

Housing Authority of the City of Laredo
Board of Commissioner Meeting
LHA Board Room
2000 San Francisco Ave.
Laredo, Texas 78040
Friday, October 21, 2016
12:00 p.m.

A-16-R-10

Minutes

October 21, 2016

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Chairman Ceballos called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM**

Commissioners Present

Jose L. Ceballos, Chairman
Dr. Sergio Garza, Vice Chairman
Dr. Marisela Rodriguez, Commissioner
Gina Magallanes, Commissioner

Commissioners Absent

Commissioner Solis submitted a letter that he is no longer available to serve on the board due to personal and charitable commitments.

Staff Present

Christy Ramos, Administrative Assistant
Jose Collazo, Resident Initiative Coordinator
Roberto Peña, Director of IT
Cesar Vasquez, Human Resources Manager
Bulmaro Cruz, Director of Modernization and Development
Maria De Lourdes Hernandez, Assistant Director of Public Housing
Orlando Guerrero, Interim Finance Director
Jennifer Barrientos, Interim Section 8 Administrator
Julia Orduña, Planning & Community Affairs Specialist
Dolores Aguilar, Leasing and Occupancy Technician
Melinda Gavilanes, CQI
Frank Lopez, Procurement Officer
Ricardo De Anda, Attorney
Mario Jasso, Consultant

Others Present

Rosa Rios, Central Resident Council

4. **CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS** Chairman Ceballos reserved his comments.

5. **CITIZEN'S COMMENTS** No 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 this time. There will be a 3-minute limitation per speaker. (Texas Attorney General Opinion-JC-0169)

Chairman Ceballos made a motion to move up Item 6C.

Vice Chairman Dr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Ortiz recognized the service that Ms. D. Ortiz had given LHA for 40 years and detailed the positions, recognitions, and awards received by her.

Chairman Ceballos stated that he met Ms. Ortiz in 1998 when he first joined LHA as staff. He stated that the dedication of 40 years is commendable and he thanked her for her service on behalf of the entire board of commissioners and wished her a happy retirement.

Ms. D. Ortiz thanked the board and stated that she enjoyed serving the public during those 40 years.

Ms. D. Ortiz was presented with a commemorative plaque in honor of her service.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- A. Approval of minutes for Special Board of Commissioners Meeting on September 6, 2016.

Vice Chairman Dr. Garza motioned to approve minutes as presented.

Commissioner Magallanes seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

- B. Approval of minutes for Board of Commissioners Meeting on September 7, 2016.

Chairman Ceballos motioned to approve minutes as presented.

Commissioner Dr. Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

- C. Recognition for Delia Ortiz retiring employee with 40 years of service.

7. PRESENTATION BY CENTRAL RESIDENT COUNCIL

Ms. Rios stated that there were no comments and they would just like an update on the TDHCA meeting.

Chairman Ceballos stated that the results of that meeting will be discussed in an item listed in the agenda.

8. PRESENTATIONS (No Action to be taken)

A. Executive Director's report.

Chairman Ceballos stated that because of scheduling restraints he was asking that the Executive Report be accepted as submitted and no action is to be taken on that item.

B. Unaudited Financials for the month of August 2016.

No action to be taken and no questions presented.

9. ACTION ITEMS

- A. Discussion and possible action to approve the 2017 Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program Payment Standard amounts effective November 1, 2016 using the Fair Market Rents.

Chairman Ceballos motioned to table Item 9A. He stated that the staff needs additional time to come back with that item.

Vice Chairman Dr. Garza seconded the item.

Motion passed unanimously.

- B. Discussion and possible action to approve staff's recommendation to award the 2016-2017 Unarmed Security Guard Services Contract to Eye View Investigations & Security Agency with an option to extend for four (4) additional twelve month periods at LHA's discretion.

Chairman Ceballos asked how many security guards will be under this contract.

Mr. Cruz stated that it was one at the Senior Home.

Chairman Ceballos asked what the quoted rate was.

Mr. Lopez stated that the quoted rate was \$10.75.

Chairman Ceballos asked that the attorney use the same contract template that has been used for other contracts that clearly stated the renewal options and termination periods.

Mr. Cruz stated that the company is asking to retro the rate of \$10.75 as of September being that they were being paid \$9.65 and have requested an increase that was being delayed due to other more pressing issues to be addressed by the board.

Chairman Ceballos stated that that was an issue that the director could negotiate with the contractor for the time that they were on a month to month basis.

Commissioner Dr. Rodriguez asked if the agency has a tracking system in place to avoid contracts expiring and then having these situations occur.

Mr. Cruz stated that there is a tracking system.

Commissioner Dr. Rodriguez stated that she would like to see these contracts that are about to expire be brought to the board with time to allow for renewals of RFP if needed prior to the expiration of the contract.

Chairman Ceballos stated that he would have liked for them to receive the compensation they were requesting but being that the board is just now approving he would like for it to become effective now and avoid having to retro payment if possible.

Vice Chairman Dr. Garza motioned to approve Item 9B.

Chairman Ceballos seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

- C. Discussion and possible action to rescind previous board action taken May 6, 2016 and approve updated staff's recommendation to award the purchase of entry doors, metal frames, and related hardware to lowest bidder, NB Door & Specialty, LLC form New Braunfels, Texas. Vendor will provide entry doors, metal frames, and related hardware as per invitation Bid # 08052016 specifications.

Mr. Lopez stated that the invitation to bid resulted in a bid from Home Depot at \$103K, Dr. Ike's at \$85K, Laredo Building Center at \$115K, NB Door at \$71K, and South Central Hardware at \$80K.

Chairman Ceballos asked if there was a tabulation sheet for all the bids submitted.

Mr. Lopez stated that it was in the packet.

Chairman Ceballos stated that the last time it was awarded he had asked the staff to go back and check the bids to ensure that the items being bided were the same due to the large difference in costs. He stated that the staff rebid the items and what are being presented is the result.

Chairman Ceballos asked what project it was for and what doors.

Mr. Cruz stated that it was for AMP 1 Colonia Guadalupe and it was for exterior doors.

Chairman Ceballos asked if the core of the door had been verified to be the same.

Mr. Lopez responded yes.

Vice Chairman Dr. Garza stated that the reason for the rebid was because of the price difference and asked why the difference.

Mr. Cruz stated that the vendor complied with the bid request however the specification were incorrect in the IFB.

Chairman Ceballos asked who the vendor was that originally bided the lowest.

Mr. Cruz responded that it was NB Doors; the same vendor had the lowest bid.

Chairman Ceballos asked if it was verified that the doors were equivalent when compared.

Mr. Cruz responded yes.

Chairman Ceballos asked if they had a local representative.

Mr. Cruz responded no. He stated that at the time of publication the vendor was in Laredo doing work for another entity and saw the ad.

Chairman Ceballos asked Mr. Lopez if he is comfortable with the way that this process is being handled.

Mr. Lopez stated that to his understanding the way it was published for bid the door specifications were incorrect and therefore it was republished with the correct specification.

Chairman Ceballos asked if the board has to award to the lowest bidder or if they can award to the lowest qualified bidder.

Attorney Poneck stated that the vendor complied with the specs that were presented in the original bid even though the other vendors submitted better quality for the same bid. During the second bid the vendor submitted a bid with the new specs.

Vice Chairman Dr. Garza asked if this could be discussed in Executive Session.

Attorney Poneck stated that any item can be taken into Executive Session.

Item was discussed during Executive Session.

Chairman Ceballos motioned to table Item 9C for additional staff work and it be brought back to the board.

Vice Chairman Dr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

- D. Discussion and possible action to approve the write-off of non-collectable amounts of \$23,083.39 for vacated units from April 1, 2016 through September 30, 2016.

Ms. Ortiz stated that once the receivables are evaluated and the tenants move out they request to write off any owed amount from the books. She stated that all the amounts listed are for tenants that have moved out and if they were to request assistance again they would have to pay any debt owed to the authority prior to being assisted.

Chairman Ceballos asked why South Laredo and Meadow Acres had accumulated \$7000.

Ms. Ortiz responded that those cases were under litigation.

Attorney De Anda stated that he inherited this case when he came on board with LHA and it was in litigation approximately 2 years in total.

Chairman Ceballos asked who is representing this client.

Attorney De Anda responded Santiago Sandoval.

Commissioner Dr. Rodriguez asked if there is a procedure in place to avoid this.

Ms. Hernandez responded yes but in cases that are in litigation the process is longer and that is why the amount accumulates.

Chairman Ceballos asked if there are other tenants that are in the same situation.

Ms. Hernandez stated yes there are other cases in litigation.

Chairman Ceballos asked if the board would like to be made aware if there are cases in litigation longer than 6 months. He requested that it be added to her report.

Chairman Ceballos motioned to approve the Item 9D as presented.

Vice Chairman Dr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

- E. Discussion and possible action to approve revisions to 2016-2017 Farm Labor Operating Budget.

Ms. Ortiz stated that it is being recommended to include a management fee. She stated that previously a bookkeeping fee of \$5000 could be collected but now a management fee of \$33,403 could be collected and this would lower the net income for that project.

Chairman Ceballos asked how much money in reserves it has.

Ms. Ortiz stated that it has about \$300,000 in operating and about \$160,000 in reserves.

Chairman Ceballos asked if PILOT is paid through this project.

Ms. Ortiz responded no but she will verify.

Ms. Ortiz stated that being that the project has this money at hand a physical needs assessment will be conducted to target areas that need improvement and utilize the money.

Chairman Ceballos stated that there is no line item for tenant services and asked if any are being provided.

Mr. Collazo responded that there was Kids Café at one point but the turnout was low even after door to door recruitment. He stated that they do offer meals to elderly through BANC.

Chairman Ceballos asked if there is a representative from Farm Labor in the Central Resident Council.

Mr. Collazo responded that at the moment there is no one representing Farm Labor. He stated that the only persons that were interested were Ms. De La Cruz but her husband became ill and Ms. Tafolla but she had some issues.

Chairman Ceballos stated that he would like to see this project receive the same services that all the other projects do.

Mr. Collazo stated that he is always trying to recruit from that project and to get the residents involved but there is very limited interest.

Chairman Ceballos asked if the issues that were pending with USDA were resolved.

Mr. Guerrero responded that all their concerns were being addressed and this item was one of their recommendations.

Chairman Ceballos asked if it had been resolved if non migrant families could be assisted in the project

Ms. Ortiz responded that non migrant families could not be assisted at Farm Labor.

Chairman Ceballos asked if there were currently any non-migrant families being assisted in that project.

Ms. Ortiz responded yes there are about 7 families.

Chairman Ceballos asked when this issue will be addressed.

Ms. Ortiz responded that the staff is already working on a solution for that.

Chairman Ceballos asked how it is that non-migrant families are housed there and how much longer will it take for the issue to be addressed.

Ms. Ortiz responded that she will come back to the board in 30 days to report.

Chairman Ceballos stated that he has been aware of this issue for some time and he would like to see it be addressed because the longer the solution takes is a reflection on the present board and it has been at least 3 months since it was first brought up and needs to be settled in the next 30 days.

He stated that it is a reflection on him because he received the call from the USDA regional director and his intention is not to house people that have not gone through the process to live in subsidized housing.

Chairman Ceballos motioned to approve Item 9D as presented and instructed staff to settle any performance issues regarding tenants at that project.

Vice Chairman Dr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

- F. Discussion and possible action to approve the purchase of playground system and playing surface for the amount of \$43,244.00 from Kidstuff Playsystems.

Mr. Lopez stated that there was a recommendation for the playground specs that were included in the packet. He stated that the quote was to include ground events to allow it to be ADA compliant.

Chairman Ceballos stated that this price doubled from what was initially estimated. He stated that the city has requested that public playground have a playing surface rather than mulch to avoid there being hidden object in the ground.

Mr. Lopez stated that the material is resilient to the heat and very durable.

Chairman Ceballos asked if this is the average cost and if other options were considered in terms of cost savings.

Mr. Lopez stated that the initial quotes received were over \$50K for the playground itself and this is the first time that they were able to come in below that amount and include the playing surface.

Chairman Ceballos asked if we are installing it internally.

Mr. Cruz stated yes and the manufacturer will send a schematic for it.

Chairman Ceballos stated that normally the manufacturer will send a representative for little to no cost to assist.

A video demonstration of the installation and products was presented to the board.

Chairman Ceballos motioned to approve Item 9F as presented.

Commissioner Dr. Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

- G.** Discussion and possible action to approve and implement the Resident Work Order Survey.

Mr. Vasquez stated the survey was developed to be used by residents when a work order is performed. This survey would allow the tenant to rate the performance and satisfaction of the work completed. He stated that the survey was kept simple to encourage the tenant to fill it out.

Chairman Ceballos suggested for it to be integrated into a mobile app to keep that anonymity and eventually integrate the management as well.

Ms. Ortiz stated it is in English and Spanish.

Commissioner Magallanes stated that she does think this will help the tenants report any concerns.

Commissioner Dr. Rodriguez motioned to approve Item 9G as presented and that it be developed as a mobile app in addition to the hard copy to make it accessible to tenants.

Vice Chairman Dr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

- H.** Discussion and possible action regarding PILOT agreement.

Chairman Ceballos stated that this item will be discussed in Executive Session but wanted to inform that there are some years that Payment In Lieu of Taxes are pending and need to be made and that is what they will be discussing.

Item was discussed in Executive Session no action was taken.

- I.** Discussion and possible action to authorize Executive Director to fill certain vacant management positions. This item may be discussed in Executive Closed Session, pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.074 (personnel matters).

Item was discussed in Executive Session.

Ms. Ortiz recommend that the board approve hiring Maria de Lourdes Hernandez as the Assistant Director of Public Housing and Mauricio del Barrio as Director of Finance.

Chairman Ceballos motioned to approve the recommendations for Item 9I.

Vice Chairman Garza seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

10. 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 Closed 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).

- A. Consultation with legal counsel related to River Bank and Casa Verde housing developments.

Chairman Ceballos motioned to allow staff and counsel to proceed as discussed in Executive Session to continue negotiations with TDHCA and necessary related to Casa Verde and Russell Terrace, to proceed and early start by HUD standards, and to take any and all actions necessary to preserve Casa Verde and Russell Terrace if possible.

Commissioner Dr. Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Ceballos made a motion to enter into Executive Session for Items 9C, 9H, 9I and 10A.

Vice Chairman Dr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

Board entered into Executive Session at 1:21 p.m.

Board returned from Executive Session at 3:24 p.m.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Ceballos motioned to adjourn.

Vice Chairman Dr. Garza seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 3:27 p.m.



Jose L. Ceballos, Board Chairman



Melissa Ortiz, Acting/Interim Executive Director