



Council District 8
Manny Peláez

Federal & State Government Relations Working Group – COVID Response
Co-Chairs: Commissioner Kevin Wolff, Councilman Manny Peláez

Meeting Summary
April 27, 2020

Contact Information:

Chief of Staff, Pat Wallace - 210-454-1474, pat.wallace@sanantonio.gov

Five Strategic Goals:

- Identify existing City/County revenue streams that have new “added” dollars
- Identify newly established revenue streams that don’t have an existing pipeline
- Categorize dollars based on the other committees
- Track all revenue streams to include dollar amounts and destination of allocations
- Create a communications system with other committees in order to best disseminate information

Overall Goal: To acquire as much funding as possible for San Antonio/Bexar County and have a solid plan in place for distribution.

Ground Rules: For the sake of expediency, it’s important to allow our city and county staffs to focus on the work at hand as well as manage the lobbyists and report to our group with updates or challenges. If you have ideas or suggestions, please send them to Pat Wallace.

COSA & County Updates:

Councilman Manny Peláez:

- Stated that revenue recovery for municipal, county, and state revenue should be top priority.

Commissioner Kevin Wolff:

- Echoed CM Peláez, we need to make sure we can cover our losses and fund our essential services. The City and County have been asking private sector people to help. Insurance and oil industry are going through their own tough times. If there is something our lobbyists can echo on the hill, let us know.
- Chief of Staff, Lauren Mandel will be taking a leave of absence from the County. Pat Wallace will be the only point of contact for this group.

Sally Basurto – City of San Antonio

- New funding was identified and added to the Stimulus Funding Tracker
- Education Stabilization Fund - \$6.2B for instructions of higher education by formula to expand remote learning, build IT capacity, recover costs for instruction delivery associated with changes due to COVID.
- \$1.28 for Texas' K-12 schools for distance learning tools/resources, to develop and implement plans for next school year.
- \$54M from HHS-Administration for Community Services for Texas Area Agencies on Aging. AACOG is our local recipient. This funding will support delivered meals, household chores assistance, groceries and respite care and other family caregiver services.
- \$100M from FEMA for the Assistance to Firefighters grant program. The NOFA opens on April 28 and application deadline is May 15. SAFD is already reviewing. This grant will help fire departments to prevent, prepare and respond to COVID 19 public health emergency.
- The work groups' website is up and running. WWW.SACOVIACTION.COM. Gordon Hartman requested that we submit weekly success stories, so please send ideas to us.
- One of the goals of this work group is to establish communication with the other workgroups. In coordination with the other work group managers we will be communicating weekly via TEAMS and on weekly calls to ensure information sharing.
- Now that the interim 3.5 stimulus bill was enacted on April 24; Congress will shift its focus to the 4th stimulus funding package. Speaker Pelosi has expressed her support for additional funding for state and local governments, but there is opposition from Senator McConnell and now the White House.
- **The main City and County priority is to advocate for additional funding and more importantly, flexibility to cover revenue losses. We will need assistance from our community and business partners to advocate for this request.**

Melissa Shannon – Bexar County

- The County received 79.6 million and are trying to figure out how to allocate it. A big issue is, between the jail and court, they can quickly spend 80 million.
- Thanked Sally and COSA for creating and updating the Stimulus Funding Tracker.

Councilwoman Adriana Rocha-Garcia

- HHSC authorized more than \$1.5 million (between Bexar and Alamo) for nutrition services.
- Area Agencies on Aging is working with our 9 nutrition partners to provide meals to more older adults than ever, since all congregate meal sites closed in mid-March. They are in discussions with the San Antonio Food Bank to see how we can collaborate to assist more people that are eligible for services. As of Friday, April 24th, the grant has not been distributed.
- CW could not find any new sources from the federal government.
- CW connected with Diane Rath, Executive Director of AACOG, and they will continue to share information as they find it.
- There are several sites that allow searches for grants and philanthropic efforts, but it is hard to find some that are specifically for seniors and available in Texas.
- AACOG's Senior Demonstration Program volunteers are making sure their Veterans have food, by shopping for themselves and the Veteran and leaving groceries at their front door.
- As of April 23rd, H.R. 6322 passed both chambers and was on the President's desk. The Student Veteran Coronavirus Response Act of 2020 is aimed at helping student veterans continue to get paid through their work study.
- MVCC awarded \$22,000 to TXServes San Antonio.

Councilwoman Rebecca Viagran:

- NLC is pushing for equity and impact on communities of color at the local and federal level.
- The bankruptcy proposal from McConnell was alarming – NLC is going full court press on that.
- We need an impact analysis – If cities don't have federal support, what will it look like. Scenario modeling being done by NLC now.
- We need to share success stories with the Congressional delegation so they can communicate the need and secure support.

Mayor Dennis:

- The Texas Municipal League Board is concerned that those who cannot pay their mortgages will not have sufficient funds in escrow to pay for property taxes. Taxes fund a city's general budget.
- The Mayor agrees with the proposal for a letter signed by CEO's and elected officials.

Walter Serna:

- **Proposed a letter campaign to Senators:** Walter is brainstorming with Sally and Melissa about a strategy. Per Walter, we need Senators Cruz and Cornyn to help with a stabilization fund. The U.S. President and VP have been back and forth on this issue. Mitch McConnell is not completely onboard and said he'd rather have local governments file bankruptcy. Federal government seems more engaged and responsive when top CEO's request the help.

Jeff Coyle:

- We know definitively we can't use the current federal money to recover lost revenues. We have tens of millions of response and recovery expenses. The impact to the community will be much greater if we can't direct this money. I think we can encourage them better to comply with the request for flexible guidelines on stimulus funds IF we say, "we don't necessarily need more, please let us use what we already have been given."

Vic Boyer:

- Advocating for transportation funding on behalf of SAMCo
- A 50 billion, 18-month state transportation funding backstop
- Timely reauthorization of expanded FAST Act
- A large national infrastructure investment program with significant funding for highways

Action Items:

- Pat Wallace will organize a strategy meeting for lobbyists (pending for Friday, May 1st).
- The main City and County priority is to advocate for additional funding and more importantly, flexibility to cover revenue losses. We will need assistance from our community and business partners to advocate for this request.
- Co-Chairs and Sally Basurto will reach out to lobbyists from SAWS, CPS, Brooks and The Port
- Jeff Coyle and his team, Melissa Shannon and Carlos Contreras will take the lead on composing a letter to Senators with help from Valero and USAA
- Jeff Coyle and his team, Melissa Shannon and Carlos Contreras will create a list of the top CEO's in the County
- Direction for the lobbyist; confirm the timeline for the letter, before the 4th stimulus package.
- Sally Basurto will continue to update other working groups and share the stimulus funding tracker

- Members of this group should forward ideas for Success Stories as required by Gordon Hartman every week.

Next Meeting:

Monday, May 4th at 3pm. Summaries will be sent after every meeting.

Sally Basurto will be maintaining and sharing the main dashboard with all the working groups. Keep in mind, the document changes every day so it's imperative that we use the document for reference only.