

41. Presentation and possible action on legislation being proposed in the current session of the State Legislature which, if passed, would adversely affect the sales tax revenues of the City's General Fund.

Conrado Hein, Finance Director, reported that staff received communications from the Legislative Committee of the GFOAT (Government Finance Officers Association of Texas) regarding some proposed legislation on sales tax exemption. If this exemption goes into effect, it will have a 10% negative impact on the sale tax receipts for cities throughout the state. What prompted this legislation is the fact that the state has excess funds in its general operating funds. The other alternative being discussed is the reduction of the state sales tax rate. The GFOAT is suggesting for us to pursue the latter alternative through our legislative delegation.

42. Request for Executive Session pursuant to Texas Government Code 551.071(1)(A) to consult with City Attorney regarding contemplated litigation regarding Molano Construction, Inc., and return to open session for possible action.

Mayor Flores announced that she was informed by the City Attorney that they did not need to go into executive session.

X. COMMUNICATIONS

a. Mr. Manuel Benavides gave out a handout before delivering his speech. He stated that Council can count him among the growing number of people who think that the government has gotten too big and too involved in our daily lives. There are places where the government does not belong as well as places where it is absolutely necessary.

He reported that a few weeks ago, a group of people associated with the State Association of Soil and Water Conservation District included him in their trip to Austin. The purpose of the trip was to ask state government leaders for help because the federal had reneged it.

However, before meeting with the state leaders, he attended the 10th Annual Dinner of the Texas Public Policy Foundation (PPF). This foundation does research on public policies such as transportation, school performance, and education related issues. At that dinner, Governor Bush gave a glowing speech on how "education" would be the theme of this legislative session. The speakers that followed such as Governor Bush also based

their presentations on the education theme; however, the backroom was brought to life when Comptroller Rylander got her turn at the podium and said "the yardstick by which government should decide its involvement is the yellow pages test." This concept means that if you can look through the yellow pages of a phone book and find the listing by a private enterprise that can do the same job "cheaper and better", then the government should either limit its involvement or stay out.

The following day, the Soil and Water Contingent attended meetings with Lt. Governor Perry, Representative Henry Cuellar and others, but the unprepared agricultural group met with discouraging news time after time. Mr. Benavides added that the group's unpreparedness is testimony on how unfamiliar these folks are towards asking for help. They have dealt with budget cutbacks, they have found ways to quietly get along, and have never asked for help.

The state leaders' response was that their priority is on education and that soil and water were not on their funding list. Mr. Benavides pointed that education is exactly what the Soil and Water Conservation District technicians provide; these technicians educate farmers, ranchers, foresters and other providers of necessities on how to best use our state's most basic and precious resources. Education doesn't take place only in the classroom, students must satisfy their hunger before being able to learn. So producers must be educated on how to maximize their outputs.

This group is not asking to be fully or permanently funded, but rather to buy time to explore other ways to achieve the financial help they need. Ironically, congress reduced funding to the conservation efforts while voting itself a pay raise. Shamefully, our representative in Washington was at the forefront asking for that pay raise.

Mr. Benavides concluded by saying that he does not know what the solution is, -is it federal, state, local or private enterprise? He knows that he begged for Council's help for seeking direction at these crossroads in order to rescue this noble cause.

- b. Mr. Julian Delgado was called by the Mayor to appear before Council; however, City Attorney Jaime Flores advised Council not to take public comment at this time since the issue that Mr. Delgado will talk about is under investigation. The City Attorney offered Mr. Delgado to speak about this matter at Mr. Delgado's convenience, but he refused and said that he will

rather speak before the City Council.

Mr. Delgado stated that he will give credit where credit is due. He doesn't care much for politicians, but there are instances in which he has been proud of how certain individuals use their office. As an example, he cited Cm. Bruni during the time when City Council attempted to hold the retreat at San Antonio or at La Posada. He added that Cm. Bruni came out on the *Laredo Morning Times* on the front page standing in front of the Laredo Public Library where he wished to hold that retreat. Another example, when Mr. Guerra requested that certain information be made public regarding a fire captain who was under the influence of alcohol while driving a city vehicle and hit a tree. However, his disgust for local or federal government is intensified when certain individuals abuse their power. Mr. Delgado then referred to an incident that took place on January 29, 1999 involving Cw. Montalvo and a field officer. The field officer and his cadet were tagging illegally parked vehicles and while proceeding to tow a certain pick-up truck, a lady came out screaming not to tow that vehicle.

At this point Mayor Flores reiterated that this matter is under investigation and insisted to Mr. Delgado that it would be more appropriate if he talks to the City Attorney.

Mr. Delgado responded that because he is researching this issue, he had put a request under the open records act to view the investigation done by the Assistant Police Chief, but found out that his request was submitted to the Texas Attorney General's office and has yet not heard from them. He added that he would speak to the City Attorney about it; however, he wants to know why none of the councilmembers have pursued this matter further. He is aware that an investigation is going on, but hasn't heard anything. The last thing he heard, from Mayor Flores, was that voters will be the ones to punish Ms. Montalvo whether she deserves punishment.

Mayor Flores dismissed Mr. Delgado and stated that she did not say that.

- c. Ms. Carol Sherwood, from Habitat for Humanity, informed that two years ago they received funds through the Community Development Office. The funds were used to purchase land, six lots at the Riverhills Subdivision. She issued a special invitation to all the citizens for the groundbreaking of their third house. This will be the 10th home in three years fully built by volunteers and from donations of local corporations

and individuals. She commended the Community Development Department for its continuous assistance and also appreciated other city's departments for their support. Finally, Ms. Sherwood announced that CP&L will be donating \$25,000, at the groundbreaking ceremony, so that materials can be purchased to build at least one more home.

Magda Lopez Baker, Area Business Manager from CP&L, stated that CP&L made the commitment to do this spring project and named it "Luz del Corazon Project". Since Mayor Flores will be unable to attend the groundbreaking ceremony, Ms. Lopez Baker presented her with a hard hat that indicates that the Mayor will be the honorary superintendent for that construction project.

- d. Mayor Flores reminded all the City employees on the need of assisting our Sister City Tlahualilo, Durango.
 - e. Mayor Flores thanked the Councilmembers that participated on the trip to Washington, D.C. She said that the trip was very successful.
 - f. Cm. Guerra directed the council's attention to pages number 20 and 21 of the most recent edition of *LAREDOS*. He commented that it is like a black eye for all the Councilmembers because people continue to use the city's empty lots as dumping grounds. Cm. Guerra instructed staff to see if code enforcement personnel can find out who the culprits are.
- Cm. Valdez suggested that we put PSA's to inform the public, and encourage the public to get involved. Also, get code enforcement to follow up on messy homes because most of the times it is the same people that dump over and over again.

Motion to move item number (43) (D) (3).

Moved : Cm. Valdez

Second: Cm. Galo

For: 7

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

XI. CITY COUNCIL PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

- 43. **Requests by Mayor and City Council members for presentation and discussion.**

A. Request by Mayor Elizabeth G. Flores

- 1. Preliminary discussion regarding the development of a

Retiree Incentive Program.

Mayor Flores said that the city like many other businesses that have been in existence for a long time, have employees who would like to retire, but don't do so because there is no financial incentive, or because they either need health insurance or financial support.

She gave an overview of the State of Texas Retirement Plan. She said she does not know much about the city's retirement plan, but hopes that the City of Laredo is working on some kind of program for the employees that need to take retirement.

Dan Migura, Administrative Services Director, reported that one of the most popular trends on the early retirement incentive programs is for medical care after retiring than anything else. It may help Council know that we currently have 250 retirees (including police and non-civil service), the city has 14 employees that have 20 years of service and are eligible for retirement, and would consider a retirement incentive program. There are also 33 employees that have 10 years of service with 60 years of age that may be eligible for that program as well. It may be of interest for council to know that during the last five years we had an average of about 24 employees retiring. Staff has implemented various things to try to enhance and improve the retirees' benefits. They have done several improvements such as increasing the employees contribution from 3% to 5%, increased the city's contribution from 6% to 10%, implemented a program for prior service buy back which was implemented in January, 1997. He added they are seeing favorable things and employees seem to be more encouraged whenever they see the retirement numbers. Certainly, they are continuing to look at other options. He said the city has done quite a few changes over the last three years and because of the way they calculate the pension some of those things are not seen yet in the retirees calculations, but in a year or two many of those things are going to be seen and they are going to see an improvement.

 Cm. Galo asked for a report that will reflect the figures for people who have been employed for 30+ years and figures for example, whereby if an employee would retire and we would hire somebody back in his/her position (at

the new rate for new employees) would there be a substantial savings to the city?

Mr. Migura replied that certainly that is the trend, when you see long-term employees they are usually hired at the rate scales and you can bring new employees in at the lower rate. He said he does not have such figures right now, but can work on getting these figures and bring back a report.

Cm. Galo said sometimes there are incentives such as giving a one-time bonus or something else to encourage employees to retire.

Mayor Flores expressed they just want to be sure that the people that feel like they would want to retire and who are able to do so, that they be given some kind of incentive after all the service they have provided to the city.

Cm. Bruni said there is a problem with the health care benefits. He has received several calls from retired city employees that are having problems with their health care. This is one of the reasons that employees who are eligible for retirement do not want to retire. If staff irons out those problems out first, it would greatly help.

Cm. Galo wanted to know what the policy is on retirees' health benefits is?

Mr. Migura replied there are various groups of employees, he spoke of the majority, the non-civil service group. At the time of retirement, they can elect to continue their health coverage at a city-rate established by council plus there are other more affordable options, but if we look into their pension benefits, it may not be affordable to them. Mostly, the retirees will take the prescription-only option because that is what most can afford.

He informed council that they have had two opportunities to spend time with retirees. There is also a "Retired Benefit Fair" once a year for those employees that are close to retirement whereby those employees can come in and ask questions about Social Security, Medical Benefits, etc. He said this is something that has been implemented and they will continue doing it.

Cm. Guerra asked if city employees can take their health care benefits with them when they retire?

Mr. Migura said they can, but they will have to pay the rate that it costs the city to provide that benefit because there is no city participation after they retire.

Cm. Guerra said that essentially this would make it as expensive as it is in the open market.

Mayor Flores said it would be cheaper for them to look for something else, but even then it is very expensive.

Mr. Migura said this would still be a more competitive rate.

Mr. Pena stated it is a more competitive rate, besides it offers four different levels or alternatives such as deductibles, prescription-only, etc., but it is at their cost. The incentive that they are possibly looking at for this year's budget is to analyze and prepare some alternative incentive packages for the next fiscal year so that there can be a three month window (October, November and December of 1999) affording a select group that is, those people that are 25 years of service or whatever level is decided on, and possibly some health benefits.

Cm. Guerra questioned the targeted benefits such as heart and cancer benefits, can they take those plans with them after they retire? Some of those health plans have deductibles in the range of \$500 up to \$1,000 and if a person gets sick and needs to see the doctor or go to the hospital, that person has to pay until those exorbitant deductible amounts are reached.

Mr. Migura replied that the employees do get optional coverage through our Section 125 provision and if they leave or separate from the city, they can always continue with their health care through a private policy through our insurance agent of record Benefit Alliance.

Cm. Guerra wants staff to look into the possibility of keeping the health insurance plan active and in place for elected officials. He said that it is very expensive for anybody to go out on the open market and purchase a health insurance plan.

Cm. Galo wants staff to look and see if the city can offer an incentive per say paying their health insurance completely or something around those perimeters to employees who would be beneficial for the city to have retire per say which we could replace them with somebody that would be less expensive plus it might be worth to them if they are going to have all their health benefits. He added that this has to be something good for both sides the city and the employee.

Cw. Moreno said that we should be interested in helping people who retire so they can have better benefits, but she is not sure if it is really of benefit to the city to have people to retire because we lose knowledge and expertise. There was a big turn over this last year and that itself caused many employees to be at the lower steps.

Mr. Migura reiterated that there are 177 employees as of October 1998 that were eligible to retire so that is the group of people that they will be looking at.

B. Request by Council member Louis H. Bruni

1. Discussion with possible action on the continuing problem with tractors and tractor trailers parking on city property on the 2300 and 2400 block of Saunders and at the Laredo International Airport parking lot.

Cm. Bruni spoke on the continuing problem with tractors and tractor trailers parking on city property on the 2300 and 2400 block of Saunders, at the Laredo International Airport parking lot, and at the 600 block of Grand Central on Milo Distribution Center.

The city property on the 2300/2400 block of Saunders is the old K-Mart parking lot that is being used as a truck stop. Every evening, around 11:00 p.m. is when trailers start to park there. Sometimes there are from 10 to 20 trailers, illegally parked, that usually spend the night there. This is an ongoing problem at District II.

Cm. Bruni stated that about a year ago he addressed this problem and was told either by the City Manager or City Attorney that this particular property was leased to the Tankins and that the Police Department could not go in there and remove the trailers. He wants staff's input on

what can be done to solve this issue.

Jaime Flores, City Attorney, said that the Tamkins have always respond very quickly to any issues pertaining to the compliance of their lease contract, so a letter will be sent to them tomorrow.

Cm. Bruni requested that the letter be sent as soon as possible and that council be given copy of such letter. He also suggested that strong language be used in order to put this problem behind us.

Cm. Bruni addressed the problem at the airport's parking lot. He said tractors also park there and sometimes they even park at city employees' designated spaces. Also he has seen tractors coming underneath the canopy to pick up passengers. That canopy area was not designed for tractors. Another problem is the vehicles that hunters use during the hunting season. These vehicles are parked on the airport's parking lot year-long. He wants to know what kind of measures do we have in order to monitor what vehicles are being parked there.

Jose Flores, Airport Director, said that most of these people parking at the airport are customers of the airport. They are using the parking lot because they are using the airport to go back home or to their corporate office, or they are going out on vacation. Mr. Flores added that they are visiting with FAA to see if they are allowed to charge parking lot fees since the airport's parking lot was funded with a 90% federal grant. FAA's response was that the grant does not allow that it be a revenue generator for the airport. On the other hand, the hunters also park there for approximately 6-8 months or so, but they are here for the deer, white dove, and other local hunting experiences. So they are indeed using the airport.

Cm. Bruni suggested that we should designate an area of the parking lot for these stagnant vehicles. Also, since it's not appropriate for a tractor trailer to be parked next to a vehicle, an area, with FAA's approval, should be designated for these tractors.

Mr. Flores replied that there is an area designated for tractor trailers. He also mentioned that a policy on employee parking will be presented to the board.

Florencio Pena, City Manager, stated that our first goal is to convince FAA to allow us to charge a minimum charge for parking use in order to establish a better control of the facility. The second thing is to identify areas to be use as long-term/short-term parking area as well as an employee parking area.

Finally, Cm. Bruni asked staff if they had any information on the illegal trailer parking occurring at the 600 block of Grand Central at the Milo Distribution Center. Since staff didn't have any information on this particular issue, he instructed the Police Chief to look into this matter.

2. Status report on motion made September 31, 1998 regarding the relocation and demolition of the buildings used by CAA located on Cherry Hill.

Jose Flores, Airport Director, reported that they been encouraging the CAA to move out of that facility. He added that Judge Martinez called last week to request a 30-day extension and because of the lease they felt compelled to grant CAA the 30-day request.

3. Status report on a request to study avigation fuel odors in the area of Vista Hermosa Subdivision.

Jose Flores, Airport Director, reported that they worked with the Health Department and this matter was deferred to TNRCC for a study consideration. He will report back to Council until TNRCC provides a report.

4. Discussion with possible action and status report on progress of filling marketing positions at the Laredo International Airport.

Jose Flores, Airport Director, reported that even though there are some applicants, this position remains open. For the present time he has been performing the marketing responsibilities as well because the airport has a very challenging budget. Also, it was noted that the beginning balance was at deficit contingent upon the land sale happening to end up with a positive balance. However, the challenge will remain for subsequent years: during the past 3 year approximately \$340,000 of debt service was incurred on acquiring property north of the airport. Approximately \$400,000 a year were added for airport rescue and firefighting expenses. Last year \$1.6

million were drawn from the fund balance when matching a \$5 million dollar grant for the noise abatement program; also, \$3.3 million were drawn for the parallel taxiway. During the last 5 years the airport has matched an excess close to \$40 million for discretionary FAA grants. Mr. Flores said that the funds balance reserves have been depleted; therefore, he asked Council to bear a little longer to see how the funding situation will develop and in the meantime he is assuming the marketing responsibilities as well.

Florencio Pena, City Manager, added that in addition to the above there is an extra \$30,000 expenditure to make the airport security gates and elevators Y2K compliant.

C. Request by Council member John C. Galo

1. Status on the hiring of the tennis pro and wind screens at the Market Street Tennis Courts with possible action.

John Vidaurri, Parks and Recreation Director, reported that they completed the interviews for the tennis pro position a week ago. This week they will go ahead and extend an offer and hope that by next week they will have a negotiated contract. If the contract is negotiated this will enable them to come back to City Council on the first meeting in April with the recommendation to consider approving the contract.

Cm. Galo asked if this position is going through the Parks and Recreation Board?

Mr. Vidaurri said that staffing is an issue that is the responsibility of staff and so the hiring of staff is his responsibility so the recommendation would not go through the board. He added that they did set up a committee and had a Park Boardmember on that committee as well as several tennis coaches who participated in rating and ranking each of the applicants.

In reference to the wind screens, they did a survey of the pole structures at the Market Street Tennis Court and found that forty (40) of those poles need structural reinforcing, but before they add wind screens (in order to have safe supports), they need to get that work done. They have an estimate of approximately \$20,000 to do the structural support work for the poles on the south.

D. Request by Council member Eliseo Valdez Jr.

1. Discussion and possible action on a resolution from the City Council requesting assistance from the state and federal government for the visually and hearing impaired in Laredo, in the form of facilities (for mobility training), trained specialists and equipment. The South Texas area is underserved and limited in facilities. Most people need to travel to Austin, Houston, or San Antonio for services, training and audio visual equipment. Laredo is rapidly becoming a regional health center for South Texas. These facilities would compliment this growth and meet the needs of another segment of our population in South Texas. (Co-sponsored by Council member Alfredo Agredano and Council member John C. Galo).

Cm. Valdez stated that public schools along with Ruth B. Cowl have done a tremendous job with the children in the school system as far a guiding, training, and assisting them, but we are still underserved. He added that the biggest support group for many of these people in need are their family members who have to travel out-of-town which is a tremendous expense for them to stay out-of-town and wait for their family members to go through specialized training. Medical centers in Laredo make an investment in the community and these facilities certainly complement the growth that we are experiencing.

He added that for many years we've been neglected in the areas of education and infrastructure. In reference to infrastructure funding, our Legislators and Senators in Washington have done a tremendous job during the past few years and he thinks the time has come for us to ask for this sort of facilities in South Texas. He would like a resolution on behalf of the City Council addressed to our Legislators in Austin and in Washington to see if we can get some assistance and facilities for the South Texas area.

Motion to draft a resolution on behalf of the City Council addressed to our Legislators in Austin and in Washington to see if we can get some assistance and facilities for the South Texas area.

Moved : Cm. Moreno
Second: Cm. Bruni
For: 7

Against: 0 Abstain: 0

2. Discussion and possible action on creating three more slots for investigators to keep up with the increased workload and to complement the 30 additional officers that are going to be hired under the new grant. (Co-sponsored by Council member Cecilia May Moreno and Council member Consuelo "Chelo" Montalvo)

Agustin Dovalina, Chief of Police, reported that it seems unlikely for him to say "no, I don't need these positions," because he does. Additional positions is an item that he will propose during the upcoming budget hearings. They have 30 additional people coming in, and with that influx of personnel, they will need to add more supervisors.

Right now, they are in a situation in which three people are on an eligibility list that will expire next month. He has concerns with that because the competitive nature of the examination for a position is somehow deteriorating this particular scenario with respect to the re-classification that is being proposed. He also has two other eligibility lists and they will be looking at those on up the line for the same possible scenario that is happening right now. He further explained that once their eligibility expires, there will have a set number of slots available, employees compete for those particular positions, and depending on what place or slot they fall into, they may be promoted. At this time, on this particular scenario, they don't have these positions.

He expressed that he is in need of more supervisors than anything else, but again he stressed that he also needs more positions. He concluded by saying that in order to give council an analysis of the overall needs, he will present a report during the budget hearings.

He informed that they are in need of investigators, but also sergeants, lieutenants, etc., and at this particular time the re-classification of these individuals would also result in the reduction of line personnel. The additional officers will be hired until September, but because of the Police Academy training, they don't expect to see them in the field before April, 2000.

Cm. Bruni questioned if the Police Department had the necessary and needed vehicles for the additional officers to effectively work on the streets?

Chief Dovalina replied that the Police Department will need additional equipment to equip the additional personnel, but he will come before council to ask for that.

Cm. Bruni asked that if IH-35 is a State Highway why doesn't DPS (Department of Public Safety) help us also?

Chief Dovalina replied that DPS has concurring jurisdiction within the city limits in traffic enforcement, but "their limited number" doesn't help much. He added that DPS helps whenever they can, but they have fewer people and their area is much larger than ours, so it is our jurisdiction within the city limits to man IH-35.

Luis Dovalina, President of the Laredo Police Officers Association, reported on the statistical reports whereby they will be dealing with more population taking into account the estimation of almost 350,000 to 400,000 population (this includes our sister city's population), the rising crime and theft. He pointed statistical figures dealing from month to month, how it was in 1998 versus 1999. He added that on auto theft there were 97 cases in 1998 and 177 in 1999. There are only two investigators assigned to those cases and four investigators assigned to a task force.

After lengthy explanation on statistics, Mr. Dovalina stated that currently there is an issue under litigation. There was a hearing where maybe they will just include two investigators because there is a certain issue about a captain slot, but as soon as that is cleared up that will open up the slot for the other investigator. He explained that this issue will be brought before April 15th.

Florencio Pena, City Manager, stated that with all due respect, the issues of hiring, classifying, and additional personnel requirements are management responsibilities. He added that through the annual budget process management reviews the strengths. He mentioned that council approved (late last year) a total of nine additional positions for investigators and now these additional three will make twelve additional positions for investigators in a one-year period, and this is a large increase. Mr. Pena is aware of the

city's growth and feels that he needs time to evaluate the organization as to where it's heading to with the additional 30 new officers. He feels that Council should not allow eligibility to dictate the process of classifying the positions.

After lengthy discussion on this issue. The Police Chief confirmed that the budget does limit the amount of staff even though there is a need for additional staff. Laredo has low ratio of police officers compared to other cities. Also consideration was given to the large number of visitors from our sister city that come to Laredo on a daily basis. So, it was determined that the Police Department indeed needs more investigators as well as additional financial resources.

Motion to add the three new positions for investigators.

Moved : Cm. Valdez

Second: Cm. Galo

For: 7

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

3. Discussion with possible action on a resolution supported by Judge Liendo for a detoxification facility for Laredo, Texas, County of Webb. (Co-sponsored by Council member Alfredo Agredano and Council member John C. Galo).

Hector Liendo, Justice of the Peace, asked council support to pass a resolution supporting a detoxification center for juveniles. He added there is a petition being circulated throughout the community which already has close to 1,000 signatures.

He explained that the petition is asking the State of Texas to appropriate monies to Webb County or to the City of Laredo for a Juvenile Detoxification Center and asked that Councilmembers sign it. He added that they have facilities available already, all they need are the operational monies. The amount of money in question would be submitted to our State Representative after hopefully, they get a resolution from the city.

He concluded by saying that the resolution was passed by the Board of Judges which is the juvenile board in support of this detoxification center.

The resolution reads as follows:

State of Texas**County of Webb****RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, Laredo has been identified as the fastest-growing metropolitan statistical area (MSA) in the United States, and lacks the basis for a continuum of care infrastructure for the care and treatment of juveniles who are chemically dependent; and

WHEREAS, an inexpensive supply of heroin is readily available to the youth of this city, and the grade of heroin is higher than other MSA's by 12%, thus increasing the probability of experimentation and subsequent addition among young users; and

WHEREAS, the rapid transition from inhaling heroin to injecting heroin presents an expanded number of problems, including overdose and HIV infection; and

WHEREAS, the average age of a typical cocaine/alcohol user continues to decrease and a large percentage of adjudicated juveniles who are substance abusers admit to experimentation with heroin and cocaine; and

WHEREAS, a 1998 survey indicates that 22% of Laredo students admit to using Rohypnol, three-quarters of secondary-school students report lifetime usage of alcohol, and 68 youth (whose average age was 14.8) were admitted to treatment programs in 1996 and 1997.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Webb County Juvenile Board supports and endorses the creation and implementation of a medical model detoxification facility for juveniles in the County of Webb.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED at a Regular Meeting of Juvenile Board of Webb County, Texas, on the 10th day of March, 1999.

Cm. Alvarado said he knows that Mr. Liendo has gone to the SCAN Facility "RAICES" and asked him if he has an agency that is willing to submit an application at the state level? He said the way this works is that there needs to be an agency that is willing to sponsor or willing to submit an application at the state level to compete for funds for this type of center. He added that he agrees that we need to have work with the service providers in the area and if they are not willing to sponsor one of this projects then try to work with one of the agencies that works throughout Texas and maybe they would be willing to expand into this area. He added

there has to be an agency that is willing to go out and do the proposal and the licensing required for this type of facility.

Judge Liendo said that RAICES has been contacted. Also, AMA, and STACADA will be contacted.

Motion in support of the Resolution on behalf of City Council.

Moved : Cm. Valdez
 Second: Cm. Galo
 For: 7 Against: 0 Abstain: 0

At this time City Councilmembers signed the petition brought forth by Judge Liendo.

E. Request by Council member Joe A. Guerra

1. Discussion and possible action concerning morning and afternoon traffic problems at Alexander High School. (Co-sponsored by Council member Louis H. Bruni).

Chief Dovalina reported that he has instructed police officers to increase the patrol surveillance of the area and to enforce traffic guidelines.

Robert Murillo, Traffic Engineer, stated that from the Traffic Department standpoint there was a request for a traffic study. Some data, including the traffic counts, has been collected; however, there are other items that need to be considered before he makes a recommendation.

Cm. Guerra asked Mr. Murillo to expedite the traffic study.

XII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

44. Deleting Article II, of the Laredo Land Development Code and amending Article III, Chapter 7, of the Code of Ordinance of the City of Laredo, entitled Building and Building Regulations by amending Section 7-1, thereby Adopting the 1997 Edition of the Standard Building Code, amending Section 7-4 Mechanical Code, thereby, adopting the Standard Mechanical Code (1997 ed.), and any and all provisions regulating and controlling the design, construction, quality of materials, erection, installation, alteration, repair, location, relocation,

the Neural Tube Defects Project of the City of Laredo Health Department for the period beginning January 1, 1999, through December 31, 1999.

Motion to open the public hearing.

Moved : Cm. Bruni
Second: Cm. Agredano
For: 7
Against: 0
Abstain: 0

There was no public input.

Motion to close the public hearing and introduce.

Moved : Cm. Agredano
Second: Cm. Alvarado
For: 7
Against: 0
Abstain: 0

Ordinance Introduction: City Council

XIII. MOTION TO RECESS AND CONVENE AS LAREDO MUNICIPAL HOUSING CORPORATION

Motion to recess as City Council and convene as the Laredo Municipal Housing Corporation.

Moved : Cm. Galo
Second: Cm. Alvarado
For: 7
Against: 0
Abstain: 0

46. Authorizing the Laredo Municipal Housing Corporation (LMHC) Director to continuously submit the required applications to the Webb County Appraisal District for recognition of property tax exemption for the fifty (50) lots and improvements at the Riverhills Subdivision, Unit I, under the LMHC Lease/Purchase Program. The tax exempt applications will be submitted to the Appraisal District until all 50 homes are purchased by the families. LMHC has been advised that it will be necessary to apply for tax exemption on a yearly basis since the tax exemption is not renewed automatically. The property tax exemption will enable LMHC to be reimbursed for the closing costs and downpayment paid for the new homes constructed under the Lease/Purchase Program.

Motion to approve.

Moved : Cm. Alvarado
Second: Cm. Valdez

For: 7

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Motion to adjourn as the Laredo Municipal Housing and reconvene as City Council.

Moved : Cm. Alvarado

Second: Cm. Valdez

For: 7

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn.

Adjournment time: 8:15 p.m.

Moved : Cm. Galo

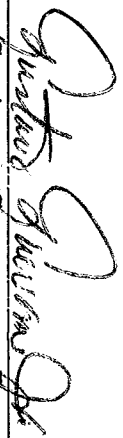
Second: Cm. Moreno

For: 7

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

I hereby certify that the above minutes contained in pages 01 to 38 are true, complete, and correct proceedings of the City Council Meeting held on March 15, 1999. A certified copy is on file at the City Secretary's Office.



Gustavo Guevara, Jr.
City Secretary

Minutes approved on: April 5, 1999