

**Webb County - City of Laredo
Regional Mobility Authority (RMA)
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, February 24, 2015
9:00 AM**

Minutes

The Webb County - City of Laredo Regional Mobility Authority Board of Directors convened in a meeting at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 24, 2015 at the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Office in the Laredo District Meeting Room, 1817 Bob Bullock Loop, Laredo, TX. They discussed the following agenda:

1. Open Meeting and Establish Quorum
2. Welcome and Opening Remarks - Ruben Soto (RMA Presiding Officer)
3. Discussion/Approval of December 15, 2014 Meeting Minutes
4. Accept Resignation of Vice-Chair and Secretary
5. Introduction of New Director
6. Election of Vice-Chair and Secretary
7. Action to Appoint New Chair for Planning Committee
8. Action to switch initial term length between directors
9. Discussion and action on securing temporary legal services
10. Bylaws: Review final changes and vote on adoption
11. Discussion and possible action regarding posting Request For Qualification & Request for Proposals for Legal Services, General Engineering Consultant, Financial Advisory Consultants
12. Discussion and possible action regarding preparation of Procurement Policy
13. Discussion on Status of Webb County Vehicle Registration Fees availability and uses
14. Discussion and possible action on Web Site assistance
15. Discussion and possible action on Financial Assistance Request
16. Discussion of presentation on Loop 20 east and west bound main lanes over IH35 and Laredo MPO resolution of use of CBI funds for Loop 20 east and west bound main lanes over IH35 (Nathan Bratton - MPO Director)
17. Discussion and possible action on MPO resolution for project sponsorship
18. Discuss future development and construction of Hachar Loop and funding resources
19. Discuss short, medium and long range solutions for Mines Road area
20. Public Comments
21. Date/Time/Location of the Next Full Board Meeting
22. Adjournment

Minutes are as follows:

Present: Ruben Soto, Jr., Chairman and Presiding Officer; David Arredondo, Steve LaMantia, Oscar Lopez (New appointee for Pct. 2), Albert Muller, Sr. and Jose Murillo

Absent: Board Member for Precinct 1 (Unassigned), Board Member for Districts 3 & 4 (Unassigned) and Board Member for Districts 7 & 8 (Unassigned)

Resigned: Carlos Flores, Viviana Frank and Enrique S. Valdez

Others: Melisa D. Montemayor, TxDOT District Administrator, Laredo District
Raul Leal, Public Information Officer, TxDOT Laredo District (Photographer)
Mike Graham, Environmental Coordinator, TxDOT Laredo District
Nancy Cordero, Administrative Assistant, TxDOT Laredo District (Notary Public)
Marissa Montoya, Office Technician, TxDOT Laredo District (Registration,
Note taker)
Araceli Rangel, Staff Assistant, CPA Office of Ruben Soto, Jr., (Note taker)
Nathan Bratton, Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Director (Presenter)

1. Open Meeting and Establish Quorum

After establishing a quorum, Presiding Officer Ruben Soto, Jr., called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. He then stated all the Board Members that were present; David Arredondo, Steve LaMantia, Jose Murillo, Albert Muller, Sr., Oscar Lopez and himself, Ruben Soto, Jr.. He also stated that Melisa Montemayor, TxDOT District Administrator, was present.

2. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Chairman Soto notified everyone present that the meeting was posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act and then asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Soto informed all present that the meeting was being recorded. He proceeded to thank TxDOT, Melisa Montemayor and staff; Mike Graham, Marissa Montoya and his assistant, Araceli Rangel, for their assistance.

3. Discussion / Approval of December 15, 2014 Meeting Minutes

Chairman Soto asked the board members if they had an opportunity to review the minutes of the last meeting of December 15, 2014. He then asked if there was a motion to approve the minutes for the Webb County - City of Laredo RMA meeting that took place on December 15, 2014 as presented.

Albert Muller, Sr. made a motion, seconded by Jose Murillo to approve the meeting minutes. No discussion was held. Motion carried.

Chairman Soto then asked the Board Members to review their copy of the Compliance Report, which should be submitted to TxDOT annually. The Compliance Report covers the fiscal year, ending in September 2014. There was no financial activity for the RMA for that period.

Mr. Soto then asked if there was a motion to approve the Annual Compliance Report as presented. Mr. Albert Muller, Sr. made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jose Murillo to approve the Annual Compliance Report. No discussion was held. Motion carried.

Additional information can be found on the attached Annual Compliance Report.

4. **Accept Resignation of Vice-Chair and Secretary**

Chairman Soto stated since the last board meeting, they have had the resignation of three Board Members; Viviana Frank, Carlos Flores and Enrique Valdez. He asked if there was a motion to accept their resignation.

Albert Muller, Sr. made a motion, seconded by Jose Murillo to approve their resignation. No discussion was held. Motion carried.

Attached are their resignation letters.

5. **Introduction of New Director**

Mr. Soto then introduced a new Director, Mr. Oscar Lopez. He then asked Mr. Lopez to join Nancy Cordero, Notary Public, at the head of the room. Mrs. Cordero then administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Oscar Lopez.

Mr. Soto stated that there are three directors not present, two have recently been appointed. They will have to fill out forms that are required to be submitted to the Secretary of State and get sworn in. They should be present at the next Board Meeting. The remaining director to be appointed is the representative of Districts 7 & 8.

6. **Election of Vice-Chair and Secretary**

Chairman Soto said that in light of the recent resignations, they would have to elect a new Vice-Chair and Secretary. He asked for a motion in regards to the Secretary of the Board of Directors of the Webb County - City of Laredo RMA.

Steve LaMantia nominated Jose Murillo, seconded by Oscar Lopez to approve Jose Murillo as Secretary of the Board of Directors of the Webb County - City of Laredo RMA. No discussion was held. Motion carried.

Albert Muller, Sr. then nominated Oscar Lopez as Vice-Chair, seconded by David Arredondo to approve Oscar Lopez as Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors of the Webb County - City of Laredo RMA. Motion carried.

The Executive Committee is now as follows: Chairman: Ruben Soto, Jr., Vice-Chairman: Oscar Lopez, Treasurer: Steve LaMantia and Secretary: Jose Murillo

7. **Action to Appoint New Chair for Planning Committee**

Mr. Soto then nominated Oscar Lopez to Chair the Planning Committee.

The Planning Committee is now as follows: Oscar Lopez, David Arredondo, Steve LaMantia and Albert Muller, Sr.

8. Action to switch initial term length between directors

Chairman Soto then stated that Jose Murillo asked to switch his four year term length to Albert Muller, Sr., who is in agreement. Mr. Soto stated that if there was no objection, then he would make a motion, which was seconded by Oscar Lopez to approve the exchange of term lengths between Mr. Murillo and Mr. Muller. No discussion was held. Motion carried.

The term lengths are now as follows:

Oscar Lopez - Long Term = 4 Year Term

Albert Muller, Sr. - Long Term = 4 Year Term

Steve LaMantia - Short Term = 2 Year Term

Jose Murillo - Short Term = 2 Year Term

David Arredondo - Long Term = 4 Year Term

Precinct 1 (Unassigned) - Long Term = 4 Year Term

Districts 3 & 4 (Unassigned) - Short Term = 2 Year Term

Districts 7 & 8 (Unassigned) - Short Term = 2 Year Term

9. Discussion and action on securing temporary legal services

Chairman Soto stated that despite the RMA having no funds, there is still a need for temporary legal services to guide them with the By-Laws and other matters. The RMA should consider hiring temporary legal services until permanent representation can be secured via the RFQ / RFP (Request for Qualifications / Request for Proposals) Process. He stated that they have considered a firm and invited the Board to make a motion to secure J. Cruz & Associates, LLC, to serve as temporary general counsel and approve the law firm's contract relations.

Jose Murillo made a motion, seconded by Albert Muller, Sr. to secure J. Cruz & Associates, LLC, to serve as temporary general council. No discussion was held. Motion carried.

Attached is the legal services contract.

10. By-laws: Review final changes and vote on adoption

Chairman Soto stated that all the Board Members were sent a copy of the By-Laws for their review. He asked if anyone had questions regarding the revised By-Laws. No questions were asked. Mr. Soto then asked for a motion to adopt the final By-Laws for the Webb County-City of Laredo RMA.

Albert Muller, Sr. made a motion, seconded by Jose Murillo to adopt the By-Laws. No discussion was held. Motion carried.

Attached are the adopted By-Laws.

11. Discussion and possible action regarding posting Request For Qualification & Request for Proposals for Legal Services, General Engineering Consultant, Financial Advisory Consultants

Mr. Soto stated that in order to get ready for the upcoming transportation projects, he wanted the Board to consider posting requests for qualifications, requests for proposals for: legal counsel, general engineering consultants, financial advisory consultants, and whatever they need to be prepared for the first RMA transportation project.

When the forms for those requests are completed, Mr. Soto will ask for the assistance of Webb County and the City of Laredo, so the forms can be posted on their web sites. Chairman Soto then asked for a motion authorizing the RMA to post RFQ's and RFP's for legal services, general engineering consultants and financial advisory consultants.

Jose Murillo made a motion, seconded by Albert Muller, Sr. to authorize the RMA to post RFQ's and RFP's for legal services, general engineering consultants and financial advisory consultants. Mr. Oscar Lopez questioned if the posting was for a particular project, or in general. Mr. Soto stated that it was in general. No further discussion was held. Motion carried.

12. Discussion and possible action regarding preparation of Procurement Policy

Chairman Soto stated that the RMA needs to prepare a Procurement Policy in regards to securing contracts with outside parties. It would state what the terms should be, what they should follow, and the minimum amount of request for proposal qualifications. He also stated that the policy would need to be prepared and reviewed by an attorney. Mr. Soto asked for a motion authorizing the RMA to prepare a Procurement Policy as needed and/or required for the business of the RMA.

Albert Muller, Sr. made a motion, seconded by Jose Murillo to authorize the RMA to prepare a Procurement Policy. No discussion was held. Motion carried.

13. Discussion on Status of Webb County Vehicle Registration Fees availability and uses

Mr. Soto said that legislation passed to authorize Webb County to collect an additional 10 dollars per vehicle registration fee. This money is to be set aside for the use of the RMA and specifically only for transportation projects. It cannot be used for start-up or expenditures prior to starting a transportation project. At the February 9th County Commissioners meeting, they passed a resolution for the County to start drafting an agreement to release the funds to the RMA. Those funds that would be available for the year, in regards to the last meeting, is averaging 1.3 million a year and it's up to 1.8 million dollars. TxDOT can only match the current year's amount, not the bondable amount. The purpose for these funds is, in the future, if the RMA has a project in mind they can use it for bonding purposes.

14. Discussion and possible action on Web Site assistance

Chairman Soto said since the RMA does not currently have funds, the County Commissioners passed a resolution for the County to assist the RMA in web site development. Mr. Soto asked

for a motion authorizing the RMA to request and accept web site assistance from Webb County in order to have an official web site for the RMA.

Mr. Jose Murillo questioned if the assistance is in a financial form. Mr. Soto replied that Webb County would use their in house technicians. Mr. Jose Murillo made a motion, seconded by Mr. Albert Muller, Sr. to authorize the RMA to request and accept web site assistance from Webb County. No discussion was held. Motion carried.

15. Discussion and possible action on Financial Assistance Request

Chairman Soto stated that TxDOT has a Financial Assistance Request, which is an upfront loan that can assist the RMA prior to starting transportation projects. If the RMA has a project in mind in the near future, they can request financial assistance. Mr. Soto asked for a motion to authorize the RMA to commence with the preparation of the Financial Assistance Request, once a project is identified. Mr. Steve LaMantia questioned if it was a loan. Mr. Soto replied yes.

Mr. Albert Muller, Sr. made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jose Murillo to authorize the RMA to commence with the preparation of the Financial Assistance Request, once a project is identified. Mr. Oscar Lopez questioned how the loan would be repaid. He asked if, when they start construction projects, a certain amount of that would be allotted back to the RMA to cover these costs. Mr. Soto stated that, for example, there is some money available for one project, and if they add it to another project, the RMA would probably need to use the vehicle registration fees, bonds, or SIB Loans, and in the process of searching for other avenues of funding, they could use the financial assistance for the time being and use the fees/bonds/SIB Loans to pay it back.

Mr. Juan Cruz from J. Cruz & Associates, LLC, stated that under the transportation code, the RMA has the authority to borrow money from, or to enter in a loan agreement, or other arrangement with a State Infrastructure Bank, the Department, the Commission, or any other public or private entity. He stated that the Board can meet with the officials that created the entity, which is the Commissioner's Court and the City of Laredo, and ask to give the RMA funds through a loan agreement, inter-local agreement, memorandum of understanding, or whatever the case may be. He stated that it would require the collective efforts from, not just Mr. Soto, but all of the Board to acquire start-up funds from those that appointed them from City of Laredo or Webb County. Chairman Soto thanked Mr. Cruz and asked if anyone had any questions. Mr. Oscar Lopez asked if the Board could be allowed to contact their City Council members and County Commissioners that appointed them and ask them to consider, in their respective meetings, to help with the start-up funds for the RMA, so money won't be an issue in the future. He then asked if that could be added to the motion. Mr. Soto stated that the motion would be amended to include what Mr. Lopez stated. Mr. Steve LaMantia then asked Mr. Soto if he had a budget or amount. Mr. Soto said that they still needed to work on that.

Chairman Soto then stated that he would amend the motion to authorize the RMA to start the Financial Assistance Request process with TxDOT, and for the Board to approach the City or County officials that appointed them to request start-up funds. Mr. Soto then asked for a motion.

Albert Muller, Sr. made a motion, seconded by Jose Murillo to authorize the RMA to commence with preparation of the Financial Assistance Request with TxDOT and authorizing the Board to approach the City or County officials for start-up funds. No further discussion was held. Motion carried.

16. Discussion of presentation on Loop 20 east and west bound main lanes over IH35 and Laredo MPO resolution of use of CBI funds for Loop 20 east and west bound main lanes over IH35 (Nathan Bratton - MPO Director)

Chairman Soto then introduced Mr. Nathan Bratton, City of Laredo Planning and MPO Director, to make a presentation of the recent MPO developments and discussion of the Loop 20, east and west bound main lanes, over IH35 and what transpired at the last MPO meeting.

Mr. Bratton stated that at the last MPO meeting, the policy board discussed consolidated border infrastructure funds that were available to TxDOT and what has been allocated in the RMA petition to projects along Loop 20. That money is available and in that discussion it was noted that there are projects that are “shovel” ready, as in there is no Right of Way requirement, and they would fulfill part of the Loop 20 expansion to interstate standards, as such, they voted to issue a resolution requesting that the RMA use those funds in conjunction with the Texas Department of Transportation to do one project. It is estimated to be between 27 and 40 million dollars. The final estimates are being reworked through TxDOT. The main lanes over I35 should have a continuous flow of traffic from the World Trade Bridge all the way to International. The International overpass is also programmed for construction, plans and specs having been completed for letting in December, possibly of this year, and the request from the MPO is to use the CBI funds to complete the section over the Loop and I35 so they would have a continuous road section built and it would all be designated I-69. The request also states that the funds be allocated for 2016.

Melisa Montemayor stated that the International grade separation is Proposition 1 funding that was approved earlier this year. That money will also be used for the Kansas City Southern Frontage Bridges. The money for the widening of the KCS structure is Category 7 MPO money that was allocated a year ago.

Mr. Bratton stated that at the last meeting, the MPO allocated another 6.1 million of Proposition 1 money that was under the discretion of the frontage bridge structures and some international as well. The MPO had a total of 12 million in its discretion.

Albert Muller, Sr. asked what the time frame was. Mr. Bratton stated that International would be December 2015 and the request for the main lanes over I35 would be 2016.

Chairman Soto then asked for a brief explanation on how the MPO works and how it interrelates with the RMA. Mr. Bratton stated that the MPO is a regional entity, its boundaries go into Webb County, but not all of Webb County as the RMA does. It is the entity that interfaces with TxDOT to look at regional planning issues and also, at this point, to collaborate with TxDOT in the use of certain funds for transportation improvement projects. It has become a TMA, Transportation Management Area, but in the past it was a small MPO. It didn't have a lot of influence because there wasn't a lot of money for the MPO. He stated that since we went over 200,000 in population, the Federal Government has designated a TMA. TMA's are usually in your larger cities like Austin, Houston, Dallas, El Paso, San Antonio, and now it makes the MPO more active plus it gives them more reporting requirements for the Federal Government. A lot of levels of regulatory detail that have to be complied with. If the

MPO doesn't get its certification or there are issues with the MPO, it could affect TxDOT funding as well. It could be held back by the Federal Government.

Mr. Soto then stated that based on some MPO meetings that he attended, when they are devising their 25 year plan, which is revisited every five years, there is a list of projects that they prioritize. Mr. Bratton stated that it is required to have all projects constrained, where they identify where the money is coming from for those projects and try to look in the future and try to predict where the budget is going to be for TxDOT. Some projects are brought to the MPO by the public, city, county, or TxDOT itself. Those projects are put into a master project list, and under the new guidance of the Federal Legislation, they have to have a ranking process and do different kinds of studies, like traffic modeling and other things to assess the priority of those projects based on if they are helping congestion, issues, are they new roads, or capacity added enhancements.

Attached is the MPO Resolution No. 2015-02 for additional information.

17. Discussion and possible action on MPO resolution for project sponsorship

Chairman Soto asked the Board to view the MPO Resolution No. 2015-02 and asked for a motion authorizing the RMA to accept the City of Laredo MPO's resolution for project sponsorship of Loop 20 east and west bound main lanes over IH35.

Albert Muller, Sr. made a motion, seconded by Jose Murillo to authorize the RMA to accept the City of Laredo MPO's resolution. No discussion held. Motion carried.

18. Discuss future development and construction of Hachar Loop and funding resources

Chairman Soto stated that there is a push to revisiting the Mines Road area of the Hachar Loop and for relieving the congestion of truck traffic from that area, as well as plan for future growth and development. He wanted the Board to start considering ideas so the RMA can take on that project. He stated that the City awarded a million dollar contract to do some surveying and environmental work to start the process of developing the Hachar Loop. The Hachar Loop is the connection between Mines Road all the way out to 35.

Nathan Bratton then stated, for clarification on the Hachar Project, that it does not go all the way to I35 as part of the actual dedicated right of way. It stops at the northern boundary at the Hachar property and the southern boundary of the Ruethinger property. They have taken the roadway on the Mines Road all the way across the Hachar tracks up until that point. That is something the MPO and the City is looking at because it would help mobility in that area.

David Arredondo then asked if Mr. Bratton could use the Map of the RMA Projects, which was displayed in the room, to show the area he was talking about.

Attached is the Webb County-City of Laredo RMA Projects Map, where Mr. Bratton referenced the area around "Green Ranch Road."

Steve LaMantia asked why the project is not designed to go all the way to IH35. Mr. Bratton stated that the land owner for the Hachar Trust offered to donate the right of way and, at the moment, that was being negotiated. The property owners to the north have not responded, but the MPO would be meeting with them. Mr. Bratton stated that this would help traffic levels on Mines Road and traffic coming off of Highway (40). Mr. Soto then asked where, on Mines

Road, does that connect to, in relation to where the golf course is. Mr. Bratton stated that it was north of "Green Ranch Road."

Chairman Soto stated that it is a very important project that the City and County need to look at and maybe something that the RMA can assist with.

19. Discuss short, medium and long range solutions for Mines Road area

Melisa Montemayor stated that TxDOT Laredo District has an inter-agency contract with Texas Transportation Institute out of Texas A&M University. Via that contract, they have asked them to study the congestion on Mines Road and give them some solutions to that congestion and to be able to increase the mobility out there. The phasing of that study is based off a short, medium and long term type solution. For the short term solution, they anticipate that TTI will come back and inform them of signal timing solutions so they can adjust the actual signals to help the congestion. For the medium term solutions, they expect TTI to come back with lane configuration improvements, which would be acceleration and deceleration lanes. That would be a modification to the lane configuration that's there today. For long term solutions, TTI could come back with an alternative or relief route to Mines Road, which is another road completely. This would relieve some of the traffic currently on Mines Road and shift some of that traffic over to a relief route. She stated they don't know exactly what the study will reveal, but those were just some samples of what they could possibly come back with. She stated, as far as timing and deliverables on that study, the short term could possibly come back two to three months maximum from now, another two months for the medium term and another couple of months for the long term. TTI is working on that right now, and TxDOT will update the RMA, MPO, City and the County on the developments of that study as they go along.

20. Public Comments

No public comments.

21. Date/Time/Location of the Next Full Board Meeting

Chairman Soto proposed the next meeting be held on Monday, March 16, 2015, at 9 a.m. Location to be announced.

22. Adjournment

Albert Muller, Sr. made a motion, seconded by Jose Murillo to adjourn the Webb County - City of Laredo RMA meeting at 9:48 a.m. Motion carried.

Action Items Previously Discussed

Date	Action Item	Date Completed
11/17/14	Board members will decide the term limits.	12/15/2014
11/17/14	Board members will decide on the RMA Mission Statement	
11/17/14	Legal Responsibilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surety Bonds • Conflict of Interest Policy forms • Procurement Policy (Samples will be discussed at the next board meeting. A RMA standard must be used.) • File an annual Personal Financial Statement • Training on responsibilities under the Open Meetings Act and Publication Information Act • Nepotism laws • Ethics and Compliance Program 	
11/17/14	Future Services / Facilities Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lease facilities for staff • Banking services (Finance Committee will need to draw up agreement with county to agree how much the \$10 fee will go to RMA and then set up an account.) • Legal counsel (Completed 2/24/15) • Financial advisory services • Accounting and auditing services • Public informational material • Branding, web site design & maintenance • Inter-local Agreements- TRZ, Toll Equity Bonds, Tolling • Executive Director (job description to be developed and posted when needed with experience in business, management, state policy and TxDOT) • Staffing (Receptionist, secretary (preferably paralegal), executive director and support staff.) 	
12/15/14	By-Law Committee will edit By-Laws Section 5, E., to include Director term limit.	2/24/15
12/15/14	By-Law Committee will check Section 5, D., with the Transportation Code.	2/24/15

MINUTES FOR THE WEBB COUNTY - CITY OF LAREDO REGIONAL MOBILITY AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 24, 2015 WERE COMPLETED ON THIS THE 6th DAY OF MARCH 2015.

Submitted by:
 Marissa J. Montoya
 Office Technician
 TxDOT Laredo Dist.