

Housing Authority of the City of Laredo

Board of Commissioner Meeting

LHA Board Room

2000 San Francisco Ave.

Laredo, Texas 78040

Wednesday, September 7, 2016

10:00 a.m.

A-16-R-9

Minutes

September 7, 2016

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Chairman Ceballos called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
3. **ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM** Roll call and declaration of quorum by Melissa Ortiz, Acting/Interim Executive Director/Secretary.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

STAFF PRESENT

Bulmaro Cruz, Director of Modernization and Development
Robert Pena, IT Coordinator
Alfonso Trevino, CFP Coordinator
Norma Ybarra, Section 8 Administrator
Alma Mata, Administrative Assistant
Christina Ramos, Administrative Assistant
Julia Orduna, Planning and Community Service Specialist
Jose Collazo, Special Projects Coordinator
Orlando Guerrero, Interim Finance Director
Cesar Vasquez, Human Resources Manager
Doug Poneck, Attorney
Ricardo De Anda, Attorney
Raquel Favela, NDC Consultant

4. **CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS** Chairman Ceballos reserved his 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 this time. There will be a 3-minute limitation per speaker. (Texas Attorney General Opinion-JC-0169)

Ms. Ortiz presented Vice Chairman Garza with a plaque in recognition of his accomplishment in receiving the 2016 Teacher of the Year at the TAMU College of Education.

Vice Chairman Garza accepted the plaque and stated that he was there for a reason and as an educator he fought for the site of Russell Terrace because its funding affects schools, teachers, and principles and students. He stated that he is a firm believer that you have to do what's right and when you take on projects you have to think of the entire development and how it affects the future. He stated that all the AMPS could use more services from the educational sector and he has voiced that.

Chairman Ceballos mentioned that he first met Vice Chairman Garza as board members of the AVANCE program and that he is honored to serve aside him for this board as well. He stated that he is also involved at Bethany House providing student teachers to assist the youth in that program as well.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- A.** Approval of minutes for Board of Commissioners meeting on August 3, 2016.

Chairman Ceballos called for a motion.

Commissioner Solis motioned to approve minutes as presented.

Vice Chairman Garza seconded the motion.

Motion Passed unanimously.

7. PRESENTATION BY CENTRAL RESIDENT COUNCIL (No action to be taken on these items)

Ms. Rios informed the board that she had been re-elected to serve as President for the Central Resident Council and thanked the board for the opportunity to participate in these meetings.

Chairman Ceballos congratulated her on the re-election and thanked her for her service in the Central Resident Council.

8. PRESENTATIONS (No action to be taken.)

- A.** Executive Director's Report

- B.** Financials for the month of July 2016.

Chairman Ceballos asked that the Director's Report and Financials be accepted as presented and should any questions or comments arise they be emailed to the director due to time constraints. He also asked to have the items pertaining to HR and Curb Appeal mentioned at the last board meeting be brought to the board at the next meeting.

9. ACTION ITEMS

- A. Discussion and possible action to approve the Significant Amendment to the 2016 Five Year/Annual PHA Plan regarding conversion of Russell Terrace from public housing to project-based Section 8 under the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD), and related matters.

Chairman Ceballos stated that the item includes both Casa Verde (38 units) and Russell Terrace (162 units). He stated that meetings with residents were held on July 28 & 29, 2016, a Board of Commissioners meeting on July 30, 2016 and a Public Hearing on September 6, 2016 to close the 45 day public hearing process.

He stated that this is an administrative requirement in order to continue with the RAD conversion. Also a finance plan will be submitted in the coming days for Casa Verde and one for Russell Terrace will follow.

Chairman Ceballos called for a motion.

Vice Chairman Garza motioned to approve Item 9A the Significant Amendment to the 2016 Five Year/Annual PHA Plan regarding conversion of Russell Terrace and Casa Verde from public housing to project-based Section 8 under the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD), and related matters.

Commissioner Solis seconded the motion.

Motioned passed unanimously.

- B. Discussion and possible action to approve the Amended Audit Services contract to Garza/Gonzalez & Associates pertaining to RFQ 16-0310-3.

Chairman Ceballos stated that this item is back to the board because the board had asked the auditor to do a special audit for the sourcing funds that had been allocated to the COCC and to the PFCs accounts. He asked what the additional cost of this service would be.

Ms. Ortiz responded \$150.00 per hour.

Chairman Ceballos asked what the total cost range would be.

Ms. Ortiz responded 80-100 hours.

Chairman Ceballos stated that during the phone conversation the auditor stated that it should not exceed \$10,000 and 80 hours sums up to \$12,000. He asked if the auditors had completed their audit.

Ms. Ortiz replied no they were still pending the audit for some programs.

Attny. Poneck stated for clarification that this addendum also follows the Professional Service Template that the board has asked all consultants and professional services follow. It incorporates the RFQ and clarifies termination terms .

Vice Chairman Garza asked how many hours the audit team has worked.

Ms. Ortiz stated that at the moment they were conducting their field work and she did not have an exact number of hours worked.

Chairman Ceballos motioned to approve Item 9B at a rate of \$150 per hour with an amount not to exceed \$12,000 and if it does so it be brought back to the board.

Commissioner Solis seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

- C. Discussion and possible action to authorize the Executive Director to pursue a Community Development Block Grant for Transitional Housing Projects in the amount of \$249,736.00 from the City of Laredo.

Chairman Ceballos stated that this is an opportunity from the City for funding through the Community Development Department. He stated that he does not see any competition for this grant and would hate to miss the opportunity to receive this funding if possible.

He stated that the project is still in concept and a site is yet to be determined however passing on this opportunity may mean that if not awarded it could be reprogrammed and we would miss out on that funding. He stated that he would like to see something submitted to the City requesting the funding that allows us to locate the project where we deem best.

Ms. Orduna stated that the grant application is due on September 9, 2016.

Chairman Ceballos called for a motion.

Commissioner Solis motioned to approve Item 9C.

Chairman Ceballos seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

- D. Discussion and possible action to authorize the Executive Director to pursue a Project Basing HUD-VASH Voucher application for 75 units designated for veterans from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Chairman Ceballos stated that this is an opportunity through a HUD issued notice and there is a 75 unit limit. He stated that the need for housing for homeless Veterans exists and there are 60-111 homeless or at risk of homelessness in a 1 year span. He stated that not all 75 may be awarded but that is the goal.

Chairman Ceballos motioned to approve Item 9D.

Commissioner Solis seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

- E. Discussion and possible action to approve staff's recommendation to award the 2016-2017 General Depository Service Contract to Falcon International Bank with an option to extend for four (4) additional twelve month periods.

Chairman Ceballos stated that he was invited to join the committee therefore the staff has made the recommendation. He stated that the cost and charges are minimal in comparison to the other submitted proposal from what he could see.

Ms. Ortiz stated that the staff was recommending Falcon international bank. She stated that Compass Bank submitted a proposal in which fees would be assessed versus those fees being waived by Falcon.

Chairman Ceballos asked how much those fees amount to.

Ms. Ortiz responds that for example the service monthly maintenance fee is \$35 and the authority has approximately 20 accounts totaling \$700 per month and \$8,400 per year in that fee alone.

Chairman Ceballos stated that all the banks in Laredo are great banks and it is likely because of the history between the authority and the bank that these fees are waived. He asked if the authority was satisfied with the service being provided.

Ms. Ortiz replied yes. She stated that they are always available for the staff when necessary and we have established contacts in each department.

She stated that the interest rate was also a deciding factor.

Mr. Guerrero stated that the interest rate at Falcon was .75% versus .35% at Compass Bank.

Chairman Ceballos asked what the total fund balance is at Falcon.

Ms. Ortiz responded approximately \$24 million.

Chairman Ceballos stated that the board had approved a credit card for small purchased and asked if it was obtained through Falcon.

Ms. Ortiz stated that the card was obtained through Falcon and it was board authorized for travel only.

Chairman Ceballos called for a motion.

Vice Chairman Garza motioned to approve Item 9E.

**Commissioner Solis 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).

**Chairman Ceballos motioned to enter Executive Session.
Vice Chairman Garza seconded the motion.
Motion passed unanimously.**

Board entered into Executive Session at 10:27 a.m.

Board returned from executive session at 12:26 p.m.

- A. Consultation with legal counsel related to River Bank, Casa Verde and other developments and related consultant contracts.

**Chairman Ceballos motioned to proceed with Item 10A as discussed in Executive Session.
Vice Chairman Garza seconded the motion.
Motion passed unanimously.**

- B. Consultation with legal counsel regarding pending litigation: Laredo Housing Authority vs. Metro Affordable Housing, Inc.

**Chairman Ceballos abstained from participating in Executive Session Item 10B.
Vice Chairman motioned to proceed with Item 10 B as discussed in Executive Session.
Commissioner Solis seconded the motion.
Commissioner Rodriguez voted to approve.
Commissioner Magallanes voted to approve.
Chairman Ceballos abstained.
Motion passed.**

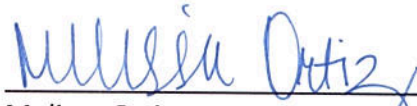
11. ADJOURNMENT

**Chairman Ceballos motioned to adjourn.
Commissioner Solis seconded the motion.
Motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 12:28 p.m.



Jose L. Ceballos
Board Chairman



Melissa Ortiz
Acting/Interim Executive Director