

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS
COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2021
10:00 AM
VIDEOCONFERENCE**

Members Present:	Councilmember Manny Pelaez, <i>Co-Chair, District 8</i> Commissioner Justin Rodriguez, <i>Co-Chair, Bexar County Commissioner’s Court, Precinct 2</i> Councilmember Rebecca Viagran, <i>District 3</i> Councilmember Adriana Rocha Garcia, <i>District 4</i> Councilmember Clayton Perry, <i>District 10</i>
Members Absent:	Commissioner Kevin Wolff, <i>Bexar County Commissioner’s Court, Precinct 3</i>
Staff Present:	Carlos Contreras, <i>Assistant City Manager</i> ; Chelsea Mikulencak, <i>Assistant City Attorney</i> ; Jeff Coyle, <i>Director, Government & Public Affairs</i> ; Sally Basurto, <i>Assistant Director, Government & Public Affairs</i> ; Christine Wright, <i>State Relations Manager, Government & Public Affairs</i> ; Nancy Cano, <i>Office of the City Clerk</i>
Others Present:	Dawn Larios, <i>Executive Director, San Antonio Restaurant Association</i> ; Cindy Dorantes, <i>Director of Events and Member Engagement, San Antonio Restaurant Association</i> ; Kelsey Streufert, <i>Vice President of Government Affairs and Advocacy, Texas Restaurant Association</i> ; Melissa Shannon, <i>Director, Governmental Affairs, Bexar County</i> ; Baltazar R. (“Walter”) Serna, Jr. <i>Attorney, Serna & Serna, San Antonio</i> ; Henry Bonilla, <i>The Normandy Group</i> ; Ron Eritano, <i>The Normandy Group</i> ; Shadi Nasabzadeh, <i>Legislative Specialist, Government & Regulatory Affairs Office, Clark Hill</i>

Call to Order

Co-Chairman Pelaez called the meeting to order.

State Update on:

- **87th Session Protocol**
- **Issues/Bills of Interest**

Jeff Coyle reported that the Texas Legislature convened for its 87th Legislative Session yesterday with very limited attendance and only those who had taken a COVID-19 test allowed in the building. He stated that Dave Phelan (Beaumont) was sworn in as the 76th Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives by a vote of 142-2. He added that both Chambers would discuss operating procedures related to COVID-19 tomorrow. He noted that Bill filing began on November 9, 2020 and the Senate and House had filed over 1,200 Bills to date; and during the first 60 days of session, or before March 12, 2021, lawmakers were prohibited from passing any legislation, unless declared as an emergency item by Governor Abbott. He stated that the Speaker announced that after rules were set tomorrow, the Legislature would adjourn and not meet next

week out of concern for nationwide protests due to the Presidential Inauguration; thereafter it would reconvene on January 26, 2021 and the last session would be held on May 31, 2021.

Mr. Coyle reported that the State Comptroller's biannual budget projection was an estimated \$112.5 billion which was barely down from \$112.9 billion last year, and the projected shortfall in the current two-year budget was reduced to \$1 billion from a projection of \$4.6 billion shortfall over the past summer.

Mr. Coyle reported that Rep. Barbara Gervin-Hawkins was committed to filing 4 separate Bills which included Chapters 143 and Chapter 174 of the Texas Local Government Code on the accountability and transparency items designated as priority Legislative Agenda items by City Council. He stated that a joint meeting was scheduled for February 3, 2021 with Rep. Gervin-Hawkins and activity community groups; and that staff had met (twice) with the San Antonio Police Officers Association (SAPOA), the Texas Police Officer's Association, COPS/Metro and had briefed other major city officials on the City's priority police reform bills. He noted that the FixSAPD Group submitted petitions this week to the City Clerk to potentially place Chapter 174 on the ballot, which if successful and voter-approved, would undo collective bargaining in San Antonio.

Mr. Coyle reported that based on the projected State Budget shortfall, a directive was issued to for all State agencies to reduce their budgets by 5% for the next biennium, and staff would request that the Department of State Health Services be exempted from the 5% cut during the midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic. He stated that Senator Nathan Johnson filed SB 117 which would direct the State to adopt Medicaid expansion and would brief the Texas Municipal League of Cities (TML) on the significant impact of this Bill as reinforced by the COVID-19 Pandemic. He added that Sen. Charles Perry filed SB 154 which would create a State broadband office focused on drawing Federal funding to address internet gap coverage. He indicated that staff would meet with the Governor's Lead Advisor this Friday to address the City's broadband needs and would schedule a meeting with Sen. Perry.

Mr. Coyle reported on the following Bills related to the City's Legislative Agenda:

- HB 638 would prevent a city from adopting its budget if it was planning on spending less on public safety than in the previous year [Filed by Rep. Matt Krause]
- HB 741 would require cities and counties to hold an election if they wanted to decrease their spending on public safety by more than 5% from the previous fiscal year [Filed by Rep. Steve Allison]
- HB 872 would protect the personal information of residents who had utility services disconnected, or were pending disconnection
- HB 891 would allow birth record fee waivers for homeless individuals [Filed by Rep. Diego Bernal]

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked if there was a plan to continue to actively engage State representatives to keep pushing for the accelerated FDA approval and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. Mr. Coyle reported that the Mayor and County Judge Wolff sent a joint letter to the Governor requesting the need for vaccines and noted that the Alamodome and Wellmed COVID-

19 Vaccine Events demonstrated how great the demand was and how capable the City was in delivering vaccines quickly and efficiently.

Councilmember Perry noted that the State Budget was the number one issue and requested regular updates.

At this time, the Intergovernmental Relations Council Committee meeting was adjourned, and the Intergovernmental Relations COSA Subcommittee convened to consider the following items:

Federal Update on:

- **Coronavirus Response & Relief Bill**
- **San Antonio Restaurant Association Priorities**

Mr. Coyle reported that House Resolution 133 Omnibus Appropriations Bill and COVID-19 Response and Relief Act was signed into law on December 27, 2020 and consisted of a \$2.3 trillion package to fund the Federal government for FY 2021 and included \$900 billion in additional COVID-19 relief. He stated that \$600 will be disbursed to individual taxpayers earning less than \$75,000, \$1,200 for spouses earning under \$150,000, an enhancement of \$300 per week of unemployment will be added on top of current State unemployment benefits through March 14, 2021, and the eviction moratorium will be extended to January 31, 2021.

Mr. Coyle reported that a total of \$325 billion would be provided for small business assistance in the amount of a third round of Paycheck Protection Program forgivable loans and noted that the Trans Peco Bank would be the designated portal for local restaurant PPP applications. He added that a \$20 billion economic injury disaster loan fund was appropriated for true loans; the employee retention tax credit was extended and increased; and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit was extended.

Mr. Coyle reported that Response and Relief Act would provide the State with funding:

- \$1.5 billion for COVID-19 testing and tracing
- \$5.5 billion for school reopening
- \$7 billion for broadband internet access with \$3.2 billion directed to low-income individuals
- \$10 billion for State highways
- Estimated \$8 million - \$10 million to the San Antonio International Airport

Mr. Coyle reported that the Relief Act would allow for cities with a population of 200,000 or more to apply for direct funding and that the City submitted its application on Friday for an estimated \$6 million in direct funding for rental and utility assistance.

Mr. Coyle reported that partnering agencies with the City would receive Relief Act funding as follows:

- Food Banks: \$400 million

- VIA Operational Support: \$61 million
- Live venues, cultural institutions, independent movie theaters: \$15 billion

Commissioner Rodriguez confirmed that Bexar County had submitted an application for rental assistance funding. He requested that Melissa Shannon confirm if University Health had received direct funding.

Councilmember Viagran asked for further information on the \$10 billion appropriated for State highways and for the \$15 billion appropriated for live venues and entertainment. She expressed support for a mass food distribution event for the farther Southwest side. Ms. Basurto reported that specific detail on highway funding was not provided and that staff would track and provide the information as provided by the Department of Transportation. Mr. Coyle reported that staff would consult the Economic Development Department to provide further information on engagement with local community venue and entertainment outlets.

- **San Antonio Restaurant Association Priorities**

Dawn Larios reported that the San Antonio Restaurant Association (SARA) reviewed the 5,000-page House Resolution 133 Omnibus Appropriations Bill and assessed key points and issues that would benefit the restaurants. She stated these businesses would receive 3.5 times more of their monthly payroll. She explained that in order to be eligible for a loan, a business would have had to suffered 25% in revenue loss and gross receipts. She added that under the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), a business could apply for loan up to \$2 million and allocate 60% for payroll and other expenses, and 40% towards non-payroll expenses. She noted that businesses with 300 employees per location would qualify for the PPP and items that were tax deductible.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia how SARA communicated with the restaurants. Ms. Larios stated that the SARA's leadership team reached out to member and non-member restaurants to ensure all the organizations had access to resources, held nightly webinars, and provided face masks. She reported that SARA had signed a contract with Trans Pecos Bank to assist any restaurant in Texas that needed help filling out the PPP application.

Councilmember Viagran asked if there was assistance for small businesses or restaurants for the implementation of digital or touch free payment systems for safe practices during the COVID-19. Dawn Larios stated that the PPP loan included 40% for non-payroll items and digital technology systems would be covered under that category.

Councilmember Perry stated that he was a proponent of increasing the amount of assistance to businesses. He noted that he signed and approved a Council Consideration Request for the creation of a Food and Beverage Worker Relief Program that would soon move forward yet.

Kelsey Streufert stated that Trans Pecos bank was chosen because they were local, their average loan amount was \$19,000, and they focused on small mom-and-pop businesses. Ms. Streufert noted that SARA received a \$500,000 contribution from Doordash for the Texas Relief Fund to help independent restaurants regardless of their membership with the Texas Restaurant Association.

Adjourn

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 11:23 am.

*Councilmember Manny Pelaez,
Co-Chairman*

*County Commissioner Justin Rodriguez,
Co-Chairman*

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Cano, Office of the City Clerk