



CITY OF LEON VALLEY
CITY COUNCIL ANNUAL TOWN HALL MEETING
Leon Valley City Leon Valley Conference Center
6421 Evers Rd, Leon Valley, TX 78240
Saturday, January 26, 2019

MINUTES

1. **8:30 AM** Call to Order, Determine a Quorum is Present.

Attendee Name	Organization	Title	Status	Arrived
Chris Riley	City of Leon Valley	Mayor	Present	
Monica Alcocer	City of Leon Valley	Mayor Pro Tem	Present	
David Edwards	City of Leon Valley	Council Place 1	Present	
Catherine Rodriguez	City of Leon Valley	Council Place 2	Present	
Benny Martinez	City of Leon Valley	Council Place 4	Present	
David Jordan	City of Leon Valley	Council Place 5	Present	

Also present was City Manager Kelly Kuenstler, ACM/HR Director Crystal Caldera, City Secretary Sandra Passailaigue, City Attorney Denise Frederick, LVPD Chief Joseph Salvaggio, LVPD Assistant Police Chief Ruben Saucedo, LVFD Chief Michael Naughton, LVFD Captain Blake Wade, Finance Director Vickie Wallace, Assistant Finance Director Ashley Wayman, Library Director Sandy Underwood, Assistant Library Director Theresa Brader, Public Works Director Melinda Moritz, Assistant Public Works Director David Dimaline, Director of Business Relations William Cox, Director of Special Events/Community Center Manager Maribel Mendoza, and Planning & Zoning Director Brandon Melland.

Mayor Riley welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming.

Welcome (Mayor Chris Riley)

Presentations

The following presentations were made and those in attendance participated in discussion.

Dr. Francine Romero's Summary, Report and Recommendations are below.

City of Leon Valley Town Hall-January 26, 2019
Report and Recommendations

Submitted by:
Francine S. Romero, Ph.D.
March 4, 2019

Overview

The City of Leon Valley's 9th Annual Town Hall Meeting took place on Saturday, January 26, 2019. It was attended by 76 citizens (although not all citizens voted on every instant polling question). Mayor Riley and all Council Members (Edwards-Place 1, Rodriguez-Place 2, Alcocer-Place 3, Martinez-Place 4, Jordan-Place 5) as well as City Manager Kuentler, all Department heads and many City employees attended.

In the following pages, I provide brief summaries of each agenda item as well as my own recommendations, where appropriate. In my opinion, this Meeting illustrated the growth in complexity of this City's most significant issues. It also showed that citizens are well up to the task of considering these challenges and providing guidance to their elected and appointed officials. This meeting was a bit different from previous versions in that less time was available for feedback on new issues, as there were numerous updates on ongoing policies. City leaders may want to consider fewer agenda items for future meetings, as too many items limit the opportunity for citizen dialogue. Alternatively, having Department Directors present update-only items in a separate forum is another option.

As always, this gathering was a model of respect, engagement, and thoughtful reflection. The Leon Valley Town Hall remains a model of good governance.

Topic 1: Update on last year’s Meeting presentations and recommendations.

City Manager Kelly Kuenstler presented several updates, briefly summarized below:

- The On-It Team met its 2017 and 2018 objectives, continues to improve its performance and responsiveness, and was recognized for its community collaboration by Texas Town & City Magazine.
- Benefits of the Home Rule status adopted in 2017 were reviewed, including passage of cell phone and graffiti ordinances, which would not have been possible under the City’s previous status.
- The 2018 Leon Valley swim season was reviewed, especially in regard to changes made in response to citizen feedback at the 2018 Meeting. Overall, the data showed that the pools remain popular, with citizens indicating frequent usage (especially of the Forest Oaks pool) and high overall satisfaction, indicating that the expanded arrangement with SELA Aquatics is working well. Pool patrons reported a high level of satisfaction with the ability and professionalism of lifeguards, with a majority giving scores of 4 or 5 on a 1-5 scale. Wait time for concessions was very low, and satisfaction with concessions seemed adequate. While 22% of respondents reported a score of 3 for concession satisfaction on a 1-5 scale, about 70% rated it as 4 or 5. In short, last year’s recommendations were followed and appear to be meeting demand.
- Plans to improve Bandera Road are ongoing, and it appears that the strong support for the boulevard option expressed at the 2018 Meeting has been noted by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDot) and other entities moving toward a final recommendation. The unpopular “flyover” configuration is no longer being presented as the leading future option.
- Citizen recommendations on updates to Strategic Goals from the 2018 Meeting were used to fine-tune this document. Final action was still pending at the time of the 2019 Meeting.
- A review of solid waste services was provided.
- An update on the use of the Peachtree/Poss corner lot was provided, although it is not clear whether or how that was informed by recommendations from the 2018 Meeting, as no clear consensus had emerged from that discussion.

1. How effective, in general, do you think the City of Leon Valley’s Town Hall Meetings have been? (Multiple Choice)

	Responses	
	Percent	Count
Very Effective	57.58%	38
Somewhat Effective	30.30%	20
Neutral	10.61%	7
Not Very Effective	1.52%	1
Not Effective at All	0.00%	0
Totals	100%	66

2. What day of the week do you prefer for next year's Town Hall Meeting? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Monday	0.00%	0
Tuesday	0.00%	0
Wednesday	0.00%	0
Thursday	0.00%	0
Friday	1.45%	1
Saturday	94.20%	65
Sunday	4.35%	3
Totals	100%	69

3. What time of the day do you prefer the Town Hall Meetings to take place? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Mornings	91.04%	61
Afternoons	5.97%	4
Evenings	2.99%	2
Totals	100%	67

Recommendation:

Per the instant polling questions that followed this update, it is clear that citizens find this annual event worthwhile, with almost 80% of attendees rating it very (57.58%) or somewhat (30.3%) effective. The Saturday morning time slot is also the overwhelming preference, so that should be retained.

Topic 2: Status of Bandera Road Working Group

Mayor Chris Riley was joined by City of San Antonio District 7 Councilwoman Ana Sandoval, Jonathan Bean of TxDot, and Chad Gardiner of Halff and Associates for a review of the history and future of the ongoing effort to improve this congested corridor. Overall, this suggested that Leon Valley’s preference for the Boulevard concept of the flyover concept has prevailed, resulting from evidence on the comparative impacts of these options, as well as the continued communication of citizen demands. The presentation also highlighted how the planning process has focused on broader land use within the corridor in addition to the narrower question of transport, as the two are closely connected. The only instant polling question on this topic had to do with preferred meeting times, and Saturday mornings were again the overwhelming winner.

1. What day of the week do you prefer to have TXDOT Public Meetings to solicit citizen input (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Monday	0.00%	0
Tuesday	1.59%	1
Wednesday	6.35%	4
Thursday	1.59%	1
Friday	0.00%	0
Saturday	90.48%	57
Sunday	0.00%	0
Totals	100%	63

2. What is your preferred time for TXDOT public meetings to solicit citizen input? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Mornings	89.55%	60
Afternoons	7.46%	5
Evenings	2.99%	2
Totals	100%	67

Half of the citizen tables were asked to discuss their preferences and concerns as the process continues, as well as to consider what it is that *they* know, but that traffic engineers and planners might not. Overall, this input complemented the significant scale and impact of the project-while citizens are strongly supportive of the Boulevard option, their discussions reflected nuanced reflection of the opportunities and challenges that the transformation will entail.

Key themes that emerged include:

- Concerns about safety and inconvenience during the construction project.
- The challenge of handling cross traffic from the major Bandera Road intersections.
- The need for a comprehensive and successful multi-modal approach that facilitates pedestrians and bike-riders and emphasizes connectivity among various transportation modes.

- Including attractive and climate-appropriate landscaping in the planning process.
- Concerns about clear road signage, but with an overall limit on signs in general.
- Local knowledge about particular intersections, on which planners should consult with citizens.
- While some citizens expressed concerns about the additional traffic that a more vigorous commercial presence might bring, most welcome the Boulevard option as a means to stimulate commerce and eliminate vacancies. Citizens are anticipating more variety in the retail and commercial mix as well as an opportunity for more locally owned businesses to locate on the corridor. As one attendee noted, “we want people to come *to* Leon Valley, not *through* it.

Recommendation:

Leon Valley’s elected and appointed leaders have done a commendable job of listening to citizens and working with all relevant parties. My only recommendations are to keep up the good work and continue to hold meetings where citizens may actively participate.

Topic 3: Photographic Traffic Control System

Chief Salvaggio presented an overview of the System, also known more informally as the Bandera Road red light camera program, activated by the City in 2018. Citizens had strongly endorsed this policy option at the 2017 Meeting. After reviewing the need for the System and the history of its adoption, the Chief presented data indicating its success. Traffic incidents have declined since the cameras came on line. Furthermore, it seems that drivers are driving more safely in the first place, as the number of citations is also decreasing, and there are few examples of repeat offenders. As the citizens had already anticipated, non-residents of Leon Valley received the vast number of citations (94%). The Chief emphasized that, while the purpose of the program has always been to enhance public safety, and not to raise revenue, the citation funds collected have facilitated funding for new traffic officers and other safety-related expenditures. There was some discussion of the possibility of future state legislation precluding local use of red light cameras.

Half of the citizen tables were asked to discuss their assessment of the program, and the increased patrols that its adoption has facilitated, as well as to provide recommendations for use of the Tier 2 funds (citation income that is not required to be spent on direct program costs). Overall, the table discussions demonstrated strong satisfaction with the program, as well as with the increased patrols funded by citation proceeds. A few had questions on the source and accuracy of the data and wondered if a future third party review might be warranted. Several citizens also suggested a public information campaign, as drivers may be uncertain on when to proceed through yellow lights, and on the rules governing pedestrian right of way. Many ideas were presented on how to spend the Tier 2 funds, but two particularly popular ones were flashing stop signs and audio signal crosswalks.

Instant polling, of all attendees, reflected the positive response, with almost 94% expressing general satisfaction with the program, and almost 71% reporting satisfaction with increased neighborhood patrols.

1. Are you generally satisfied with the Red Light Camera Program? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Yes	93.85%	61
No	6.15%	4
Totals	100%	65

2. Are you generally satisfied with the increased neighborhood patrols in Leon Valley? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Yes	70.77%	46
No	29.23%	19
Totals	100%	65

Recommendation:

Given the popularity of this suggestion, which emerged during the table discussions, I recommend that the City embark on a public education campaign concerning the basics of

stopping at yellow lights and yielding to pedestrians.

Topic 4: Update on El Verde 2020

Mayor Riley updated citizens on progress toward the Environmental Sustainability Plan, adopted in 2007. This includes goals related to a carbon neutral city, tree preservation and planting, green construction, and water conservation.

Instant polling questions followed the presentation and indicated the attendees' strong support for a number of specific mechanisms to realize the Plan going forward.

1. Would you like to continue the dedication towards making Leon Valley a sustainable city? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Yes	92.75%	64
No	7.25%	5
Totals	100%	69

2. Consider creating program to use store credits for the purchase of xeriscape plantings and rain barrels at low/no cost to citizens to further reduce water consumption? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Yes	93.65%	59
No	6.35%	4
Totals	100%	63

3. Would like to move the date from 2020 to 2025 to continue goal of planting 10,000 trees? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Yes	75.38%	49
No	24.62%	16
Totals	100%	65

Topic 5: Discussion of Future Updates to the Comprehensive Master Plan

Brandon Melland, Planning and Zoning Director, and David Smith, Zoning Commission Chair, provided an overview of key components of municipal comprehensive master plans. They explained the importance of Leon Valley’s Future Land Use Map and presented the 2019 timeline for updates.

In both the rapid table discussions and the instant polling, some clear themes emerged. Most notably, residents of Leon Valley treasure their neighborhoods, and view them as the most important element of the City. Parks and recreation resources are also highly valued. Second, even more than traffic, citizens are concerned about the future character of development. They want the City to continue to grow and expand its economic capacity, but in a sustainable and neighborhood-friendly way. Finally, this focus on the integrity of a small city was reflected in the polling question on favorite thing about cities that participants had visited, which highlighted general appreciation of a Town Center atmosphere.

1. Regarding land use, what element do you like best about Leon Valley? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Parks & Recreation	33.90%	20
Neighborhoods	40.68%	24
Community Image	6.78%	4
Streets & Ease of Movement	1.69%	1
Commercial & Retail Areas	0.00%	0
Sense of Place	16.95%	10
Totals	100%	59

2. What is your biggest concern regarding future land use and development in the City? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Traffic	28.57%	16
Economic Stability	19.64%	11
Character of Development	35.71%	20
Neighborhood Stability	14.29%	8
Public Spaces	0.00%	0
Trees & Environment	1.79%	1
Totals	100%	56

3. Your favorite thing about cities you visit? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Wide Streets for Walking & Biking	13.56%	8
Town Center Atmosphere	35.59%	21
Architecture	6.78%	4
People & Activity	20.34%	12
Public Spaces & Art	8.47%	5
Shopping	11.86%	7
Transportation	3.39%	2
Totals	100%	59

Topic 6: Update on Infrastructure and Flood Control

Public Works Director Melinda Moritz provided updates on a variety of projects, including street maintenance, sidewalks, water and sewage, and flood control.

Two questions on funding processes/options were presented to attendees through instant polling, and results indicated majority support for bond funding for one project at time.

This was followed by an update on the four hike and bike trail route options, and an instant polling question indicated strongest support for Option 3 at 41.67%. This route follows a path under the Bandera Road bridge on Huebner Creek, in the CPS easement in the Huebner-Onion Natural Area Park and parallel to Red Jacket, then turns northwest in the fire break (parallel to Sunlight Dr.), finally connecting to the walking path in Raymond Rimkus Park.

1. Would you be willing to fund all flood control projects at one time through a Bond or Certificate of Obligation? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Bond	58.97%	23
Certificate of Obligation	41.03%	16
Totals	100%	39

2. Would you prefer to fund each project at a time? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Yes	61.11%	33
No	38.89%	21
Totals	100%	54

3. Public Input (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Option 1	3.33%	2
Option 2	20.00%	12
Option 3	41.67%	25
Option 4	26.67%	16
Other	8.33%	5
Totals	100%	60

Topic 7: Review of Home Rule Charter Amendments

City Attorney Denise Frederick summarized the process of adopting a City Charter and becoming a Home Rule city in 2017, and the rules governing future changes to the Charter.

Instant polling following this item showed strong satisfaction with the changes made in the City as a result of Home Rule status. A majority of citizens did not have Charter amendments in mind, but almost 33% did. Finally, about 75% of participants supported City Council convening a committee to consider future amendments to the Charter.

1. Are you pleased with the changes you have seen this City make after becoming a Home Rule City? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Yes	85.45%	47
No	14.55%	8
Totals	100%	55

2. Do you have amendments in mind that would strengthen your City's Charter? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Yes	32.76%	19
No	67.24%	39
Totals	100%	58

3. Should your City Council convene a Home Rule Charter Committee to consider further amendments to the new Charter? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Yes	75.41%	46
No	24.59%	15
Totals	100%	61

Topic 8: Progress on Business Development

The final item of the day was a review of economic and community development, presented by the City Manager, joined by William Cox, Business Relations Director, and Geraldine Rodriguez-Smith, Vice Chair of the Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee. Topics covered included a review of the Committee's mission, statistics on new business development, and a summary of the Business Relations Director's role.

This item was followed by a Citizens to Be Heard portion, in which citizens asked general questions of the Mayor and entire City Council, prior to adjournment at noon.

Introduction to and Procedures for Town Hall Meeting (Dr. Francine Romero)

Update on Progress from 2018 Town Hall (Informational Tables in Back: Earthwise Living; Volunteer; and Tiger Sanitation) (City Manager Kelly Kuenstler)

Status of Bandera Road Working Group (Mayor Chris Riley and CoSA City Council Member Ana Sandoval)

Update on Red Light Cameras (Citizens Police Advisory Committee Vice Chair, Karen Seiffert and LVPD Chief Joseph Salvaggio)

Break-Out Discussion and Instant Polling to Follow (Items 3 & 4)

Update on El Verde 2020 (Mayor Chris Riley and Public Works Director Melinda Moritz)

Discussion of Future Updates to the City of Leon Valley Comprehensive Master Plan (Zoning Commission Chairman David Smith and Planning & Zoning Director Brandon Melland)

Update on Infrastructure & Flood Control (Public Works Director Melinda Moritz)

Home Rule Charter Amendments (Texas Constitution Article XI, Section 5): City of Leon Valley Home Rule Charter May Be Amended by a Majority Vote of the Qualified Voters at an Election Held for That Purpose In the Second Year After This Charter is Adopted and Once Every Fourth Year Thereafter (City Attorney Denise Frederick)

Progress on Business Development (Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee Vice Chair Geraldine Rodriguez Smith and Business Relations Director William Cox)

Citizens to be Heard

12:30 PM - Adjournment


Mayor Riley announced that the meeting adjourned at 12:30 PM.

These minutes approved by the Leon Valley City Council on the 19th of March, 2019.

APPROVED



CHRIS RILEY
MAYOR

ATTEST: 
SAUNDRA PASSAILAIGUE, TRMC
CITY SECRETARY

