

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM
2nd PUBLIC HEARING/MEETING
MINUTES MAY 24, 2018

The City of Pharr's Community Development Council held a public hearing/meeting for the purpose of soliciting comments on the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. Citizen participation is encouraged and comments received will be considered for the City of Pharr's One Year Action Plan for the 2018-2019 CDBG Program Year.

Thursday, May 24, 2018
Commissioners Room
118 S. Cage Blvd. 2nd Floor
Pharr, Texas 78577

- 1. Call Meeting to Order and Roll Call:** Chairman Danny Smith started the hearing/meeting at 6:05 p.m. by following the published Public Hearing/Meeting Notice: There being no quorum for the meeting, public hearing continued.

Council Members present:

Jose G. Rodriguez
Ruben Solis
Danny Smith
Joe Hinojosa
Norma Treviño

Staff Present: Raul Garza, Director
Santiago Salinas, Program Manager
Sonia Barajas, Secretary

Public Present: see attached roster

- 2. Public Comments:**

Raul Garza, GMCD Director welcomed Board Members and public present. Mr. Garza stated there was not enough members to meet the quorum but the meeting proceed with the non-action item. Mr. Garza also said a meeting will be rescheduled to be able to vote on the Action Plan 2018 Recommendations.

Mr. Garza opened up the Public Comments Section of the agenda:

Dr. K. C. Fletcher and Lorena Singh signed to speak at this meeting. Comments were made as follows:

Ms. Lorena Singh introduced herself as a resident of Las Milpas and as an Activist for the Pharr community. She thanked the members for the opportunity to speak. Ms. Singh proceeded by reading a document she wrote about the Section 108 Loan Aquatic Park/Natatorium. Please refer to the attached Lorena Singh document for the complete detailed report.

Dr. K. C. Fletcher, introduced himself and said "trying to reside at 504 Diplomat in Pharr" (referring to his ongoing Costco disruption). Mr. Fletcher continued by commending the board for showing interest in the values of the community. He is advocating for more trees in the community. Mr. Fletcher said took Pharr 2-3 years to get "Tree City USA" designation the only city in the valley with that designation. He also said it will be good to be in good relationship with Santa Ana Wild Refuge, they have a big nursery with native trees.

3. **Public Hearing:** Public participation and discussion concerning community needs and priorities for the development of the One Year Action Plan 2018. Lorena Singh and Dr. K. C. Fletcher signed for this item. Comments were as follows:

Ms. Sing thanked the council for the opportunity to speak. She continued by presenting her concerns in reference to a community matter that continues to affect not only her, on many families that live in Pharr. This is in reference to a letter the city received from HUD December 13, 2017 regarding the Aquatic Center's City Pool/Natatorium. To see more details in this matter see attachment.

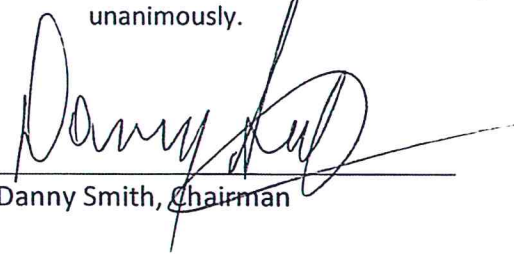
Dr. K. C. Fletcher talked about the Pharr Swimming Pool, He told the members swimming is a wonderful exercise, and he's a certified life guard and instructor. He was disappointed to learn that he was denied his right and privilege to use the pool because somebody somewhere in bureaucracies decided to change the hours and allocate the time against the federal government mandate. He also mentioned he paid \$90 for a "Pile of Papers" worth of documents he requested (Public Information Request) and was very disappointed. Mr. Fletcher said he spoke to the GMCD Director and on that day he got to use in the pool. Mr. Fletcher also said he is tired of being denied Public Comments at City Commission meetings referring to it as "Official Oppression". He is tired of being denied by P&Z meetings, BOA meetings and City Commission meetings. Mr. Fletcher made notice of a change order in the Public Information Request (PIR) he requested, he said it's a way to make money in Pharr, you don't have to go to Las Vegas. Come here low bid then change the order. He continued by saying there was an excess of \$992,000 in that change order plus the \$2.05M that could have been used for something else but somebody decided to use it somewhere else and advised the council to ask that person about those changes and not to let it happen again.

Mr. Garza closed the meeting. A new meeting will be rescheduled as soon as possible to take action on the rest of the items.

4. **Administrative:**

- A) Approval of minutes for March 6, 2018. – No action taken
- B) For Discussion/Approval: Action Plan 2018 Recommendations. – No action taken
- C) For Discussion/Approval: Action Plan 2018 Substantial Amendment. – No action taken

5. **Adjourn:** Chairman Danny Smith entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:21 p.m. Ruben Solis moved to adjourn the hearing seconded by Jose G. Rodriguez, when it came to a vote it carried unanimously.



Danny Smith, Chairman



Ruben Solis, Secretary

REC'D _____

CC _____

CITY OF PHARR REGISTRATION FORM

MAY 24 2018

PUBLIC COMMENTS

CITY OF PHARR
ADMINISTRATION
PHARR, TEXAS

Notice: You may speak on any subject that pertains to the governmental interest other than topics prohibited by law or local ordinance. A time limit of three (3) minutes per speaker is allowed. No action or discussion may take place with any member of the governing body or personnel on any matter until such matter has been placed on a legal notice allowing such discussion. It is possible that your comments may not be heard on the day you submit this form due to time and registration allowances. Should this occur, you may attempt to register to speak at any subsequent meeting. All speakers will be heard in the order of registration.

PRINTED NAME: _____

Lorena Singh

ADDRESS: _____

8302 LAS Palmas

CITY: Pharr

STATE: TX

ZIP CODE: _____

78577

PHONE NO: (A/C) _____

956-460-9905

EMAIL: _____

lorenasingh@yahoo.com

ORGANIZATION (IF ANY): _____

BOARD/COMMITTEE: _____

CDBG

MEETING DATE: _____

May 24, 2018

6:00pm

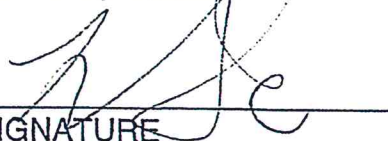
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

By signing below, I hereby acknowledge that I have been provided a copy of Ordinance O-2015-28 that governs this matter, or was given the opportunity to review the ordinance, that contains the rules and procedures applicable to city meetings. I further acknowledge that I agree to comply with the provisions contained in the ordinance including but not limited to time limits, and I do not need further warning from the presiding officer or other officials. Any violation on my part shall subject me to any and all applicable punishment as contained therein, including but not limited to, removal from the premises.

MAY 23, 2018

DATE

SIGNATURE



Please fill out this form, and file with the City Clerk prior to the scheduled meeting. Once the meeting has started, the City Clerk will no longer accept registrations.

Public Comments

Good evening ladies and gentlemen, thank you for giving me this opportunity to present my concerns through this public forum. My name is Lorena Singh, I am resident of Pharr who resides in Las Milpas area, and I am also an activist in this community.

This evening I want to inform this panel of some events that need immediate attention by the CDBG department with regards to the Section 108 Loan for the Aquatic Park/Natatorium. I will use as a reference a letter from HUD dated December 13, 2017 to the City of Pharr.

On October 6, 2010, the City of Pharr submitted an application for a Section 108 loan that proposed funding for two public facility projects, a municipal swimming pool and widening and reconstruction of west hall acres access road. HUD approved a 5.6 million Section 108 commitment for these two projects on September 19, 2011. The City advised HUD, that both projects would meet the national objective of benefit to low to moderate income individuals through area benefit.

On December 13, 2017 the city received a letter from HUD "Subject: Compliance Review of Pharr's Section 108 Loan," In this letter HUD made 6 findings and requested that the City make corrective actions. HUD determined in their review that "the city's office of grant management and community development failed to monitor the progress of the projects to ensure that all compliance requirements were met."

Unfortunately, the City failed to be transparent losing credibility with the community. The success of public participation revolves on the public's ability to trust that the city is providing accurate information. The public must trust that this city is not suppressing facts on important issues that the people of this city feel are meaningful to them. How does the city begin changing the public's perception in the City's department when they do not trust how their money is being allocated?

Today, you will be approving another Action Plan for 2018, the allocation for \$355,000 for the Section 108 Loan has changed since 2017 ^{in the amount} which was \$400,000 can someone please explain this difference. Also,

Also

I notice that there are community agencies that are receiving CDBG funding please explain how the City is doing community outreach and informing residents that these agencies exist ~~and once a year of~~ ~~community outreach is not enough.~~ Thank you

CITY OF PHARR REGISTRATION FORM

REC'D _____
CC _____

MAY 24 2018

PUBLIC HEARING

CITY OF PHARR
ADMINISTRATIVE
PHARR, TEXAS

Notice: You may speak on a subject that pertains to a legal notice requiring a public hearing in accordance with applicable federal, state, or local laws. A time limit of three (3) minutes per speaker is allowed. If you have been affected physically, by use or damage to property, or to any other legally recognizable interest, or received a written notice, please execute and submit this form to the office of the city clerk within the prescribed deadlines.

PRINTED NAME: Lorena Singh

ADDRESS: 8302 Las Palmas CITY: Pharr STATE: TX

ZIP CODE: 78571 PHONE NO: (A/C) 956-460 9905

EMAIL: lorenasingh@yahoo.com ORGANIZATION (IF ANY): _____

Public Hearing Agenda Item #: 3 A For: ☒ Public ☐ Not Public Against ☐

Board/Committee: CD BG Meeting Date: 5/24 2018

How will or has the proposed action affect you? To Be Discussed

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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SIGNATURE [Signature]

DATE May 27, 2018

Please fill out this form, and file with the City Clerk prior to the scheduled meeting in which the public hearing item appears. Once the meeting has started, the City Clerk will no longer accept registrations.

Public Hearing

Good evening ladies and gentlemen, thank you for giving me this opportunity of presenting my concerns through this public forum. My name is Lorena Singh, I am resident of Pharr who resides in Las Milpas area, and I am also an activist in this community. This evening I want to shed light to a community matter that continues to affect not only me, but many families who live in Pharr. During my statement I will make reference to a letter the City of Pharr received on December 13, 2017 from HUD regarding the city pool known as the Aquatic Park/Natatorium.

Every year the City repays the Section 108 loan through annual installments from the CDBG Program, as a matter of fact, in today's agenda you will be approving \$355,000.00 for a Section 108 repayment loan for the Aquatic Center. The sole purpose of this facility was to meet HUD's national objectives and guidelines, I'm here to report that the City has failed to meet those objectives.

On several occasions I, and other entities have been denied access to the City's Natatorium during the hours of 8am to 8pm reason given by the City is that "the pool belongs to the PSJA school district from the hours of 8am to 8pm."

HUD informed the City of Pharr that after reviewing the City's Section 108 Loan, "The Natatorium is being used primarily by the PSJA ISD for training and competition events and is not made available to the general public as required," HUD also stated that "The use of the Natatorium by the public must be at least equal to 51% of the number of hours that it is open." Unfortunately, the residents of Pharr continue to be deprived entrance to the pool, after HUD, clearly requested the city to adjust the hours for public use. It was CDBG's responsibility to monitor and communicate to City Departments and the PSJA School District of all restrictions and laws regarding the use of the pool and it did not.

The city used the low social economic status of an already marginalized population to get federal funding and then excludes these families from pool participation. The most affected Pharr families are those who are not zoned to PSJA ISD, but to other school districts, such as Valley View ISD and Hidalgo ISD. These children will have to wait until the summer months to enjoy the Aquatic Park/Natatorium.

I am humbly requesting that you use your platform to advocate for this community and represent our interest with integrity. Now, I would like to provide the secretary a copy of my statement for the record. Can I please approach the secretary? Thank you and have a great evening.

REC'D
CC

CITY OF PHARR REGISTRATION FORM

MAY 21 2018

PUBLIC COMMENTS

CITY OF PHARR
ADMINISTRATION
PHARR, TEXAS

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PRINTED NAME: Dr. K C Fletcher

ADDRESS: 5045 Diplomat CITY: Pharr STATE: TX

ZIP CODE: 78577 PHONE NO: (A/C) 956 278, 9883

EMAIL: kc@vme6@gmail.com ORGANIZATION (IF ANY): _____

BOARD/COMMITTEE: CDBG MEETING DATE: 5/24/2018

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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5/21/2018
DATE

[Signature]
SIGNATURE

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CC _____

CITY OF PHARR REGISTRATION FORM

MAY 24 2018

PUBLIC HEARING

CITY OF PHARR
ADMINISTRATION
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PRINTED NAME: Dr. K.C. Fletcher

ADDRESS: 504 S. Diplomat Dr. CITY: Pharr STATE: TX

ZIP CODE: 78577 PHONE NO: (A/C) 956 279 9893

EMAIL: kcfletcher6@gmail.com ORGANIZATION (IF/ANY): _____

Public Hearing Agenda Item #: _____ For: ☒ 3A Against ☐

Board/Committee: CDBG Meeting Date: 5/24/2018

How will or has the proposed action affect you? TO BE DISCUSSED

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[Signature]
SIGNATURE

5/23/2018
DATE

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