

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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89716725429?pwd=TORQRVJlMldtUUJzWCtrcnJwMkZrQT09>

Call in Number: 1-346-248-7799

Webinar ID: [897 1672 5429](#)

LHA Board Room
2000 San Francisco Ave.
Laredo, Texas 78040
Wednesday, April 5, 2023
11:30 A.M.

Board of Commissioners

Cynthia Mares, Board Chair
Silvia Madrid, Vice Chair
Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner

Jose L. Ceballos, 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 videoconferencing, as permitted by Tex. Gov't Code Section 551.127)

A-23-R-2

Minutes

April 5, 2023

1. CALL TO ORDER

Cynthia Mares, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.

2. INVOCATION PRAYER

Cynthia Mares, Board Chair, led us in prayer.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Jose L. Ceballos, Commissioner, led us in the recital of the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Mrs. Gaona proceeded with roll call and a declaration of quorum was made by Cynthia Mares, Board Chair.

Commissioners Present

Cynthia Mares, Board Chair
Silvia Madrid, Vice Chair
Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner
Jose L. Ceballos, Commissioner
Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner

Staff Present

Mary Gaona, Executive Director
Jennifer Barrientos, Director of Finance
Bulmaro Cruz, Director of Construction
Melissa Ortiz, Director of HCV
Robert Pena, Director of IT
Raquel Aguilar, Interim Director of Housing Management
Melissa Hernandez, Interim Director of Planning and Community Services
Alejandro Jimenez, Assistant Director of IT
Christy Ramos, Administrative Assistant
Sonia Flores, Senior Accountant (zoom)
Sara Vicharelli, Leasing Specialist (zoom)
Maria Hernandez, Property Manager (zoom)
Veronica Alcala, Assistant Property Manager
Melinda Gavilanes, Property Manager
Elsa Rodriguez, Clerk
Maria Serrano, Assistant Property Manger
San Juana Valero, Assistant Property Manager
Kayla Moreno, Property Manager
Denise Guzman, Property Manager
Doug A. Poneck, Attorney
Ricardo De Anda, Attorney

Others Present

Heriberto Avalos, Off Duty Police Officer
Doak Brown, Brownstone Group
Jed Brown, Brownstone Group

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)

Cynthia Mares, Board Chair, stated that there were no citizens comments.

6. PRESENTATION BY RESIDENT ADVISORY BOARD

Mary Gaona, Executive Director, informed the Board of Commissioners that Ms. Rios, Resident Advisory Board President, was unable to attend the meeting today.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

The Laredo Housing Authority will be opening the 45-day comment period on an amendment to the agencies Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP) incorporating the final ruling on the limitation on Public Housing tenancy

for over-income families under the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016 (HOTMA).

Mary Gaona, Executive Director, presented information on PIH Notice 2023-03 Supplemental Guidance for Implementation of Section 103; Limitation on Public Housing Tenancy for Over-Income Families under the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016 (HOTMA) and advised the Board of Commissioners that this policy would need to be implemented by June 14, 2023. Discussion took place. Jose L. Ceballos, Commissioner, stated that he would like to study this new policy.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of Minutes for Regular Board of Commissioners meeting on February 10, 2023.

B. Approval of Minutes for Special Board of Commissioners meeting on February 22, 2023.

Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to approve the minutes for the Board of Commissioners meeting on February 10, 2023 and February 22, 2023 as presented. Jose L. Ceballos, Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

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

A. Executive Directors Report to include status of grant programs and ongoing construction projects.

Mary Gaona, Executive Director, presented the Executive Directors Report. Discussion took place.

B. Unaudited Financials for the month of February 2023.

Jennifer Barrientos, Director of Finance, presented the February 2023 unaudited financials.

10. CONSENT AGENDA

All of the following items may be acted upon by one motion. No separate discussion or action on any of the items is necessary unless desired by a commissioner.

Jose L. Ceballos, Commissioner, moved to approve all the following items under Consent Agenda.

- A. Consideration to authorize out of town travel of staff for the Housing Agency Procurement Assistance Procurement and Contract Management Seminar in San Antonio, Texas on May 16-18, 2023.
- B. Consideration to authorize out of town travel of staff for the Texas NAHRO Annual Conference in Corpus Christi, Texas on April 11-13, 2023.

Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

11. ACTION ITEM

- A. Presentation and possible action related to an agreement with Brownstone on the proposed development of Hillside Crossing Apartments. This item may be discussed in Executive Session pursuant to Section 551.071, consultation with attorney.

Mr. Jed Brown and Mr. Doak Brown, Brownstone Affordable Housing, Ltd., made a presentation on the proposed development of Hillside Crossing. Discussion took place. Jose L. Ceballos, Commissioner, moved to move forward favorably with this project subject to a due diligence stage where a draft of the MOU is reviewed by our legal counsel including Mr. Mark Foster and in that process our Director and Board Chair get an architect and engineer to review the construction standards to assure that the asset is all that we want it to be. Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- B. Discussion and possible action to evaluate the existing telephone communications system with a recommendation by the Information Technology Department to enhance on the existing network in place. (Sponsored by Commissioner Joe E. Aranda and Co-sponsored by Vice Chair Silvia E. Madrid)

Mr. Robert Pena, IT Director, advised the Board of Commissioners that in 2019 the LHA switched from AT&T to Verizon. Discussion took place. No action was taken.

- C. Presentation by Management on the status of all the existing vacancies with possible action to proceed and fill all necessary positions as allotted in the approved operating budgets for purposes of facilitating the operations of the Laredo Housing Authority in the best interest of the public's needs and requests and the needs of existing tenants. (Sponsored by Commissioner Joe E. Aranda and Co-sponsored by Vice Chair Silvia E. Madrid)

Mary Gaona, Executive Director, provided an overview on the status of all the existing vacancies. Discussion took place.

Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to have the Executive Director work with our Board Chair and Vice Chair to identify and fill key management vacancies. Silvia Madrid, Vice Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- D. Discussion and possible action to approve the writing-off of non-collectable amounts for vacated Public Housing, Russell Terrace, Meadow Elderly and Farm Labor units from October 1, 2022 through March 31, 2023, as recommended by staff.

Jennifer Barrientos, Director of Finance, presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval the write-offs for vacant units from October 1, 2022 through March 31, 2023 in the amount of \$18,507.51. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to approve as presented. Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- E. Discussion and possible action to renew the Blue Cross Blue Shield Health Insurance, effective June 1, 2023 through May 31, 2024 as recommended by staff.

Jennifer Barrientos, Director of Finance, presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval a renewal of the Blue Cross BlueShield Health Insurance for the period of June 1, 2023 to May 31, 2024 at a monthly rate of \$685.19 per employee. The 2023-2024 premium showed a zero increase from the 2022-2023 year. Discussion took place. Jose L. Ceballos, Commissioner, moved to approve as presented. Resident Commissioner, Gloria Ann Freeman, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- F. Discussion and possible action to approve the Capital Fund Program Amendment to the Consolidated Annual Contributions Contract for calendar year 2023 and adopt Resolution No. 23-R-05.

Mary Gaona, Executive Director, presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval an amendment to the 2023 Capital Fund Grant in the amount of \$494,983. This amendment is due to an increase in funding from \$1,900,000. To \$2,394,983. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to approve as presented. Jose L. Ceballos, Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- G. Discussion and possible action to award RFP No. 2023-0130-2 Integrated Pest Management & On-Call Services to JD's Pest Control in the amount of \$25,430.00 and authorize the Executive Director to finalize negotiations and contract with selected firm.

Valeria Cabello, Procurement Officer, presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval an RFP for Integrated Pest Management & On-Call Services from JD's Pest Control in the amount of \$25,430. annually. Discussion took place. Jose L. Ceballos, Commissioner, moved to approve

as presented. Silvia Madrid, Vice Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- H. Discussion and possible action to award RFP No. 2023-0130-1 Landscaping & Ground Maintenance to Airstream Professional Misting Systems in the amount of \$258,840.00 and authorize the Executive Director to finalize negotiations and contract with selected firm.

Valeria Cabello, Procurement Officer, presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval an RFP for Landscaping & Ground Maintenance to Airstream Professional Misting Systems in the amount of \$258,840. annually. Discussion took place. Jose L. Ceballos, Commissioner, moved to approve as recommended with a request to have the attorney add to the contract a without cause termination clause and for staff to request a listing of exactly who will be on our site and that a background check be conducted on everyone. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- I. Discussion and possible action to authorize the Executive Director to extend the contract with Slay Architecture for an additional year, as allowable by Contract No. 2022-0516-1 effective May 16, 2023 through May 15, 2024. This would represent the second year of the contract maximum of five years.

Valeria Cabello, Procurement Officer, presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval a one-year extension to the Slay Architecture contract effective May 16, 2023 through May 15, 2024. Discussion took place. Jose L. Ceballos, Commissioner, moved to approve as presented. Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- J. Discussion and possible action to authorize the Executive Director to extend the contract with Redline Architecture for an additional year, as allowable by Contract No. 2022-0516-4, effective May 16, 2023 through May 15, 2024. This would represent the second year of the contract maximum of five years.

Valeria Cabello, Procurement Officer, presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval a one-year extension to the Redline Architecture contract effective May 16, 2023 through May 15, 2024. Discussion took place. Jose L. Ceballos, Commissioner, moved to approve as presented. Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- K. Discussion and possible action to authorize the Executive Director to extend the contract with Architects Plus, Inc. for an additional year, as allowable by Contract No. 2022-0516-2, effective May 16, 2023 through May 15, 2024. This would represent the second year of the contract maximum of five years.

Valeria Cabello, Procurement Officer, presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval a one-year extension to the Architect Plus, Inc. contract effective May 16, 2023 through May 15, 2024. Discussion took place. Jose L. Ceballos, Commissioner, moved to approve as presented. Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- L. Discussion and possible action to authorize the Executive Director to extend the contract with Able City for an additional year, as allowable by Contract No. 2022-0516-3, effective May 16, 2023 through May 15, 2024. This would represent the second year of the contract maximum of five years.

Valeria Cabello, Procurement Officer, presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval a one-year extension to the Able City contract effective May 16, 2023 through May 15, 2024. Discussion took place. Jose L. Ceballos, Commissioner, moved to approve as presented. Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

12. 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).

13. ACTION ON ANY EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEM


14. ADJOURNMENT

Jose L. Ceballos, Commissioner, moved to adjourn and then convene as a different organization. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 1:14 p.m.



Cynthia Mares, Board Chair



Mary Gaona, Executive Director