

**CITY OF LAREDO
CITY COUNCIL
AIRPORT ADVISORY BOARD
CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU
WORKSHOP ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SALES TAX**

**MAIN LIBRARY MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM
1120 E. CALTON ROAD
LAREDO, TEXAS
11:30 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.**

MINUTES

M-98-W-10

FEBRUARY 24, 1998

Florencio Pena, City Manager, announced there was no quorum and started to recapped what had transpired on the last meeting and in the meantime, he explained what direction was given on a previous meeting, and what they expect to accomplished. He announced the members present:

The Airport Advisory Board members, Convention & Visitors Bureau, Economic Advisory Council Group, Chamber of Commerce, Laredo Development Foundation members, and the Chairman of U.I.S.D.

He said the general direction for the Economic Advisory Committee which consists of Jerry Swebel, Elmo Lopez, Beto Gutierrez, and Eloy Cantu was to see if they could develop a list of projects that could be placed on the ballot for May 2nd. Last council action taken was that the Economic Sales Tax be considered on the May 2nd Election, however there was discussion about deferring the election to August. There was a general agreement that they need to have a consensus of the council and the business community that this is the project that is in fact needed by the community. There was an issue on whether it should be on May or August and on how specific the project should be.

He further stated that they met with the Economic Advisory and discussed the issues, they prepared a strategy of a list of projects that they feel could be considered. The issue of whether it be held in May or August is still something that can be debated if council desires, but at the present time there is a decision to go forward with May 2nd.

Mr. Pena explained that 6 1/4% is going to the state, 1% is coming to the city, 1/4% to transit and 1/2 is going to the county. The city's \$12 million is used for operating the general fund. The option of using the sales tax or the property taxes are conditions that this community needs to be debating. A quarter cent (1/4) increase is about \$3 million a year.

Mr. Jerry Swebel stated they believe that the only way that you can go to the public with a request or increase for a new tax would be that it be project specific and that it be time specific.

Note: At this time the meeting was called to order. 1:15 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

With a quorum present Mayor Elizabeth G. Flores called the meeting to order.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Elizabeth G. Flores led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. ROLL CALL

IN ATTENDANCE:

ELIZABETH G. FLORES,	MAYOR	
JOSE R. PEREZ, JR.,	COUNCILMEMBER,	DISTRICT I
JOE A. GUERRA, *	"	, DISTRICT VI
MARIO G. ALVARADO,	"	, DISTRICT VII
CONSUELO "CHELO" MONTALVO,	"	, DISTRICT VIII
GUSTAVO GUEVARA, JR.,	CITY SECRETARY	
FLORENCIO PENA, III,	CITY MANAGER	
JAIME L. FLORES,	CITY ATTORNEY	

ABSENCES:

Motion to excuse Cm. Bruni, Cm. Casso, Cw. Moreno, and Cm. Valdez.

Moved : Cm. Cm. Perez

Second: Cm. Alvarado

For: 4

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

IV. CONTINUED DISCUSSION REGARDING THE UPCOMING REFERENDUM ON A 1/4 OF 1 PERCENT (.0025) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SALES AND USE TAX.

He presented the sales tax concept and presented the following recommendations based on the input provided that they think

would be acceptable to the entire community.

1. An aggressive marketing and industrial development strategy designed to attract and promote industry;
2. Development and construction, possibly by partnering with other taxing entities, of a Sport Complex in a centralized location, to include a football stadium, basketball gymnasium, ball park, adequate parking facilities and other exhibition facilities designed to hold local sporting events, trade shows, concerts, graduation ceremonies, rodeos, carnivals, and other public entertainment events;
3. Downtown revitalization, development and/or redevelopment designed to expand business enterprise in this important sector of the City;
4. Revenue Guarantee for airport jet service at the Laredo International Airport to aid in the promotion of the Laredo International Airport so as to promote economic development and tourism in Laredo;
5. Purchase, at fair market value, property of approximately 8.973 acres at the Laredo International Airport for the purpose and benefit by the University of Texas Health Science Center in Laredo, Texas for the establishment of a Medical Education and Research Campus.

Cm. Perez stated he is for the Economic Development Tax and suggested that the election be held in May.

Cm. Alvarado thinks the election should be held in August for presentation to voters and to the community in order to sell it to them. As far as the selling of the package, he likes the project, but does not think that we can get support from the community on all these projects.

Mayor Flores thinks that in any or in all of these we have to have the word "jobs" or "creation of jobs". The only one that stands out creation of jobs is Number 5. What concerns her is not involving a very important group of people and those are the groups of people that do not have jobs right now or have low paying jobs that will also be on the same boat as everybody else who benefits from a good job. She would like to see that we step back for a few weeks or a month to include a large group of non profit organizations that may represent either fixed income folks, elderly or low income people to hear from them, and include them in the discussions so that they contribute to these discussions and with concerns. She added that this is her reason for wanting to wait until August. She wants to include more discussions before we go to the polls, that there be more balance, and the only way is to initially include, invite,

facilitate and listen to everybody.

Mr. Swebel stated we need to hold public forums and suggested neighborhood town hall meetings to share the information with everyone.

Mayor Flores stated that the meetings work well when the Councilmember of their district go there accompanied by the resource people. She asked that the meetings be headed by the Councilmember in their district.

Cm. Guerra agrees that this election should be postponed until August. He does not agree with the memorandum received today with the general terms that it expresses. He referred to the communication received from Mr. Pena dated January 30, 1998 which is more project specific. It outlines about 8 projects that could be funded by this sales tax and thinks it is the way they should approach the voters.

Cm. Guerra left the meeting at 1:15 p.m.

Mr. Jorge Trevino stated they need to have a plan, be project specific, and time specific.

Mr. Larry Norton spoke of the projects and asked that they be time specific.

The general consensus was to be project and time specific.


V. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn.

Moved : Cm. Perez
Second: Cw. Montalvo
For: 4

Against: 0 Abstain: 0

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE MINUTES CONTAINED IN PAGES 01 TO 04 ARE TRUE, COMPLETE, AND CORRECT PROCEEDINGS WORKSHOP HELD ON THE 24TH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 1998. A CERTIFIED COPY IS IN FILE AT THE CITY SECRETARY'S OFFICE.


GUSTAVO GUEVARA, JR.
CITY SECRETARY

Minutes Prepared by: Delia Rodriguez

Minutes approved on: April 20, 1998