

**REGULAR MEETING
TOLL BRIDGE BOARD
HELD ON APRIL 16, 2015, AT 12:00 P.M.
CITY HALL, 118 S. CAGE BLVD., 2ND FLOOR, PHARR, TEXAS**

On the 16th day of April 2015, the Toll Bridge Board met in a regular Bridge Board Meeting. Following is the record of attendance.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Adalberto Campero, Chairman
Rick Martinez, Vice-Chairman
Romeo Cuellar, Member
Artemio Palacios, Member

MEMBER ABSENT: Edgar Delgadillo, Secretary

**EX-OFFICIO MEMBER
PRESENT:** None

**EX-OFFICIO MEMBER
ABSENT:** Mayor Leopoldo Palacios, Jr
Mayor Pro-Tem Adan Farias

STAFF PRESENT: Fred Brouwen, Director of Operations
Luis Bazan, Industrial Development Manager
Vanessa Guzman, Administrative Assistant
Cleo Salinas, Administrative Assistant

OTHER PRESENT: Karla Moya, CFO
Bill Ueckert, City Engineer
Ezequiel Ordonez, Bridge Liaison
David Moreno, CBP
Guillermo Aguilar

There being a quorum established Chairman Adalberto Campero called the meeting to order. Following is the agenda:

1. Roll Call-Excuse absent members
2. Pledge of Allegiance/Invocation
3. Consideration and action on approval of minutes-March 23, 2015
4. Crossings and revenues comparison for March 2015
5. Expenditures report for March 2015
6. Project engineer report

7. Director's Administrative Report
8. Discussion and action, if any, on BTA Bronze Plus Level Sponsorship for \$ 2,500
9. Adjournment

A. CALL TO ORDER:

ITEM "1": ROLL CALL-EXCUSE ABSENT MEMBERS

Chairman Campero called the meeting to order. All members were present during roll call except Member Delgadillo. Member Palacios made a motion to excuse Member Delgadillo. Member Martinez seconded the motion and was then carried on unanimously. Chairman Campero moved to the next item.

ITEM "2": PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INVOCATIONS

Chairman Campero introduced the item and led them in the Pledge of Allegiance. Vice-Chairman Martinez led the group in a prayer. Chairman Campero moved to the next item.

B. CONSENT AGENDA: *(All items listed under consent Agenda are considered to be routine and non-controversial by the Governing body and will be enacted by one motion. Any Board Member may remove items from the consent agenda by making such request prior to a motion and vote on the Consent Agenda)*

ITEM "3": CONSIDERATION AND ACTION ON APPROVAL OF MINUTES-MARCH 23, 2015

Chairman Campero introduced the next item. Member Cuellar made a motion to approve the minutes from March 23, 2015. Member Palacios seconded the motion and was then carried on unanimously. Chairman Campero moved to the next item.

C. 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 "4": CROSSING AND REVENUES COMPARISON FOR MARCH 2015

Chairman Campero introduced the next item. Mr. Brouwen, Director of Operations stated that for the month of March car crossings were 65,260, which represents a (-10,702) cars or (-14.09%) compared to last year. Mr. Brouwen then showed a graph of all the car crossings from all the bridges across the board. He stated that Brownsville had a -2,165, which represents a -1%; Eagle Pass had an increase of 17,191 or 8%; Laredo had an increase of 18,833 or 5%; Hidalgo and Anzalduas had a

decrease of -11,504, or -4% decrease; Progreso had a decrease of -8,836, which represents -18.97%; Donna had a decrease -3,310, which represents -7.56% decrease; the Pharr Bridge had a decrease of -10,702, which represents a -14.09%.

Mr. Brouwen reported that total truck crossings for the month of March were 47,929, and had an increase of 2,638 trucks, which represents an increase of 5.82%. Mr. Brouwen stated that for the first six months of the fiscal year they have a total of 15,968 trucks increase, which represents an increase of 6.43%. Mr. Brouwen then showed a graph of all the truck crossings from all the other bridges across the board. He stated that Brownsville had an increase of 208, which represents a 1%, Eagle Pass had an increase of 648 trucks, which represents 6%; Laredo had an increase of 11,640 trucks or 7% increase; the Pharr Bridge shows 2,638 trucks, which represents 6%, and Progreso showed an increase of 554, which represents 18%.

Mr. Brouwen reported that the total northbound crossings for the month of March were 49,542 trucks, which represents an increase 3,316 or 7.17% increase on trucks coming from Mexico to the U.S.

Mr. Brouwen reported that the total revenues collected for the month of March was \$1,137,093 with an increase of \$26,571 or 2.39% over the same period a year ago. He added that the total amount for the first six months of the fiscal year were \$334,842, which represents an increase of 5.54%. Member Cuellar stated that if Mr. Brouwen could explain again why there is almost 2,400 difference in crossings northbound versus southbound. Mr. Brouwen stated that the difference is because a small 2 axles truck that carries a box of chips worth a million dollars, CBP considers that as a commercial crossing, and that same vehicle that crosses back to Mexico through the bridge, they consider it as a regular passenger vehicle, a car crossing and that is the reason why there is always a bigger amount of northbound crossings through the bridge. Chairman Campero stated that it still looks like they are having troubles bringing cars over here. Mr. Brouwen stated that he has a presentation on the connector coming from Mexico in his administrative report. Several discussions then took place regarding the connector. Chairman Campero moved to the next item.

ITEM "5": EXPENDITURES REPORT FOR MARCH 2015

Chairman Campero introduced the next item. Mr. Brouwen stated that he has Mrs. Karla Moya there from finance there if there are any questions on the expenditures report. He added that Mr. Guerra was out. Member Cuellar stated that if they have more expenditures than revenues. Mrs. Moya stated that they have total revenues at 6.6 million dollars and expenditures at 5 million dollars. Several discussions took place regarding this issue. Chairman Campero moved to the next item.

ITEM "6": PROJECT ENGINEER REPORT

Chairman Campero introduced the next item. Mr. Ueckert, City Engineer stated that there is a list of projects that he has been asked to come up with construction estimates and they have about six projects inside the facility. He stated that the first project is one lane and one wide lane that is currently under design and if they look at the button of the photo they can see that there are two lanes at the button, and one lane

would be for a wide lane and the other one for a travel lane and that lane would be coming out with a booth, two booths also. He stated that they estimate about 2.5 million dollars for that project, but it is under design right now and the engineer is about 30% complete on the plans. Mr. Ueckert stated that the other project is the gate-to-gate, and that project is a one lane and it goes north and then it goes back to the west and turns around and then joins up in to the facility itself. He added that that is the one lane from the gate-to-gate and it is currently under design, and that particular project is under design with the exit lanes that is coming out in to the new BSIF Project right now. Mr. Ueckert stated that the other project is the truck parking area, which would be just south of the inspection building, and they have looked at possibly putting a truck parking area which will keep the trucks from circulating round the inspection and they can go ahead and park there and when they are ready to be inspected they call them in and the inspection will be done on them. He added that they are looking at about 2.7 million dollars for that project itself. He added that another project is to add two more exit booths, currently part of the project is with TX-DOT to move the exit booths from there current location to the north south and that would be part of the TX-Dot project, but this other project is to add another extra two exit booths and that is about eight-hundred thousand dollars. Several discussions then took place regarding the exit booths. Mr. Ueckert stated that the total amount in projects is about 10 million dollars. Chairman Campero asked that if there is a benefit of moving the exit booths to the west? Mr. Brouwen stated that right now they are exiting from east to west and that is creating a bottleneck inside the port during peak hours, so by moving the booths from south to north that would give them more of a queuing area inside the port. Mr. Brouwen then explained in more detail how the projects would be and where by showing a picture of the port to the board. Several discussions then took place regarding this item. David Moreno, CBP stated that this project goes way back many, many years and there has been a whole bunch of different designs, and one of the reasons why this design was kind of selected, and this is the first time he has actually seen this currently one, was because of the flow of the trucks was going to change so that is why the exit booths have to be moved to this other location, because right now the truck flow is going counter clock wise and with this design it is going to change the flow and go clock wise instead of counter clock wise, so there for that exit that they had wasn't going to work for them and that is why it was decided that they needed to relocate the exit booths because of the truck flow. Several discussions then took place regarding this issue. Member Palacios asked that what was the outcome on the staging area as the trucks come in. Mr. Brouwen stated that they are working on it and showed them a picture of where the staging area will be and that it will be for about 80-90 trucks, to get them off the bridge and CBP will directing the trucks and tell them where they need to go. Some discussions then took place regarding Member Palacios question. Chairman Campero stated that going back to that comment of the exit booth being moved west, you hear some of the comments being said from CANAR is that why do they get the FAST permit if they go and they are still in the same line like everybody, till they hit the curve and then they can get in to the FAST Lane. Mr. Brouwen stated that this connector will help the FAST Certified companies. Several discussions then took place regarding this issue. Member Cuellar asked that what percentage of FAST Lane clients that they have. Mr. Brouwen stated that the percentage based on the numbers that they have is 30%.

Several discussions then took place regarding the FAST Certified Program. Mr. Luis Bazan, Industrial Development Manager for the Pharr International Bridge stated that one of the things that they are doing there with the project is that it is for future growth and they are now under the understanding that now that Kia is opening up close to Monterrey, which is only two and a half hours away and Toyota is opening up in Guanajuato, 100% of those supplying companies to that manufacturing plant will be FAST Certified, so they are preparing for those 100%, additional to what they are already carrying which is that 30% that Mr. Brouwen was talking about. Member Martinez asked that out of these six projects, which is number one, number two or which one is the most important at this time, and also what is the time frame that they are looking at. Mr. Ueckert stated that the first two are the one lane, and the one wide lane, the 2.5 its under design right now, they have an engineer consultant working on it and he is about 30% complete on the plans, they might need to submit these plans to TX-DOT for their review, and they are looking at about nine-month period before they actually have the ok to go ahead and advertise for the project itself. He added that the other one is the gate-to-gate and that is in conjunction with the TX-DOT project, when the TX-DOT project lets their project, which connects to the BSIF then that is when will let also that project at the same time. He stated that the other items will be at a later date, and then began to explain about the funding for the projects. Several discussions then took place regarding this issues. Chairman Campero stated that all the projects sound great, the extra parking the people won't be just waiting hanging around in front of the loading docks so that they can find a space, the only thing is the benefit of the FAST crossing, if they can get a dedicated lane for that. Member Martinez stated that he knows that the bridge had a meeting with the locals as far as INDEX and staff, and wanted to know if this was presented to INDEX. Mr. Brouwen stated that at the meeting that they were invited to in McAllen at the Convention Center they did not present it, but he did work on a follow up meeting the next day and he will discuss that in his report. Several discussions then took place regarding this issue. Member Martinez asked that they are looking at 9.9 on this and from the 9.9, federal funds how much are they looking at. Mr. Ueckert stated that they currently have 5 million dollars that TX-DOT has assigned for projects, and they have about 4 million already planned and programed, which are the top two and that leaves a balance of about a million dollars. He added that TX-DOT has what they call a CBI Funds, specifically for improvements at the port, there is about three and a half million dollars left and they are making a request to set that money aside for other improvements within the facility right now, so they are hoping to fund about 75% of the projects that they show here with TX-DOT funds. Chairman Campero asked that what would it take if you know that you need a presidential permit to add on to this current bridge, add on another span, to add on one lane or two lanes to the bridge before they hit that curve, would that be something that could not be done. Several discussions then took place regarding Chairman Campero's comments and concerns. Mr. Brouwen stated that he would like to show the board a video on how the projects will look more or less inside the port. Chairman Campero moved to the next item.

ITEM "7": DIRECTOR'S ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Chairman Campero introduced the next item. Mr. Fred Brouwen, Director of Operations stated that on the last bridge board meeting the board had several questions on the construction on the Mexican side, so he invited Mr. Marcos Olivares who is the Regional Director for CAPUFE Zona 8 Octava and he is in charge from Del Rio all the way to Brownsville, so he is here to answer any questions for the board today. Mr. Marcos Olivares from CAPUFE then began to give an explanation on the construction on the Mexican side of the bridge in Spanish. Several discussions then took place regarding this issue. Mr. Brouwen stated that he had a meeting with INDEX, with maquilas and trucking companies, CBP, and Mexican Customs to discuss the hours of operations and one of the things that was mentioned at the last meeting of INDEX was that the Pharr Bridge has a lot of traffic this past holiday, and the reason was because it was Thursday and Friday, and the main issue was that the Mexican custom closed at 2:00 pm, and when there is a holiday in the U.S. like 4th of July, they open normal hours of operations and during holidays in Mexico, which they have around 7 holidays they close at 2pm, that is one of the reasons why he went to Mexico to discuss that issue with the Regional Administrator for Adunanas in Mexico. He added that they will continue to have meeting with them to discuss this issue, and that one of the things that he is recommending is that they need to extend the hours of operations for holidays. Several discussions then took place regarding this issue. Mr. Brouwen stated that another comment that he made at the meeting last week was that they do not have commercial traffic on top of the bridge, and that he took some pictures last week after that meeting. He added that he took a picture at 8 in the morning on top of the bridge and there was basically no traffic at all, probably about 15-20 trucks, and he also went to Mexico to take pictures on the Mexican side and there were no trucks coming in to the port. Mr. Brouwen then showed more pictures that were taken on top of the bridge on the U.S. and Mexico side, and explained more on that. Mr. Brouwen stated that Mr. Sergio Contreras was there to give the board an update on an event he had this past week. Mr. Sergio Contreras, External Affairs Director for the City of Pharr stated that he will be providing a brief update on three legislative bills that are of importance to the City of Pharr, in particular the bridge in its self. He added that earlier today the house floor voted out favorably, the house vote 25-15 by Representative Munoz, which establishes a Foreign Trade Zone near our port of entry, we had both Guillermo Aguilar testify before the International Trade and Internal Governmental Affairs Committee a couple of Monday's ago, we also had Carlos Del Angel with Petro Operacions de Renta, both did an excellent job in relating our message. He added that at this point in time the way it works now, is that Senator Lucio will pick it up on the Senate side and get it through committee, and hopefully get it signed by the Governor, so it's moving along just fine. He added that there is another bill, House Bill 979 and that is of importance to the City of Pharr, Representative Guerra and Munoz, and this is to create a grant program, a grant program that would allocate if it passes 1.8 million dollars to be utilized by ports of entry that conduct trade. Mr. Contreras stated that the way it works is that currently the City of Pharr contributes funds to an organization called STAC, it's a non-profit to help off-set the overtime to help us elevate traffic jams by reducing border wait times, in 2014, they did about ninety-thousand dollars' worth, if this bill does pass then that will provide us an opportunity to continue with that program, however; it will be a matching, so whatever dollar amount we put in then through the grant they will match it. He added

that at this point in time it did go through the committee itself and was voted out favorably through the ag and livestock committee, and it is now pending for calendars committee to pick it up and then go through a vote. Mr. Contreras stated that they still have another bill, but this one is still in committee which is the transportation committee and that is by Representative Mando Martinez, and what that bill does is that it relates to where counties are able to apply for grants to help support international trade bridges, so that one is pending. Mr. Contreras stated that the bridge team and himself met with TX-DOT, and also the MPO this past Monday morning to discuss the design that Bill Ueckert talked about, and they are going to meet again next week and we are going to invite the interested parties to make sure that we maximize each and every inch in that port of entry because it's not big, and when it comes to the question on budget the way that it works is that the federal government hands down the funds, the state takes it and passes it down to TX-DOT, and TX-DOT gives it to the MPO, so at this point in time there is already an agreement. Mr. Contreras then explained in detail about the agreement. Several discussions then took place regarding these items. Chairman Campero moved to the next item.

D. ADMINISTRATIVE:

ITEM "8": DISCUSSION AND ACTION, IF ANY, ON BTA BRONZE PLUS LEVEL SPONSORSHIP FOR \$2,500

Chairman Campero introduced the next item. Member Palacios stated that going back to the BTA, even now they are asking for the bronze twenty-five hundred, and he use to be one of the board of director members when Richard Cortez was the President at that time, but in the past two-years we haven't had anything, invitations to their conferences that we use to attend in Washington, D.C. Mr. Brouwen stated that what they are doing now is sending Mr. Sergio Contreras and Mr. Guillermo Aguilar to attend those meetings, but if he would like to attend one of those meetings please let them know. Member Palacios stated that that was the idea, that was the thing, that he has been here for so many years and they use to get it and everyone use to attend and they had a good show at the BTA, but lately he has not seen any invitations, or dates of conferences, and he remembers a while back that Mr. Guerra had become a part of the Board of Directors, but he doesn't know if he ever attended any of the meetings. Mr. Brouwen stated that Mr. Guerra did attend a couple of the meetings, and what they are doing right now is sending Sergio Contreras, sending Guillermo Aguilar to those meetings, but definitely Member Palacios if you would like to attend, we will definitely get those invitations out and invite the board to attend those meetings. Several discussions then took place regarding this item. Vice-Chairman Martinez made a motion to approve the BTA Bronze Plus Level Sponsorship for \$2,500. Member Palacios seconded the motion and was then carried on unanimously. Chairman Campero moved to the next item.

E. ADJOURNMENT:

ITEM "9": ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Campero introduced the next item. Member Palacios made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Vice-Chairman Martinez seconded the motion and was then carried on unanimously.

APPROVED AS SUBMITTED:

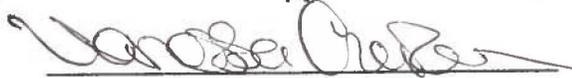

ADALBERTO CAMPERO, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:


EDGAR DELGADILLO, SECRETARY

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

ON THE 16th DAY OF APRIL 2015, 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: 5-20-15
Word/C:BoardMeetings/BoardMtgMinutes4-16-15