

HARLINGEN COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT BOARD
MEETING

May 1, 2014

A meeting of the Harlingen Community Improvement Board was held Thursday, May 1, 2014 at 12 Noon at Town Hall, City Hall located at 118 E. Tyler, Harlingen, Texas. Those in attendance were:

Harlingen Community Improvement Board

Jesse Robles - President
Gina Cano-Monreal – Secretary
Joe Rubio Jr.
John Guevara
Danny Villarreal

Absent

Paul Durant
Daniel Arazia

Staff Present

Carlos Yerena, City Manager
Amanda C. Elizondo, City Secretary
Gabriel Gonzalez, Assistant City Manager
Dan Serna, Assistant City Manager
Elvia Trevino, Finance Director

Also Present

Mayor Chris Boswell

President Jesse Robles called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m. and stated the agenda had been duly posted accordingly to state law.

- 1) Consider and take action to approve the minutes of April 8, 2014 meeting

Motion was made by Joe Rubio and seconded by Danny Villarreal to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

- 2) Executive/Closed Session pursuant to Chapter 551, Subchapter D, V.T.C.A Government Code, Section 551.087 and 55.071 regarding commercial and financial information from a business prospect with which the City is conducting economic development negotiations and/or to discuss or deliberate financial or other incentives with the business prospect know as **Project Opportunity** and to seek legal advice from the City Attorney regarding subject.

At 12:11p.m. President Robles announced the Harlingen Community Improvement Board would convene into executive session to discuss Item No. 2.

Motion was made by Joe Rubio and seconded by Gina Cano-Monreal to go into executive session to discuss Item No. 2. Motion carried unanimously.

At 12:35 p.m., President Robles announced the Harlingen Community Improvement Board had completed its executive session and declared the meeting open to the public.

No actions taken on Item No. 2

3) Update on the following Projects:

- a. 25th Street Trail Project
- b. Update on Restrooms/Concession Projects at McKelvey and Arroyo Parks

Paul Menzies, Parks & Recreation Director reported on the McKelvey Park Restrooms and Arroyo Park Concession Stand/Restrooms Projects which have been completed and were opened August of 2013. The projects came in under budge. The funds that were left over were returned to the 4B Fund Balance. He reported the 25th Street Trail Project is 60% complete. Paving work remains to be done and should be completed within 60 days for its grand opening. He highlighted the areas still in need of work including the railroad track areas near Bonham Elementary, 25th Street/Bourne Trail and surrounding areas of Texas State Technical College Campus near Rio Hondo Road. There would be two monument signs constructed out of concrete with landscaping that would say for example "Harlingen 25th Street Trail Project" that would be situated at corner of Loop 499/FM 106 and the bend from Harrison headed North to 25th Street. The signs would also have a description of the trails. The Ramsey Hughes Birding Trail would have a continuous paved sidewalk trail from TSTC down 499 to the expressway. Sprinkler systems, landscaping and trees along the trails have been included into the project budget.

4) Presentation and discussion of the Harlingen Comprehensive Plan updates with Jim Carrillo from Halff & Associates, Inc.

Jim Carrillo of Halff & Associates, Inc. gave a brief summary of the recommendations in regards to the Harlingen Comprehensive Plan. He said the key philosophical areas that needed to be focused on were a strong and growing economic vitality; maintain a very high quality of life; build on the unique strengths of the City; and proactive governance. The key areas he discussed were Transportation in regards to Thorough Plan, alternative modes of transportation, and the kinds of responsibilities other entities of projects they might take on and assist in, and Time Frame; a list of recommendations to the Parks System, focus on the Arroyo Colorado and Athletic Complexes; Downtown Area in regards to the traffic and making the connection from Tyler Street to Harrison and parking availability around the Blashkah Tower and major buildings around the Downtown District Area, statistics versus one way to two way streets in the in the Downtown Area in regards how they could approve retail sales, and look at the Down Town Master Plan to address all the issues in a very short period. He said the core area of the City is vital to the future of the City and some attention would need to be attended to it. In regards to

the economic development of the City he stated the airport is huge part of the City's economic engine that should be protected and enhanced. The Economic Development Corporation should expand the industrial base in the City and should work with the private sector to bring industrial and light manufacturing logistics to the area. The standards and guide lines should be looked at in the Medical District in regards to the land use to create a solid medical area amongst the community. The City should work in partnership with the Harlingen Consolidated Independent School District and Texas State Technical College to help them accomplish their goals.

Mr. Carrillo stated the firm is working on the language and text of the final document. He assumed another round of review and meeting with this and other boards would take place to gain further insight and information for the final document.

Mr. Rubio questioned what discussions were held in regards to the Port of Harlingen.

Mr. Carrillo responded this was one of the areas that need to be focused on. He said it is an area that is close to the City by and would have an impact on the City's economic development.

Mr. Rubio stated there were immediate needs in the community and questioned how long was the proposed plan would be.

Mr. Carrillo responded a typical plan would take about ten years. He said an appropriate plan for the City of Harlingen would be when the City Commission, Boards and Staff come together on a yearly or bi-yearly basis to review the Comprehensive Plan. The plan doesn't tell what one should do but it merely suggests a plan of action.

President Robles said then welcomed input, feedback or questions regarding the presentation. He said he omitted all of the statistical data and then questioned who would address and implement certain areas of the plan. He said the suggestions should be forward to Mr. Carrillo to be included into the comprehensive plan.

Mr. Yerena said document would serve as a guiding source for the Commission to consider and set policy. The budgeting process is done throughout the year where the Commission could decide what priority are most important and is Staff can seek the funding to meet their goals and objectives.

President Robles said if certain projects are going to be considered then the budgeting process is most important in who is going to maintain those projects after they are complete.

Mr. Yerena said ultimately the Commission would be in charge to decide what the priorities of the plan should be. The policy would be set by the City Commission. The vision would be set for the community to participate in and gain their feedback.

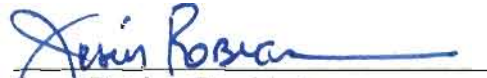
Mayor Boswell said in regards to the Harlingen 100 Plan quarterly meeting were held where the 10 most important items were put on a fast track to be completed. These steps should

also be considered with the Comprehensive Plan. He said 3 - 4 signature long-term items should be considered to be completed.

Kenneth Benton felt one of the most important thing missing from the Comprehensive Plan is the recommendations for land use around the community. He said one thing that would help drive this and take the City forward is land use decisions. He said an effective comprehensive plan would help guide land use decision to the Planning and Zoning Board, Community Improvement Board and City Commission don't make political decisions.

There being further business to discuss, President Robles adjourned the meeting.

Motion was made by John Guevara and seconded by Danny Villarreal to adjourn the meeting.



Jesse Robles, President

ATTEST:



Amanda C. Elizondo, City Secretary