

MINUTES
KEEP PHARR BEAUTIFUL ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR CALLED MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2025
118 S. CAGE BLVD., 2ND FLOOR

The Keep Pharr Beautiful Advisory Board of the City of Pharr, Texas met on Tuesday, February 18, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. and the following is the record of attendance.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Romeo Cantu
Marisa Oliva
Laura M De La Garza
Romeo Robles Jr.
Jessica Trevino

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mari Caballero
Rolando Perez

STAFF PRESENT: Elva Guajardo, Administrative Assistant
Dylan Rocha, Code Compliance Officer
Remy Vargas, Urban Ecologist
Cynthia Castro, Parks and Recreation Assistant Director
Irma Diaz, Environmental Supervisor
Napolean Coca, Grants Management Assistant Director
Niko Tapangan, Public Health Director
Maria Morales, School Yard Forestry Coordinator
Sam Pena, School Yard Forestry Coordinator
Cassandra Montanez, School Yard Forestry Coordinator
Damaris Pizano, School Yard Forestry Coordinator

OTHER PRESENT: Roberto Gaitan

ITEM 1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

(A) ROLL CALL AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE EXCUSING OF ANY ABSENT MEMBER

Board member Romeo Robles Jr. called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Roll call established a quorum.

Board member Romeo Cantu moved to excuse absent board members. Board member Marisa Oliva seconded the motion and when put to a vote, it was carried unanimously.

B) INVOCATION

Board member Romeo Robles Jr. led the invocation.

ITEM 2. ADMINISTRATIVE

A) APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR DECEMBER 17, 2024 - REGULAR CALLED MEETING

Board member Jessica Trevino moved to approve. Board member Marisa Oliva seconded the motion and when put to a vote, it carried unanimously.

B) UPDATE ON KEEP TEXAS BEAUTIFUL GOVERNOR'S COMMUNITY ACHIEVEMENT AWARD GRANT BY ELIZABETH DIAZ AND NAPOLEON COCA

Board member Romeo Robles Jr. introduced the item.

Napoleon Coca, Grants Management Assistant Director, informed the board the Governor's Community Achievement Award Grant had been submitted successfully. He stated the city qualified in category 8 based on population. Mr. Coca advised the results on grant would be announced sometime in the month of April. Lastly, he advised all City departments collaborated and assisted with the application.

C) DISCUSSION ON KEEP PHARR BEAUTIFUL 2025 PROJECTS

1. INFORMATION ON THE TEXAS A&M FOREST SERVICE GRANT

Remy Vargas, Urban Ecologist, advised they are currently working on the Texas A&M Forestry community greening grant. He advised the City of Pharr was categorized under one of the twenty-nine (29) crucial greening cities. The grant would expand canopy growth in the City of Pharr, and it would entail tree planting and tree giveaways.

2 PRESENTATION BY ROBERTO GAITAN RGV CHAPTER-NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF TEXAS

Board member Romeo Robles Jr. introduced the item.

Roberto Gaitan, President of RGV Chapter - Native Plant Society of Texas, provided an overview of their chapter that included native landscape certifications, planting, and grants. A brief discussion was then held regarding the possibility of incorporating the certification classes to our parks groundskeepers and board members.

3 UPDATE ON THE PHARR YOUTH ECO ALLIANCE ECO FEST EVENT

Board member Romeo Robles Jr. introduced the item.

Board member Marisa Oliva thanked all the City departments that supported the Eco Fest event that was held on Saturday, January 18, 2025, at Jones Box Park through the Pharr Eco Alliance.

4 PRESENTATION ON ADOPT A HIGHWAY PROJECT

Board member Romeo Robles Jr. introduced the item.

Remy Vargas, Urban Ecologist, advised the City had adopted a two (2) mile stretch of highway from Bus 83 to Moore Rd. on Cage Boulevard. A brief discussion was then held regarding what this project entailed the benefits and the requirements that are associated with the project.

5 UPDATE ON STANDPIPE ART PROJECT

Board member Romeo Robles Jr. introduced the item.

Cynthia Castro, Parks and Recreation Assistant Director, advised there was a new theme for the Standpipe Art Project that was now called “Pharr in Color”. She advised the City was welcoming all artists, volunteers, and residents to come and paint the standpipes. Mrs. Castro stated the project commence phase one in the central part of Pharr and phase two would be in the South side of Pharr.

D) RECAP ON THE 30TH ANNUAL RIO REFORESTATION

Board member Romeo Robles Jr. introduced the item.

Board member Laura De La Garza began by giving the board a recap on the 30th Annual Rio Reforestation event that was held on Saturday October 19, 2024, located at Milagro Tract in Pharr. She provided several pictures of the event and advised that ten (10) acres were reforested with native plants and over fifteen thousand one hundred forty-seven (15,147) native seedlings were planted. She further thanked the City of Pharr Partners and the Keep Pharr Beautiful Board for all their support.

E) UPDATE FROM BUILDING AND CODE COMPLIANCE, PARKS AND RECREATION, AND PUBLIC WORKS STAFF

Board member Romeo Robles Jr. introduced the item.

Dylan Rocha, Code Compliance Officer, began by advising the board the next Block Party would be held on Thursday March 13, 2025, at Dr. Long City/School Park and they would be giving out Easter Baskets at the event. Mr. Rocha presented a video on the Property Maintenance Assistant Program and Cody’s Address Plaque Assistance Program and stated they were still accepting applications.

Public Health Department, School Yard Forestry Coordinator's introduced themselves to the board and advised they were currently working with the grant for forestry to reforest four P-SJ-A schools in Pharr.

Irma Diaz, Environmental Supervisor, reported on the monthly performance indicators. She further reported the next Trash Bash would be held at Jones Box Park on Saturday, February 22, 2025, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

F) BOARD COMMENTS

Board member Romeo Robles Jr. introduced the item.

Board member Jessica Trevino suggested having a "Lawn of The Month" project to recognize the lawns that have been maintained throughout the City. She recommended recognizing these property owners on our social media outlets or by creating a picket fence sign showing citizen pride.

Board member Laura De La Garza recommended a sub-committee for the Nature Park project to bring back ideas to the board.

Lastly, Board members Marisa Oliva and Romeo Robles Jr. thanked all the City staff for all their efforts.

ITEM 3. ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, Board member Romeo Cantu. moved to adjourn. Board member Laura De La Garza seconded the motion and when put to a vote, it carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:29 p.m.

KEEP PHARR BEAUTIFUL COMMITTEE

Mari Caballero, Chairperson

ATTEST:

Romeo Robles Jr., Vice-Chairperson

**STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF HIDALGO
CITY OF PHARR**

ON THE 18th DAY OF FEBRUARY 2025, the Keep Pharr Beautiful Advisory Board of the City of Pharr, Texas, convened in a Regular Called Meeting at City Hall, 2nd Floor, 118 S. Cage, the meeting being open to the public notice of the said meeting, giving the date, place and subject hereof, having been posted in accordance with chapter 551, Texas Government Code (Open Meeting Act) and there being a present quorum, I **Cynthia Bernal, Parks and Recreation Administrative Assistant, of the City of Pharr, Texas**, certify that this is true and correct copy of the minutes.

ATTEST:

Cynthia Bernal, Administrative Assistant

APPROVED DATE: _____