

**HARLINGEN COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT BOARD
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING
JUNE 26, 2012**

A meeting of the Harlingen Community Improvement Board of Directors was held on Tuesday, June 26, 2012 at 11:30 a.m. at Town Hall, City Hall located at 118 E. Tyler Street, Harlingen, Texas. Those in attendance were:

Present:

Jesse Robles -- President
Paul Durant -- Vice President
Gina Cano-Monreal -- Secretary
Joe Rubio
Daniel Araiza

Absent:

Dean LaFever

Mayor & Commission

Chris Boswell - Mayor

Staff Present:

Carlos Yerena, City Manager
Roxann P. Cotroneo, City Attorney
Gabriel Gonzales, Assistant City Manager
Roel Gutierrez, Director of Finance
Amanda C. Elizondo, City Secretary

President Jesse Robles called the meeting to order and stated the agenda had been posted accordingly.

- 1) Consider and take action to approve the minutes of November 28, 2011 meeting.

Motion was made by Paul Durant and seconded by Gina Cano-Monreal to approve the minutes of November 28, 2011. Motion carried unanimously.

- 2) Presentation of financial status report.

Roel Gutierrez, Finance Director reported the May 31, 2012 cash assets to be \$1,606,786. Accounts receivable from sales tax are at \$96,667. Total assets are at \$1,703,453, which is also the Fund Balance. Under Revenues and Expenditures, total revenues for the year came in at \$851,596 with the year to date Fund Balance at \$1,640,273. He reported on the Cash Flow Projection for year ended May 31, 2012. The cash balance is at \$1,606,786 with additional cash expected by year end to be at \$391,422 for an estimated cash balance by September 30, 2012 to be at \$1,998,208. All projects

under Committed Project Expenditures have already been approved. The total cost if spend throughout the rest of the year is \$1,017,919. The balance for Fiscal Year 2011-2012 will be \$980,289.

Mr. Gutierrez highlighted on some of the Projects that have been approved since 2008 by the Harlingen Community Improvement Board. Along with a history of the sales tax for Fiscal Years 2008-2012.

Mr. Durant suggested the Veterans Memorial Committee members are present at the next Harlingen Community Improvement meeting and provide a progress report on where they are at with their expenses.

Mr. Araiza asked for an update on the Trail Improvement Plan for the next meeting.

3) Public Hearing by the Harlingen Community Improvement Board in accordance with the Development Act of 1979, Article 5190.6, Section 4B(n) to hear comments for or against funding the following projects:

a) Project 2012 – 1 – Restrooms at McKelvey Park and restrooms/concession facility at Arroyo Park.

Paul Menzies, Parks & Recreation Director reported on the Restrooms at McKelvey Park. He stated the Harlingen Community Board previously approved this project back in 2008. Staff is finalizing a plan to gain access to sewer through the adjacent apartment complex with separate funds. He is requesting the board to approve the restroom request of \$205,000.

He continued with the second part of Item A, which are the combination restroom/concession facility to serve the ball fields at Arroyo Park. The girls fast pitch league that uses the facility does not have convenient access to restroom facilities or any permanent concession facility. Such a combination facility is commonplace for other city facilities that host youth leagues. The proposed facility would be similar to that of the proposed restroom facility at McKelvey Park. The request is for \$210,000.

Dan Araiza asked why the Parks Department couldn't fund these projects, if they are park related and why are they coming to the 4B for funding.

Carlos Yereña, City Manager replied it is an eligible quality of life project that qualifies under the 4B. So the Parks Department is here asking for funding from the board.

Jesse Robles pointed out the city funds that the Parks Department receives are mainly for maintenance and operation.

b) Project 2012-2 -- Pagodas at Vestal Park, Rangerville Park and Bonham Park

Mr. Menzies stated there is an Adult Soccer League that has played at Vestal Park for years. There is one restroom, but no shelter/covered area for the neighborhood. He is requesting a gazebo with picnic tables for the league and the citizens in the neighborhood that use this park.

He continued with Rangerville Road Park and stated it is also a heavily used park with a playground and plenty of parking. There is also a lighted trail at this location. There are three existing gazebos. Funds requested will be used to construct a gazebo to be similar to the existing covered gazebos.

Currently, there are no covered shelters at Bonham Park. He is requesting funds to construct a gazebo similar to the gazebos recently constructed at the Splash Park. This park is eventually going to become one of the trail project parks once the trail is completed.

c) Project 2012-3 – Irrigation System at Vestal Park

Referring to Item C, he is requesting \$20,000 for the installation of the irrigation system, also located at Vestal Park.

d) Project 2012 – 4 – Comprehensive Master Plan

Mr. Yerena informed the board that a Comprehensive Plan was established back in 1996. There were minor modifications in 1998. Staff is asking for \$300,000 in funding, but the amount could be a little lower. The Thoroughfare Plan, which is one of the components of the Comprehensive Plan, has been contracted out through the General Fund. The amount requested could be as low as \$225,000.

Ken Clark, Planning and Zoning Director stated the Comprehensive Plan has been in the budget for approval for the past 5 or 6 years. The Comprehensive Plan is a statute that every state adopts that allows communities to adopt a guide for the community. It serves many purposes. Initially it serves as a unified advisory document to the City Commission and the Planning and Zoning Commission to address issues and concerns in the community regarding land use, growth and transportation and the general future of the City. Recently, the City contracted with a traffic-engineering firm to update the numbers and run software models to update the City's Thoroughfare Plan. Those numbers will be going before the Planning and Zoning Commission sometime in August and then to the City Commission right following for approval. There will be a section on the revitalization on the downtown area. Some architect students from the University of Brownsville worked some of the plans for the downtown area. The work performed by these students helped in saving money on the Comprehensive Plan. The plans will be turned over to a consultant that is going to do the actual work on the plan. There is also an open space on the Parks and Recreation portion of the plan that addresses what the community wants to see happen with open space in the future. Also, included is an economic element that talks about economic development for the future of the City.

Sometimes capital improvements are included in the plan for annual review. This is not an ordinance it is only a guide to find out what the community wants to see happen in future. The most important key is to get a consultant who specializes in preparing this type of advisory documents. They will have to conduct and bring the citizens to these community meetings to get input and incorporate this information into the Comprehensive Plan. Once the consultants have completed the draft of the Comprehensive Plan it will be presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission for recommendations and then the final draft will be presented to the City Commission for approval.

Carlos Yerena, City Manager stated that the City has applied for funding through the Economic Development Association (EDA) and they were informed today that their request have been denied.

Mr. Rubio questioned the amount of \$300,000 on the agenda item.

Mr. Yerena stated its reads \$300,000, but the Project can be completed with \$225,000.

Mr. Rubio asked whether the item had to be re-written or just approved.

Mr. Yerena replied the amount of \$225,000 is lower, so it can be approved.

A lengthy discussion followed on the Project.

President Robles stated he sees no issue in funding the component of the parks in the Comprehensive Plan because part of that process is land acquisition and it falls under the 4B board.

Mr. Yerena stated the Capital Improvement Plan talks about the public facilities and the needs assessment on what the City has to accomplish to upgrade any additional demands. All this goes back to Economic Development and the quality of life. These expenditures are related to public safety issues and all are eligible expenditures under the 4B.

Roxann Cotroneo, City Attorney stated that the 4B board in the past has referred themselves as a Parks Board that has funding for city parks. But in reality under state law and under city ordinances that created this board, the 4B board has more authority then just projects for parks. The board has the authority to contract for economic development purposes which can improve a multitude of items, such as airport facilities, community facilities, and can also include various projects such as public facilities, infrastructures, streets, drainage and roads.

President Robles stated his concern is that \$300,000 is a very large amount of money to fund this project.

Ms. Cotroneo pointed out that the \$300,000 request for the Comprehensive Master Plan has been reduced to \$225,000. She wanted the board to be informed that this is an allowable expense under the 4B.

Mr. Rubio questioned when action is taken on this item to approve the amount can there be a motion made to reduce to a certain amount.

Ms. Cotroneo replied yes.

Mr. Yerena stated this is an eligible expense under the 4B, twice city staff has applied for grants and was denied. This is the last option, to present this Project to the 4B for approval.

Mayor Boswell stated this board was created to improve the quality of life issues in the community. The funding request has come down and the City of Harlingen needs to have a Comprehensive Plan. He pointed out that the city is not going to spend the \$225,000 before end of this fiscal year, so he would consider the approval of the project. He also pointed out this is a critically important project.

Daniel Araiza asked if the board would approve only a certain amount less than \$225,000, can the City Commission go back and approve the original amount.

Mayor Boswell answered they will approve the amount that is approved by the 4B board.

President Robles opened the public hearing to solicit comments from the public on the above Projects.

Kenneth Benton stated he served on the Comprehensive Plan Committee and Land Use Planning Development in the City of Austin. The visions and goals set by the Community were long-range scopes. They wanted high tech industry. Those were some of the guiding principles that came out of the Comprehensive Plan that guided the Economic Development and city staff in the decision making in determining incentives. The City of Harlingen needs a Comprehensive Plan. He urges the 4B board to support the Comprehensive Plan. He suggested the steps the Mayor used on the Harlingen 100 Plan should be followed in establishing the Comprehensive Plan for the city. He suggested to not only fund the Plan, but breakout of the Comprehensive Plan by looking at the Original Townsite and developing a plan for City of Harlingen's future.

There being no other comments, President Robles declared the public hearing closed.

4) Consider and take action to approve funding for the following projects:

a) <u>Project 2012 – 1 – Restrooms at McKelvey Park</u>	<u>\$ 179,530</u>
<u>Restrooms/concession facility at Arroyo Park.</u>	<u>\$ 192,000</u>

Motion was made by J. Rubio and seconded by P. Durant to approve Project 2012-1 in the amount of \$415,000. Motion carried unanimously.

- b) Project 2012 – 2 – Pagodas at Vestal Park, Rangerville
Park and Bonham Park \$ 26,000

Motion was made by J. Rubio and seconded by D. Araiza to approve Project 2012-2 in the amount of \$26,000. Motion carried unanimously.

- c) Project 2012 – 3 – Irrigation System at Vestal Park \$ 20,000

Motion was made by G. Monreal and seconded by P. Durant to approve Project 2012-3 in the amount of \$20,000. Motion carried unanimously.

- d) Project 2012 – 4 – Comprehensive Master Plan \$ 300,000

Motion was made by J. Rubio and seconded by P. Durant to approve Project 2012-4 in the amount of \$200,000. Motion carried unanimously.

- b) Project 2011 – 2 – Perimeter fence for the Splash Park
at Lon C. Hill Park. \$ 32,334

Gabriel Gonzalez, Assistant City Manager stated last year the 4B board approved the amount of \$232,000 for the Lon C. Hill Park. The perimeter fence for the Splash Park was not included in that amount. Staff is requesting \$32,334 this year to pay for the perimeter fence.

Paul Menzies, Parks Director stated vandalism was a big issue at the Splash Park when it first opened. The City Commission asked staff to fence this park due to the vandalism. They are here tonight requesting funding for the completion of this project.

Roxanne Cotroneo, City Attorney stated under the Local Government Code, Section 505.159, it requires this board/corporation to have a public hearing on a proposed project. Back in May 26, 2011, this corporation had a public hearing on the Splash Park as a project. This project is only increasing the amount that is going to be spending on the project. She informed the board they had met the requirements of a public hearing. They do not have to have a public hearing for the expenditure of the perimeter fence for the Splash Park.

Motion was made by J. Rubio and seconded by G. Monreal to approve Project 2011-2 in the amount of \$32,334. Motion carried unanimously.

- 5) Approval of the Fiscal Year 2012-2013 Budget.

Roel Gutierrez, Finance Director highlighted on the revenue projections for budget year 2012-2013. He stated the revenues were at \$1,270,129. Expenditures for unallocated projects are for the same amount. Throughout the year if any projects are added a budget amendment will be made to move to whichever project the board wishes to move it to.

He stated the available balance for Fiscal Year 2011-2012 is \$286,995 and next year the board will receive \$1.2 million in revenue.

Motion was made by P. Durant and seconded by D. Araiza to approve the 2012-2013 budget. Motion carried unanimously.

6) Five minute presentation by Kenneth Benton on the Revitalization of the Original Townsite.

Kenneth Benton commented the 4B board should not be spending their money on Parks. The City has a Parks Board and these expenditures should be coming out of the Parks and Recreation budget. He asked that in the future the 4B budget be spend as the law requires and approves.

He continued with his presentation on the revitalization of the Original Townsite. He is asking the board adopt the Original Townsite as a project to make it eligible to help revitalize and improve our city. If the City of Harlingen is ever to become a tourist and retirement community in the future, there is no way the city will attract any private investors unless the city has a vision, a plan and a funding mechanism to make those investments? He is asking the board to adopt the revitalization of the Original Townsite which the Planning Department can define and outline and make it eligible for 4B funding. This area basically falls under District 3 and District 4 and is considered the core of the city. He suggested using the \$275,000 budget that was just approved and plan for the future for the Comprehensive Plan.

Making the City of Harlingen a "Retirement Community" was an excellent mechanism, but there is no plan, no vision and no strategy to bring retirees to create an economic base in the community.

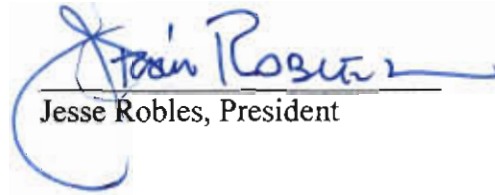
He is here tonight to ask the City to define the Comprehensive Plan process and formally adopt the Original Townsite as a revitalization project.

Mr. Rubio asked what is the follow-up that the 4B board has to accomplish with regards to this presentation.

Mr. Benton replied all he is asking is that the 4B board place an action item on the next meeting agenda adopting the Revitalization of Original Townsite as a Project. He would like to see that area as a Project, so it can be included on the Comprehensive Plan once the City starts working on it. This would change the vision and image of the Original Townsite.

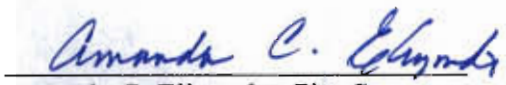
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There being no further business to discuss a motion was made by Mr. Rubio and seconded by Mr. Araiza to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.



Jesse Robles, President

Attest:



Amanda C. Elizondo, City Secretary