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REPORT FROM JANUARY DETCOG BOARD MEETING

The Board of Directors of the Deep East Texas Council of Governments and Economic Development District (DETCOG) reviewed agency finances, approved regional solid waste grant awards, and took up a number of other matters during its January business meeting. The meeting was held January 28th via an online webinar.

DETCOG Executive Director Lonnie Hunt gave highlights from the financial report for the first quarter of fiscal year 2021, which included:

- DETCOG spent 25% of its projected annual expenditures for all grant programs combined.
- Spent 21% of its annual budget for the Indirect Cost Pool, which funds facilities and related costs.
- Spent 24% of its annual budget for the Employee Benefits Pool.
- DETCOG's cash balance in all accounts as of December 31, 2020 was \$3,676,509.

The Board approved a recommendation from the Solid Waste Advisory Committee to fund three regional solid waste grants. Funding for these is provided to DETCOG by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

- Angelina Beautiful Clean was awarded \$14,137.57 that will go towards a hazardous waste cleanup project.
- Polk County was awarded \$14,137.56 that will go towards the purchase of a used cardboard baler and forklift.
- Trinity County was awarded \$8,030.49 that will be used to fund a local enforcement officer.

The Board went on to approve a recommendation from the DETCOG staff to rank HDR of Houston as the top-ranked responder to a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for regional transportation planning services. Moore & Associates, a firm from McKinney, was ranked second. The Board authorized contract negotiations to begin with HDR. Should those negotiations not be successful, DETCOG will negotiate with the second highest ranking firm – Moore & Associates.

There were three Homeland Security reports given by Mike Claude, DETCOG Director of Public Safety, that were approved by the Board. Those reports included:

- The Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) identifies catastrophic threats and hazards, their consequences, and the capabilities needed to address them.
- The Stakeholder Preparedness Review (SPR) is a self-assessment of capability levels based on the capability targets identified in the THIRA. It identifies the gaps between existing and desired capabilities.

- The Implementation Plan (IP), takes information from the THIRA and SPR and plans how to implement strategies to overcome identified gaps.

Mr. Claude then reviewed three resolutions in support of grant applications. All three were approved for submission to the Office of the Governor. The resolutions included support for the Regional Law Enforcement Training Grant, the Regional Homeland Security Planning Project, and a new Intelligence and Information Sharing Grant.

The Board also approved a revision to a Regional Mutual Aid Agreement. The revision clarifies the method by which a responding party can seek reimbursement from the requesting party for expenses incurred when aid is provided.

Ginny Lewis Ford, Executive Director of the Texas Association of Regional Councils, attended the meeting and provided a legislative update from Austin. She noted that Senator Robert Nichols, who represents the entire DETCOG region, will continue serving as chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, and will serve on several other important committees including the Finance Committee, Redistricting Committee and a new Committee on Local Government. Committee assignments for Texas House Members are yet to be announced by the new Speaker of the House, Dade Phelan of Beaumont.

Executive Director Lonnie Hunt then highlighted the agency's Annual Performance Report. DETCOG is required to submit this report to the Governor's Office, as well as the State Auditor's Office each year. It outlines program accomplishments over the past year and gives objectives for the current year. The 2020 Annual Performance Report is available for the public to view on the DETCOG website at <https://www.detcog.gov/transparency-reports>.

Hunt reported that DETCOG has not received any word on its Community Development Block Grant (CBDG) – Mitigation grant applications for the regional broadband network and regional public safety communications infrastructure. Three applications were submitted under two different programs. Those programs were the 2016 Floods Competition and the Hurricane Harvey Competition. The Texas General Land Office (GLO) has requested more information from DETCOG about the broadband grant application in the 2016 Flood Competition – a \$10 million application which would serve a portion of Newton County. DETCOG is in the process of providing this additional information.

Hunt also gave an update on the Hurricane Harvey Regional Allocation, which will go to counties and cities that were in the Harvey Presidential Disaster Declaration. There has been \$69 million allocated to the DETCOG region, which includes seven Harvey disaster counties: Jasper, Newton, Polk, Sabine, San Augustine, San Jacinto, and Tyler. DETCOG will develop the Method of Distribution that will determine how much money each of these affected areas receive. This process will take a minimum of 120 days to complete, but it cannot begin until the Texas GLO gives the go-ahead to start.

The next DETCOG Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 25th at noon.