

Webb County - City of Laredo
Regional Mobility Authority (WC-CL RMA)
Board of Directors Meeting
Monday, April 24, 2017
9:00 AM

Minutes

The Webb – County City of Laredo Regional Mobility Authority (“WC-CL RMA”) Board of Directors convened in a meeting at 9:04 a.m. on Monday, April 24, 2017 at TxDOT Laredo District Meeting Room located at 1817 Bob Bullock Loop, Laredo, Texas 78043.

Minutes are as follows:

Present: Ruben Soto, Jr., Chairman and Presiding Officer, Steve LaMantia, Jose Murrillo, Jesus Romero, Jose Murillo, Arturo Dominguez, Douglas Howland, Oscar Lopez, and Alfonso Mendiola

Absent: Albert Muller

Others: Pete Alvarez, TxDOT, Laredo District Engineer
Melissa Montemayor, TxDOT Laredo District Administrator
Carlos Rodriguez, TxDOT Laredo Area Engineer
Araceli Rangel, Staff Assistant, CPA Office of Ruben Soto, Jr.
Marissa Montoya, TxDOT
Brian O’Reilly, Locke Lord, LLP (Legal Counsel)
Juan Cruz, J. Cruz & Associates, LLC (Legal Counsel)
Antonio Rodriguez, HNTB
Mike Graham, TxDOT Environmental Specialist
Rolando Ortiz, Board Member, Texas Trade Advisory Committee

1. Open Meeting and Establish Quorum

After establishing quorum, Presiding Officer Ruben Soto, Jr. called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. He then announced the following Board Members present: Steve LaMantia, Jesus Romero, Jose Murrillo, Arturo Dominguez, Oscar Lopez, Jesus Romero, Douglas Howland, and Alfonso Mendiola. He notified everyone present that a notice of the meeting had been posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act and then asked everyone to stand for the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Welcome and Introduction of Board Members – Ruben Soto, Jr. (WC-CL RMA Presiding Officer)

Chairman Soto informed all present that the meeting was being recorded and thanked TxDOT for hosting the meeting. He also thanked Mike Graham for videotaping and Araceli Rangel and Marissa Montoya for assisting with the meeting.

3. Action Item: Discussion, Consideration, and Approval of February 21, 2017 WC-CL RMA Regular Board Meeting Minutes.

Chairman Soto stated that the Board Members had been provided a copy of the February 21, 2017 meeting minutes for review. He then asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the WC-CL RMA meeting that took place on February 21, 2017, as presented. Jose Murillo made a motion, seconded by Douglas Howland to accept the meeting minutes. No discussion was held. Motion passed unanimously.

4A. Chairman's Report-Financial Report

Chairman Soto informed the board that thanks to the effort of Mr. Juan Cruz WC-CL RMA received its past due installments of vehicle registration fees amounting to \$1,229,550.00. Unfortunately, as of today, WC-CL RMA is still not receiving the funds on a monthly basis as agreed upon. Hopefully, Mr. Cruz can assist again in requesting the county to be timely in their future transfers.

WC-CL RMA currently has a balance of \$5,450,078.11. Last funds disbursed were to HNTB Corporation for work authorizations 1, 2, 4, and 6 in the amount of \$16,230.72 and Locke Lord LLC for \$5,418.11.

4B. Chairman's Report-Update on Surety Bond Applications

Chairman Soto reminded board members of the option of paying for their own public official bond and having the RMA reimburse them once funds were made available for that purpose.

4C. Chairman's Report-Personal Financial Statements Filing Deadline

Chairman Soto reminded board members that their personal financial statements must be electronically submitted to the Texas Ethics Commission no later than May 1, 2017. Board members may request a 60-day extension of the filing deadline provided that the request is made in advance of the regular deadline. Board members who have already completed and submitted their personal financial statements include: Alfonso Mendiola, Douglas Howland, Ruben Soto, Jr., and Jose Murrillo.

4D. Chairman's Report-Update on Completed and Pending Reports

Chairman Soto informed the board members that he had received a request from the Compliance Specialist at the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) asking for clarification on the WC-CL RMA's "written policy that addresses what specific auditing and/or monitoring systems were in place to assess compliance with the code of conduct and policies and procedures adopted to promote adherence with laws and regulations."

With the assistance of Brian O'Reilly, WC-CL RMA responded on March 15, 2017 that the process had been completed. A copy of the document is included in board member's notebooks and will be further discussed in an upcoming agenda item.

Chairman Soto had previously instructed our General Engineering Consultant ("GEC") to assist the WC-CL RMA in formalizing comments on record regarding the region's needs and criteria that should be used in granting funding for mobility projects. Chairman Soto asked Mr. Antonio Rodriguez, with the GEC, HNTB, for an update.

5. Action Item (Resolution 17-03): Discussion, Consideration and Possible Action on Election of Officers (Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer).

Chairman Soto thanked the officers for their participation for the past year. He went on to say that the board needed to select a new Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary for 2017. Mr. Jose Murillo nominated Oscar Lopez for Vice Chair. Mr. Douglas Howland seconded the motion. Mr. Oscar Lopez nominated Arturo Dominguez for Secretary. Mr. Jose Murillo seconded the motion. Mr. Alfonso Mendiola nominated Douglas Howland for Treasurer. Mr. Steve La Mantia seconded the motion. Chairman Soto then asked if there was any discussion on the appointment of the officers. With no discussion, all officers were unanimously approved.

6. Action Item (Resolution 17-04): Discussion, Consideration and Possible Action to Approve the 2016 WC-CL RMA Audit Report.

Chairman Soto informed the members of the board that the audit had been completed and had been previously provided to them for review. He went on to provide some of the highlights of the report. Chairman Soto then asked if there was a motion regarding the acceptance of the WC-CL RMA's FYE 9/30/16 audit by PMB Helin-Donovan, as presented. On a motion made by Alfonso Mendiola and a second by Jesus Romero, the motion was unanimously approved.

Chairman Soto also mentioned that now that the audit was completed, it would be appropriate, with the assistance of Mr. Juan Cruz, to approach city council members and Webb County Commissioners Court regarding funding to reimburse already incurred expenses of the WC-CL RMA.

7. Action Item (Resolution 17-05): Discussion, Consideration and Possible Action to Amend the WC-CL RMA Policy Manual.

Our policy code manual continues to be updated as needed. TxDOT has asked that all RMA's insert a disclaimer in their internal audit policy in accordance with mandatory compliance with TxDOT's administrative rules. Mr. Brian O'Reilly was then asked to elaborate on the new policy revision.

TxDOT's audit division in Austin wanted an explicit statement in all the RMA's policies to add specific language that would ensure that we are complying with our polices. We've had a position that we inherently were already doing this, but TxDOT wants an explicit statement. Mr. Alfonso Mendiola made a motion to approve to an amendment to the RMA's policy code. Mr. Oscar Lopez seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with no discussion.

8. Action Item (Resolution 17-06): Discussion, Consideration and Possible Action to Support the Inclusion of Loop 20 from IH-35 to State Highway 59 in the National Map Freight Corridor.

Chairman Soto mentioned that Rolando Ortiz, board member of the Texas Freight Advisory Committee, requested that the WC-CL RMA pass a resolution reflecting the RMA's support to include Loop 20 from IH-35 to Highway 59 in the National Map Freight Corridor. Chairman Soto asked Mr. Ortiz to brief the board on the advantages of this inclusion.

Mr. Ortiz explained that several years ago the federal government identified fast lane grant money to be given to various states for freight mobility only. The federal government is asking TxDOT to ensure that

TxDOT is in compliance with the freight mobility plan. The state previously created a freight mobility plan but needs to modify it to mirror the federal government's plan.

Mr. Ortiz recommends that all entities in Laredo write a letter or pass a resolution to support inclusion in the freight system. He further stated that there was a drawback: Laredo falls in the urban category. Therefore, the region will be competing against areas such as Houston, Dallas, Ft. Worth, Austin, San Antonio, El Paso, and the Valley. Therefore, the more support locally, the better chance of inclusion in the national map freight corridor. On a motion from Mr. Douglas Howland and a second from Mr. Jesus Romero, the motion board unanimously passed a resolution to support the inclusion of Loop 20 from IH-35 to HW 59 in the National Map Freight Corridor.

9. Action Item (Resolution 17-07): Discussion, Consideration and Possible Action to Approve Supplemental Work Authorization ("WA") No. 6.03 with HNTB for Continued Work Related to the Industry Review Meeting for the Loop 20 Project.

Chairman Soto introduced Antonio Rodriguez from HNTB to explain to the board Supplemental WA No. 6.03.

Mr. Rodriguez explained that the request was simply to extend the current WA from March 31, 2017 to July 30, 2017. There will not be any additional funding for the WA.

Outstanding items that are still to be completed are: Final update of the Loop 20 financial plan. The update will include two to three implementation scenarios that account for the construction of the overpasses at Shiloh, Jacaman Road and Airport. One of the implementation scenarios to be considered includes implementing some of the future overpasses on Cuatro Vientos and one-on-one meetings with City Council and the Commissioners Court to build support for a Transportation Reinvestment Zone ("TRZ") along Loop 20.

On a motion made by Mr. Oscar Lopez and a second by Mr. Alfonso Mendiola, the board unanimously approved the time extension under Supplemental Work Authorization No. 6.03.

10. Report on Possible Development of the FM 1472 Project.

Chairman Soto informed the board that he had attended the Metropolitan Planning Organization ("MPO") meeting on Monday, April 24, 2017. Due to a lack of quorum, the meeting was cancelled. However, there was an informal discussion with Mr. Pete Alvarez and other panel members. It was suggested that the WC-CL RMA research preliminarily development of a potential direct connector from World Trade Bridge to northbound Mines Road. Chairman Soto inquired whether this project would be done by TxDOT and how it can be expedited. Mr. Alvarez mentioned that several studies were done with the assistance of the Texas Transportation Institute ("TTI") to identify short term, mid-range, and long term projects.

Pete Alvarez from TxDOT suggested the need for operational improvements. He said it is most important to preserve the corridor. There continues to be development, but the right-of-way must be preserved. TxDOT locally identifies projects, and it starts with preservation of the right of way.

Mr. Alvarez continued that besides the projects identified, the WC-CL RMA has additional capacity projects (i.e., raised medians to help control direction flow). In the long term, Vallecillo Rd. and Hachar

Parkway, will need overpasses. The locations will be determined through feasibility studies, along with determinations on controlled access, deceleration lanes, acceleration lanes, and raised medians. Mr. Alvarez said it was premature, but the plan must be started eventually.

Chairman Soto suggested meeting with TxDOT and revisiting the issue at the next board meeting.

11. General Engineering Consultant Report.

Mr. Antonio Rodriguez from HNTB updated the board on work authorizations and other projects, including: work on the Vallecillo Road environmental assessment; right-of-way entry from Killam; the environmental assessment for Killam to be completed by approximately October 2017; the submission of a antiquities permit to the Texas Historical Commission; coordination with the Laredo MPO to include a future overpass for Vallecillo/IH35 in the Metropolitan Transportation Plans ("MTP"); a final financial plan for different implementation options at cost for Loop 20; scheduling meetings with the city council and commissioners court in the month of May; working with Chairman Soto and the Executive Committee to attend those meetings; ad hoc work authorizations for any tasks or requests; providing a draft letter of support for the WC-CL RMA to include Loop 20 to the national freight map; and assisting Locke Lord LLP and J. Cruz and Associates with a response to an open records request.

12. Legislative Update.

Mr. Brian O'Reilly from Locke Lord, LLP updated the board on legislative developments. House Bill 141 introduced by Representative Richard Raymond removes tolls from Camino Columbia and passed the House committee. The bill must still be considered by the full House and the Senate. A bill introduced by Senator Kolkhorst would prevent TxDOT from providing grants to RMAs. Another bill subjects RMAs to review by the state auditor. Some bills will be heard regarding toll operations. Comprehensive development agreements ("CDAs") (public-private partnerships) need to be extended. The CDA authority expires in August. Finally, the TxDOT sunset bill is in the House.

13. Report: Update from TxDOT on the Status of Projects in the TxDOT Laredo District.

Mr. Carlos Rodriguez stated that the Oscar Renda project is making progress on the northbound main lane and on the northbound frontage road. The project is 40% complete with estimated completion in Fall 2018. The adjacent project, the SER project, is 65% complete. The retaining walls are up and slabs for the retaining walls are being installed. The project is still expected to be complete by Spring 2018. On the International Project, there were closures. The retaining walls on International are fully complete. East side retaining wall work needs to be completed. The estimated completion date is December 2017. 1472 Mines Road is 40% complete. The project will be complete in late summer. The overlay project was proposed at various locations.

14. Open Public Forum/Comment Period.

No one signed on for public comments.

Mr. Arturo Dominguez discussed an accident, use of the flyover, and safety. Mrs. Montemayor discussed TxDOT's process.

Mr. Dominguez asked about laws related to medians and bike lanes. Mrs. Montemayor stated that TTI is researching the feasibility to transfer a median to a bike lane.

Mr. Dominguez asked about truck traffic at checkpoint mile marker 30. Mr. Magee stated that he was working with border patrol on the issue. Mr. Pedro Alvarez recommended adding an additional lane.

15. Report: Date/Time/Location of the Next Regular Board Meeting.

Chairman Soto stated that the next meeting would tentatively be scheduled for May 15, 2017 with the location to be announced.

16. Adjournment.

Alfonso Mendiola made a motion, seconded by Arturo Dominguez to adjourn the WC-CL RMA meeting at 10:07 a.m. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned.

MINUTES FOR THE WEBB COUNTY – CITY OF LAREDO REGIONAL MOBILITY AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING HELD ON April 24, 2017 WERE APPROVED ON THIS THE 19TH DAY OF JUNE 2017.

Submitted by:
Marissa Montoya
TxDOT Laredo Dist. &
Araceli S. Rangel