

**Housing Authority of the City of Laredo**  
Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting  
Zoom Video Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89816903007>

Call in Number: 1-346-248-7799

Webinar ID: 898 1690 3007

LHA Board Room

2000 San Francisco Ave.

7Laredo, Texas 78040

Wednesday, December 15, 2021

12:00 P.M.

**Board of Commissioners**

Jose L. Ceballos, Board Chairman  
Dr. Sergio D. Garza, Vice-Chairman  
Anita L. Guerra, Commissioner

Dr. Marisela Rodriguez Tijerina, Commissioner  
Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner

**“The Board of Commissioners will convene for a Board meeting for discussion on the following matters (NOTE: A quorum of the Board will be physically present at this location, but up to two other Commissioners may attend by video conferencing, as permitted by Tex. Gov’t Code Section 551.127)”**

**A-21-R-12**

**Minutes**

**December 15, 2021**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Jose L. Ceballos called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

**2. INVOCATION PRAYER**

Commissioner Ms. Freeman led them in prayer: “Dear Heavenly Father, together we pray that you protect and guide us throughout our daily lives; we pray for those affected by the natural disasters at both ends of our nation; we pray for the safety of all our first responders throughout our planet that began their battle with the next wave of COVID 19; we pray for all our elected officials, that they act for the protection of our citizens throughout this difficult time; we pray for the safety of all travelers throughout the holidays; we pray for the needy, the sick, the elderly and all the special needs this particular group requires, and lastly Lord, we humbly thank you for all the blessings you have bestowed unto us, in Jesus name we pray, Amen.”

Chairman Ceballos thanked Ms. Freeman for the prayer.

**3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** Chairman Jose L. Ceballos led them in the recital of the pledge.

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

Chairman Ceballos asked Mrs. Gaona to proceed with roll call. Mrs. Gaona mentioned that Commissioner Ms. Guerra is running late and that Commissioner Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina is absent.

Chairman Ceballos thanked everybody that is present as well as Attorneys Ricardo De Anda and Doug Poneck that are on zoom. Chairman Ceballos stated that they have a quorum.

**Commissioners Present**

Jose L. Ceballos, Chairman  
Dr. Sergio D. Garza, Vice-Chairman  
Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner

**Commissioners Absent**

Dr. Marisela Rodríguez Tijerina, Commissioner  
Anita L. Guerra, Commissioner

**Staff Present**

Mary Gaona, Executive Director  
Christy Ramos, Administrative Assistant  
Robert Peña, Director of IT  
Melissa Ortiz, Director of Section 8  
Jennifer Barrientos, Director of Finance  
Jessica Martinez, Interim Director of Housing Management  
Valeria Cabello, Procurement Officer  
Alejandro Jimenez, Assistant IT Director  
Bulmaro Cruz, Director of Construction Projects  
Ricardo De Anda, Attorney  
Doug Poneck, Attorney

**Others Present**

**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 citizens comments.

**6. DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST FOR BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF**

There were no disclosures.

**7. PRESENTATION BY CENTRAL RESIDENT COUNCIL**

Chairman Ceballos asked if there was anybody from the Resident Council present to speak and mentioned that there was nobody to speak for the residents.

**8. PUBLIC HEARING: To receive public comments and input, and close the public hearing period as it relates to the proposed PHA Annual Plan and Five-Year Action Plan for fiscal years 2022-2026.**

Chairman Ceballos stated that there was not anybody present and that they will act on this item during the action item and that technically the public hearing closes today, as they vote on it.

**9. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A. Approval of Minutes for Board of Commissioners meeting on November 19, 2021.**

Chairman Ceballos mentioned that Mr. Poneck's statement in regards to needing translation and stating that he is fluent in Spanish will stand, for the record, uncorrected. Mr. Poneck stated that those were very detailed minutes. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that the minutes actually included the Spanish part which was a pretty extensive part of the meeting. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that they had an opportunity to size back the minutes which he thinks has been covered before, but he thinks that it is part of the culture and stated that this Housing Authority has kept this kind of minutes that he can remember, so it is part of this culture and mentioned that Dr. Valle wrote a piece on the Housing Authority before this Board service and Mr. Valle actually researched all those comments from before and why things happened or why things occurred, so it is cultural. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that he is sure that if somebody one day would write about the Housing Authority would remember that he clarified that Mr. Poneck is actually fluent in Spanish.

**Vice-Chairman Dr. Garza moved to approve the minutes for Board of Commissioners meeting on November 19, 2021 as presented.**

**Commissioner Ms. Freeman seconded the motion.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**10. ACTION ITEM**

**A. Discussion and possible action to adopt the Public Housing Flat Rents and Resolution No. 21-R-10 effective January 1, 2022, as recommended by staff.**

Chairman Ceballos asked Mrs. Gaona if there were any highlights on this item. Mrs. Gaona mentioned that as the Commissioners can see, there is an increase roughly of about \$20 and other than the four bedroom and Asherton that went down a little bit due to the FMR going down this last year and mentioned that they currently only have 23 families paying this rent that would be affected by this change.

Chairman Ceballos asked Mrs. Gaona who had made the study. Mrs. Gaona responded that it is just the 80% of the FMR. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that it is not the utility allowance, but a flat rent.

Chairman Ceballos asked if there were any questions for Mrs. Gaona; there were none.

**Chairman Jose L. Ceballos moved to approve the adoption of the flat rents effective January 1, 2022.**

**Commissioner Ms. Freeman seconded the motion.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- B.** Discussion and possible action to finalize and adopt the Public Housing Agency Plan, the 2022-2026 PHA Five Year Action Plan and Resolution No. 21-R-11, as presented by staff and in consideration of all public input, to become effective April 1, 2022.

Chairman Ceballos mentioned, for the record, that it needs to be clarified that the agenda item reads April 1, 2022, but it is actually to become effective once they adopt it today. Chairman Ceballos asked Mrs. Gaona if there was any additional information. Mrs. Gaona stated that the plan remains as to their review of last Board meeting and mentioned that they are going to submit Capital Fund for year 2022 and the Five-Year Action Plan and that the deadline is January 15, 2022 to submit it, so they will be submitting it after approval. Chairman Ceballos stated that they agreed to have some sort of focused workshop on this for 2022. Mrs. Gaona confirmed and mentioned that as soon as they get notification of the award and the level, they will come back to the Board.

**Commissioner Ms. Freeman moved to accept and adopt the PHA 2022-2026 Five Year Action Plan with the correction that it will be effective immediately instead of April 1, 2022.**

**Chairman Jose L. Ceballos seconded the motion.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- C.** Discussion and possible action authorizing an extension of the General Depository Services Agreement with Falcon International Bank for an additional and final year, as allowed under said agreement, effective December 21, 2021 through December 20, 2022.

Chairman Ceballos asked Mrs. Gaona if she had any additional information. Mrs. Gaona mentioned that the bank sent in a letter to renew the extension and it is attached and they will be finalizing the contract as soon as it is approved by the Board and stated that it will be the final year and that they should be going out early next year for a depository agreement. Chairman Ceballos asked Mrs. Gaona if they are satisfied with the service. Mrs. Gaona confirmed. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that they pretty much beat every other proponent that he has seen with fees and the one thing he thinks they talked with the Board before and will bring it up now and said that this is an extension, but for the coming years, they need to look at how they service them from the lending side and he knows that this is the depository, but also knows that there are points and for Ms. Barrientos

to know that there are points that are issued for other ancillary services and they would need to score that next time, so that they actually get which has not happened, but they will have a finance option for one of the projects which would be important for them down the road. Chairman Ceballos mentioned that he just thinks the Housing Authority should value lending and giving and stated that they see a lot of banks donate to a lot of entities and stated that they typically do not seek donations for their projects, but he thinks that it would be good as in the Summer Summit and other things, that they would sponsor which he thinks is another way when they prepare the RFP, to value those points, as to what is their charitable giving program and what is their lending, if there is a lending incentive for holding the money with our depository.

Chairman Ceballos asked if there were any questions for Mrs. Gaona on this item. There were no questions.

**Chairman Jose L. Ceballos moved to approve to authorize the Executive Director to execute the extension for the coming year.**

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

**Motion passed unanimously.**

Chairman Ceballos stated that it was a short meeting, even less than 30 minutes and mentioned that he wants to thank everybody for this year and stated that he is officially uphold over on the Board and said that his appointment was December 11, and mentioned that he has not been reappointed yet and that hopefully it will get done next year, in the near future. Chairman Ceballos thanked everybody on the Board, the attorneys and the staff for all the work they have done along the way and stated that, obviously, there is a lot of work that is going to be more visible to all the staff members which has to do with this campus, so they have a lot of things that they as the team, staff members, the Board, the legal team and all the consultants that are helping them to finish up another year, so he mentioned that he got appointed December 11 of 2015 and that his first meeting was sometime in January and stated that it took a while to start, but he is looking forward to what is next and hopes that they are too and are utilizing in work and hopefully everything is as positive as they wish it to be.

Chairman Ceballos mentioned that he wished everybody a great holiday break with their family and those they love the most.

Commissioner Ms. Freeman thanked Chairman Ceballos for his hard work.

## **11. EXECUTIVE 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).

**12. ACTION ON ANY EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEM**

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

**Chairman Jose L. Ceballos moved to adjourn the meeting.**

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

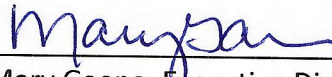
**Motion passed unanimously.**

**Meeting adjourned at 12:13 p.m.**

Chairman Ceballos thanked Mr. De Anda and mentioned that he knows he is traveling and also thanked Mr. Poneck as well for joining.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Jose L. Ceballos, Chairman



\_\_\_\_\_  
Mary Gaona, Executive Director