

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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84531296241?pwd=cEFFeFVSZkliNDIjdE1JaUpOcHc2dz09>

Call in Number: 1-346-248-7799

Webinar ID: [845 3129 6241](#)

LHA Board Room
2000 San Francisco Ave.
Laredo, Texas 78040
Monday, May 22, 2023
10:30 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-3

Minutes

May 22, 2023

1. CALL TO ORDER

Cynthia Mares, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m.

2. INVOCATION PRAYER

Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, 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.

Commissioner 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
Christy Ramos, Administrative Assistant
Sonia Flores, Senior Accountant (zoom)
Sara Vicharelli, Leasing Specialist (zoom)
Maria Hernandez, Property Manager (zoom)
Veronica Alcala, Assistant Property Manager (zoom)
Melinda Gavilanes, Property Manager (zoom)
Elsa Rodriguez, Clerk (zoom)
Maria Serrano, Assistant Property Manager (zoom)
San Juana Valero, Assistant Property Manager (zoom)
Kayla Moreno, Property Manager (zoom)
Gisela Mendoza, Clerk (zoom)
Denise Guzman, Property Manager (zoom)
Doug A. Poneck, Attorney
Ricardo De Anda, Attorney

Others Present

Melissa Amici Haynes, Laredo Center of the Arts
Pedro Morales, Laredo Center of the Arts
Ana Laura Hernandez, Artist, Laredo Center of the Arts
Mario Maldonado, Public Citizen

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 closing 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, stated that there were no public comments received from the community and or residents.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of Minutes for Board of Commissioners meeting on April 5, 2023.

Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner moved to approve the minutes for the Board of Commissioners meeting on April 5, 2023, as presented. Jose L. Ceballos, seconded the motion; motion carried.

Cynthia Mares, Board Chair stated that she wanted to congratulate the staff on the fantastic minutes with the new format.

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 March 2023.

Jennifer Barrientos, Director of Finance, presented the March 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 approve the certification of the HCV Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) for the Fiscal Year ending March 31, 2023, as recommended by staff, and authorize the Executive Director to submit the SEMAP Submission Certification to the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) and adopt Resolution No. 23-R-06.

B. Consideration to approve the purchase of a 2023 Ford F150 Regular Cab in the amount of \$32,565.00 from the 2022 Capital Fund Grant.

- C. Consideration to approve the purchase of a 2023 Toyota Highlander in the amount of \$37,325.00 from the Emergency Housing Voucher Service Fee Allocation.

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

11. ACTION ITEM

- A. Discussion and possible action approving the Memorandum of Understanding between the Laredo Housing Opportunity Corporation and Brownstone Affordable Housing, Ltd. for the development of Hillside Crossing an affordable housing development. This item may be discussed in Executive Session pursuant to Section 551.07 l, consultation with attorney.

Mary Gaona, Executive Director, presented to the Board of Commissioner for approval on the Memorandum of Understanding between the Laredo Housing Opportunity Corporation and Brownstone Affordable Housing, Ltd. Discussion took place. Jose L. Ceballos, Commissioner, moved to authorize the Board Chair and our Executive Director to finalize the Memorandum of Understanding with the understanding that there is a 70/30 split on developer fee and that the developer will serve as manager while they guarantee the project and that we also work with them on finalizing the amenities and discuss any insurance supplements that may be required to protect the Housing Authority and our General Partnership. Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- B. Discussion and possible action to approve the Continued Occupancy Policy for Public Housing Over-Income Families effective June 1, 2023 and adopt Resolution No. 23-R-07.

Mary Gaona, Executive Director, presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval the Continued Occupancy Policy effective June 1, 2023. Discussion took place. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to approve as presented. Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- C. Discussion and possible action to approve the 2023 Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program Payment Standard Amounts effective July 1, 2023 using Fair Market Rents and adopt Resolution No. 23-R-08.

Melissa Ortiz, Director of HCV, presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval the 2023 Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Payment Standard Amounts effective July 1, 2023 using the Fair Market Rents. Discussion took place. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to approve as presented. Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- D. Discussion and possible action on the proposed Jovita Idar mural at the Ana Maria Lozano BiblioTech.

Melissa Amici Haynes, Laredo Center of the Arts, and Ana Laura Hernandez, Artist, made a presentation on the proposed mural. Discussion took place. Silvia Madrid, Commissioner, moved to bring this item back at another meeting. Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- E. Discussion and possible action on the appointment of a Building Committee.

Discussion took place. Cynthia Mares, Board Chair, appointed Jose L. Ceballos, Commissioner, and Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, to the Building Committee. Cynthia Mares, Board Chair, asked Mary Gaona, Executive Director, to post all these committee meetings and to notify all commissioners of these meetings in case anyone would like to join. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to approve as presented. Silvia Madrid, Vice Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- F. Discussion and possible action on the appointment of a Finance Committee.

Discussion took place. Cynthia Mares, Board Chair, appointed Jose L. Ceballos, Commissioner, and Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, to the Finance Committee. Cynthia Mares, Board Chair, stated she would be joining the meetings at times. Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, moved to approve as presented. Silvia Madrid, Vice Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- G. Discussion and possible action on the appointment of a Program & Policy Committee.

Discussion took place. Cynthia Mares, Board Chair, stated that she would like to appoint the following to these committees. Silvia Madrid, Vice Chair, and Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to approve as presented. Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- H. Discussion and possible action to award RFP No. 2023-0403-1 HQS Housing Inspection Services and authorize the Executive Director to finalize negotiations and contract(s) with selected firm(s).

Valeria De Leon, Procurement Officer, presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval an RFP for HQS Housing Inspection Services to Antonio Murillo. Discussion took place. Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, moved to approve as presented. Silvia Madrid, Vice Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- I. Discussion and possible action to authorize the Executive Director to extend the contract with Bronze Builders LLC for an additional year, as allowable by Contract No. 2022-0131-2, effective June 28, 2023 through June 27, 2024. This would represent the second year of the contract maximum of five years.

Valeria De Leon, Procurement Officer, presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval, a one-year extension to the Bronze Builders LLC contract effective June 28, 2023 through June 27, 2024. Discussion took place. Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, moved to approve as presented. Silvia Madrid, Vice Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- J. Discussion and possible action to authorize the Executive Director to extend the contract with Trinity MEP Engineering LLC for an additional year, as allowable by Contract No. 2022-0613-1, effective June 13, 2023 through June 12, 2024. This represents the second year of the contract maximum of five years.

Valeria De Leon, Procurement Officer, presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval, a one-year extension to the Trinity MEP Engineering LLC contract effective June 13, 2023 through June 12, 2024. Discussion took place. Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, moved to approve as presented. Silvia Madrid, Vice Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried. Discussion took place. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to approve as presented. Silvia Madrid, Vice Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- K. Discussion and possible action to renew the Commercial Property Insurance for the Laredo Housing Facilities Corporation effective June 27, 2023 through June 26, 2024.

Jennifer Barrientos, Director of Finance, presented to the Board of Commissioners the renewal for the Commercial Property Insurance for the Russell Terrace, Meadow Elderly, and Bernal Sunrise Court properties. The renewal is in the amount of \$75,378 for the period of June 27, 2023 through June 26, 2024. Silvia Madrid, Vice Chair moved to approve as presented. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- L. Discussion and possible action related to the filling of management positions and any other matters incident thereto. This item may be discussed in Executive Session, pursuant to Section 551.071 (consultation with attorneys) and 551.074 (personnel matters).

Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, moved to authorize Mary Gaona, Executive Director, to hire all personnel except for any Director positions. These positions would need to come to the Board of Commissioners for approval before filling. Silvia Madrid, Vice Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried. Discussion took place. Mary Gaona, Executive Director stated she would like to recommend to promote Raquel Aguilar to Director of Housing Management

& Melissa Hernandez to Director of Planning & Community Services. Silvia Madrid, Vice Chair moved to approve the recommendations. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

M. Discussion on a date for our next Board of Commissioners meeting.

Cynthia Mares, Board Chair, asked the commissioners if they would like to start meeting monthly or quarterly? The bylaws state to meet quarterly. The board has agreed to meet on a monthly basis as needed. Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, moved to approve the changes to the bylaws to state the board will meet monthly. Silvia Madrid, Vice Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

Next meeting date was set for July 19, 2023.

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).

Jose L. Ceballos, Commissioner, moved to take items 11A, 11D, and 11L into executive session. Joe E. Aranda, seconded the motion; motion carried. Board of Commissioners entered executive session at 10:51.

13. ACTION ON ANY EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEM

Board of Commissioners returned from executive session at 12:14.

No action was taken during executive session.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Gloria Ann Freeman, Resident Commissioner, moved to adjourn and then convene as a different organization. Silvia Madrid, Vice Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 1:03 p.m.



Cynthia Mares, Board Chair



Mary Gaona, Executive Director