

**REGULAR MEETING
TOLL BRIDGE BOARD
HELD ON JANUARY 20, 2021, AT 12:00 P.M.
CITY HALL, 118 S. CAGE BLVD., 2ND FLOOR, PHARR, TEXAS**

On the 20th day of January 2021, the Toll Bridge Board met in a regular Bridge Board Meeting. Following is the record of attendance.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Edgar Delgadillo, Chairman
Tony Martinez, Vice-Chairman
Adalberto Campero, Secretary
Luis Flores, Member
Larry Hernandez, Member

MEMBER ABSENT: None

**EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS
PRESENT:** None

**EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS
ABSENT:** Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez
Mayor Pro-Tem Bobby Carrillo

STAFF PRESENT: Luis Bazan, Bridge Director
Fred Brouwen, Director of Operations
Vanessa Guzman, Administrative Assistant
Cleo Salinas, Administrative Assistant
Freddy Flores, Trade Liaison

OTHERS PRESENT: Ed Wylie, Interim City Manager
Anali Alaniz, Assistant City Manager
Hilda Pedraza, Asst. City Manager/City Clerk
Patricia Rigney, City Attorney
Daniel Gonzalez, Asst. City Attorney
Omar Anzaldua, Engineering Department
Karla Saavedra, Finance Director
Juan Gonzalez, Asst. Police Chief
Lucio Villagomez, Contract Compliance Officer
Carlos Rodriguez, CBP
David John Gonzalez, CBP
Ezequiel Ordonez, Mexico Liaison
Hollis Rutledge, Governmental Affairs
Steve Tayler, Rio Grande Guardian

There being a quorum established Chairman Edgar Delgadillo called the meeting to order.

A. CALL TO ORDER:

ITEM 1 ROLL CALL-EXCUSE ABSENT MEMBERS

Chairman Delgadillo called the meeting to order. All members were present during roll call.

ITEM 2 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INVOCATIONS

Luis Bazan, Bridge Director, led in the Pledge of Allegiance and said the prayer.

B. DIRECTOR'S ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT: *(Director's Administrative Reports and discussion, if any, with Bridge Board. The Director may also assign a designated spokesperson for any particular listed topic)*

ITEM 3 CROSSING AND REVENUES COMPARISON FOR DECEMBER 2020

Chairman Edgar Delgadillo introduced the item.

Fred Brouwen, Director of Operations, went over the total crossing and revenues report for the month of December 2020. He reported total crossings were 107,179, which was an increase of 12,556 vehicles or 13.27% compared to last year. Mr. Brouwen stated that total crossing for cars were 50,008, which was an increase of 1,603 cars or 3.31% and showed a car crossing comparison from other bridges across the board. Mr. Brouwen further reported the total truck crossings were 57,171, which was an increase of 10,953 trucks or 23.70% increase. Mr. Brouwen then showed a truck crossing comparison from other bridges across the board. Mr. Brouwen further reported northbound crossings were 56,949, which was an increase of 7,973 trucks or 16.28% increase. Mr. Brouwen further stated for the Agriculture for the month of December they had 16,902 trucks, which represents a 30% of all imports from Mexico to the U.S. Lastly, Mr. Brouwen stated total revenue collected for the month of December was \$1,437,554, which shows an increase of \$ 277,683 or 23.94% in revenues.

Discussion ensued on the crossings.

ITEM 4 DIRECTORS ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Chairman Edgar Delgadillo introduced the item.

Luis Bazan, Bridge Director, reported on Trade. He stated that with great growth there is always responsibility and it is their responsibility to invest in the infrastructure necessary for this bridge. He added that they need to invest in more hours of service, to have matching hours of operation with Mexico or Mexico have matching hours with them. He also added that as they know they did get their presidential permit, which is a huge advantage for the entire region. He stated that 96% of their trade is with Mexico and the rest comes from about 90-93 different countries around the world. He added

they need to keep that in mind when they are trading globally and what they have to offer the trade, so the infrastructure is very important.

Luis Bazan, Bridge Director, reported on the Bridge Expansion. He reported they will be building a brand-new bridge and what the presidential permit will allow them to do is build an additional four lanes of traffic. He added that they will have switching lanes in between, one in the US and one in Mexico to be able to handle contingences, emergencies and adapt to anything that comes there way. He stated that this past year they experienced some blockades in Mexico, they experienced COVID, they experienced a lot of other things that they were not looking forward to experiencing. He added that they still have the responsibility is to ensure that trade keeps moving forward, they do not close, do not reduce their hours of operations and continue to work with CBP and SAT to ensure the truck throughput is there so trucks are not standing on the bridge. He reported that with this bridge, they have different traffic models that they have been looking at because they are going to be working with what they have. He added that having an additional four lanes will gives them 100% capacity, but that does not mean that they are going to be at 100% the first year. He reported they are estimating about 20% year per year growth.

Luis Bazan, Bridge Director, reported on Unified Cargo Process. He stated there are different ports around Texas that have established this and they have looked into this about 3-4 years ago, and as of this week they have started what is called a Pilot Program. He added they have one company that is using it and what this does is that it allows these companies that are vetted by the federal government or CT-PAT or FAST certified trucks to use Unified Cargo Processing. He explained that Mexico and the US will be doing one joint inspection under one roof which will be done in the US. He added that there are still a lot of unanswered questions, some inconsistency because it is the first week, but they will bring them a full report and invite CBP next month to give an update on what is going on there.

Luis Bazan, Bridge Director, reported on Stakeholders meeting. He announced that they meet with all the major associations to discuss their working relationship, the presidential permit, other services and what they must do to retain their current customers and attract new customers. He added that it is not about attracting one or two crossings, it is about attracting a company to expand in Pharr which will then equal additional crossings and additional revenues.

Luis Bazan, Bridge Director, reported on Marketing Campaign. He stated that their crossings are up and with that they need to realign and regroup about this marketing campaign. He added they thinks it is about time that the bridge steps up and gets together with a major marketing firm or someone that can put them in line with the right avenues to market this bridge. He also added they are already doing a lot but at the moment they cannot travel due to COVID, but once that opens up and they are allowed to travel they can get back to that normal way of conducting business. Several discussions ensued over marketing the bridge.

Luis Bazan, Bridge Director, reported on Trade Associations. He stated they are also working through their trade associations and one of them is the Border Trade Alliance, which by the end of the week they should have the policy agenda in place. He added they try to align all their trade associations to have the same policies and one thing that has stood out for the past year or so is having enough funding at the state level to be able to pay for Ag overtime. Several discussions then took place regarding Ag overtime.

Luis Bazan, Bridge Director, stated they are also updating their 411 flyer, which is the document that they use for congressional visits. He added that they are working with the city's governmental affairs department to make sure that the information on the flyer is accurate. He reported they are working with Ken Roberts to publish the new trade numbers book for 2020 and they are also working on the Pharr Trade Trends which has become apart of our BridgeConnect sessions.

Luis Bazan, Bridge Director, stated that tomorrow is the State of the City at 1:30pm and will be virtual event, so they will be sending them the link to log on.

After several discussions, Chairman Edgar Delgadillo moved to the next item.

ITEM 5 EXPENDITURES REPORT FOR DECEMER 2020

Chairman Edgar Delgadillo introduced the item.

Luis Bazan, Bridge Director, stated Karla Saavedra, Finance Director, was in the audience and questions could be entertained at this time.

After a brief discussion, Chairman Edgar Delgadillo moved to the next item.

ITEM 6 PROJECT ENGINEER REPORT

Chairman Edgar Delgadillo introduced the item.

Luis Bazan, Bridge Director, stated Omar Anzaldua, City Engineer, was present and questions on projects could be entertained at this time.

Luis Bazan, Bridge Director, reported on the DAP15 projects. He stated they may have a little bit of a set back due to rain days but that has been ongoing since September 8th. He added the work schedule is on time and budget for March 2022 to be completed.

Luis Bazan, Bridge Director, reported on the DAP16 projects. He stated that there are no major updates at this time.

Luis Bazan, Bridge Director, reported on the Office Expansion Phase II. He stated that it is still under legal review and they are trying to get the final contract executed to move forward with that.

Luis Bazan, Bridge Director, reported on the Bridge Expansion project. He stated there is a time frame and they are moving very fast and very aggressively with this schedule, because they want to move forward and get the construction started. Discussion ensued on bridge expansion.

Luis Bazan, Bridge Director, reported on the FAST Lane Relief Route. He stated they should be getting a cost estimate, scope of work and timeline for that, but are also looking at other options. He reported if they start construction of the actual lanes for DAP15 in another area they will not need to block lane 6 and will not need that FAST Relief Route. He added there was a lot of fill area that is needed but that is something that they have been looking at since their last board meeting. Omar Anzaldua, City Engineer, reported they have an estimate of how much fill material would be needed and its about 3,000 cubic yards of fill material. He also added that is something that they would need to coordinate if they do want to fill that area to create a temporary lane for a queuing area. He stated they do have some preliminary numbers on fill materials so they can put a more detailed cost analysis to that.

Omar Anzaldua, City Engineer, reported on the Commercial Truck Staging Area. He reported that GeoTeck finished their borings about a week ago, so they should be getting their final pavement design recommendation next week.

After a brief discussion, Chairman Edgar Delgadillo moved to the next item.

C. ADMINISTRATIVE:

ITEM 7 CONSIDERATION AND ACTION ON APPROVAL OF MINUTES- DECEMBER 16, 2020.

Chairman Edgar Delgadillo introduced the items.

Vice-Chairman Martinez **moved** to approve the minutes as presented. Secretary Campero seconded the motion and when put to a vote, it carried unanimously.

ITEM 8 DISCUSSION AND ACTION, IF ANY, ON ADVERTISING WITH THE RIO GRANDE GUARDIAN FOR \$11,000 (TWO PAYMENTS OF \$5,500).

Chairman Edgar Delgadillo introduced the items.

Vice-Chairman Martinez **moved** to approve. Member Hernandez seconded the motion and when put to a vote, it carried unanimously.

ITEM 9 DISCUSSION AND ACTION, IF ANY, ON APPROVING QUOTE FOR

VIRTUAL ANIMATION VIDEO FOR BRIDGE EXPANSION PROJECT.

Chairman Edgar Delgadillo introduced the items.

Luis Bazan, Bridge Director, stated that this is an ongoing project and when they started working with this company, they realized that they need to start updating not only the project videos but the presentations themselves. He added this is the company they have been working with and if they see the work that they do and their client list and what they have done, this company has the highest level of animation video and that is why they want to move forward with this.

After a brief discussion, Member Flores **moved** to approve. Member Hernandez seconded the motion and when put to a vote, it carried unanimously.

F. ADJOURNMENT:

ITEM 10 ADJOURNMENT

Member Hernandez **moved** to adjourn the meeting at 12:44pm. Secretary Campero seconded the motion and when put to a vote, it carried unanimously.

APPROVED AS SUBMITTED:

EDGAR DELGADILLO, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

ADALBERTO CAMPERO, SECRETARY

STATE OF TEXAS §
COUNTY OF HIDALGO §
CITY OF PHARR §

ON THE 20th DAY OF JANUARY 2021, the Toll Bridge Board convened in a Regular Meeting at the Pharr International Bridge, the meeting being open to the public and notice of said meeting, giving the date, place and subject thereof, having been posted to the public and notice of said meeting, given in accordance to Chapter 551, of the Texas Government Code, (Open Meetings Act) and their being present a quorum, **I, VANESSA GUZMAN, BRIDGE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**, of the City of Pharr, Texas, certify that this is a true and correct copy of the minutes.

VANESSA GUZMAN, BRIDGE
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

DATE APPROVED: _____
Word/C:BoardMeetings/BoardMtgMinutes1-20-21