

DEE MARGO
MAYOR

TOMMY GONZALEZ
CITY MANAGER



CITY COUNCIL
PETER SVARZBEIN, DISTRICT 1
ALEXSANDRA ANNELLO, DISTRICT 2
CASSANDRA HERNANDEZ, DISTRICT 3
SAM MORGAN, DISTRICT 4
ISABEL SALCIDO, DISTRICT 5
CLAUDIA L. RODRIGUEZ, DISTRICT 6
HENRY RIVERA, DISTRICT 7
CISSY LIZARRAGA, DISTRICT 8

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
December 7, 2020
9:05 AM

Due to the temporary suspension of Open Meetings laws due to the COVID-19 emergency this meeting was conducted via telephonic and videoconference formats.

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The City Council of the City Council met on the above time and date via videoconference. Meeting was called to order at 9:16 a.m. Mayor Dee Margo present and presiding and the following Council Members answered roll call: Peter Svarzbein, Alexsandra Annello, Sam Morgan, Isabel Salcido, Claudia Rodriguez, Henry Rivera and Cissy Lizarraga. Representative Hernandez joined the videoconference at 9:21 a.m. due to technical difficulties.
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AGENDA

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1. Presentation and discussion by the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Cross-Functional Team providing information on key activities, efforts and processes.

1. Overview (Tommy Gonzalez)

City Manager Mr. Tommy Gonzalez introduced the item.

2. Cross Functional Team Operations (Chief Mario D'Agostino/ Angela Mora)

Assistant Fire Chief Jorge Rodriguez and Ms. Angela Mora provided an overview of the operations and the upcoming vaccination rollout.

3. City Attorney's Office Update (Karla Nieman)

- a) Governor Abbott's Executive Orders & Proclamations
- b) City Attorney's Office COVID-19 Support

Ms. Karla Nieman, City Attorney, provided an overview of the presentation and Ms. Anna Schumacher, Assistant City Attorney, presented a Power Point presentation (copy on file in the City Clerk's Office).

4. Team Lead Reports:

- 1. Health Focus (Hector Ocaranza, M.D.)
 - a) Community Task Force Recommendations Update
- 2. Testing Recap and Update (Tracey Jerome)

3. Data Analysis (David Coronado)
4. Education, Communication and Compliance (Ellen Smyth, Dionne Mack)
5. Financial Focus (Robert Cortinas)
6. Economic Recovery (Jessica Herrera, Kelly Kotlik)
7. Community Vulnerabilities and Human Services (Nicole Ferrini, Abraham Gutierrez)
8. Operations Focus (Cary Westin, Richard Bristol)

The following City staff members presented PowerPoint presentations and addressed questions posed by Council members (copies of presentation on file in the City Clerk's Office):

1. Dr. Hector Ocaranza, City of El Paso Public Health Authority
2. Ms. Tracey Jerome, Deputy City Manager for Quality of Life
3. Mr. David Coronado, International Bridges Director
4. Ms. Ellen Smyth, Environmental Services and Sun Metro Director
5. Ms. Laura Cruz-Acosta, Strategic Communications Director
6. Ms. Nicole Cote, Office of Management and Budget Director
7. Mr. Kelly Kotlik, Economic Development Program Administrator
8. Ms. Nicole Ferrini, Community and Human Development Director
9. Mr. Cary Westin, Senior Deputy City Manager
10. Mr. Tommy Gonzalez, City Manager
11. Mr. Ben Fyffe, Cultural Affairs and Recreation Director
12. Mr. Sam Rodriguez, Chief Operations and Transportation Officer
13. Ms. Angela Mora, Public Health Director

The following members of the Community provided an update on how their organizations are helping the public:

1. Ms. Marybeth Stevens, President and CEO, Better Business Bureau
2. Ms. Alma Aranda, Interim Programs Director, Workforce Solutions Borderplex
3. Ms. Paloma Medina, Technical Assistant, Project Vida

Mayor Margo and Representatives Svarzbein, and Lizarraga commented and asked questions regarding the presentation.

NO ACTION was taken on this item.

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2. A) Presentation on the 4th Quarter Financial Report for FY 2020.

B) **RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020 the President of the United States declared a national emergency, the Governor of the State of Texas declared a state of disaster, and the Mayor of the City of El Paso ("City") declared a local state of disaster in relation to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 17, 2020 City Council Issued an Emergency Ordinance Instituting Emergency Measures Due to A Public Health Emergency ("Emergency Ordinance"); and

WHEREAS, on March 27, 2020, the federal government enacted the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (“CARES Act”), which established the Coronavirus Relief Fund (“Fund”) and appropriated \$150 billion to the Fund to be used to address the economic fallout caused by the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the City is a recipient of the CARES Act grant in the amount of \$118,956,278.90 from the Fund; and

WHEREAS, on May 11, 2020 City Council approved appropriations for the CARES Act funds received by the City on eligible expenses from March 1, 2020 through December 30, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the City has on-going COVID-19 related expenditures that are expected to continue into FY 2021; and

WHEREAS, on March 3, 2020 City Council established a Stabilization Fund which allows for the use of funds to provide funding for specific circumstances or state of emergencies as determined by City Council; and

WHEREAS, the City wishes to allocate funds from the Stabilization Fund toward the on-going expenditures associated with the COVID-19 emergency.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO:

THAT City Council approves the appropriation of funds from the Stabilization Fund to cover public health and safety costs associated with the COVID-19 emergency that:

1. Will allow for the ongoing public and health response and operations expenses associated with the COVID-19 Pandemic, in an amount not to exceed \$16,816,869 during FY2021;
2. These expenses are necessary expenditures for public health and safety solely attributable and incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID–19) through August 31, 2021.

THAT, the City Manager, or designee, be authorized to effectuate any budget transfers and execute any contracts and/or related documents necessary to ensure that the funds are properly expended for such purposes.

Mr. Robert Cortinas, presented a Power Point presentation (copy on file in the City Clerk’s Office).

Mr. Tommy Gonzalez, City Manager, commented.

Mayor Margo and Representatives Svarzbein, Anello, Hernandez, Morgan, and Rivera commented.

1ST MOTION

Motion made by Representative Hernandez, seconded by Representative Anello, to amend the Resolution to reduce the amount from \$16,816,869 to \$8,408,435.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Annello, and Hernandez
NAYS: Representatives Morgan, Salcido, Rodriguez, Rivera, and Lizarraga
THE MOTION FAILED

2ND AND FINAL MOTION

Motion made by Representative Morgan, seconded by Representative Lizarraga, and unanimously carried to **APPROVE** the Resolution.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Annello, Hernandez, Morgan, Salcido, Rodriguez, Rivera, and Lizarraga
NAYS: None

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3. Presentation and discussion by Medical Center of the Americas "MCA" on their annual report on the status of activities during the fiscal year, use of grant funds, and progress in the performance measures required under the agreement with the City of El Paso.

Ms. Pamela Sifuentes, Economic Development Specialist, introduced the item.

The following members from the Medical Center of the Americas "MCA" presented a Power Point presentation (copy on file in the City Clerk's Office).

1. Ms. Emma Schwartz, President
2. Mr. Carlos Ortega, Chief Financial Officer

NO ACTION was taken on this item.

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion made by Representative Annello, seconded by Representative Morgan, and unanimously carried that the City Council retire into **EXECUTIVE SESSION** at 2:04 p.m. pursuant to Section 3.5A of the El Paso City Charter and the Texas Government Code, Sections 551.071 - 551.089 to discuss the following:

- Section 551.071 CONSULTATION WITH ATTORNEY
- Section 551.087 DELIBERATION REGARDING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEGOTIATIONS

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Annello, Hernandez, Morgan, Salcido, Rodriguez, Rivera, and Lizarraga
NAYS: None

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tempore Svarzbein, seconded by Representative Rivera, and unanimously carried to adjourn the Executive Session at 2:33 p.m. and **RECONVENE** the meeting of the City Council.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Annello, Hernandez, Morgan, Salcido, Rodriguez, Rivera, and Lizarraga
NAYS: None

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EX1. Status of pending negotiations for several Economic and International Development

Department Projects in the City of El Paso. (20-1007-2670) (551.087) (551.071)

NO ACTION was taken on this item.

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ADJOURN

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tempore Svarzbein, seconded by Representative Rivera and unanimously carried to **ADJOURN** the meeting at 2:34 p.m.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Annello, Hernandez, Morgan, Salcido, Rodriguez, Rivera, and Lizarraga

NAYS: None

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APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

Laura D. Prine, City Clerk