

**Housing Authority of the City of Laredo**  
Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting  
LHA Board Room  
2000 San Francisco Ave.  
Laredo, Texas 78040  
Friday, September 13, 2019  
1:30 P.M.

**A-19-R-8**

**Minutes**

**September 13, 2019**

---

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Chairman Ceballos called the meeting to order at 1:40 p.m.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** Chairman Ceballos led them in the recital of the pledge.
3. **ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM** Chairman Ceballos asked Alma D. Mata, Executive Director, to do roll call, so Ms. Mata proceeded with roll call and stated that there is a quorum. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that Commissioner Dr. Rodriguez will join them later during the meeting.

**Commissioners Present**

Jose L. Ceballos, Chairman  
Dr. Sergio Garza, Vice-Chairman  
Dr. Marisela Rodriguez, Commissioner  
Anita Guerra, Commissioner

**Commissioners Absent**

**Staff Present**

Alma D. Mata, Executive Director  
Juan Mendive, Planning & Systems Administrator  
Christy Ramos, Administrative Assistant  
Leticia Sosa, Office Clerk  
Jessica Martinez, Program Coordinator  
Valeria Cabello, Project Specific Manager  
Jennifer Barrientos, Director of Finance  
Alina Rios, Property Manager  
Alfonso Treviño Jr., Project Specific Manager  
Maria Hernandez, Procurement Officer  
Melissa Ortiz, Director of Section 8  
Bulmaro Cruz, Project Specific Manager  
Martin Chaires, Project Specific Manager  
Roberto Peña, IT Director  
Doug Poneck, Attorney

**Others Present**

Rosa Lilia Rios, Central Resident Council President

4. **CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS**

Chairman Ceballos stated that there were no comments.

## **5. CITIZENS COMMENTS**

This is the opportunity for visitors and guests to address the Board of Commissioners on any issue. The Board may not discuss any presented issue, nor may any action be taken on any issues at the time. There will be a 3-minute limitation per speaker. (Texas Attorney General Opinion-JC-0169)

Chairman Ceballos stated that there were no comments.

## **6. DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

No comments.

## **7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. Approval of Minutes for Board of Commissioners meeting on April 12, 2019.
- B. Approval of minutes for Board of Commissioners meeting on May 17, 2019.
- C. Approval of Minutes for Board of Commissioners meeting on August 3, 2019.
- D. Approval of Minutes for Board of Commissioners meeting on August 23, 2019.

Chairman Ceballos mentioned, for the record, that Commissioner Dr. Rodriguez had just joined them for the meeting.

**Chairman Ceballos moved to approve the minutes as presented.**

**Vice-Chairman Dr. Garza seconded the motion.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

Chairman Ceballos stated, for the record, that they are adopting minutes for the Commissioners meetings held on April 12, 2019, May 17, 2019, August 3, 2019 and August 23, 2019.

## **8. PRESENTATION BY CENTRAL RESIDENT COUNCIL**

Rosie Rios, Central Resident Council President, stated that everything looks good at the different Councils. Chairman Ceballos informed Ms. Rios that Ms. Mata met with Mr. Mendive and Ms. Martinez to review the project for the BiblioTech at Lozano. Ms. Mata mentioned that they met to present the project for the renovation at Lozano and met with the Council there in reference to the activities they have and the use of the facilities in regards to the use of the kitchen to make sure all of that is taken into consideration while they continue with the renovation and also mentioned that they plan to start the project within a month and informed

that it has not been published for bids yet. Ms. Rios mentioned that the furniture they have in all the Kids Café is worn out and she was wondering if they need to wait for the renovations for the BiblioTech to look into it or if they would consider that earlier due to some incidents that have happened to some children that have experienced cuts on their legs due to the bad condition of the desks. Ms. Mata mentioned that she will meet with Ms. Jessica Martinez to evaluate the condition of the desks in order to take care of whatever might be necessary. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that the order they will follow with the construction of BiblioTech after Lozano they will continue with Russell Terrace and after that it will be Carlos Richter and then Colonia Guadalupe and mentioned that they will look at the type of furniture they will consider for Bibliotech. Ms. Rios stated that it would be good in order to prevent the children from getting hurt. Ms. Mata mentioned that they will follow up in regards to the desks.

## **9. STANDING REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS (No Action to be taken on these items)**

### **A. Executive Director's Report**

Ms. Mata mentioned that in regards to staff development they continue with the trainings available and she provided information as to the staff that have taken the opportunity to continue with their training and stated that Ms. Ortiz in Section 8 took her executive management training and they are waiting on the results, hoping they will be favorable. Ms. Mata stated that they have management positions vacant and mentioned that they have an item to discuss in executive session, but they continue to have the Human Resources Manager position, the Director of Housing Management and the Director of Community and Economic Development and that they are expecting to fill the Procurement Specialist position in the coming week. Chairman Ceballos stated that he had visited with Mr. Mendive to set an alignment for the inspectors so that the Project Managers track and then the inspector track because there are so many different inspections; they have Section 8 HQS, the UPCS and the REAC, so that everybody that is being trained be cross trained, so that they can serve when needed and for the Project Manager to have a list of project management trainings that leads people to the PMC, the Project Manager Certification; a credential that allows them to grow both internally or externally in the community, so they will eventually see those tracks formulated. Ms. Mata stated that they also have a Master Training Plan for all the positions to be delivered to the Board the coming month.

Ms. Mata mentioned that at Casa Verde they have five pre-leased units which they do not count them as vacant because they are pending to move in and at River Bank Village they have eight vacancies and two are currently being pre-leased and stated that she has implemented a monthly site visit to those properties when they receive their financials information which she received the day before the meeting, so she will schedule a visit and will inquire about the vacancies at that time and stated that they should have a waiting list there as well.

In regards to the BiblioTech numbers Ms. Mata mentioned that the registered users are 582 and the educational curriculum registered users are at 272; they also saw an increase in attendance when school started and they kicked off the tutoring services as well and they continue to work with the staff at Bibliotech and TAMIU tutors.

Chairman Ceballos congratulated the BiblioTech team for getting to 800 followers and likes because it was not too long ago they were at a couple hundreds. Ms. Mata mentioned that she also wanted to congratulate them and stated that they reached the one-year mark for BiblioTech in August and commemorated by having week-long activities. Chairman Ceballos asked about the grants. Vice-Chairman Dr. Garza asked if they could e-mail them the events in reference to BiblioTech. Ms. Mata responded that they will provide the Commissioners with a calendar.

Ms. Mata informed the Board about the grants they have been applying and mentioned that a grant that was submitted September 5, 2019 for mainstream vouchers which are Section 8 vouchers that are designated for non-elderly, disabled individuals and said that they are seeking 50 additional vouchers and they are pending on HUD for their release and also mentioned that they submitted an application on August 23, 2019 for continuum of care program, requesting funding in the amount of \$221,176 for rapid rehousing initiatives and they anticipate learning the results of that submission by September 25, 2019. Ms. Mata mentioned that Mr. Mendive has been leading the initiative on any grants that have been submitted and in reference to the rapid rehousing she mentioned that they will be assigning specific units and working with landlords to house people that are homeless and pushing the rapid rehousing supported for transitional housing. Chairman Ceballos asked if it will go up to 18 months.

Ms. Mendive mentioned that it will go up to 18 months and stated that there is a leeway to go up to 24 months and said that they allocated for up to 12 families throughout the life of the program at the capacity of eight families at a time and said that they asked for \$221K and there will be a match contribution that they will need to provide which will be 25% which they got from In-kind service agencies, Bethany House, Scan, Workforce and NeighborWorks of Laredo. He mentioned that the Texas Homeless Network applies for the grant to HUD, the deadline being September 30, 2019, and they will score all the projects in the State of Texas before sending them to HUD, so they will get that score and the ranking they will be in and then they will find out what funding they will get and they will still need to get funded from HUD and mentioned that they list the projects by priority, depending on the different needs. Mr. Mendive mentioned that he has very good communication with Texas Homeless Network and said that, personally, he has had very good communication with them and they invited him to be part of the strategic plan committee because they had seen him involved with the COC project and that they saw he had applied for a Board position, but he was not able to serve in their Board because they already had

three appointees from Laredo and they cannot have more than two and the third person is grandfathered in. Ms. Mata mentioned that the third grant they submitted an application for was in June 28, 2019 which was the D. D. Hachar Charitable Trust requesting funds that will go towards the BiblioTech Initiative and Ms. Mata mentioned that she is pleased to announce that due to Mr. Mendive's hard work in leading the submission and with the assistance of Valeria Cabello, Jennifer Barrientos and Jessica Martinez they were awarded \$30K towards the BiblioTech and mentioned that they hope to have favorable results on the other grants.

Ms. Mata informed the Board that they had a RAD application that was submitted for the Conversion of AMP 5 which is Meadow Acres and South Laredo which has been discontinued and mentioned that currently HUD has a push to convert properties to RAD, so they feel that it is more convenient for the Agency to remain as a Public Housing entity and in the time being receiving Capital Fund for improvements and they will have opportunities later to convert the property to RAD. Chairman Ceballos asked if this was happening while they have 13 vacancies. Ms. Mata mentioned that they receive quarterly reports regarding income discrepancies, so they take action when they see there might be fraudulent activity happening; therefore, they have vacated units based on that and they also had some criminal activity and have been following up on them and have taken action on those as well which created an increase in turn over.

Mr. Mendive mentioned that they will notice a note at the bottom on the dashboard and said that reporting at the end of the month there were 13 vacancies and by September 6, 2019, they were down to 6 vacancies; therefore, he made that note because it was a significant change, so he would like to credit the Property Manager for making sure they fill those units. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that they appreciate it and that they know they have had some incidents of criminal activity that has been reported and he would understand that they have turn over units and would want them to have turn over because of that.

Ms. Mata presented in regards to the work orders and mentioned that they will notice that at AMP 3, Ana Maria Lozano and Carlos Richter, there is still a high number of work orders that are open which were generated from the REAC inspection, so they met with that team and are working on getting it resolved as quickly as possible and added that some of the work orders are extensive because when they did the inspections to the units they found that it required out of the normal repairs, so they are working on getting those fixed. Vice-Chairman Dr. Garza asked what the reason was for it happening. Ms. Mata stated that they are required to inspect the units once a year and they have tenants that have not reported repairs that are needed in their units and now that they implemented the home visits which should be a way to improve in that regard and actually have the home visit and if the tenant is not reporting repairs that are needed, it would be the opportunity to visit the unit and make the repairs that they feel are

needed. Chairman Ceballos asked which project Ms. Mata was talking about. Ms. Mata responded that it was Ana Maria Lozano and Carlos Richter. Chairman Ceballos asked if the Board knows about the HUD REAC score. Ms. Mata responded that they did not and mentioned that they had a REAC inspection and they had a score of 74 that they are disputing because it was a unit that was inspected that was not on the list the inspector has, however, it is reflecting on their score and stated that they are disputing it to ensure the appropriate score. Chairman Ceballos asked Ms. Mata if they had begun to address having the work orders near the inspection date. Ms. Mata confirmed and informed that they have met with a couple of the properties and stated that they are now being required to function under REAC standards at all times because that is the requirement they have and mentioned that the REAC rules have changed as to now notifying them 14 days prior to them coming to do the inspection, so they want to make sure that they get ahead of that and be prepared for any REAC inspection at any time, so in coordination with Mr. Herrera, the Facilities Coordinator, they are beginning to address those issues. Chairman Ceballos asked that when REAC comes to do the inspections they give them roughly a two-week notice, so the Manager, staff and maintenance expect who might get selected based on who was checked last and usually what happens is that once they get the notice it is actually too late to fix things, so Chairman Ceballos recommended Ms. Mata to assemble a team and dedicate \$10K to potentially raise the score from a 70 to 80 or above which he knows is a lot of money, but is worth the money, so it would be important that they be ready to assist the team so that they do not get a mark that will stay forever and stated that they went from 84 to 74 and lost 10 points. Ms. Mata mentioned that it would also affect how often they do a REAC inspection for the property because if they get 79 or below they inspect every year and if they get 80 to 89 they will inspect every two years and anybody scoring between 90 to 100 would be inspected every three years

Vice-Chairman Dr. Garza asked if they had gone to the wrong unit. Ms. Mata confirmed and stated that there was a deficiency in that unit and it was corrected. Vice-Chairman Dr. Garza asked if the deficiency was there because the tenant did not report it, and wondered if the tenants would get charged for those repairs. Ms. Mata stated that there are certain repairs that get charged; some are tenant cost. Commissioner Ms. Guerra asked about the type of the deficiency. Ms. Mata responded that it was an electrical outlet that was improperly installed, but it was something that was done by the tenant. Ms. Alina Rios, Project Manager for Colonia Guadalupe, stated that she was present during the inspection and mentioned that the inspector had selected unit 3 and they went into unit 95, so what that particular tenant did was that he installed a dryer hookup without any authorization, so the outlet with 210 electrical power was missing the cap on top, so that was what triggered them losing 8 to 9 points. Chairman Ceballos asked if they realized they were going into a different unit. Ms. Rios stated that they did not realize it. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that everybody had missed that detail. Ms. Rios confirmed and stated that it was what had happened and said

that they are trying to reverse that. Vice-Chairman Dr. Garza asked if the units were numbered. Ms. Rios mentioned that they are on the back of the unit and stated that the Manager had all the keys to the units that were selected and Ms. Rios mentioned that she did not know why they had that key in the first place and then they went into the correct unit and that unit was actually fine. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that maybe it was meant for them to see that deficiency because it was a health hazard and stated that he just wanted the Board to be informed. Ms. Mata mentioned that they are taking steps to correct it and they are also having pre-inspections ahead of the REAC; having a third party coming to do the inspections to see how they will score ahead of the REAC inspection and in case there are some deficiencies found they would be able to handle them before.

Vice-Chairman Dr. Garza asked in reference to the case of the dryer, who would pay for it, if it would be the people living in that unit or if Housing would upgrade it. Ms. Rios mentioned that they needed to call an electrician for proper repair and got billed and stated that she did not recall the amount, but they billed the tenant for the repair.

Chairman Ceballos recommended that in those situations, they conduct a hearing and tenants besides being billed for it, it would also come in as a lease violation and they would document it because somebody could get seriously hurt if they mess up with the 220/210 electrical power; they could have really injured themselves. Vice-Chairman Dr. Garza mentioned that maybe they could consider payment arrangements in cases when tenants could not afford the repairs in order to avoid those situations. Chairman Ceballos stated that to him it was a lease violation because if they cause a short and it burns the property. Vice-Chairman Dr. Garza mentioned that it could burn a building down. Commissioner Ms. Guerra stated that when the tenants lease, they will have an orientation by Property Managers and asked how often the tenants would get reminded because it always help to have that continuous reminder. Ms. Mata mentioned that they have an annual re-inspection and re-examination; they have re-exams done by the Property Manager which is done individually with the tenants.

Chairman Ceballos mentioned in Section 8 they could get terminated with a similar situation and asked Ms. Ortiz, Section 8 Director, if she would be a landlord if she would evict and Chairman Ceballos mentioned that In reference to Asherton, he wanted to inform the Board that he was contacted the day before, and as they know there is a cooperative agreement with the City of Asherton to manage their Section 8 and Public Housing units which they have been doing for over 12 years or longer and stated that they see the 9 vacancies on page 4 and said that they have room to grow; they have 32 vouchers and are currently using nine and for a variety of reasons the demand has been down, there does not seem to be an interest in folks leasing and receiving the assistance and added that he got a call from one of the non-profit housing providers, Community Service Agency, CSA, who mentioned they have 5 vacancies and they only have like 16

units. Chairman Ceballos also mentioned that a Commissioner that uses the Housing Authority was asking to get in touch with Chairman Ceballos, so he informed that he is going to visit with them next week to figure out how they would deal with the underutilization in Asherton, whether they would do project based and go back to the City of Asherton and consider putting them into a project as opposed to vouchers and mentioned that they also need to probably do a better job at marketing in Carrizo and other places. Vice-Chairman Dr. Garza mentioned that it is a small town and nobody is dying to go live in Asherton. Chairman Ceballos asked Ms. Barrientos if they were breaking even in Asherton with 9 vacancies. Ms. Barrientos responded that they are barely making it.

Chairman Ceballos mentioned that they had asked for a marketing plan before and stated that they need to go ahead and do it, try it and do a 90-day or four-month marketing program and see what they can generate and added that the fact that the organization has vacancies tells him that it is not what they are doing that is not working, but it is the community there. Vice-Chairman Dr. Garza confirmed that it is a small town. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that they have been here before, that the Mayor of Asherton had been here before and mentioned that they have a local government body and have an agreement with them just like Zapata and the units belong to them, so Chairman Ceballos mentioned that they will work with them and report back and added that his experience is that they are very agreeable people and very easy to work with. Ms. Mata mentioned that she had conversations with the Executive Director at Carrizo and they seem to be under leased as well and also mentioned that they did a little bit of marketing push about two months ago through Facebook advertising and also visited community service agencies in Carrizo and Asherton for information and she spoke with the Director at Carrizo, but they do not have people using up their vouchers. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that there are other solutions that are probably more legal to expand beyond Asherton and stated again that the vouchers belong to them not to Laredo Housing; they have been absorbing them like in Zapata and mentioned that if people want to live in Carrizo, maybe they could seek an operating agreement with the County so that they can serve them at least in the area they are working and mentioned that it might come back; that he is not necessarily proposing it, but they have to find solutions.

#### B. Unaudited Financials for the month of July 2019

Jennifer Barrientos, Director of Finance, made a power point presentation to the Board on the unaudited Financials for July 2019 for COCC, AMP 1, AMP 3, AMP 4, AMP 5 and stated that as they know AMP 2 used to be Russell Terrace, but is no longer AMP 2 any more in case they would wonder why AMP 2 is not there, so she presented the revenues and the profits and stated that their funds and programs have a profit. Chairman Ceballos asked about AMP 6 and Ms. Barrientos responded that AMP 6 is Asherton. She also presented Section 8 and Farm Labor and stated that Section 8 is due to have funds, \$3M that are coming

in from HUD and it was year to date because each month they send about \$700K for HAP expenditures. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that last year they had a bonus at the end. Ms. Barrientos confirmed and presented Farm Labor revenues and expenditures and said that they have a positive. She also presented the highlights compared to the revenues budgeted for this fiscal year from April through March 2020 and showed the actuals spent up to July, 2019 and the percentage they are at and then the annual budget expenses and stated that they are currently at one percent. Ms. Barrientos mentioned that they have a new slide for the benefits and salaries savings they had for each program and the savings they had up to July in the amount of \$285,989 which is due to employee turnover vacant positions and mentioned that they will see a change to it in August and then proceeded with the PFC's, the Laredo Housing Facilities Corporation, Russell Terrace, the Bernal Sunrise Courts and the Tiny Homes, the revenues and expenses and Laredo Housing Opportunities Corporation which is River Bank and Casa Verde and Laredo Housing Development Corporation, which is the Balcones O'kane Apartments.

Ms. Barrientos also presented on the 2016 CFP Grant and stated that they were granted \$1,387,114 and have expended \$711,312 as of July 31, 2019 and still have \$625,802 remaining which is the working category they reported to HUD and stated that they had the management improvement, administration, any fees and cost, site improvements, structure, dwelling equipment and non-dwelling equipment and for 2017 they also have relocation cost and RAD investment activities and stated that the budget total for that grant is \$1,380,645 and they expended \$210,916 and mentioned that grant had just started; therefore, it is a little low on the expenditure part. Commissioner Ms. Guerra asked how long they have to utilize it. Ms. Barrientos responded that they have four years and stated that the remaining balance is \$1,169,729; then, she presented the 2018 CFP grant which is \$1,691,481 and have expended \$206,163 with a balance of \$1,485,318. Chairman Ceballos asked who has been working the environmental clearances. Ms. Barrientos responded that they had Mr. Reyes working on it for the past two grants, 2017 & 2018, and are currently working on the 2019 which they barely brought to the Board to get approved, so they started with the environmental process and once it is completed they send it to HUD for approval, so once they approve it they can start using the grant. Chairman Ceballos asked how much they could move between line items before Board approval. Ms. Barrientos responded that it is more than 25%. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that significant amendment if 25% or above. Ms. Barrientos mentioned that she will be sending the information to Chairman Ceballos. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that Bulmaro used to know. Bulmaro Cruz, Project Specific Manager, mentioned that it is 25% and stated that it needs to be in the 5-year plan.

Chairman Ceballos mentioned that he liked the power presentation and that it was faster. Ms. Barrientos stated that there was more detail in the packet. Chairman Ceballos asked if they still had enough money for architects. Ms. Barrientos responded that they still do and that it is for the AMP's and the

projects; they cannot use it for Tiny Homes or for Balcones, but they would be able to use it for BiblioTech.

C. Status on FY 2018-2019 Audit

Chairman Ceballos asked Ms. Barrientos for the status on the audit. Ms. Barrientos mentioned that it is doing good and they will be coming in October to start working on the final audit to present to the Board. Ms. Mata mentioned that they have included in the packet a breakdown of the process to get to the final report and informed that they have already completed the Compliance Review on June 17-28 and currently they are working on the data collection section and will have the onsite visit for the Audit review on the 21st – 25th of October and they expect a draft Audit report on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November to review ahead of the December meeting. Chairman Ceballos asked who the lead is for the Audit. Ms. Barrientos responded that it is Rene Gonzales and then asked who the onsite is and Ms. Barrientos mentioned that it is Jason Hyde. Commissioner Ms. Guerra asked in reference to the percentage, if it was the amount of data they collected. Ms. Barrientos responded that they send a list of the information they require to submit before they come for the visit, so that they could start calculating the numbers. Commissioner Ms. Guerra asked if they look at it onsite. Ms. Barrientos responded that they share an e-mail system with them, which is like a drop box and they upload the documents so that they may see them and they go over any information, but she does not know their process to complete the Audit, but they send a list and then Ms. Barrientos sends it to the drop box and then they start looking at that information. Commissioner Ms. Guerra asked if when they put 75% of general document, it is that they have done 75%. Ms. Barrientos stated that if they had four items that they were required to submit and they are pending one, it means that they have done 75% and would be pending to do one. Ms. Mata mentioned to clarify that on the ones that say 0%, it means one document that needs to be forwarded to them. In reference to the format Commissioner Ms. Guerra recommended to state it as 1 of 4 because as it is, it looks like they have not done anything, so Ms. Barrientos stated that they will change it for the next Board meeting. Chairman Ceballos thanked Ms. Barrientos for her presentation.

D. Status on implementation of Community Safety and Security (Peace Officer) Program

Ms. Mata mentioned that she provided information in the packets and some of it is confidential information that they will consider in executive session and stated that effective September 12, 2019 they finalized 7 contracts with off-duty Police Officers to provide security services related to the Community Safety and Security Program and they will begin this project at Colonia Guadalupe and they will be patrolling 3 days out of the week in four-hour shifts; two of those shifts will be in the evening manned by one officer and one of those shifts will be overnight hours which will require two officers for a total of 16-hours a week that they will be

patrolling. Commissioner Ms. Guerra asked if it will be just in Colonia Guadalupe or throughout the colonias. Ms. Mata mentioned that they will focus on Colonia Guadalupe at the inception of it, but if they would be required to have surveillance or any kind of patrol at another property they can request that as well. Commissioner Ms. Guerra asked if most of the issues or challenges had been at Colonia Guadalupe. Ms. Mata confirmed and mentioned that there has been an increase in Colonia Guadalupe, so they want to target Colonia Guadalupe first and stated that the agreement will also allow them to receive documentation from the Police Department regarding statistics which will help them better gauge where they will have them spend their time depending on the level of activity in the properties. Chairman Ceballos asked where they will be located because they had talked about a place where residents know where they will be able to find them. Ms. Mata responded that the unit will be kept at the Police Department and stated that she and Abraham Martinez will look at the facilities to see what is best and stated that she would want to give them access to the Conference building and they just need to look at the security settings because Robert has a very nice security system in that building. Commissioner Ms. Guerra asked if there was any particular reason for considering that building. Ms. Mata responded that it is because it has access to a computer system and they could submit their daily reports and mentioned that they had also looked at the option of issuing a laptop or an Ipad, so they can do the electronic submitting. Commissioner Ms. Guerra stated that she thinks it would help the residents feel more secure if it would be more attached to the residents, something like a community room because she would not expect anybody to break in the Conference/Board room building. Ms. Mata mentioned that they will actually be patrolling and also that there is a Community Hall which is in the same area and stated that they will look at it. Chairman Ceballos asked if they would provide monthly statistics. Ms. Mata confirmed and mentioned that it would be statistics regarding all the properties and also about officers that are dispatched to the properties and missed calls that are recorded and then statistics on the program on issues they encountered and said that they have identified about 9 units of interest which was provided in the packet to the Commissioners. Chairman Ceballos stated that it was not urgent, but asked if they could brand the program within the next 90 days. Ms. Mata responded that they have started conversations with graphic designer Sergio Puente who is working on very basic design and stated that she together with Jessica Martinez have given him a little bit of background on what the program is going to entail and they are pending to see his first draft to provide some guidance.

E. Status and progress of ongoing construction projects.

Ms. Mata stated that they had included progress reports on all the current projects in the Commissioners packets and mentioned that they have attached the traits that are taking place at the projects and their completion percentage and informed that at the Russell Terrace Revitalization project they are at 58% complete and they also included pictures of the current work being conducted

there and also mentioned that they have started working on the final phase of the project. Chairman Ceballos asked if it was with framing. Ms. Mata responded that the Project Managers had informed that they are pouring today. Chairman Ceballos asked Bulmaro Cruz to provide some information. Mr. Cruz mentioned that the concrete was poured the day before and the framing is set up to start Monday. Chairman Ceballos stated that they have a weekly meeting on Mondays at 8:30 a.m. and he has made several of the meetings which are mostly to generate decisions and assistance and stated that the relocation team, for the most part, settled in because most of the relocation that needed to happen has happened and now it is the the labor force teams because they have gaps because they go do other jobs, so what they have done is that almost everybody that is involved with Russell Terrace is to negotiate with the contractor for them to release some traits so that they can pick them as the Housing Authority and keep them on the job and stated that Ms. Mata has been negotiating directly with one of the major subcontractors and from then on it will just be the matter of keeping on task and added that they will have weather days, so it will just be the matter of keeping at a pace that they can get it done.

Chairman Ceballos asked if there was anything that was needed from the Board to facilitate their job and added that they already know part of the answer, but he would like the Board to engage. Vice-Chairman Dr. Garza asked if there was consensus about them working with each other because people with different attitudes can be hard at times. Mr. Cruz mentioned that they started using the plan grade and said that Mr. Ceballos will be receiving and invitation soon and mentioned that he uploaded the blueprints the day before and that along with Alexis Chaires, they are interchanging ideas on how it will work with the team and said that it would facilitate communication between the team because they have had gaps in communication in the past that have caused delays. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that he and Ms. Mata appointed Mr. Cruz and Mr. Chaires captains to do research and identify the software and the software they picked out of seven will keep the pictures, documents, communication between team members and they can add the subcontractors and it is something they think Housing Authority can grow into and most importantly make them all accountable as to where the gaps are and if they are looking for a picture in the portal and do not know who has it, the particular program id's pictures, they will not even have to file it, when they go to the location it will show that there is a picture in file and everybody on the team should be able to see it and added that they are going to be in the business of building, so they might as well get digitized. Mr. Cruz mentioned that the onsite training is scheduled for September 23, 2019.

Chairman Ceballos asked if there is anything that the Board should be aware of or that needs support. Ms. Mata mentioned that there is an action item related to Russell Terrace and informed that the target is to have the project completed and delivered by January 31, 2020 and stated that they seem to be on target with the changes they made and is just asking for the continued support they have been receiving.

Chairman Ceballos mentioned that the Bernal project is a little bit behind schedule, 88% percent complete. Ms. Mata confirmed that they are a little behind schedule and stated that they had hoped to have it completed today and informed that most of the work pending is site work and added that the Project Manager is Alfonso Treviño and they also have a Consultant working as well with that project. Ms. Mata stated that they anticipate having it completed no later than two weeks from today and at that point they would be able to establish a date for the ceremony. Chairman Ceballos stated that they will not establish a date until it is completed and mentioned that usually a 2 ½ day notice for people to join in the ceremony should be sufficient, so they need to be done with the project. Commissioner Ms. Guerra asked if they have a time frame. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that it has to be in October and stated that he wanted that project to be a model that others can follow and mentioned that not only him, but a bunch of them are looking at the details and if they choose to compete nationally for that model and stated that what he means is compete in the industry that is going make it realistic for it to be replicated, but if it is not replicable, then they did not achieve their goal, so he mentioned that they are looking at everything and stated that he thinks all of them are going to be pleased with the quality.

Ms. Mata mentioned that the last project is Los Balcones Apartments which is the project they received funding through CDBG fund and they have a deadline to complete it by April, 2020, so they will be grouping to focus on the plan of action and stated that they have learned through the other two projects they just discussed that they had some management issues to address and moving forward they will continue with the work to be done at Los Balcones to ensure they do not have the delays they have encountered. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that they are model programs and mentioned that they are not going to find any other organization doing that kind of work and said that when they are putting students in a transitional housing it really needs to be done to as high as possible quality given the resources, so they will assemble the right team and stated that they have until April to make it as per the City requirements, so they will get there and it be around the time for Russell Terrace too and added that they are all great projects. Ms. Mata mentioned that they have already started some of the work and are at about 29% complete in the front building and have done the mold and mildew remediation and have started the demotion of the interior of the building and have done some framing work to install windows because that property had like wall-size windows which are being reduced and they have done some roofing as well.

Chairman Ceballos mentioned that the goal was to assemble the project management teams that could take on those unique projects because the private sector is not really building much in the Inner City and he thought if they assembled the right team with the right qualities that could generate efficiencies, they could keep doing it at the small scale and still thinks that they should make

every attempt to assemble their teams and stated that the minute they put it up for bids it will be like a 25% mark up and most non-profits do not do those projects, they just skip them and that is why those projects do not get done and said that they have to get efficient on the management side and improve their quality and stated that Russell Terrace was very hard to improve the quality because it had the relocation on top of it, not anymore, but for a long time they could not create efficiencies because they only had one or two units vacant and they did not have the rest, but some of these other programs are new construction or vacant and they should be able to assemble strong teams that have the skills to push through the projects.

Chairman Ceballos mentioned that they will be building BiblioTech, so the next one they did not take it in house which he wished they would have; it is going to be bided out; they will see a general contractor and then they will see the cost because they do not build for what they built, so the sooner they get their teams efficient, the better it will be for the organization because if they step back and put everything out to bid, instead of building at \$90 or \$100 per sq. ft. they will be building at \$130 or \$140 per sq. ft. and then they will probably say that they cannot afford to do it and not do the project which is where non-profits typically are because they do not want to do the difficult projects. Commissioner Ms. Guerra mentioned that they keep it safe because it is challenging.

Chairman Ceballos stated that BiblioTech will go out and they will go through a process to get an internal kind of bid and they will see where it is going to land and stated that there are very few contractors that can do anything over 300K or 400k and there is probably three or four and then they add the bond and they eliminate two that maybe do not want to deal with it and then, they are left with two and mentioned that he had asked Ms. Mata to have the updates on the projects until they get done, at least with Russell Terrace.

Ms. Mata mentioned that in the past they brought items regarding the Master Plan for the administrative facilities and stated that they are focusing on those projects and they are still looking at the Master Plan overall and hopefully within the next few months they can get some work started and said that they opened up a little bit of the space in the Finance Department in the Administrative Building and they are going to continue to open up some spaces while they get to that project in its entirety. Chairman Ceballos recommended Commissioners to walk around Jennifer Barrientos area and stated that they had opened up windows in between the offices and stated that he thinks is great and kind of builds cohesion and team and that kind of layout helps a lot in building a team and stated that he got to see it last week. Ms. Mata mentioned that it is the first thing they took on, but they hope to continue throughout the whole floor.

Chairman Ceballos mentioned that there is a relatively good size warehouse at Carlos Richter that he thinks they should study to see if they can tie in the trades with the College if they decide they want to continue doing tiny homes and added

that he talked with Alfonso Treviño in regards to making that area like a hub, for the micro housing training because right now it is just storage and mentioned that about two years ago they switched from keeping things in storage to ordering just in time, so he stated it is something they need to keep in mind and said that it is a good size and has two levels where they can set up trainings and other things. Commissioner Dr. Rodriguez mentioned that it would be something they will be open because they are considering to expand the practicum onsite locations because the students learn more, not just by knowing the theory, but knowing the practical because it is very important to learn by doing it.

## 10. ACTION ITEM

- A. Discussion and possible action to authorize the Executive Director to execute a modification agreement with BBVA Compass to extend the Russell Terrace Revitalization loan conversion date to March 21, 2020 and adopt Resolution No. 19-R-13.

Chairman Ceballos mentioned that it is the extension they have been working on with the bank since last year which gives the final date of March 21, 2020 so they need to finish construction ahead of that day and asked if there were any questions. Ms. Mata informed that the original conversion date was September 21, 2019 and said that the term sheet allows them for a six – month extension and stated that March 21, 2020 will be the end of the extension, so they have to pitch construction by the end of January to allow two months for closing. Commissioner Ms. Guerra asked if they could get another six-month extension. Chairman Ceballos stated that it usually comes at a cost and added that this is the first time the team, Mr. Cruz and Mr. Chaires, hear about the March date because they had told them January 31; it would be matter of them dealing with the bank and Chairman Ceballos thinks they will say to see where they would be by a certain date and come back and mentioned that it took them six months' worth of waiting on progress. Ms. Mata mentioned that the last time they met with the bank was in May. Commissioner Ms. Guerra asked if they would want to approach them in December or January. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that he thinks Ms. Mata should make a call informally and see what they hear back. Vice-Chairman Dr. Garza asked if with the new program Bulmaro Cruz is working now kind of alleviates everything and hopefully it will speed up things.

Chairman Ceballos mentioned that he could validate that the construction process is much better and faster and mentioned that they now got some quality, good contractors that he thinks they will be competing for the January date, but they do not want to learn in December that they need another extra 30 days, so Chairman Ceballos stated, for the record that they need to call and then do it formally and mentioned that the bank had a practice of reaching out to him directly in the past and that they are probably aware of it and he thinks is fine and stated that he is not ready to ask for an extension and that they are not asking the Board to do it, but they should know that it is a possibility. Ms. Mata mentioned that she will make the call but does not anticipate it and stated that the team has been made aware that the expectation is to deliver by

the end of January and stated that they are on track to do it. Chairman Ceballos asked Ms. Mendive if they are on board to do it. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that one of the improvements that has been critical is having the staff that is called crew and also mentioned that it is a tough meeting at 8:30 in the morning on Mondays, but it has been showing its fruits and said that he has not been there all the time, but there is a 1 ½ page of to do's list, a summary of working items and if something comes up, they put it on.

**Chairman Ceballos moved to approve Item 10A.**

**Commissioner Dr. Rodriguez seconded the motion.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- B. Discussion and possible action to award Request for Proposals (RFP) No. LHA2019-0801-1 Unarmed Security Guard Services and authorize the Executive Director to finalize negotiations and contract with selected firm.

Chairman Ceballos asked if there was a recommendation. Ms. Mata mentioned that they are recommending to negotiate with Securitas and provided score information to the Board and mentioned that Securitas scored 92 and informed that they will see that Vets Securing scored higher, however, when they considered the pricing and the fact that Securitas has a local office was taken in consideration. Chairman Ceballos asked how they determined cost and what kind of size of a contract they were looking at. Ms. Mata responded that they will have somebody man Senior Home after hours, outside of the regular operating hours, and then they will have security for the construction project. Commissioner Ms. Guerra asked about the rate. Ms. Mata responded that the rate for Securitas is \$15.55 and Vets Securing America is \$17.24. Commissioner Ms. Guerra mentioned that Securitas was less even though scored less. Ms. Mata confirmed and stated that they have a local office and they offer the same amount of report that they will get from the other. Vice-Chairman Dr. Garza asked how Vets Securing America had outscored Securitas. Ms. Mata responded that it is all based on the submission and that they have a committee that is put together to do the evaluation of all the submitted packets and it is based on what they submit and also there is a scoring category. Ms. Barrientos stated that they can get a maximum of 10 points understanding the requirements of the proposal and then 20 points for technical approach which is how they would do the quality and the work plan of the security and the services and 20 points for technical capabilities, the equipment, personnel and materials that will be in the management plan, another 20 points awarded for experience, patrolling and security services and 10 points for overall quality and professional appearance on the submittal. Chairman Ceballos asked if there were any points for veterans or minorities. Ms. Barrientos mentioned that it would be for Section 3, so if they claim Section 3 there is, but not if they did not. Chairman Ceballos asked if any of them claimed it. Ms. Barrientos responded that they did not. Commissioner Ms. Guerra asked to make sure that if somebody would get sick they will send somebody else. Ms. Barrientos confirmed and stated that it would be negotiated with whoever gets awarded in the final contract. Chairman Ceballos asked if she could confirm if the Vets claimed Section 3. Ms. Barrientos checked and stated that they did not check off veteran and Chairman

Ceballos stated that maybe it was just a name and asked if there were any more questions, comments or a motion.

**Vice-Chairman Dr. Garza moved to award proposal RFP No. LHA 2019-0801-1 Unarmed Security Guard Services and authorize the Executive Director to finalize negotiations with Securitas.**

**Chairman Ceballos seconded the motion.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- C.** Discussion and possible action to consider ratification of the sale of refrigerators for the Russell Terrace Revitalization Project for the Russell Terrace Revitalization Project.

Jennifer Barrientos presented to the Board who stated that on June 20 & 23, 2019 they published a newspaper ad for the sale of refrigerators for the Russell Terrace revitalization program and are bringing for ratification from the Board for 23 refrigerators they sold altogether. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that he asked them for clarification in reference to the new policy they are working on and stated that it kind of falls in a grayish area that although they are under \$500.00 each which does not necessarily trigger Board approval, but as bulk, they are all the same unit and he thought it would be important for the Board to be aware that all of them were sold and essentially they met the policy, but they were all sold in bulk, so they just need to be aware, for the record, that they were sold that way. Chairman Ceballos stated that when they amend the policy it will be much clearer, so if they decide to write it up that if in bulk will equal more than a certain amount that they would need to come to the Board as \$5,000.00. Chairman Ceballos stated that he asked Ms. Barrientos for everybody's sake to record it as being disclosed and that is exactly what she is doing. Ms. Barrientos provided information as to who the refrigerators were sold to and who had submitted proposals, and they were Gerardo Gallegos, Ramon Gallegos and Luis Guevara. Commissioner Guerra asked if it was advertised. Ms. Barrientos responded that it was advertised in the newspaper twice. Ms. Barrientos showed them the bids and said that they were numbered individually according to how it was published in the newspaper and the persons went to see the refrigerators at Russell Terrace because it was open to the public, so they bided on the refrigerators they were interested in.

**Chairman Ceballos moved to ratify the sale which was done in accordance to the policies.**

**Commissioner Ms. Guerra seconded the motion.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- D.** Discussion and possible action to adopt Resolution No. 19-R-14 pursuant to Board Action taken August 3, 2019 authorizing the By-Laws amendment for the Laredo Housing Facilities Corporation, Laredo Housing Opportunities Corporation and Laredo Housing Development Corporation to reflect the fiscal year closing date of March 31<sup>st</sup>.

Chairman Ceballos mentioned that they voted on the item at the last meeting, but they did not have the resolution as part of the motion; therefore, Ms. Mata brought it back with the resolution to be able to make those changes.

**Commissioner Dr. Rodriguez moved to approved Item 10D.**

**Vice-Chairman Dr. Garza seconded the motion.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- E. Discussion and Possible action related to the evaluation of staff and filling of management positions. This item may be discussed in executive session, pursuant to Section 551.74 (personnel matters).

Chairman Ceballos mentioned that this item relates to turnover in positions and stated that he wants to have a conversation that involves filling those positions and also discussing the staff and other things related to filling positions on a timely basis, so that folks that are performing do not get overstrained because they are supporting other jobs and also mentioned that he does not think that they will be making any changes to the organizational chart behind closed doors or coming back, it will be about some performance and there will be executive session discussion with the Director regarding filling key positions and they will also discuss in executive session the Community Safety and Security Program and matters related to it that are considered private.

**Chairman Ceballos moved to go into executive session.**

**Commissioner Ms. Guerra seconded the motion.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

## **11. EXECUTIVE CLOSED SESSION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE**

The Board of Commissioners for the Housing Authority of the City of Laredo reserve the right to adjourn into Executive Session at any time during the course of this meeting to discuss any of the matters listed on the posted agenda, above, as authorized by the Texas Government Code, including Sections 551.071 (consultation with attorneys), 551.072 (deliberations about real property), 551.073 (deliberations about gifts and donations), 551.074 (personnel matters), 551.076 (deliberations about security devices), and 551.086 (economic development).

Chairman Ceballos called the Board of Commissioners, Attorney Mr. Poneck, Alma Mata, and possibly Jennifer Barrientos and Juan Mendive into executive session.

**The Board went into executive session at 2:57 p.m.**

**The Board reconvened from executive session at 4:20 p.m.**

## **12. ACTION ON ANY CLOSED ITEM**

Chairman Ceballos stated that there was no action taken in executive session.

Chairman Ceballos asked Ms. Mata for her recommendation in reference to Item 10E, Ms. Mata mentioned that she was recommending Diana Cruz for the Human Resource Manager position.

**Chairman Ceballos moved to accept the recommendation as presented to hire Diana Cruz at the request of the Director.**

**Vice-Chairman Dr. Garza and Commissioner Dr. Rodriguez seconded the motion.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

### 13. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Ceballos moved to adjourn.

Commissioner Dr. Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 4:22 p.m.



---

Jose L. Ceballos, Board Chairman



---

Alma D. Mata, Executive Director