

State of Texas
County of Bexar
City of San Antonio



Meeting Minutes
City Council B Session
Council Briefing Room
City Hall
100 Military Plaza
San Antonio, Texas 78205

2023 – 2025 Council Members

Mayor Ron Nirenberg

Dr. Sukh Kaur, Dist. 1 | Jalen McKee-Rodriguez, Dist. 2
Phyllis Viagran, Dist. 3 | Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, Dist. 4
Teri Castillo, Dist. 5 | Melissa Cabello Havrda, Dist. 6
Marina Alderete Gavito, Dist. 7 | Manny Pelaez, Dist. 8
John Courage, Dist. 9 | Marc Whyte, Dist. 10

Wednesday, October 18, 2023

2:00 PM

Council Briefing Room

The City Council convened a B Session meeting in the Council Briefing Room beginning at 2:06 PM. City Clerk Debbie Racca-Sittre took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Council Members present:

PRESENT: 11 – Nirenberg, Kaur, McKee-Rodriguez, Viagran, Rocha Garcia, Castillo, Cabello Havrda, Alderete Gavito, Pelaez, Courage, Whyte

ABSENT: None

ITEMS

1. Briefing on the Alamo Plan [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Shanon Shea Miller, Director, Office of Historic Preservation]

City Manager Erik Walsh introduced the Item noting that the project had made significant progress and he recognized members of the Alamo Management Committee Andy Segovia, City Attorney, Rebecca Viagran and Hope Andrade with the Alamo Trust and Jeff Gordon from the General Land Office. Segovia provided a timeline for the Alamo Plan which began in 2015 with a cooperative agreement, approval of a Master Plan in 2017, approval of a lease agreement and site strategy in 2018, interpretive plan in 2019 and

the denial of the Texas Historical Commission Permit to repair and relocate the cenotaph in 2020. He indicated that in 2021, the plan was re-set and put back on track.

Segovia provided the organizational structure which included Mayor Ron Nirenberg and Texas Land Commissioner Dawn Buckingham as the Executive Committee. Segovia outlined the vision of the Alamo Plan as engaging local residents and visitors while telling the story of the Alamo and its impact on the Republic of Texas, City of San Antonio, State of Texas, the United States and the international community. Segovia listed the guiding principles of the Plan.

Segovia reported that the Cenotaph would be preserved in place, the mission footprint would be delineated by paving materials, the plaza would remain accessible to pedestrians without railings, streets would be closed and the Visitor Center and Museum would repurpose the Crockett Block and Woolworth buildings.

Former Councilmember Rebecca Viagran thanked the Mayor for appointing her to the Management Committee and noted that she had attended approximately 40 meetings and provided information on the Subcommittee membership and work of the Museum Planning Committee. She reported that the Alamo Citizen Advisory Committee held 15 meetings since the re-set and established the Alamo Design Review Committee. Viagran reported that the 2023 State Legislature included \$400 million for the Alamo Project which would be used to design and construct the project. Viagran listed the planning and interpretive elements of the plan.

Dr. Kate Rogers, Executive Director of the Alamo Trust, thanked City staff for their work on the Plan as well as the Governor and Lieutenant Governor for helping secure the funding. She recognized the Museum Planning Committee, listed historians and other experts that advised on the content of the museum which included Indigenous Native American groups, Spanish Colonial Settlement, Independence and Resolution, the Battle and post-battle. Rogers displayed a map of the grounds and the planned schedule of completion of the project. Rogers stated that the economic impact of the project was projected to be almost \$12 billion.

Mayor Nirenberg noted that much progress had been made on the project and he appreciated the overview despite the challenges, noting that the vision and guiding principles had endured as a result of the partnership between the City, the State General Land Office and the Alamo Trust.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez commented that there were conflicting views of the Alamo, noting that some people did not see it as a symbol of pride as history was messy, but he appreciated that groups who had been oppressed and those who had been colonized were included in the conversation. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez asked if the surrounding businesses were included in the discussions including the historic Bonham Exchange.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez noted that Black History was an important part of the story as well since San Antonio played a significant role in the civil rights movement

through the lunch counter sit-ins. He asked how the individuals were selected to represent the community on the Museum Planning Committee. Rodgers stated that the original Citizen Advisory Committee was the starting point and they recommended more advisors in the areas of museum planning, indigenous people and civil rights. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez suggested revisiting who might not be in the room and should be invited. He supported the addition of the Lunch Counter Exhibit at the Woolworth Building. Rogers stated that Dr. Carey Latimore had written a paper regarding how San Antonio's civil rights movement was different, and this would inform the exhibit.

Mayor Nirenberg recognized the passing of Dr. Latimore and his incredible contribution to the community.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda was encouraged that the Plan embraced the stories of many groups in addition to the battle. Councilmember Cabello Havrda noted that the exhibit needed to continually evolve and hoped the museum would separate the Alamo myth from reality and educate people from all over the world.

Councilmember Phyllis Viagran thanked the Bexar County delegation for securing the State funding and Mayor Nirenberg for appointing her sister to the Committee. Councilmember Viagran noted that women were the ones to rescue and preserve the Alamo from ruin while the men wrote stories.

Councilmember Kaur asked how the team was planning to communicate the construction timelines to the neighboring businesses. Rogers stated that she hosted monthly breakfasts to review the plans in the past, but were now hosting weekly meetings and calls. Rogers noted that if she heard a concern there was an immediate discussion with the contractor and noted that wayfinding signage was crucial. Councilmember Kaur recommended provision of a two to four week notice for any closures or construction that might affect nearby businesses. Councilmember Kaur asked if the gates to the northeast would be open and recommended a more walkable experience by opening the area more. Rogers stated that the gates near the Menger Hotel would be open in the evenings.

Councilmember Castillo thanked the team and her Alamo Advisory Committee appointee for their work and was happy that the full story would be told of the Texas Revolution and the Battle of the Alamo from various perspectives including the Mexican Soldiers. Rogers stated that there was a postponement of the Mexican Soldado's presentation in order to include the story from both sides. Councilmember Castillo noted that the Civil Rights Subcommittee included Civil War experts and not Civil Rights scholars so she requested background information on those Committee Members. Rogers offered to add to the Committee if there was another scholar that needed to attend. Councilmember Castillo recommended compensation for those that do work to write the papers and research the history.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito appreciated the space created for safe dialogue as history was messy and she highlighted her appointee to the Alamo Citizen Advisory Committee who led the Civil Rights Subcommittee. Councilmember Alderete Gavito supported enhanced communication with local businesses and the new signage. Councilmember

Alderete Gavito requested a timeline for completion of the Education Center. Rogers stated that it would be completed in the summer of 2025. She added that the Visitor's Center and Museum would open in 2027.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia commented that the team was majority woman-led and congratulated them on their work. Councilmember Rocha Garcia suggested more diverse feedback and supported the inclusion of stories from all groups.

Councilmember Whyte thanked the team for their work and the Bexar County delegation for their work securing funding. Councilmember Whyte commented on the need for a construction grant to help the nearby businesses. He also thanked his appointee to the Alamo Citizen Advisory Committee for their service.

Councilmember Courage commented that San Antonio was a large tourist destination and most people visited the Alamo but had focused on the chapel which was only one small portion of the mission. Councilmember Courage expressed concern that the Alamo needed to remain affordable as Rogers had noted the plan was to charge admission in an effort to be self-sustaining. Councilmember Courage suggested that with so much public investment there should be some areas that were free of charge. Rogers stated that the plaza and all outdoor areas/gardens, the church, the long barrack and the new museum would be free; the 4D theater would charge an admission as well as the upstairs galleries in the museum. She added that they planned to offer free admission to local residents on certain days and would be raising money to pay for educational programs and would provide free admission to Title 1 schools.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda asked about free days. Rogers stated that they had not yet set ticket prices and were reviewing the market as well as options for free days.

Councilmember Pelaez thanked Segovia for serving on the Committee and asked about first amendment demonstrations that had traditionally been held in front of the Alamo. Segovia stated that even before the re-set there was a designated free speech area which would remain after the project was completed. Councilmember Pelaez recommended that the Alamo conduct market research on the visitors to learn how to enhance the experience. Rogers stated that they expected 2.5 million visitors annually after the project was complete and were already sending email surveys to the visitors that bought tickets.

Councilmember Viagran commented that Visit San Antonio provided visitor analytics and asked Segovia about the image trademark of the church. Segovia stated that the trademark belonged to the State and staff would work with them on licensing. Jeff Gordon, GLO General Counsel, stated that the State owned several trademarks of the Alamo and licensed them for a fee. Councilmember Viagran noted that conventions often wanted to use images from the Alamo to advertise. Gordon stated that they did not restrict individuals from taking pictures in front of the Alamo, it was only the commercial use of the image that was restricted.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia suggested developing an avatar of a child to help market the Alamo to children and reach them at their level and asked how they might target

different age groups.

Mayor Nirenberg closed the discussion by thanking the Alamo Team.

2. Staff presentation on the FY 2024 Annual High Profile Forecast Report [Ben Gorzell Jr., Chief Financial Officer; Troy Elliott, Deputy Chief Financial Officer]

City Manager Erik Walsh introduced the Item and mentioned that some of the contracts would be brought before the Audit Committee only and some might be suitable for presentation at a B Session. Deputy Chief Financial Officer Troy Elliott provided background on the types of solicitations and applicable preference programs and introduced the Finance Procurement Team led by Angelica Mata, Assistant Director.

Elliott listed three solicitations governed by the Texas Local Government Code Chapter 252 which was the Invitation for Bid (IFB) usually awarded to the lowest bidder, Request for Offer (RFO) for small purchases under \$3,000 or on cooperative agreements and Request for Competitive Sealed Proposals (RFCSP) considered a best-value type bid which could be scored. He noted that none of these solicitations could be negotiated. Elliott noted that the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was reserved for architecture, engineering and other professional services and the Request for Proposals (RFP) was reserved for professional services and alternative construction delivery methods.

Elliott outlined the use of the Local Preference Program (LPP) which required a business to be located within the San Antonio city limits for at least one year and meet the requirements approved by Ordinance but was not applicable to contracts using Federal funds. Generally, a LPP price preference of 5% was allowed on low-bid contracts and points were provided in discretionary solicitations not governed by State Law. He noted that LPPs could be used on IFBs, RFPs, RFQs and RFPs unless funded with Federal dollars.

Elliott stated that in January 2014, the City Council approved a Veteran-owned Small Business Preference Program (VO) that provided preference points in discretionary solicitations such as RFQs and RFPs. Elliott noted that some Federally funded programs required the use of the Disadvantaged Business Program (DBE) including most airport projects and some Public Works projects.

Michael Sindon, Small Business Administrator with the Economic Development Department, provided history, background and the description of the Small Business Economic Development Advocacy Program (SBEDA). Sindon reported that to participate in the program, firms had to be certified by the South Central Texas Regional Certification Agency (SCTRCA) as a small, minority or woman-owned business primarily located in San Antonio. Sindon stated that the department recommended use of the tools based on availability of firms and the preference points or goals which were established by the Goal Setting Committee for each applicable solicitation. He added that the tools included SBEDA prime preference points and subcontracting goals which could be met by a certified prime who self-performed.

Elliott defined high profile contracts as a discretionary contract valued at over \$1 million, or those which had a high level of community interest, or were highly technical. IFBs were not discretionary,

therefore, they did not meet the definition of high profile contract no matter the size or interest. Elliott reviewed a detailed forecast of the 51 high profile solicitations planned to be released in FY 2024. He indicated that eight would be briefed at B Session (including five Aviation Department solicitations), 22 would be briefed to the Audit Committee and 21 were recommended to be directly placed on the A Session agenda.

Mayor Nirenberg thanked staff for the presentation and diligence noting that the City's procurement effort had been refined over the years and was a model for other governments. Mayor Nirenberg suggested that the presentation regarding the types of procurement and tools be included on the website as a procurement primer.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez commented that City Council often agreed on so many things passed each week in the City Council meetings without fanfare, however, he expressed concern that the library procurement for materials might be moved to B session as it was worth \$24 million.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda supported the plan and noted the large investment the City made in serving the community. Councilmember Cabello Havrda asked whether there were goals for contracting with small, local, minority or Veteran owned businesses. Elliott stated that there were goals for the SBEDA Program but not for LPP or VO. Sindon stated that once a SBEDA goal was set on a contract, it was monitored until the end of the contract and an annual report was provided for SBEDA. Segovia suggested discussion in Executive Session regarding the details.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda noted that this was important to help our local small businesses build generational wealth and requested information on bidders both successful and unsuccessful.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito asked what constituted high community interest. Elliott stated that it could be several things such as a public safety item or something that people had been discussing. Councilmember Alderete Gavito asked how many high profile contracts were typically procured annually and how it was determined which would be brought before the Audit Committee or at a B Session. Elliott stated that the average was 50 and it was based on past experience and practices. City Manager Walsh mentioned that the City Council could request a briefing at any time and feedback on the list was requested.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito asked about the portal that included partners as well as the City and the timeline for the project. City Manager Walsh stated that the Mayor was pushing for a one-stop portal they were calling "Supply SA" which had not been built but was being discussed. Councilmember Alderete Gavito asked how contracts were monitored, updated and presented to the City Council. Elliott stated that if there were issues with a contract, the department coordinated with the Finance Department and significant notable issues were brought to City Council's attention.

Councilmember Pelaez asked if the City was a subscriber to Worker's Compensation or was self-insured. Chief Financial Officer Ben Gorzell stated that the contract on the list would process claims but the City was self-insured and not funded through the State. Councilmember Pelaez stated that he had met with the Association of Building Contractors (ABC) and they stated that City contracts provided flexibility for inclement weather days for rain but did not include flexibility for days over 100 degrees and noted the Good Night Construction Site Ordinance which does not

allow them to work when it was cooler. Hosseini stated that contractors were allowed to begin work early during the summertime and finish early and were given rain days. Segovia clarified that hot days were not included in our contracts as inclement weather. City Manager Walsh suggested staff should meet with the ABC to identify the issue.

Councilmember Viagran thanked Mayor Nirenberg for appointing her as Chair to the Audit Committee and asked her colleagues to look closely at the A session list for potentially bringing Items before the Audit Committee and noted that she had asked the Animal Care Services contract to be moved from A Session on the Consent Agenda to the Audit Committee. Councilmember Viagran requested an update on the Supply SA Initiative including a timeline.

Councilmember Whyte thanked staff for the presentation.

Councilmember Kaur commented that sometimes the contract itself did not make a solicitation high profile but it could be something that led up to the contract.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session was not held.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Approved

**Ron Nirenberg
Mayor**

**Debbie Racca-Sittre
City Clerk**