mayor Guerra (City of San Benito) seconded the motion; and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.

ATTEST:  2/25/2021
RGVMPO POLICY COMMITTEE
(TPB) VICE CHAIRMAN