

HIDALGO COUNTY MPO
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, January 24, 2008

1 Roll Call

Chairman Angie Garza called the meeting to order at 5:33 P.M. The Policy Committee Meeting was held at the LRGVDC Transit offices located at 510 S. Pleasantview drive, in Weslaco, TX. Present were representatives from the Cities of: Alamo, Alton, Edinburg, Hidalgo County, Hidalgo, La Joya, McAllen, Mission, San Juan, Weslaco and TxDOT. ExOffio Members Present: San Juan economic development, and LRGVDC Transit.

2 Citizen Input

Chairman Angie Garza asked if there was any citizen input. There being none, the chairman proceeded on to the next item.

3 Adoption of Minutes from November 29, 2007

(ACTION ITEM)

Chairman Angie Garza asked if there were any additions or corrections that needed to be made. There being none the chairman asked for a motion of approval. *The City of Alamo made a motion to approve the minutes, the City of San Juan seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.*

4 Approval of FY08-11 TIP Amendment

(ACTION ITEM)

Mr. Andrew Canon explained that the amendment was developed to comply with the SAFETEA-LU requirements that ask to display Year of Expenditure dollars in the TIP, he advised that he had the list of projects that were dropped from the TIP in case anybody needed a copy. Mr. Canon explained that an update to the MTP is due in FY2009 and that the projects that were dropped in this amendment can always be included in the new list of projects in the MTP update. TxDOT mentioned that there are concerns about what it means for a project to be out of the TIP, they advised that the projects in the TIP are considered fiscally constraint and are referred to as funded projects. A funded project means that when, and if money becomes available that project will be built. Commissioner Palacios inquired about "I" road from Owassa to 281, he asked why it was not in the TIP. TxDOT mentioned that that project was never in the TIP. TxDOT mentioned that there was an AFA in place for this project which meant that when funding becomes available it will be let, they also mentioned that this project was ready to be let. TxDOT suggested to have a TIP revision to include this project. TxDOT mentioned that this TIP amendment had to be approved today so the Anzalduas project can move forward. Mr. Canon mentioned that he will ask the TAC members in the next meeting to consider this project for the TIP. Mr. Canon also mentioned that this project can only be funded thru category 7 and that another project from the TIP will have to be taken off to include "I" road. *The City of Alamo made a motion to approve the FY08-11 TIP amendment, the City of San Juan seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.*

5 Approval of FY08 UPWP Amendment

(ACTION ITEM)

Mr. Canon explained that this amendment was in response to the guidance received from FHWA and FTA where they suggested changes in the wording as well as the removal of the local funds received from the RMA for the administrative duties the HCMPO staff performs for them. Mr. Canon stated that all the changes had been implemented. *The City of Edinburg made a motion to approve the FY08 UPWP amendment, the City of Alamo seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.*

6 Update on Annual Project Listing

(Discussion Item)

Mr. Canon explained that this was the list of projects that were let in FY2007 and that it is brought to the TPC and TAC every year. He explained that FY2007 was the first year the federal requirement called for including pedestrian and bicycle

trail projects. He informed that this list of projects had already gone thru public involvement. **Discussion only, no action was taken at this time.**

7 Update on Annual Performance and Expenditure Report

(Discussion Item)

Mr. Canon explained that this item is also brought to the board every year. He explained that the HCMPO staff planning funds were expended at 90% of the total budget, mentioning that it was considered very good since the staff cannot go over 100%. **Reports only.**

8 Discussion on Innovative funding scenarios

(Discussion Item)

Mr. Canon explained that this was the result of a meeting he had with the executive members of both the TPC and the RMA committees where they discussed innovative funding ideas to address the financial shortfall of the future transportation system in Hidalgo county. He advised that since the vehicle registration was so well accepted, that we should be looking at additional options since this initiative is not enough to cover our financial shortfall. He advised that these are not the only tools that we will be pursuing but that it is a start. Mr. Canon informed that the three options included in the white paper were a sales tax increase of 0.25%, an increase in the international bridge southbound toll, and an increase in the local gas tax of \$0.01 cent. He asked that if anybody had another idea to please share it with the MPO staff so that it can be studied. Mr. Canon also explained that some of these initiatives will require the support from the legislation and that it would be good to start as soon as possible. The Honorable Beto Salinas, Mayor of Mission, expressed that he did not support the sales tax initiative since he believed there were already too many taxes in the county, commissioner Palacios agreed with this comment. Mayor Salinas questioned the overspending in the Pharr district. TxDOT expressed that the Pharr district strongly believes in building projects as soon as possible, even if it means utilizing future funding. TxDOT also explained that the bill for proposition 12 for \$5 billion dollars for the state of Texas had been approved and that in the next legislative session it would be decided if all the amount will be obligated, he emphasized that if it is obligated we would not receive the funds earlier than 2010. The mayor of Mission mentioned that if proposition 12 has been approved that the policy members and the county should speak to the senators and the state representatives to support it. Mr. Canon mentioned that the MPO staff can work on a memo to be sent to the senators and the state representatives to support proposition 12. The mayor of Mission also requested for the city councils to pass a resolution to support proposition 12.

9 Executive Session (Closed Session)

(ACTION ITEM)

The City of Alamo made a motion to move into executive session for the annual evaluation of the Director, the City of Weslaco seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

The City of Edinburg made a motion to approve the 5% salary increase for Mr. Canon, the City of Alamo seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

10 Staff Update

A. Calendar: February & March 2008

Mr. Canon advised that the HCMPO offices will be closed on February 18th for President's Day. Mr. Canon explained that he was requesting for the TPC meetings to be moved one week earlier due to TxDOT's commission meeting taking place the same day as the TPC meetings. Mr. Canon advised that if the committee decides to move the TPC meeting one week earlier, we can also move the TAC meeting one week earlier as well. The policy committee approved to move the TPC meeting to the third Thursday of the month.

11 Off System Report

No reports at this time.

12 Letting Report

Reports only.

13 **Old Or New Business**

(ACTION ITEM)

Mr. Canon mentioned that in everybody's packet there is a copy of the resolution for the Anzalduas bridge supported by Carlos Garza, the Chairman for the Anzalduas bridge board. Mr. Canon explained that the resolution supports the introduction of fast lanes in the Anzalduas bridge. TxDOT mentioned the concern that this resolution might conflict with the presidential permit for the Anzalduas bridge which states that commercial trucks cannot cross over the Anzalduas bridge until the quota in the Pharr bridge is surpassed. The Policy members advised that they would like to take more time to make sure that this resolution doesn't conflict with the presidential permit and also to have more time to read it carefully. The board decided to table the resolution and bring it to the next Policy meeting for further discussion.

14 **Adjournment**

The City of Edinburg made a motion to adjourn, The City of Alamo seconded the motion, and upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.