

THE STATE OF TEXAS §

COUNTY OF CAMERON §

BE IT REMEMBERED on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of February 2005, there was conducted a Meeting of the Regional Mobility Authority of Cameron County, Texas, at the Old Levi Building thereof, in the City of San Benito, Texas, for the purpose of transacting any and all business that may lawfully be brought before the same.

THE BOARD MET AT:

9:00 A.M.

PRESENT:

DAVID E. ALLEX  
CHAIRPERSON

LAURA BETANCOURT  
MEMBER

SCOTT CAMPBELL  
MEMBER

RAY RAMON  
MEMBER

VICTOR ALVAREZ  
MEMBER

MICHAEL SCAIEF  
MEMBER

DAVID N. GARZA  
MEMBER

Mary Robles  
Secretary

ABSENT:  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The meeting was called to order by Mr. David Allex, Chairperson, at 9:23 A.M. He asked Mr. Victor Alvarez to do the invocation, and the Board then considered the following matters as listed in the following Agenda:

## Cameron County Regional Mobility Authority

### Meeting Notice

Date: Friday, February 25, 2005

Time: 9:00 A.M.

Place: Old Levi Building (San Benito)  
2400 U.S. 77/83 at Wilson Road

### Tentative Agenda

1. Introduction of Board Members (Photo/Bio)
2. General discussion on Rules/Requirements and Procedures, Mario Jorge, District Highway Engineer TXDOT
3. Organization Structure
  - A. By Laws – Laura Betancourt
  - B. Office Space Set-up – Scott Campbell
  - C. Staff Requirements – Ray Ramon
  - D. Marketing Materials – David Garza
4. Meeting dates/location
5. Open discussion

Cameron County Regional Mobility Authority  
Board Members

Mr. David E. Alex, Principal  
Alex & Associates International  
P. O. Box 531300  
Harlingen, TX 78553  
E-mail: [aaidea@aol.com](mailto:aaidea@aol.com)

Business Phone: 956-425-7007  
Fax: 956-425-7121  
Mobile: 956-245-7007  
Home: 956-423-8412

Rev. Victor Alvarez, Pastor  
Iglesia Bautista Fundamental  
2618 Eduardo Ave.  
Brownsville, TX 78520  
E-mail: [iglesiabautistaf@aol.com](mailto:iglesiabautistaf@aol.com)

Business Phone: 956-546-4690  
Fax: 956-542-0933  
Mobile: 956-459-6580  
Home: 956-546-4621

Ms. Laura Betancourt, Attorney  
1134 E. Madison  
Brownsville, TX 78520  
E-mail: [serraserra@aol.com](mailto:serraserra@aol.com)

Business Phone: 956-504-3493  
Fax: 956-504-1493  
Mobile: 956-459-7410  
Home: 956-546-6384

Mr. Scott Campbell  
S R Campbell Properties  
1210 E. Tyler  
Harlingen, TX 78550  
E-mail: [crproperties@hotmail.com](mailto:crproperties@hotmail.com)

Business Phone: 956-428-6607  
Fax: 956-428-6658  
Mobile: 956-245-2735  
Home: 956-425-8847

Mr. David Garza, President  
Gulf Aviation, Inc.  
P. O. Box 530819  
Harlingen, TX 78553  
E-mail: [david@gulf-aviation.net](mailto:david@gulf-aviation.net)

Business Phone: 956-423-7317  
Alt. Fax: 956-423-7319  
Mobile: 956-873-2822  
Home: 956-797-1968

Mr. Ray Ramon, President  
South Texas Nursing Care, Inc.  
509 W. Harrison  
Harlingen, TX 78550  
E-mail: [tarponray@aol.com](mailto:tarponray@aol.com)

Business Phone: 956-428-7901  
Fax: 956-428-7813  
Mobile: 956-535-1450  
Home: 956-761-1668

Mr. Michael F. Scaief  
4211 Kornagay Rd.  
P. O. Box 1064  
San Benito, TX 78586  
E-mail: [Michael@vistanc.com](mailto:Michael@vistanc.com)

Business Phone: 956-399-1199  
Fax: 956-399-8794  
Mobile: 956-793-9400  
Home: 956-399-9778

## TENTATIVE AGENDA ITEMS

### 1. INTRODUCTION OF BOARD MEMBERS (PHOTO/BIO)

At this time, Mr. David E. Alex, Chairperson, thanked the Board Members for their dedication of time to serve on the Cameron County Regional Mobility Authority. He explained that the Board has the authority through the County Department of Transportation and the Brownsville and Harlingen/San Benito MPOs. Mr. Alex emphasized that the Board's job was to provide transportation arteries/highways that will take residents from point A to point B in a most cost efficient manner and to create an economic impact. He explained that the forms of transportation needs ranged from railroads, waterways, roads, aviation, utility infrastructure and on an international basis. Mr. Alex noted that the Board was operating under the Organization Policies of the Texas Department of Transportation. He presented a summarized description of the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority (CTRMA) that includes their By-Laws, 2003 Annual Report, questions regarding the RMA, staffing duties and responsibilities of the members of the CTRMA.

Mr. Alex suggested that the members always "think out of the box" when projects are undertaken. He noted the need to be cognizant that the Board was an authority and not just another committee; therefore, it must abide with the Open Meetings Act and the Open Records Law, thus all meetings must be recorded. Mr. Alex stated that the Board was a governmental entity who has a responsibility to every county resident, and suggested that all members work together as a team.

Mr. Alex challenged all members to provide equal opportunity employment for county residents. He commented that there was a lot of work to be done and suggested that sub-committees be formed to delegate the workload.

Mr. Alex requested that personal information directory of each member be reviewed and that corrections be made as needed.

Mr. David Garcia, Department of Transportation, indicated that a revised listing would be provided.

---

- 
3. **ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE**
    - A. **BY LAWS-LAURA BETANCOURT**
    - B. **OFFICE SPACE SET-UP –SCOTT CAMPBELL/MIKE SCAIEF**
    - C. **STAFF REQUIREMENTS – RAY RAMON**
    - D. **MARKETING MATERIALS – DAVID GARZA**

5. **OPEN DISCUSSION**

Mr. Alex stated that Mr. David Garza would be responsible for creating a letter head, a logo, and a web site. He requested that all members provide a picture and a biography for the same.

Mr. Alex indicated that Mr. Ray Ramon would be in charge of recruiting a candidates for the Executive Director Position to be reviewed by the Board. He suggested that retirees from the Texas Department of Transportation be considered.

Mr. Alex stated that the duties of identifying a facility to house the Board's operations and preparing a floor plan were delegated to Mr. Scott Campbell.

Mr. Pete Sepulveda, Department of Transportation Director, informed that the Levi Building was available for about 18 months.

Mr. Scott Campbell asked how many employees being considered in order to identify appropriate space.

Mr. Alex responded that three employees would be housed: 1) a receptionist; 2) a paralegal/secretary; and, 3) an Executive Director, resulting in the need for a reception area; an office for the Executive Director; an office for a secretary; a storage area, a map room and a conference room. He explained that this number excludes professional services, Bond Counsel and consultants. Mr. Alex requested input from each member of the Board.

Mrs. Laura Betancourt was unable to speak due to soar throat.

Mr. David Garza indicated that he was excited about the RMA, which in his belief was what Cameron County needs. He stated that the public must be informed that the RMA would not charge people for access to existing roads that are free. He noted the need to create the image that the RMA was in existence to rid the county of traffic jams by having residents pay a few pennies.

Mr. Michael Scaief stated that he was excited about State giving the opportunity to form the RMA and about the leadership serving on the Board.

Mr. Victor Alvarez stated that although he knows very little about building highways, he considers himself to be a "negotiator by nature" and "a team player," which in turn was his strong point. He requested that the Pastor and Reverend title be dropped. Mr. Alvarez stated that he has a PHD in Theology.

Mr. Scott Campbell stated that a lot of money was involved in the future impact of the RMA and that each time he sees the work chart that has been given to the RMA it gets bigger. He stated that such duties were intimidating when you think of the future, yet it was his belief that the RMA has an outstanding Board and Chairperson.

Mr. Ray Ramon noted the need to be grateful of the great leadership in Cameron County that has resulted in the RMA getting a head start, and expressed his appreciation for the trust the county has placed on the Board. He stated that he was excited to be a precinct representative and looked forward to manning one of the oars. Mr. Ramon stated that the Governor could not have selected a better man as chairperson than Mr. Alex.

Mr. Alex questioned whether to call the serving individuals Commissioners or Board Members, and reiterated that the Board was an Authority. He stated that Mr. Mario Jorge, TXDOT District Engineer, would be present shortly.

---

**2. MEETING DATES/LOCATIONS**

Mr. Alex asked if the Board was in favor of designating the Old Levi Building as their meeting place.

The Board agreed.

Mr. Alex asked what time would be most convenient for all members to meet. He indicated that Mrs. Betancourt and he oppose meeting on Monday mornings and Friday afternoons. Mr. Alex stated that he would hope that Bond application would be prepared in the next sixty to ninety days and that Bond Counsel be engaged as soon as possible. Alex also suggested that hiring Bond Counsel and consultants not presently doing business with another governmental entity would be advantages.

Mr. Ramon asked if staffing requirements include the hiring of Bond and Legal Counsels.

Mr. Alex responded in the affirmative, yet he noted that at this time the main concern was obtaining a recommendation for an Executive Director.

Mr. Ramon commented that he would look to the people whom assisted in establishing the RMA and local retirees from TXDOT for the vacant position of Executive Director.

Mr. Remi Garza, County Administrative Assistant, requested that Tuesday mornings be excluded in order to enable the presence of Mr. Pete Sepulveda, Department of Transportation Director, at the RMA meetings.

Mr. Ramon requested that as much information as possible be provided in advance from TXDOT and local MPOs.

After a brief discussion, the Board determined that Regular Meetings would be held every second Thursday of the month at 1:30 P.M., next meeting being on March 10, 2005, at 1:30 P.M.

Mr. Alex requested that Mr. David Garcia, County Department of Transportation, make arrangement to have the Brownsville and Harlingen MPOs present at said time. He indicated that he might schedule a Special Meeting upon the need arising.

Mr. Ramon suggested that Mr. Doug Wright, Commissioners' Court Legal Counsel, brief the Board on matters relating to the Open Meetings Act.

Mr. Remi Garza stated that necessary arrangement would be done and that available publications from the Attorney General's Office would be provided.

The suggestion was made that the Brownsville and Harlingen MPOs, County Legal Counsel, and a TXDOT representative knowledgeable in RMAs be present to provide needed information during the next meeting.

---

4. **GENERAL DISCUSSION ON RULES/REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES, MARIO JORGE, DISTRICT HIGHWAY ENGINEER TXDOT**

Mr. Alex asked Mr. Mario Jorge, TXDOT District Engineer, to explain the relationship between the Brownsville and Harlingen MPOs and the RMA, and the legal ramifications with regards to hiring a consultant.

Mr. Mario Jorge, TXDOT District Engineer, stated that TXDOT would support the RMA in the development of projects and that TXDOT may participate with the RMA financially on identified projects. He stated that understanding how funding with the RMA works was of great importance. Mr. Jorge explained that any State and/or Federal funding for projects must go through an MPO as standard practice, making the MPOs a critical part of the process. Mr. Jorge elaborated as to the use of Category III Funding and District Discretionary Funding, and as to needing an environmental assessment for any projects involving federal funding, noting that TXDOT would be available to guide the RMA in said process.

Mr. Jorge suggested that selection of consultants be done on a project by project basis once a project and its scope of services were identified. He stated that the RMA could look at 50% of funding for toll projects through the sale of bonds and the other 50% to be funded from TXDOT as toll equity. He stated that a Pass Through Toll (PTT) was a new form of funding developed by TXDOT where reimbursement of cost of projects was provided by TXDOT based on the number of traffic and suggested that said funding would be appropriate for the RMA to start working on development of infrastructure. He stated that said form of funding would require entering into Interlocal Agreements, and clarified that administrative fees were not reimbursable via a PTT.



Mr. Garza asked if a simulated type of RMA project could be undertaken for purposes of getting an idea of what an entire process entails.

Mr. Jorge responded in the affirmative and stated that a listing of projects could be presented next week.

The suggestion was made that the West Railroad Relocation Project be used as an initial project; however, Mr. Jorge recommended that a simpler project be undertaken as an initial project.

Mr. Alex asked if a banking relation would be needed since funding would be obtained.

Mr. Jorge responded in the affirmative and explained that the Board was an entity who would sell bonds for projects. He stated that Wall Street would be hesitant with regards to the bonds, yet TXDOT would be the RMA's back-up.

Mr. Sepulveda noted that the RMA would be responsible for maintenance and operations of the roads it builds.

Mr. Jorge stated that maintenance of projects funded via a PTT could be done by TXDOT and that maintenance and operations of toll projects must be done by the RMA, although much could be contracted with TXDOT. He indicated that the relation with TXDOT would be critical in project development.

Mr. Alex asked if excess funds could be used for operations.

Mr. Jorge noted that excess funds would not be available via a PTT project.

At this time, there was discussion concerning access mechanism for toll roads to a State highway and the options given to a driver to use a feeder road versus a more convenient toll road.

Mr. Alvarez asked how administrative expenses could be recouped.

Mr. Jorge suggested that another RMA be consulted since one RMA got a combination loan from the county and cities. He stated that TXDOT was unable to fund initial expenses of the RMA. Mr. Jorge stated that monies from toll projects could be used to fund maintenance of the road, perhaps through a maintenance contracts rather than hiring employees to do said work, adding that said contract could be paid on a monthly basis.

Mr. Alex asked if an administrative fee could be added to a toll road.

Mr. Jorge responded in the affirmative, adding that this was where the RMA would make its money.

Mr. Sepulveda stated that the RMA would operate similar to the Cameron County International Bridge System.

Mr. Jorge stated that TXDOT requires an annual report indicating where the money is used.

Mr. Alex stated that any excess monies obtained from a toll project could be used to fund other projects.

There was a brief discussion concerning possible initial projects that would enable a good success.

Mr. Alex stated that a workshop might be scheduled to have the necessary entities present to obtain as much information as possible.

Mr. Jorge explained that MPOs have long range financially constrained infrastructure plans for an area and that any project for which federal funds are requested must be on the MPO plan. He stated that the main purpose of the MPO was to gather demographic data, employment data, and to make projections over the next twenty years regarding the development of the area and its traffic.

Mr. Alex encouraged that Board Members attend the meetings of the MPO.

Mr. Jorge stated that the suggestion was made that the MPOs amend their By-Laws to include a member of RMA on their board. He reiterated the need to work together.

Mr. Alex requested a copy of the MPOs reports.

Mr. Jorge stated that he would provide a listing of projects, maps, identified funding and a sample application for a PTT.

Mr. Alex advised Mr. Jorge that the RMA meetings would be scheduled each second Thursday of the month at 1:30 P.M.

Mr. Sepulveda stated that Mr. Phil, Texas Department of Transportation, would be asked to make a presentation concerning orientation of the RMA, area in which he was very familiar with.

Mr. Jorge indicated that TXDOT was willing to provide support to make the RMA successful.

Mr. Alex questioned the status of the Hidalgo County RMA Application.

Mr. Jorge responded that an application was presented; however, it was returned to request that a public outreach plan and data indicating the geographical representation be provided.

Mr. Alex suggested that perhaps the Cameron County RMA represent both Hidalgo and Cameron Counties.

Mr. Jorge commented that this would be much more convenient for him.

---

---

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned by Mr. Alex  
**ADJOURNED** at 10:54 A.M.

**APPROVED** this 4<sup>th</sup> day of April 2005.

---

**MR. DAVID E. ALEX, CHAIRPERSON**

**PREPARED BY:**  
**MARICRUZ ROBLES**