

City of San Antonio



Minutes

Governance Committee

2021 – 2023 Council Members

Mayor Ron Nirenberg, Chair

Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, Dist. 4 | Melissa Cabello Havrda, Dist. 6

Manny Pelaez, Dist. 8 | John Courage, Dist. 9

Friday, March 24, 2023

1:30 PM

City Hall Complex

The Governance Committee convened a regular meeting in City Hall at 1:32 PM. City Clerk Debbie Racca-Sittre took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Committee Members present:

Members Present: Ron Nirenberg, *Mayor, Chair*
Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, *Member*
Melissa Cabello Havrda, *Member*
Manny Pelaez, *Member*
John Courage, *Member*

Members Absent: None

Approval of Minutes

1. Governance Committee meeting on February 15, 2023.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to Approve the minutes of the February 15, 2023 Governance Committee meeting. Councilmember Pelaez seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Nirenberg, Rocha Garcia, Cabello Havrda, Pelaez, Courage

Briefing and Possible Action on

2. Council Consideration Request by Councilmember Manny Peláez (District 8) regarding a Silk Road Cultural Corridor. [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Krystal Jones, Director, Arts & Culture Department]

Director of the Department of Arts & Culture Krystal Jones provided an overview and

background on the Council Consideration Request (CCR) submitted by Councilmember Pelaez on September 6, 2022. Jones listed currently existing programs for cultural corridors including the Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA) Cultural District Designation Program and related grant program. Jones stated that the TCA designation process was available for non-profit organizations and the application needed to include leadership, branding, geographic boundaries and cultural arts assets in the district.

Jones reported that there were currently four state designated Cultural Districts in San Antonio: King William, Zona Cultural, Old Spanish Trail, and El Mero Weso. She noted that being designated as a State cultural district opened up any non-profit located within the district to available State grant funding for projects and events, programming, enhancement and promotion of the district.

Jones provided information on the Corridor Program Pilot in collaboration with Main Street America managed by the Economic Development Department (EDD) which targeted non-profit organizations with funding for up to \$425,000 in operational, technical assistance, and implementation assistance designed to equip businesses and community leaders with the tools necessary to shape their economic futures and positively impact their communities. Jones added that the Request for Applications for the Main Street Corridor Pilot was currently open through May 1, 2023.

Jones stated that her department worked with each cultural district to provide a toolkit and proposed a plan to work with EDD to develop a plan and a timeline to leverage existing opportunities to meet goals for the Wurzbach Road Corridor. She proposed taking the plan and timeline to the Community, Health, Environment & Culture Committee.

DISCUSSION:

Mayor Nirenberg recognized Councilmember Pelaez and commented that on the east side of Wurzbach Road near Northwest Military was the Jewish Community Center and along the way was a Lutheran Church that embraced the families of refugees creating a community garden. Councilmember Pelaez noted that the area was not only a destination for Bangladeshi, African Markets, Indian Restaurants, Asian Restaurants, Pakistani Restaurants, but it was also home to a diverse community. Councilmember Pelaez commented that this was the first step in moving the Silk Road Corridor forward and introducing more art to the area.

Councilmember Pelaez invited the President of the Asian American Alliance of San Antonio to speak in support of the Silk Road Corridor.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda spoke in support of moving the Item forward to CHECC but requested more information on the State designation process. Jones stated that the letter of intent was required to be submitted by the non-profit to the TCA by January 31. Director of EDD, Brenda Hicks-Sorensen explained that there was placemaking funding within the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) for the pilot. Jones noted that the goal was marketing of the corridor for increased tourism and general economic development.

Councilmember Courage spoke in support of the Item and noted the significant growth of the Asian community in San Antonio.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia thanked Councilmember Pelaez for the CCR and clarified that this could be one of the pilot programs with the ARPA funding but there would be competition for the Main Street America Pilot. Hicks-Sorensen provided the process and timeline for the RFP but assured the Councilmember that if the Silk Road Corridor was not selected, they could still receive technical assistance and get ready for their TCA application. Hicks-Sorensen mentioned that if the pilot was successful EDD would request funds from the General Fund to continue after there were no further funds from ARPA.

Mayor Nirenberg spoke in support of the Item but suggested that the City could create its own designation. Jones suggested that this could be included in a plan that was taken to CHECC.

Councilmember Pelaez commented that the main goal of the CCR was to recognize and celebrate the Asian community.

Mayor Nirenberg requested clarification on the boundaries. Jones stated that the boundaries needed to be defined by the community but the State recommended a walkable area. Mayor Nirenberg suggested there could be designated street sign designs to highlight the amenities in the area whether it was restaurants, parks, cultural facilities, or even places of worship.

Councilmember Pelaez moved to Approve. Councilmember Rocha Garcia seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Nirenberg, Rocha Garcia, Cabello Havrda, Pelaez, Courage

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 2:02 p.m.

Approved

Ron Nirenberg
Mayor

Debbie Racca-Sittre
City Clerk