

CITY OF PHARR
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES FOR MARCH 6, 2018

A Public Meeting\Workshop of the Community Development Council for the presentation of all the agencies of the proposals for AP 2018.

Tuesday, March 6, 2018
Commissioners Room
118 S. Cage Blvd.
Pharr, Texas 78577

1. **Call the meeting to Order** Chairman Danny Smith entertained a motion to call to order the meeting and roll call at 6:00pm.
2. **Roll Call:**
 - a. **Members present:**
 - Ruben Solis
 - Belia Garcia
 - Rene Cantu
 - Norma Treviño
 - Rafael Rivera
 - Lucio Gaitan

Staff: Santiago Salinas-CDBG Manager
Sonia Barajas, Secretary

Public Present: See attached roster

3. **Public Comments:** Chairman Danny Smith entertained a motion for any comments from the public. Mr. Kenneth C. Fletcher (504 Diplomat) introduced himself and stated that the city does not have trees compare to the rest of the valley, according to a survey Pharr is #1 with the least trees. He continued by saying he applied two years ago for a small amount of money for trees and if there is any federal money falling from any bodies pockets to let him know, he'll put them to use. The City is 40,000 acre, the lack of trees is very important for the quality of life and also the economic reason to bring native trees mainly because once they're established every dollar you spent you'll receive 3-5 dollars back in services. Also attracts birders from all over the world. We have major eco-tourism industry established. In 2011 study was made, 63 million value and in 20 years will be up to 500 million. Also a study was done, sales taxes were \$2.6 Million in Hotel/Motel for the valley and will be up to \$7.3 million. He said It's important to do a survey on trees. Mr. Fletcher thanked the members for letting him speak. Councilman Lucio Gaitan asked Mr. Fletcher if he represents a 501C or have a 501C, Mr. Fletcher answered no he doesn't, but it will work better and be more efficient if the professionals like EDC or the Grant Writers have it, that way it will be municipal not private and will attract more city participation. It's important to establish

green infrastructure for the migrating birds, oxygen and protein, trees are a good investments they do not devalue.

4. **Public Workshop:** for the presentation of the submitted CDBG Request for Funds applications for the One-Year (1) Action Plan 2018/19. Mr. Salinas advised the agencies and the board applicants have 3 minutes to do their presentation. Mr. Smith called the agencies as follow:
 - a) **LRGVDC-Area Agency on Aging:** requesting \$5,000. Mr. Jose Gonzalez thanked the members for the previous funding and asked to keep assisting with the funds to help the elderly with medical bills. Councilman Rene Cantu asked Mr. Gonzales how many would they be assisting this year. Mr. Gonzalez said they will be assisting about 20 clients.
 - b) **Affordable Homes:** No representative present. Requested \$300,000.00
 - c) **Amigos Del Valle:** No representative present. Requested \$25,000
 - d) **Boys and Girl:** Stephanie Leal, Director of Operations representing Boys and Girls Club requested \$150,000.00 to continue with the operation in servicing children in Pharr. Ms. Leal stated the Boys and Girls Club been in existence for 40 years, they provide services to children every day of the year, except Saturdays and Sundays, in the after school program. The program help kids with homework tutoring, computer classes, Sports, Fitness & recreation, Education and Career Development, Character and Leadership Development, The Arts and Special Programs. Ms. Leal introduced Ashley Caballero. Miss Caballero said, Boys and Girls Club is very important place to her because attending the club every day for 4 years gave her the opportunity to explore new things, get involved in many programs such as working with others, leadership skills, time management, learning all the skills helped her to be a better person. Miss Caballero thanked the members for their time and allowing her to share her experience with Boys and Girls Club. Ms. Leal also said out of 5,000 children registered 3,000 are from Pharr. She thanked the board for all the help and ask to keep funding the Boys and Girls Club.
 - e) **CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates):** Lupe Silva, Executive Director on behalf of CASA requested \$3,000 for the children's advocates in the court system. Ms. Silva thanked the board for all the support, continued by saying CASA has been in existence since 1994 servicing children that are neglected and abuse in the County of Hidalgo. After CPS pick up children that are abused and neglect and put them in foster homes, CASA advocates for these children in the Court System. Ms. Silva thanked the board for all the support and asked to continue with the funding. Ms. Silva introduced Program Director, Esmeralda Garza. Chairman Smith asked if they have specific requirements for advocates. Ms. Silva answered they must pass a criminal background check, must have a clean record in their file. Councilman Rene Cantu asked how many cases they're anticipating for year 2018, Ms. Silva answered they're anticipating about 30 cases.

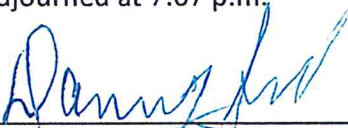
- f) **Children Advocacy Center:** Jesus Sanchez, Interim Executive Director and Melinda Garza, requested \$15,000 to pay salaries. Mr. Sanchez introduced himself and explained the process of the services they provide for the children from ages 2-17 that are victims of abused. The Center offers physical and psychological safety to protect children during the investigation of the abuse. The Center works with CPS, CASA, District Attorney's Office and Law Enforcement.
- g) **Pharr Fire Department:** Pete Arredondo, Board Member and Coach for the Boxing Gym located in South Pharr. Requested \$10,000 to buy equipment for the Gym. Jose Javier Perez, Fire Fighter, Founder and President of the Gym. Mr. Perez explain how they opened the gym. The gym was created by fire fighters to help kids of the low income area. They don't charge a penny for their services and it's strictly volunteers, they're asking for funds to buy licenses and equipment. At the moment they have 50 children registered, opening twice a week and for the summer hoping to open for a longer time Monday to Friday. Teaching children how to box, discipline, respect and how to interact with other kids. Chairman Smith asked Mr. Perez if he was a boxer. Mr. Perez respond was growing up in "Las Milpas" was an experience but boxing kept him out of trouble. He also said he was in the Marines and got some experienced in boxing.
- h) **Literacy Project:** No representative present. Requested \$15,000
- i) **Food Bank of RGV:** Tiffany Gonzalez and Glenda Reyes representing The Food Bank. Ms. Gonzales requested \$30,915.28 to assist 344 seniors at the Pharr Housing Authority for 11 months. Councilman Rivera asked if he could visit the Food Bank. Ms. Gonzalez said he can visit anytime.
- j) **Salvation Army:** Sadie Macias, Grant Coordinator, thanked the board for the continuous support, with last year's funding they assisted 6 families from the City of Pharr. The Salvation Army been helping families for 86 years. Councilman Gaitan asked if they get federal funds from other sources. Ms. Macias said they receive funds from FEMA and other cities CDBG Funds. Ms. Trevino asked how many families are project to help this year. Ms. Macias said about 6 families for this year.
- k) **Silver Ribbon:** No representative. Requested \$8,500
- l) **Su Casa de Esperanza:** Belinda Simons, Executive Director. Su Casa de Esperanza is a non-profit organization that provides early childhood development services. The Center is located at 8000 Cisne, in South Pharr. They provide pre-natal and early childhood services at the Center and Home Visits. They provide nutrition and CPR classes.
- m) **Upper Valley Community Partners Board (Rainbow Room):** No Representative. Requested \$20,000.

5. **Administrative:**

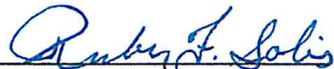
- a) Approval of minutes for February 8, 2018. Mr. Solis moved to approve as recommended. Mr. Cantu seconded the motion and when put to a vote it carried unanimously.

6. **Adjourn:**

There being no other business to come before the board, Mr. Rafael Rivera moved to adjourn. Mr. Lucio Gaitan seconded the motion and when put to a vote it carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.



Danny Smith, Chairman



Ruben Solis, Secretary

CDBG PUBLIC WORKSHOP MARCH 6, 2018

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