

OSCAR LEESER
MAYOR

TOMMY GONZALEZ
CITY MANAGER



CITY COUNCIL
PETER SVARZBEIN, DISTRICT 1
LARRY ROMERO, DISTRICT 2
EMMA ACOSTA, DISTRICT 3
CARL L. ROBINSON, DISTRICT 4
MICHEL R. NOE, DISTRICT 5
CLAUDIA ORDAZ, DISTRICT 6
LILY LIMÓN, DISTRICT 7
CORTNEY CARLISLE NILAND, DISTRICT 8

SPECIAL WORK SESSION MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM
October 19, 2015

The City Council met at the above place and date. Meeting was called to order at 9:22 a.m. Mayor Oscar Leeser present and presiding and the following Council Members answered roll call: Larry Romero, Emma Acosta, Carl Robinson, Michiel Noe, Claudia Ordaz, Lilia Limon, and Cortney Niland. Peter Svarzbein requested to be excused.

AGENDA

1. Discussion and action on Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) TPB Agenda and Pending Issues.

Mr. Sam Rodriguez, Assistant Director of EPIA.

Representative Acosta asked Mr. Rodriguez to go over the minutes of the last MPO meeting and Cadwallader project, specifically budget issues.

Ms. Monica Lombrana, Director of Aviation, gave a synopsis of what happened with the Cadwallader project.

Mr. Tommy Gonzalez added that CMAB funds go back to the state.

Ms. Lombrana explained how the funding works.

Representative Niland praised Representative Acosta for her leadership in presenting our case for the Cadwallader.

Representative Acosta explained the \$10 million surplus in the CMAB category because of difficulties in getting a viable project that meets the criteria. There is \$1 million set aside for Cadwallader.

Mayor Leeser stated, "Carolina Bridge Project will start first of the year and last 12 – 18 months and we would not lose funding."

Representative Limón stated her understanding is that the Cadwallader Bridge Project was going to cost more than \$1 million."

Ms. Lombrana stated, "We are in the process of conducting a feasibility study to determine what the project can embrace.

Representative Acosta questioned Ms. Lombrana on funding sources.

Representative Limon asked, "Would a quad gate work there?"

Ms. Lombrana replied, "No, this is a pedestrian bridge."

Representative Noe asked for a copy of Robert's Rules or Orders to be included at the TPB meetings.

Ms. Sylvia Firth, City Attorney, gave legal advice on application of meeting rules.

Representative Acosta spoke of procedural items at the TPB and MPO and how the business of the meeting is conducted by the Chair. Two hour long discussion to include limiting the time board members could speak to 3 minutes and not more than twice.

Mayor Leeser and Mr. Gonzalez discussed the toll system, funding and liability for the toll roads/Regional Mobility Authority.

Representative Niland needs guarantee to forgive \$5 million debt for toll road and ongoing operations and management if the toll roads are eliminated by the State.

There is value in having a member of the RMA on the MPO. Representative Niland asked Mike Medina at the MPO to put the item on the agenda, but he did not.

Mayor Leeser explained Mr. Medina did put it on the agenda and he removed it. He, the Mayor, removed it. He explained he did not want it to appear that the City was trying to stack the deck.

Mayor Leeser said he told former Mayor Wardy when he asked that he would not put that item on the agenda. It is not the proper time.

Representative Niland stated, "My intent was not to stack the deck but was to allow the RMA to have a voice."

Mayor Leeser is having a dialog with the players.

Representative Niland would like to look at best practices to prevent things from falling through the cracks.

Representative Acosta stated, "Mayor Cook did bring that item forward before, but the membership voted against it."

Representative Noe asked, "Could the RMA representatives be brought on as non-voting members?"

Mayor Leaser and Representative Niland replied, "Great idea."

Representative Niland asked Mayor Leaser to have a dialog on the matter.

Representative Acosta asked Mr. Rodriguez if he has a list of projects for CMAB funding. MCA Quiet Zonoes is her priority project that she believes does have a regional impact. She objected to the inclusion of Cadwallader with the MCA as she stated they do not belong together.

Representative Robinson asked, "What specific projects are we talking about?"

Mr. Rodriguez explained.

Ms. Lombrana stated, "They are projects that staff believes are ready and that have a good prospect of being funded. It is not necessarily projects that have been in the queue for a long time."

Mr. Rodriguez stated, "Some of my projects for District 4 are not being considered." He has asked numerous times, as they should have been submitted. He asked, "What do we need to do to be prepared so when there is a call for projects we are ready to go?"

Mr. Gonzalez added, "Such as the Sean Haggerty project that would impact access/egress to a fire house."

Representative Robinson said he has asked this question on Sean Haggerty before and he has not gotten an answer as to what it is that we need to do to be prepared for a call for projects to increase the chance of securing funding.

Mr. Gonzalez asked Mr. Sam Rodriguez and Ms. Monica Lombrana to meet with Representative Robinson today.

Representative Acosta believes the Yarbrough project will qualify for some funding for MTP.

2. Freese & Nichols Study Update:

Summary of Evaluation Report of Capital Improvement Department

Mr. Tommy Gonzalez, City Manager, introduced the item and explained that he and his staff met with various contractors on this topic.

Representative Niland requested a thorough explanation in precise detail of their study and their recommendations.

Mr. Allan Greer, Freese & Nichols, presented a PowerPoint presentation (copy on file in City Clerk's Office).

Ms. Linda Huff, Freese & Nichols
Mr. Juan Sierra, Freese & Nichols

Representative Acosta questioned the size of the flow charts, too small to read.

Mr. Greer explained he would be handing out a report with larger font.

Representative Niland commented on changes in ordinances, like the landscape ordinance, that impacted projects and their budgets.

Mayor Leeson agreed.

Mayor Leeson commented on the use of third party Engineering and/or Program Management firm, and noted that it does not necessarily mean out of town. It could be a local third party.

Mayor Leeson praised Mr. Greer for the comment that he will work his way out of a job.

Mr. Gonzalez mentioned there are 33 Quality of Life projects and 40 more in process. He spoke of the importance of project management certification and the absence of that among our staff members, an organizational failure. He added that we had successes in projects, but we also have had some that have received a lot of attention from the public/media.

Mayor Leeson stated, "It's important to give City Manager the tools he needs to succeed and then we do not micromanage him."

Representative Noe questioned the training aspects that have been brought up. He added that we need to train our people even if we do bring in third party people. We need to prepare to bring the duties back in house by training our own people.

Mr. Gonzalez stated, "We already are outsourcing now with local experts, and we need to do more of that while, in the process, we do train our own folks to get them the expertise they need."

Representative Acosta asked, "Do we need to update our technology to allow bidders to submit their bids and proposals on line?"

Mr. Greer stated, "There are programs out there. Online delivery is one aspect of a more effective procurement process."

Representative Acosta questioned item 3.3 project management program and the need for an attorney.

Mr. Greer replied, "Yes, there are some legal aspects but primarily it is an engineering function."

Representative Acosta explained her previous work with the City under the Public Works umbrella. And she asked if they recommending a super Department of Public Works.

Mr. Greer replied, "Yes. CID is part of that group, distinct and focused on CIP

projects, but Public Works has a broader scope of duties that need to be coordinated. Quality of Life and TXDOT/MPO are the primary areas where the City needs help."

Representative Acosta spoke of need for better coordination between departments in which the project is being executed, like Parks, and the Community Development.

Mr. Greer stated, "Yes, that is addressed in the report by having project supervisors for each department to make sure the project is successfully delivered."

Representative Acosta asked, "How do we fix the trust issue that the report identified as lacking?"

Mr. Greer replied, "Strong leadership team needs to be implemented. With all the changes that have happened, trust has been lost and staff is hesitant. There needs to be more team approach and there is need to address vertical bottleneck."

Mr. Gonzalez stated, "Contractors A/E have been left out to keep the budget down and come in to approve a change order when they have been left out of the process."

Ms. Lombrana spoke of the public meeting to be held tonight at the Civic Center with contractors, architects, engineers.

Representative Niland addressed contractors in the audience and praised the thorough clarity of the Freese & Nichols' presentation and added she will leave this meeting today for the first time in a long time really energized with this methodical plan in place. She also thanked City Manager and Freese & Nichols for the report.

Mr. Gonzalez explained to Council that he listened to all of Council and stakeholders. He was concerned we were lacking in processes and training. The 3 year CIP program here. Some cities use an operating CIP program for maintenance. We are building on some strengths and past successes and identifying areas that need to be addressed.

Mayor Leeser wants to develop processes and procedures.

Representative Limon asked, "How did Freese & Nichols determine that the trust was lost among employees?"

Mr. Greer spoke to individual employees and heard them express their distrust about delivering news on projects that is not positive and how would that be received. Need for performance reviews.

Representative Limon expressed how baffled she was when she was first elected to find the absence of performance reviews.

Representative Limon praised that out of a long list of projects of which only three were out of budget and out of time. She said staff was kicked around publically and put down repeatedly. Wants to provide employees with all the training and certifications and support they need.

Mayor Leaser stated, "We are looking at exactly that today."

Representative Acosta praised Freese & Nichols for the excellent flow charts, and asked for a time line for the new program.

Mr. Gonzalez stated that he is already trying to develop staff by having them present project updates to Council. We do lack subject matter expertise in some areas. Quarterly reports have stressed the system because it is a new duty. This analysis is to add another layer of improvements.

Representative Acosta believes we do need more communication and make it a more acceptable environment in which to deliver bad news. Need for training and mentoring.

ADJOURN

Motion made by Representative Romero, seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Noe, and unanimously carried to **ADJOURN** this meeting at 11:21 a.m.

.....
APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

Richarda Duffy Momsen, City Clerk