

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS
COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2020
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> Commissioner Kevin Wolff, <i>Bexar County Commissioner’s Court, Precinct 3</i>
Staff Present:	Carlos Contreras, <i>Assistant City Manager</i> ; Camila Kunau, <i>Assistant City Attorney</i> ; Jeff Coyle, <i>Director, Government & Public Affairs</i> ; Melanie Keeton, <i>Assistance Finance Director</i> ; Ana Bradshaw, <i>Assistant to the Director, Human Resources</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:	Melissa Shannon, <i>Director, Governmental Affairs, Bexar County</i> ; Manuel Leal, <i>Manager, Governmental Affairs, Bexar County</i> ; Jesse Ancira, <i>Founder and Principal, Ancira Strategies</i> ; Nelda Hunter, <i>Ancira Strategies</i> ; Russell (“Rusty”) Kelley, <i>Blackridge</i> ; Carol McGarah, <i>CEO, Blackridge</i> ; Micah Rodriguez, <i>General Counsel, Blackridge</i> ; Carrie Simmons, <i>Lobbyist, Texas Lobby Group</i> ; Snapper Carr, <i>Partner and General Counsel, Focused Advocacy</i> ; Andrew Keefer, <i>Senior Associate, Focused Advocacy</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> ; Kevin F. Kelly, <i>Attorney, Legislative Government Affairs Office, Clark Hill</i> ; Lauren Lipin, <i>Legislative Government Affairs Office, Clark Hill</i>

Call to Order

Co-Chairman Pelaez called the meeting to order.

1. Approval of the minutes from the June 10, 2020 meeting of the Intergovernmental Relations Committee.

Commissioner Wolff moved to approve the minutes from the June 10, 2020 meeting of the Intergovernmental Relations Committee. Councilmember Viagran seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Update and status of the items on the Federal Legislative Programs for the 116th Congress. [Jeff Coyle, Director, Government & Public Affairs; Melissa Shannon, Director of Governmental Affairs, Bexar County]

Sally Basurto provided an update on the City's 116th United States Congress Federal Legislative Program which was a two-year package approved by the City Council and included the following legislative priorities: Military Protection, Domestic Violence Prevention, Aviation and Transportation, and Housing.

Ms. Basurto reported that three Military Protection appropriation requests were included in the House Military Construction Bill passed in July 2020: Lackland AFB Basic Training Dormitory, \$36 million; Flight Simulator Training System, \$19.5 million; and F-16 Mission Training Center for the Air National Guard, \$10.8 million. She added that the National Defense Authorization Act (NDA) was a must-pass Bill and both the House and the Senate each passed their respective NDA versions and the two NDA conference committees would meet in September 2020 to reconcile the differences.

Ms. Basurto reported that U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) passed an FY 2021 \$2 million appropriations bill for domestic violence prevention which included report language that directed and guided the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to work with State and Local Governments on domestic violence prevention. She stated that the House passed the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act which expanded eligibility for assistance and increased funding for State and Local providers. She reported that the Senate had yet to take up the Bill.

Ms. Basurto reported that the House passed the Transportation Housing and Urban Development (THUD) Bill which included \$1.6 billion for aviation safety and \$500 billion for Airport Improvement Program (AIP) Grants. She noted that the San Antonio Airport relied on AIP grants for airport planning and infrastructure projects. She added that the House included \$1 billion for building grants (\$100 million above the FY 2020 level); and \$750 million for transit infrastructure grants (\$50 million above the FY 2020 level). She reported that the House passed a \$1.5 trillion infrastructure bill in July 2020 which included the reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Bill for five years.

Ms. Basurto reported that the FY 2021 Housing Bill funded several housing programs: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): \$3.2 billion; Home Partnership Grants: \$1.7 billion; Housing Rental Assistance Grants: \$25.7 billion; Homeless Assistance Grants: \$3.4 billion; and the Housing for Homeless Veterans Grants: \$40 million.

Ms. Basurto added that the House passed the Emergency Housing Protections and Relief Act in June 2020 that proposed \$200 billion in additional funding for housing and homelessness.

Ms. Basurto reported that the City received a grant award of \$3.1 million that would fund the addition of 25 Police Officer positions within the SAPD Crisis Intervention Unit with a focus on domestic violence prevention. She noted that the grant award was the second highest awarded in Texas, only behind Houston. Ms. Basurto stated that the City applied for and secured a \$3.5 million Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant allocated for emergency preparedness. She added that the House passed a Firearms Safety Bill and a Federal Background Check Bill.

Ms. Basurto reported that the U.S. Supreme Court voted to block efforts to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Program. She reported that there were more than 100,000 DACA recipients in Texas and more than 500 DACA participants in Bexar County. She stated that the

President signed the Great Outdoors Act into law in August 2020, which provided \$1.9 billion funding annually for five years. She added that the funding would greatly benefit the San Antonio Missions Historical Parks with a current backlog of deferred maintenance projects and capital projects totaling over \$20 million.

Ms. Basurto reported that the City's 117th United States Congress Federal Legislative Program was under development and proposed legislative issues would be presented to the Committee for approval in November 2020 and forwarded to the City Council for authorization by January 2021. Ms. Basurto reported that the 117th Congressional Legislative Session would begin on January 3, 2021. She added that 10 of 12 House spending Bills passed and 12 of 12 Senate spending Bills were pending.

Melissa Shannon reported that Bexar County received \$6.1 million of Federal funding in reimbursement for the completion of the Mission Reach – San Antonio River Foundation Project. She added that Bexar County also received Federal funding for the Joint Opioid Task Force and for body-worn cameras for the Sheriff's Office. She stated that the Bexar County Commissioner's Court would have a proposed draft legislative program by November 2020 and would collaborate with the City to align shared priorities.

Commissioner Wolff identified the Westside Creeks as a high priority for Bexar County. He requested a collaborative effort in a show of urgency to obtain next-phase funding to complete the project.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia requested an update on the Brownfields Grant that provided free or low cost environmental services to redevelop sites with potential environmental contamination. She requested an update on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Funding. Ms. Basurto reported that the House included \$350 million in Brownfield grants and \$90 million for Brownfield cleanup projects.

Councilmember Perry requested performance metrics be included for the City's lobby team. He noted drastic changes in the airline industry due to COVID-19, and requested that every effort be made at the next Legislative Session to obtain FAA authorization for the creation of a direct flight path from Washington, D.C. to San Antonio. Jeff Coyle stated that performance metrics were included in the City's Federal and State contracts, process metrics were used for regular updates, and reported an 80% or 90% rating for congressional bills prioritized by the City. He added that the Finance Department tracked funding grants awarded to the City and noted a tracking tool for appropriation submissions would be implemented. Mr. Bonilla noted that several airlines aligned efforts and mobilized their national employee databases, unions, and spent millions with lobbying forces to make a key vote against a direct flight from Washington, D.C. to San Antonio and that the Lobbyist Teams would regroup on the effort next year at the request of City Council.

Councilmember Viagran asked what lobbyist steps were in place to advance the Violence Against Women Act which was approved by the House over 18 months ago, which was still pending in the Senate. Mr. Coyle stated updates would be provided on efforts the Lobbyist Team made. Mr. Kelly reported that funding for the overall domestic violence programs continued through the annual appropriations process, but that broader legislative framework was caught up between specific partisan issues and unless there was change in partisan alignment, it would be difficult to win the 60 votes needed to pass the Bill in the Senate. He stated he would provide a comparative

analysis of the Violence Against Women Act introduced by Senator Joni Ernst (R-IA) in November 2019 and the parallel Bill introduced by Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA).

3. CARES Act Reporting. [Jeff Coyle, Director, Government & Public Affairs; Melissa Shannon, Director of Governmental Affairs, Bexar County]

Ana Bradshaw reported that the City received a total of \$190.0 million in CARES Act funding and leveraged additional funding from other Federal grants, FEMA, and the General Fund to maximize the impact for targeted, vulnerable populations across the City. She added that the CARES Act funds must be expended by December 31, 2020. She stated that \$130 million was allocated towards the City's COVID-19 response, of which the largest expense covered payroll for Police Officers, Firefighters, First Responders and Health Department Staff. She reported that other expenses included Housing Assistance: \$23.6 million; Recovery & Resiliency Plan: \$10.2 million; and Health Implementation Plan: \$3.5 million.

Ms. Bradshaw reported that the CARES Act funding differed from a typical Federal grant in that funds were provided upfront, guidelines were developed afterwards, and reporting procedures were developed midstream due to the urgency of the pandemic. She added that several post-grant external audits would be conducted to ensure compliance. She noted that the CARES Act stipulated the funds could only cover necessary expenditures incurred due to COVID-19 which were not accounted for in the most recently approved City Budget, and which were incurred during March 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020. She stated that recommended adjustments would be tracked, monitored, and presented to the Committee in October 2020. She added that previous CARES Act monthly reports were available online on the City's website.

Councilmember Perry asked of the number of participants enrolled in the Workforce Development Plan. Assistant City Manager Carlos Contreras stated that the program had just launched, with marketing outreach to targeted populations and intake in progress. He stated he would provide further information once the next biweekly report was obtained.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked of the decision making process for adjustments and shifting of CARES Act funding. Assistant City Manager Contreras stated that an assessment by the City Manager determined that there was flexibility in allocated funding between now and the end of the year. He added that options and recommendations would be presented to City Council and noted funding levels would not be altered, just reallocated.

4. City and County State Legislative Program Issue Coordination. [Jeff Coyle, Director, Government & Public Affairs; Melissa Shannon, Director of Governmental Affairs, Bexar County]

Mr. Coyle reported that the City and Bexar County were in the process of forming their Legislative Agendas, with each body of government passing its own separate agenda. He stated that the benefit of the Joint Intergovernmental Relations Council Committee was to share and coordinate legislative efforts during the unique COVID-19 interim process.

Mr. Coyle reported that changes to Chapter 143 of the Texas Local Government Code would be proposed to revise the current rule that eliminates disciplinary proceedings for Police Officers not enacted within 180 days after the reported violations. He added that changes to Chapter 174 of

the Texas Local Government Code would be proposed to revise the current prohibited release of Police Officer personnel records to the public.

Ms. Shannon reported that the Commissioner's Court was currently in the negotiation process of its collective bargaining agreement with the Deputy Sheriff's Association. She added that the Commissioner's Court may want to collaborate efforts regarding changes to Chapters 143 and 174 of the Texas Local Government Code.

Commissioner Wolff noted that action taken at the State level would provide local elected or appointed heads of law enforcement with the ability to address bad actors.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia proposed joint advocacy for senior services. Mr. Coyle stated that staff could collaborate with the Human Services Department and the Joint City County Elderly Affairs Commission to present a proposed agenda inclusive of elderly affairs.

Councilmember Perry noted that Texas was the last donor state to the Department of Transportation, with a highway formula-to-highway account tax payment at less than 100%. He asked for Texas gas tax to be placed on the Legislative Agenda to gain back the estimated hundreds of millions of dollars lost in gas tax that could support infrastructure.

Mr. Coyle outlined a preliminary draft list of City/County joint Legislative Agenda items: Revisions to Chapters 143 and 174 of the Texas Local Government Code; public health and COVID-19 related issues; digital inclusion; housing stability; and transportation funding.

Ms. Shannon stated that the County would propose an addition \$10 vehicle registration fee for transportation funding. She outlined other proposed City/County joint Legislative Agenda items: Voter safety/online voter registration, criminal justice reform, bail bond reform, jail population and COVID-19-related issues, and domestic violence prevention.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia requested more information on the proposed \$10 vehicle registration fee increase and an offline discussion with the Regional Mobility Authority (RMA). Ms. Shannon reported that the County would seek authorization from the State to place the proposed \$10 vehicle registration fee increase on the ballot. She stated that the RMA would manage the additional funding, and she would provide further information and coordinate a meeting with the RMA for additional questions.

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

5. Approval of the Minutes from the August 12 and August 26, 2020 meetings of the Intergovernmental Relations COSA Subcommittee.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to approve the minutes from the August 12, 2020, and August 26, 2020 meeting of the Intergovernmental Relations COSA Subcommittee. Councilmember Perry seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

6. Bexar County Emergency Services District No. 2 Request to Incur Debt. [Jeff Coyle, Director, Government & Public Affairs]

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to postpone further discussions on Item 6 to the next meeting of the Intergovernmental Relations COSA Subcommittee. Councilmember Perry seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Adjourn

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 12: 13 pm.

*Councilmember Manny Pelaez,
Co-Chairman*

*County Commissioner Justin Rodriguez,
Co-Chairman*

Respectfully Submitted,

*Nancy Cano
Office of the City Clerk*