

STATE OF TEXAS §
COUNTY OF CAMERON §
TOWN OF LAGUNA VISTA §

**MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE LAGUNA VISTA TOWN COUNCIL**

DATE: April 20, 2021

TIME: 6:00 pm

PLACE: City Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT: Nadine Smith, Mayor
Michael Carter, Mayor Pro-Tem
Bettina Tolin, Council Member Place 3
Rolando Gonzalez, Council Member Place 4
Victor Worrell, Council Member Place 5

Ed Meza, City Manager
Ana Hernandez, City Secretary
Rendie Gonzales, Town Bookkeeper
Alan Ozuna, Town Attorney
Anthony David, Police Chief

MEMBERS ABSENT: Johvonne Howard, Council Member Place 2
Silke De Gobeo, Council Member Place 6

ALSO PRESENT: Carlos Mondragon
Francisco Briones

ORDER OF BUSINESS

- 1) **Call to Order** Mayor Smith called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- 2) **Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance** was led by Mayor Smith.
- 3) **Roll Call/Excused Absences** –

Mayor Smith made a motion to excuse Council Members Howard & De Gobeo, Council Member Worrell seconded the motion. Council Members Carter, Tolin, Gonzalez, Worrell, and Mayor Smith voted “aye” to approve motion passed.

- 4) **OPEN FORUM** - At this time, audience is allowed 5 minutes per person to address the Council on any topic. There is no discussion or formal action taken during this agenda item. The speaker must identify themselves before speaking. A Speaker Request Form must be presented to the City Secretary prior to the meeting.

NO COMMENTS FOR OPEN FORUM

- 5) **NEW BUSINESS** – Discussion, consideration, and possible action on each of the following items.

Mayor Smith thanked everyone for coming on short notice. It is not her intention to call meetings on short notice but as grants become available sometimes it is necessary to hold these special meetings.

- a) **RESOLUTION 2021-14** – Consideration and possible action to approve Resolution 2021-14 authorizing the submission of a Texas Community Development Block Grant Program application to the Texas Department of Agriculture for the Community Development fund and to authorize the City Manager to act as the Town’s Executive Officer and authorized representative in all matters. (City Manager)

Mr. Mondragon addressed the Council stating that this is the actual resolution to submit the application for \$261,176 for drainage improvements. He stated that the engineer is still working on identifying the location but wherever it is needed the funds will be available.

Mayor Smith asked what changed from last meeting.

Answer: Mr. Mondragon replied that the dollar amount changed from \$350,000 and what happened was the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council Small Communities Coalition met and after meeting they reiterated previous agreement in which all communities would share the funds.

Council Member Worrell asked why did it changed?

Answer: Mr. Mondragon stated that after meeting they reiterated previous gentlemen’s agreement in which all of the Lower Rio Grande Valley would share the funds that are allocated for the Rio Grande Valley.

Mr. Meza added if not we weren’t guarantee any funding and we’d be competing with each other and we were risking not getting any funding for the next 2-4 years.

Council Member Worrell asked if the funds would be shared equally or would it be by population?

Answer: Mr. Mondragon replied it is not per capita it is equally shared.

Council Member Tolin made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-14 authorizing the submission of a Texas Community Development Block Grant Program application to the Texas Department of Agriculture for the Community Development fund and to authorize the City Manager to act as the Town's Executive office and authorized representative in all matters, Mayor Smith seconded the motion. Council Members Carter, Tolin, Gonzalez, Worrell and Mayor Smith voted "aye" to approve, motion passed.

- b) PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE** – Consideration and possible action on setting a Public Hearing on Tuesday May 11, 2021 for the submittal of funding application under the Texas General land office funding programs, including the Coastal Management Program, the 2018 South Texas Flood Program, and the 2019 LRGV Floods Program, at City Hall, located at 122 Fernandez St at 6:00 pm. (City Manager).

Mayor addressed the Council stating she recently met with Daisy from the Housing Department which is the apartment complex on Tanglewood to see what we can do in the future with the park. They got a big grant, and they are redoing the apartment complex and Mayor asked if they would work with us to keep still a piece of land and park they are willing to work with us which then Mr. Briones reached out and discussed there is a grant available then can possibly give us money through for the Housing Department if we are able to get this grant we can use that money to improve the park in that area.

Mr. Briones addressed the council that there are 3 categories of funding however there is 5 opportunities for funding which are listed on the agenda item.

Under The Texas General Land Office is the:

The Coastal Management Program in which the idea of a botanical garden combined with bayside outdoor activities such as boating, kayaking, there's various opportunities in the recreation department. This program has a category called public access this would be the category we would apply for funds for these programs. These is only in the talking stages first is placing public notice.

2018 South Texas Flood Program - South Texas Flooding request funding for infrastructure and housing, within the housing is the single & multi-family.

2019 LRGV Flooding Program – Same applies as the 2018 South Texas Flood Program

All combined the state has 96 million for the 3-county area. The only cities that will be able to apply are cities within the 3 counties Hidalgo, Willacy, and Cameron so there is a lot of opportunity for funding.

Council Member Tolin asked once we are passed the public hearing the

what are the deadlines?

Answer: Coastal Management June 9, 2021 for pre-application by then a location and a design for the botanical garden and the boating project and once accepted by the State accepts the pre-application then full application is October 27, 2021

The other programs for infrastructure & housing have a deadline of December 31, 2021. But we shouldn't wait till the last minute because it's first come first serve.

Council Member Worrell asked what piece of property was being considered?

Answer: Mr. Briones replied he has no idea and that is why he needs the council's input.

Council Member Worrell stated that in the past they have talked about the potential 8 acres where a bayside park can be placed is outside the scope of grant money because it costs too much and also he mentioned that the marina is never going to be available unless there is an election to change the city charter, which is doubtful because it overwhelmingly passed.

Mayor Smith interrupted by saying that is not the land they have in mind and that she is thinking more towards the future and thinking of the location where the new bridge would be built.

Council Member Worrell asked if we owned property there. Mayor Smith replied that its within the ETJ. Council Member Carter added that it is the property that we are in a lawsuit right now.

Mayor restated to Mr. Worrell that it is not the Marina and she stated that when she first came on board was very disappointed in the amount of grants we lost for not applying.

Council Member Carter stated that why go after grant money when we don't even have a location and Mayor Smith replied that we potentially could she also added that should we get the grant we can also decline it. Council member Carter stated that in his experience it also not good to apply for a grant to then decline it. Mr. Carter stated we have been down this road before and it always go back to we don't have the land.

Mr. Briones stated we should be thinking ahead.

Council Member Carter asked if we could use this funding for other projects other than a bayside water park?

Answer: Yes it could and that's why he needs the council's input.

Council Member Gonzalez asked if ad hoc committees will be formed to handle this?

Answer: Mr. Briones replied that it is however the council wants to handle it.

Council Member Tolin addressed the council stating that we should focus on voting on the item and once it passes and we get to that point then we can start figuring out the details or forming committees and we can then use members of CDC.

Mayor Smith told the council that also in the future if council wants to join her in meetings she is all for it.

Council member Worrell addressed Mr. Briones that he has stated 2 different things one being that we could build by the walking trail and then saying that whatever gets done must be by the coastal side.

Council Member Worrell made a motion to amend the public hearing notice to exclude the Coastal Management Program, Council Member Carter seconded the motion. Council Members Carter and Worrell voted “aye”; Council Members Tolin, Gonzalez, and Mayor Smith voted “nay”; motion failed.

Council Member Tolin made a motion to set a Public Hearing on Tuesday May 11, 2021 for the submittal of funding application under the Texas General land office funding programs, including the Coastal Management Program, the 2018 South Texas Flood Program, and the 2019 LRGV Floods Program, at City Hall, located at 122 Fernandez St at 6:00 pm., Mayor Smith seconded the motion. Council Members Carter and Worrell voted “nay”; Council Members Tolin, Gonzalez, and Mayor Smith voted “aye” to approve, motion passed.

6) ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Carter made a motion to adjourn at 6:40 p.m., Council Member Worrell seconded the motion. Council Members Carter, Tolin, Gonzalez, Worrell, and Mayor Smith voted “aye” to approve, motion passed.

Nadine Smith, Mayor

Attest:

Ana Hernandez, City Secretary