

SPECIAL MEETING

CITY COMMISSION

HARLINGEN, TEXAS

JULY 9, 2010

A Special Meeting of the Harlingen Elective Commission was held on Friday, July 9, 2010 at 5:30 p.m. in Town Hall, City Hall, 118 E. Tyler Street, Harlingen, Texas. Those in attendance were:

Mayor and City Commission

Mayor Chris Boswell
Joey Trevino, Mayor Pro Tem
Gustavo C. Ruiz, Commissioner District 1
Robert Leftwich, Commissioner District 2
Jerry Prepejchal, Commissioner District 4

Absent:

Kori Marra, Commissioner District 3

Staff Present:

Gabriel Gonzalez, Interim City Manager
Roxann P. Cotroneo, City Attorney
Sylvia R. Trevino, City Secretary

Mayor Boswell called the meeting to order and Commissioner Trevino made a motion to go into Closed/Executive Session pursuant to Chapter 551, Subchapter D., *V.T.C. A. Government Code* (Section 551.087) regarding commercial and financial information from a business prospect with which the Board is conducting economic development negotiations and/or to discuss or deliberate financial or other incentives to the business prospect known as Project Room.

Commissioner Prepejchal seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**CLOSED/EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 551,
SUBCHAPTER D., V.T.C. A. GOVERNMENT CODE (SECTION 551.087)
REGARDING COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION FROM A
BUSINESS PROSPECT WITH WHICH THE BOARD IS CONDUCTING
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEGOTIATIONS AND/OR TO DISCUSS OR
DELIBERATE FINANCIAL OR OTHER INCENTIVES TO THE BUSINESS
PROSPECT KNOWN AS PROJECT ROOM**

The Executive Session convened at 5:32 p.m. and concluded at 5:53 p.m. with no action taken in closed session.

Present during the Executive Session were: Mayor Boswell, Commissioner Leftwich, Commissioner Trevino, Commissioner Prepejchal, Gabriel Gonzalez, Roxann P. Cotroneo. (Commissioner Ruiz arrived at 5:45 p.m.)

**ACTION TAKEN TO APPROVE A CONDITIONAL AND NON-BINDING
LETTER OF INTENT FOR FINANCIAL AND OTHER INCENTIVES TO A
BUSINESS PROSPECT KNOWN AS PROJECT ROOM.**

Commissioner Leftwich made a motion to authorize the Letter of Credit with changes as discussed in Executive Session.

Commissioner Prepejchal seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

CITY PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2010-2011 DISCUSSED

Gabriel Gonzalez stated that there were no major changes to the budget due to the budget situation.

Starting with the Human Resources budget, Commissioner Ruiz asked about the tuition reimbursement and Efren Fernandez, HR Director, explained that this is an incentive for employees to continue their education in any course that is applicable to their job. It is done on a reimbursement basis and the employee is allotted up to \$250.00 per semester provided they pass the course.

Commissioner Ruiz asked that this program be promoted more among the employees.

Regarding the Risk Management budget, there was some discussion held on windstorm coverage and some discussion centered on the assets belonging to Harlingen Waterworks. It was noted that some of the assets were identified and Harlingen Waterworks reimbursed the City for the coverage on some of those assets.

Regarding health insurance, Mr. Gonzalez noted that there as a 9.75% increase but the actual is going to be only 9% for the same benefits as before. The overall increase to this budget was \$374,652.

Commissioner Trevino suggested that staff start looking at a health savings plan for the future.

Paul Menzies gave a brief overview of the Planning and Development budgets, which includes 35 full time employees within 7 departments. He indicated that the storm water management program is not a department for next year. He indicated that there were no major changes to this budget.

Regarding the Code enforcement division, there was discussion about possibly adding one additional code enforcement officer.

It was the consensus of the Commission that Mr. Menzies conduct an in depth briefing within the next 2-3 months on the storm water management program.

There was increase to the Building Inspections Division budget in the fuel account.

Regarding the CDBG budget, the Director is to come back and explain the administrative budget to the Commission.

Mr. Gonzalez stated that the MPO is reimbursed 100% by the State. \$3.2 million was awarded in stimulus funding and has been earmarked for the railroad relocation project.

The Downtown District budget was considered next and it was noted that there is an 87% occupancy rate district wide. There are no major initiatives but a lot of capital improvements have been made. The two major upcoming projects are the Blaschka Tower and the Reese Project.

The Commission asked that a list of the capital improvements that have been made downtown be provided to them.

Parking downtown was discussed briefly and comment was made that additional parking could be a 4B project.

Staff is to follow up with Lupita Gutierrez-Garza on the status of the Grande Theatre.

A discussion was held on the Whitewing field lighting as part of the Parks budget.

Commissioner Trevino asked for reports on the Teen Services contract with the Boys and Girls Club to see how effective this program has been and for the possibility of tying it with the gang task force to expand the program.

Gabriel Gonzales is to follow up with the Waterworks on the status of the tower maintenance at Pendleton Park.

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Gabriel Gonzalez stated that there are some concerns with the Harlingen Performing Arts Theatre and he asked that they come back and make a presentation regarding their budget.

Commissioner Ruiz commented that he would like to see RioFest come back. He suggested that a city festival be a topic of discussion at the Commissioners' retreat.

A press release was requested regarding the mosquito spraying that would explain the breeding cycle and its relation to the spraying.

Regarding the Golf Course budget, there was some discussion on bringing an outside vendor for the clubhouse. Staff is to gauge this possibility.
Commissioner Trevino requested that the Golf Course board minutes be provided to the Commission.

Regarding the Convention and Visitors Bureau, there were no changes to the budget. Staff needs to work on a contract with the Harlingen Chamber for the leasing of space, which are a 'zero' charge for the rent and 'zero' charge for the staff. It was noted that \$263,000 was returned to the City by the Chamber when the CVB was made a part of the City operations. The Chairman of the Convention & Visitors Bureau offered the idea of a joint meeting with the CVB and the City Commission to discuss strategies.

There being no further discussion the meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Chris Boswell, Mayor

Attest:

Sylvia R. Trevino, City Secretary