

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2021 at 10:00 AM
MUNICIPAL PLAZA BUILDING, B ROOM**

Members Present:	Councilmember Manny Pelaez, <i>Co-Chair, District 8</i> Councilmember Jalen McKee-Rodriguez, <i>District 2</i> Councilmember Adriana Rocha Garcia, <i>District 4</i> Councilmember Clayton Perry, <i>District 10 ((Teleconference)</i> Commissioner Trish DeBerry, <i>Bexar County Commissioner’s Court, Precinct 3</i>
Members Absent:	Commissioner Justin Rodriguez, <i>Co-Chair, Bexar County Commissioner’s Court, Precinct 2</i>
Staff Present:	Jeff Coyle, <i>Assistant City Manager</i> ; Alex Lopez, <i>Assistant City Manager</i> ; Camila Kunau, <i>Assistant City Attorney</i> ; Aurora Perkins, <i>Deputy City Clerk</i> ; Juan G. Ayala, <i>Director, Office of Military and Veteran Affairs</i> ; Sally Basurto, <i>Assistant Director, Government & Public Affairs</i> ; Christine Wright, <i>State Relations Manager, Government & Public Affairs</i>
Others Present:	Melissa Shannon, <i>Director, Governmental Affairs, Bexar County</i> ; Baltazar “Walter” Serna, Jr., <i>Serna and Serna, Consulting Firm</i> ; Renee Dominguez, <i>Texas Research and Technology Foundation</i> ; Randy Perry, <i>Texas Research and Technology Foundation</i>

Call to Order

Co-Chairman Pelaez called the meeting to order.

1. Approval of the minutes from the Intergovernmental Relations Committee Meeting of September 17, 2021.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to approve the minutes from the August 16, 2021 meeting of the Intergovernmental Relations Committee. Councilmember Perry seconded the motion. The motion prevailed unanimously by those present. Absent: Commissioner Rodriguez and Commissioner DeBerry.

Briefing and Possible Action on

2. U.S. Innovation and Competition Act of 2021

Sally Basurto provided an overview of S 1290, the U.S, Innovation and Competition Act (USICA) of 2021 and stated that the legislation protected U.S. innovation initiatives and strengthened national competitiveness. She noted that USICA funding supported science, innovation, and manufacturing programs with allocations totaling over \$250 million for National Science Foundation (NSF) research, Department of Energy initiatives, Regional Technology Hubs, Innovation Centers and Semi-Conductor incentives. Ms. Basurto highlighted HR 2225, the National Science Foundation (NSF) for the Future Act, and HR 3593, the Department of Energy Science for the Future Act, and

stated that the bills supported science and energy research projects. She reported that USICA next steps included:

- House and Senate conference
- Congressional passage
- Timeline at the end of the calendar year
- Government and Public Affairs (GPA) in coordination with consultants, Economic Development Department (EDD) and community partners would continue to track and monitor legislation for possible funding opportunities

Rene Dominguez with the Texas Research and Technology Foundation (TRTF) provided additional details on the USICA and noted that Innovation Centers and Regional Hubs were the primary points of interest. He reported that TRTF would leverage the strengths of partners in the industries of medical research, data analytics, biotechnology and cyber security and that additional support was needed from the City and County.

Randy Perry added that TRTF continued to expand the boundaries of its campus and was partnering with entities that could assist in making strategic investment opportunities.

Commissioner DeBerry asked about County involvement and benchmarks used by TRTF to measure success. Mr. Perry stated that the organization worked with Bexar County to develop benchmarks. Mr. Dominguez added that a study would be conducted to identify benchmarks and best practices used by similar organizations.

Chair Pelaez highlighted work done by the City over the years in support of innovation and addressed the importance of making continued investments.

Alex Lopez highlighted the financial incentives available for semi-conductor production and noted that the availability of semi-conductors was a large economic concern due to supply and demand needs.

Commissioner DeBerry asked about discussions with Elon Musk. Mr. Dominguez stated that TRTF had not made contact and recommended the assistance of the Bexar County Economic Development Office with outreach efforts. Mr. Perry requested that Bexar County also reach out to Michael Dell.

3. State 3rd Special Session Update

Christine Wright reported that five items were on the original Call for the 3rd Legislative Special Session and that three items were added by Governor Abbott. She noted that the items to be discussed included:

- State Redistricting
- Appropriations from the 2021 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding
- Vaccine mandates
- Transgender student athletes
- Unlawful restraint of a dog

- Property tax relief
- Additional bail reform
- Increasing penalties for illegal voting

Ms. Wright provided an overview of each item on the Call and provided a status.

Commissioner DeBerry requested additional insight regarding the removal of items from the ARPA funding list. Ms. Wright responded that a specific reason had not been provided and stated that the reallocation of the funds to other programs and initiatives such as property tax relief was a possibility.

Commissioner DeBerry mentioned that the County passed a property tax cut and that the reduction would be ineffective if appraisal values continued to increase. She addressed the need for the City and County to discuss appraisal reform and to jointly lobby the Legislature. Melissa Shannon recommended that the Bexar Appraisal District be included in discussions.

Ms. Wright highlighted next steps and noted that a concern was the ability of the Legislature to complete the redistricting process as well as approve COVID-19 relief funding before the conclusion of the 3rd Special Session on Tuesday, October 19, 2021. She stated that a 4th Special Session would be needed and that other items could be placed on the Call in addition to those not completed in the 3rd Special Session.

Commissioner DeBerry requested a status on the City's redistricting efforts. Mr. Coyle stated that the City Council was briefed on the redistricting process at the October 6, 2021 "B" Session and detailed initial steps to include the development of a Redistricting Committee that would review maps over the next few months.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia requested additional information regarding the elimination of ARPA funding for tourism. Mr. Coyle stated that funding language had been removed from the Senate version of the Bill but could be added to the House version. He reported that the City would engage Visit SA in order to jointly inform the Legislature of the importance of funding local tourism recovery efforts. She voiced concern with the tourism industry continuing to be burdened financially and stressed the need for the funding. At the request of Councilmember Rocha Garcia, it was clarified by Mr. Coyle that the Texas Emergency Management Operations Center would be located in Austin and that ARPA funding would be used to purchase land and building a new facility.

Mr. Coyle addressed the removal of ARPA funding for the construction of community colleges. Ms. Wright stated that funds could be included in House Bill Amendments.

Commissioner DeBerry voiced concern with the Legislature not including ERCOT on a Special Session Call. Ms. Shannon reported that the State had taken the position that energy management issues had been already resolved, especially as new Board Members were appointed.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez asked of the impact of the Bail Reform Bill. Ms. Wright reported that the Bill allowed Magistrates to deny bail for certain non-violent crimes. Ms. Shannon

stated that the Bill would result in more individuals being held incarcerated and expressed concern that the Bill would increase the burden on Bexar County.

Ms. Wright detailed discussions on the Bill and noted that passage failed. She stated that the Bill could be added to the 4th Special Session Call and clarified that the City did not take a position on the Bill. Commissioner DeBerry expressed concern with the punitive nature of the Bill and highlighted the County's efforts for jail reform.

Mr. Coyle stated that Alamo Colleges conveyed that the Senate had scheduled a hearing to discuss the issuance of Tuition Revenue Bonds and noted that Revenue Bonds were needed to fund the construction of new buildings. He clarified that funds would not be used to upgrade existing college facilities. Chair Pelaez expressed concern with the Legislature passing bills that negatively impacted vulnerable populations.

4. 2021 Defense Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant (DEAAG) Application

General Juan Ayala provided an overview of the 2021 Defense Adjustment Assistance Grant (DEAAG) Application and noted that applicants were required to provide a 50% match of proposed project costs. He stated that the City was requesting \$877,000 to fund storm water improvements along the fence and borders of Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA) military installations. General Ayala noted that Public Works funded a drainage engineering study in order to identify needed repairs and improvements with the intent to mitigate the recurring drainage damage. He reported that the City's matching portion for the repairs totaled \$438,500 and that \$161,500 was still needed as \$277,000 had been expended for the engineering study. General Ayala highlighted next steps in the application process.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia requested information on the City's role in the grant application process as Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG) traditionally took the lead on these types of requests. General Ayala clarified that the request was submitted directly to the City for consideration and highlighted an overview of previous JBSA funding requests submitted. He reported that requests are presented to the Military Transition Taskforce and that representatives from AACOG are in attendance. Mr. Coyle stated that City streamlined the submission as multiple local entities submitted grant applications for the same project.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez asked for clarification on funding sources for the balance of the City's 50% match. Mr. Coyle stated that funding would be identified upon the receipt of grant funds and noted that a mid-year budget adjustment would be needed if the City were awarded.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez motioned to move the item to the full Council for receipt of grant funding post award. Councilmember Rocha Garcia seconded the motion. The motion prevailed unanimously by those present. Absent: Commissioner Rodriguez.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 11:23 AM.

*Councilmember Manny Pelaez,
Co-Chair*

*County Commissioner Justin Rodriguez,
Co-Chair*

Respectfully Submitted,

*Debbie Racca-Sittre
Interim City Clerk*