



**EMMA S. BARRIENROS MEXICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER  
REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 2024**

The Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center convened in a Regular meeting on Wednesday, March 6, 2024, at City Hall – Board and Commissions Room located at 301 West Second Street in Austin, Texas 78701. (Some members of the ESB-MACC Advisory Board participated via videoconference.)

Chair Navarro called the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center Meeting to order at 6:01pm.

**Board Members in Attendance:**  
Angelica Navarro, Chair  
Hilario “Larry” Amaro, Vice Chair  
Noemi Castro, Member  
Raul “Roy” Reyna, Member  
Lily Zamarripa-Saenz, Member

**Board Members in Attendance Remotely:**  
John Estrada, Member  
Gerardo Gandy, Member  
Cynthia “Cy” Herrera, Member  
Anthony Martinez, Member (Arrived at 6:07pm)

**Board Members Absent:**  
Eduardo “Eddie” Rodriguez, Member

**Staff in Attendance:**  
Jodi Jay, PARD Assistant Director  
Laura Esparza, PARD Division Manager of Museums and Cultural Programs  
Michelle Rojas, ESB-MACC Culture and Arts Education Manager  
Marie Ortiz, ESB-MACC Culture and Arts Education Supervisor  
Tina Davila, ESB-MACC Administrative Specialist

**PUBLIC COMMUNICATION: GENERAL**

Leonard Davila introduced himself stating he was a concerned citizen who had grown up in the East Side of Austin and had heard of Parks and Recreations Budget cut. He commented that he would like to see funding considered for programming at Pan Am Hillside and for the Mexican American Experience when the MACC opens back up again.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. The minutes from the Regular meeting of February 7, 2024, were approved on Member Zamarripa-Saenz’s motion. Member Estrada seconded the motion. Unanimous vote (9.0). Motion passed. Member Rodriguez was absent.

**STAFF BRIEFINGS**

2. **Staff Report by Laura Esparza, Division Manager and Olivia Tamzarian, ESB-MACC Culture and Arts Education Marketing & Outreach Representative on staffing updates, February and March programs, marketing and outreach efforts, and updates on signature event planning.**

Olivia Tamzarian, ESB-MACC Culture and Arts Marketing and Outreach Representative gave a report on the Holistic Wellness programs, Education, Caminos Teen Leadership, and Academia Cuauhtli programming, sharing highlights for the month of February along with upcoming programs & events for the month of March. She also provided an update of current and upcoming marketing and outreach events and announced the MACC's annual La Mujer event was confirmed for Sunday, April 21, 2024, located at 2403 E 16th St, Austin, TX 78702 in East Austin at the Cathedral.

Laura Esparza, PARD Division Manager of Museums and Cultural Programs informed the Board that their request for consideration of an alley vacation adjacent to the plot at 64 Rainey Street was presented to the Urban Transportation Board on March 5, 2024, and passed unanimously. Esparza stated the next step was for the proposal to go to the Planning Commission and after to City Council.

- Esparza also shared news that she had announced her retirement and her last day would officially be March 31, 2024, but she would be functionally out of the office Friday, March 8<sup>th</sup>. She mentioned she had been with the city for 17 years and they had made wonderful progress but felt she would be of better use if she took the opportunity to retire so she could pursue advocacy and support for the MACC and the other cultural centers. She stated it had been an honor to serve the Board, public, and the staff and thanked the Board for their service and all they give to the City of Austin.
- The Board collectively thanked Esparza for her services in return and congratulated her on her retirement.

(Please see the Board and Commissions Website for backup material.)

3. **Presentation by Suzanne Piper, Chief Administrative Officer and David Hillers, Financial Manager, Kenneth Luu, Financial Analyst and Nicholas Johnson, Financial Analyst on the financial forecast process and draft elements of the Parks and Recreation FY25 proposal.**

Suzanne Piper, PARD Chief Administrative Officer provided a presentation on the financial forecast timeline, directives, Mexican American Cultural Center Budget Overview, and revenue and performance measures.

- Piper stated the department was working with their executive team to gather information to determine the departments base cost drivers, noting the things that would be an example of basic cost drivers would be anything that is contractually obligated such as utilities or things that were previously approved by City Council. Then they would present their FY25 proposed request to the Budget Office on March 8, 2024, and the Board would have an opportunity to make a budget recommendation by March 31, 2024. She went on to provide the dates for the financial forecast deliverables, proposed budget, and budget adoption.
- She shared the numbers for the current Parks and Recreation revenue fund of \$126 million, 811 fulltime employees (FTEs), clarifying their revenue was mostly supported by tax dollars. Also providing the numbers for the General funds that go to Community Services such as Recreation Centers, Aquatics, Park Planning, Development, and Support Services.
- Chair Navarro asked for Piper to share insight on why the Board was told there was a \$300,000+ cost reduction then retracted and was told that was no longer the case. Piper responded, she could confirm that the City of Austin Parks and Recreation department did not lose any money for the budget but there was an exercise in transparency. She explained that because of COVID and vacancies they had to show what needed to be saved in order to cover the vacancy savings that the department is obligated to every year.

- Jodi Jay, PARD Assistant Director, interjected commenting that the specific ask came from her. She requested for her Division Managers to tell her how each site could tighten their belts in order to meet their vacancy savings. She gave an example of someone going to the grocery store and needing to manage their budget because it was going to be a hard year. She stated she could not explain why the list of reductions was put together, noting it was unacceptable and it was not the ask nor was it approved but believed it may have been done to get a reaction. Member Castro thanked Jay for clarifying, expressing that herself and the Board were confused and were trying to come up with ways they could be proactive to best support the MACC so it could continue to flourish with its programming but now understood it was an exercise and no money was lost.

(Please see the Board and Commissions Website for backup material.)

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **4. Discussion on Phase 2 Construction Project Updates.**

Michelle Rojas, ESB-MACC Culture and Arts Education Manager shared the project updates on Heidi Tse, Capital Deliver Project Managers behalf providing a brief overview of the current project phase, construction progress, announcements, scheduled milestones, and the tour that was provided to the Board on February 28, 2024.

- Chair Navarro brought up that it was mentioned there would be opportunity for additional tours as the project progresses and wanted to know if the Board could request a Saturday date as an option to tour the center. Jodi Jay, PARD Assistant Director stated it could be a possibility giving an example that if it rained on a Monday or Wednesday then they might make up the work on a Saturday and Rojas could coordinate those tours with the project team as those opportunities come up.

(Please see the Board and Commissions Website for backup material.)

## **DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS**

### **5. Approve a recommendation on the FY25 Phase 2 operating budget.**

Chair Navarro let the Board know they would be discussing and approving item 5, 6, and 7 as one recommendation under agenda item 5.

- Chair Navarro asked all Board Members to review the drafted recommendation. Michelle Rojas, ESB-MACC Culture and Arts Manager reminded the Board that the draft was shared via email as an attachment titled as “*Item 3. 20240306 - 5, 6, 7 FY25 Budget Recommendations\_Draft*” but noted the document should have been titled as “*Item 5. 20240306 - 5, 6, 7 FY25 Budget Recommendations\_Draft*”.
- Vice Chair Amaro expressed he felt uncomfortable voting on the recommendation because the Budget Working Group had not yet met to look at the line items and City of Austin staff would not have a dollar amount to include in the recommendation until Friday, March 8, 2024. Member Reyna responded to Vice Chair Amaro’s concern stating the Board was selecting to move forward with the recommendation conditionally with the understanding that the Board would get access to the recommended dollar amount and if for whatever reason there needed to be further discussion then the Advisory Board would have the opportunity to discuss and make changes.
- Member Zamarripa-Saenz motioned to approve the budget recommendations for fiscal year 2025 as presented by Michelle. Chair Navarro seconded. Vice Chair Amaro abstained. (8.1) Vote passed. Member Rodriguez was absent.

(Please see the Board and Commissions Website for backup material.)

### **6. Approve a recommendation to support funding for the Bronze Community Band Program.**

No further discussion, included in item 5.

### **7. Approve a recommendation to request support for Academia Cuauhtli’s fiscal year 24-25 budget.**

No further discussion, included in item 5.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Update from Awards of Excellence (AOE) Working Group (Reyna, Zamarripa-Saenz)  
Conduct officer elections for the Chair and Vice Chair (Reyna, Zamarripa-Saenz)

**ADJOURNMENT**

Member Zamarripa-Saenz motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:55pm. Member Reyna seconded.  
Unanimous vote (9.0). Motion passed. Member Rodriguez was absent.