

Housing Authority of the City of Laredo
Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87130646984?pwd=tcKONOIId4TbCMokbgnsvoD6qKVQcpo.1>
Call in Number: 1-346-248-7799
Meeting ID: 871 3064 6984
Passcode: 761294
LHA Board Room
2000 San Francisco Avenue
Laredo, Texas 78040
Monday, May 18, 2026
10:00 A.M.

Board of Commissioners

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

Yolanda Santos, Commissioner
Myrna P. Flores, Resident Commissioner

The Board of Commissioners will convene for a Board meeting to discuss the following matters.

A-26-R-2 Minutes May 18, 2026

1. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Cynthia Mares, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. INVOCATION PRAYER

Ms. Cynthia Mares, Board Chair, led the Invocation Prayer.

4. ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Ms. Jennifer Barrientos, Executive Director, proceeded with the roll call, and Ms. Cynthia Mares, Board Chair, declared a quorum.

Commissioners Present

Cynthia Mares, Board Chair
Silvia Madrid, Vice-Chair
Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner
Yolanda Santos, Commissioner
Myrna P. Flores, Resident-Commissioner

Staff Present

Jennifer Barrientos, Executive Director
Gustavo Rojo-Buendia, Assistant Executive Director
Bulmaro Cruz, Director of Community Development
Valeria De Leon, Procurement Officer
Melissa Ortiz, Director for HCV Programs
Raquel Aguilar, Director for Public Housing
Orlando Guerrero, Director of Finance
Robert Pena, Director of IT
Ana I. Martinez, Administrative Assistant
Jocely Zarate, ROSS Coordinator

Residents Present

Kristie Jo Martinez

Others Present

**Doug Poneck, Escamilla & Poneck, LLC
Jason Hyde, Garza/Gonzalez & Associates
Stephan Trautmann**

5. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW BOARD OF COMMISSIONER

Ms. Cynthia Mares, Board Chair, welcomed and introduced the newly appointed Board Commissioner, Mrs. Yolanda Santos, to the Housing Authority of the City of Laredo.

6. ELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Ms. Cynthia Mares, Board Chair, explained that the Board had previously appointed committee members; however, because a new Commissioner had been appointed, the committees needed to be reappointed.

Ms. Mares asked Mr. Joe E. Aranda if he wished to remain on the Building Committee and the Finance Committee. Mr. Aranda responded that he did and stated that he would also like to serve as Chair of both committees.

Ms. Mares asked Mrs. Sylvia Madrid if she wished to continue serving as Chair of the Programs and Policy Committee. Mrs. Madrid responded that she did.

Ms. Mares informed Mrs. Yolanda Santos that she could decide at a later time whether she would like to serve on any of the committees. Ms. Mares explained that the committees meet in advance of the Board meetings to review agenda items, facilitate discussion, and help avoid delays during the Board meeting. She further explained that committee members meet separately to discuss agenda items, ask questions, and then present their recommendations to the Board of Commissioners during the regular Board meeting.

Ms. Mares noted that Ms. Myrna Flores served on the Programs and Policy Committee and advised the Commissioners that they were welcome to serve on the other committees if they wished.

7. 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)

No Citizens comment.

8. PRESENTATIONS BY RESIDENT ADVISORY BOARD

Ms. Kristi Jo Martinez, Resident Advisory Board President, addressed the Board regarding incidents of violence occurring within the Housing Authority properties.

Ms. Martinez stated that during Resident Advisory Board meetings with the Resident Councils, members have become more aware of the issues occurring within each community and of the efforts being made to address those concerns. She explained that she is making a greater effort to promote unity among the Resident Councils and is encouraging each Resident Council to report concerns to the appropriate Housing Manager.

Ms. Martinez further stated that these meetings provide residents with an opportunity to voice their concerns and allow Administration to hear those concerns firsthand so that appropriate action can be taken to resolve the issues. She added that, by following this process, resident concerns are being addressed.

Ms. Martinez stated that the lighting issues at Ana Maria Lozano are being addressed and that the gate issue at Senior Home is also being addressed.

Ms. Martinez emphasized the importance of residents voicing their concerns so that they can be heard and the issues can be appropriately addressed.

Ms. Martinez stated that her primary goal is to unite the residents and work collaboratively to address issues affecting the Housing Authority properties. She also expressed her desire to change the perception of the Public Housing communities by emphasizing that they are not simply places of poverty, but communities of progress where residents support one another, improve their quality of life, and contribute positively to the community.

Additionally, Ms. Barrientos introduced Ms. Jocely Zarate, Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) Coordinator, to the Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, motioned to move Item 11A forward and return to Item 8 following the completion of that item. Mrs. Sylvia Madrid, Vice-Chair, seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Following the completion of Item 11A, Ms. Cynthia Mares, Board Chair, continued with Item 8.

Ms. Zarate provided a presentation regarding the Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) Program and the services available to residents.

9. PRESENTATION BY GARZA/GONZALEZ & ASSOCIATES (No action to be taken)

Mr. Jason Hyde, Partner at Garza/Gonzalez & Associates presented to the Housing Authority of the City of Laredo Board of Commissioners the Audited Financial Statements for Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2025.

10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of Minutes for the Board of Commissioners meeting on February 23, 2026.

Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to approve the Minutes for the Board of Commissioners meeting on February 23, 2026. Mrs. Sylvia Madrid, Vice-Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

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

- A. Recognizing Mr. Leo Flores, in appreciation of his years of service to the Laredo Housing Authority.

Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, motioned to move Item 11A forward and return to Item 8 following the completion of that item. Mrs. Sylvia Madrid, Vice-Chair, seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Ms. Cynthia Mares, Board Chair, recognized Mr. Leo Flores for his years of service to the Laredo Housing Authority.

Mr. Leo Flores accepted the recognition and thanked the Commissioners for their support during his time serving on the Board. Mr. Flores stated that he had learned a great deal from the Commissioners and hoped that they had also learned from him during his tenure.

Before concluding his remarks, Mr. Flores reminded the Board that, with the guidance of the Attorney, the Board's role is to establish policies and ensure adherence to those policies. He emphasized the importance of allowing the Executive Director to manage the day-to-day operations of the Housing Authority and expressed his confidence that the Board would continue to support that structure.

Mr. Flores thanked Ms. Cynthia Mares for her leadership and support to the Board. He also expressed his appreciation to Mr. Aranda, stating that it was a pleasure meeting him and that he considered him a good friend.

Mr. Flores thanked Mrs. Sylvia Madrid and Ms. Myrna Flores for their service and for serving alongside him on the Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Flores expressed his appreciation to Ms. Barrientos and stated that the Laredo Housing Authority has an excellent staff. He commended the agency's reporting process, stating that the reports provided were exceptional compared to other organizations he had been associated with. Mr. Flores stated that he was accustomed to reviewing operational reports and recognized that the staff does an outstanding job managing the agency's operations. He congratulated Ms. Barrientos for her leadership.

Mr. Flores concluded his remarks by wishing everyone the best and encouraged the Board and staff to continue their good work.

Ms. Cynthia Mares motioned back Item 8

- B. Executive Director's Report to include the status of grant programs and ongoing construction projects.

Programs	Construction Projects	Grants
Public Housing Program	Carlos Richter BiblioTech	City of Laredo HOME-ARP Grant (Permanent Supportive Housing)
Casa Verde & Riverbank Apartments	Colonia Guadalupe Community Center (Building B)	Rapid Rehousing Grant

Housing Choice Voucher Program	508 Gonzalez Project	Innovation Funds
Emergency Housing Vouchers Program		Family Trust Initiative
Stability Vouchers Program		

Ms. Jennifer Barrientos, Executive Director, presented Executive Director's Report. Discussion took place.

12. 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.

- A.** Consideration to approve the authorization of a travel request of staff and Board of Commissioners for the Texas Housing Association Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) Training in Austin, Texas on July 9-10, 2026.
- B.** Consideration to approve the authorization of a travel request for staff and Board of Commissioners for the Nan McKay Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) Training in Houston, TX on August 18-19, 2026.
- C.** Consideration to approve the authorization of a travel request for staff and Board of Commissioners for the American Association of Service Coordinators (AASC) 2026 National Service Coordinator (ROSS) Conference in Austin, Texas on August 23–26, 2026.
- D.** Consideration to approve the authorization of a travel request for staff and Board of Commissioners for the Nan McKay HCV and Public Housing Rent Calculation Training in Houston, Texas on July 7–9, 2026.
- E.** Consideration to approve the authorization of a travel request for staff and Board of Commissioners for the 2026 Housing Alliance of Texas (HAT) Annual Conference in South Padre Island, Texas, on June 10-12, 2026.
- F.** Consideration to approve the writing-off of non-collectable amounts for vacated units in Public Housing, Russell Terrace, Meadow Elderly, Aldo Tatangelo and Los Balcones Apartments from October 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026, as recommended by staff.
- G.** Consideration to authorize the Executive Director to extend the contract with Master Vending of Laredo for an additional year, as allowable by Contract No. 2024-0501-1 Vending Machine Services, effective May 1, 2026, through April 30, 2027. This represents the third year of the contract maximum of five years.

Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to approve Consent Agenda Items 12A & 12G. Mrs. Sylvia Madrid, Vice-Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

13. ACTION ITEMS

- A.** Discussion and possible action to ratify Resolution No. 25-R-11 approving the 2026 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program payment standards for five-bedroom units in Laredo, Texas, effective January 1, 2026, in accordance with Fair Market Rents.

Mrs. Melissa Ortiz, Director of HCV Programs, presented Action Item 13A. Discussion took place. Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to approve the ratification of Resolution No. 25-R-11 approving the 2026 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program payment standards for five-bedroom units in Laredo, Texas, effective

January 1, 2026, in accordance with Fair Market Rents. Mrs. Sylvia Madrid, Vice-Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- B.** Discussion and possible action to approve the certification of the Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) for Fiscal Year ending March 31, 2026, 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. 26-R-6.

Mrs. Melissa Ortiz, Director of HCV Programs, presented Action Item 13B. Discussion took place. Mrs. Sylvia Madrid, Vice-Chair, moved to approve the certification of the Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) for Fiscal Year ending March 31, 2026, 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. 26-R-6. Ms. Myrna Flores, Resident Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- C.** Discussion and possible action to ratify the authorization of the Executive Director to extend the contract with Airstream Professional Misting Systems for an additional year, as allowable by Contract No. 2023-0412-1 Landscaping & Ground Maintenance, effective April 12, 2026, through April 11, 2027. This represents the fourth year of the contract maximum of five years.

Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to approve to extend the contract with Airstream Professional Misting Systems for an additional year, as allowable by Contract No. 2023-0412-1 Landscaping & Ground Maintenance, effective April 12, 2026, through April 11, 2027. Mrs. Silvia Madrid, Vice-Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- D.** Discussion and possible action to authorize the Executive Director to extend the contract with Architect's Plus for an additional year, as allowable by Contract No. 2022-0516-2 Architectural & Engineering Services, effective May 16, 2026, through May 15, 2027. This represents the fifth year of the contract maximum of five years.

Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to approve to extend the contract with Architect's Plus for an additional year, as allowable by Contract No. 2022-0516-2 Architectural & Engineering Services, effective May 16, 2026, through May 15, 2027. Mrs. Silvia Madrid, Vice-Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- E.** 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 Architectural & Engineering Services, effective May 16, 2026, through May 15, 2027. This represents the fifth year of the contract maximum of five years.

Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to approve to extend the contract with Redline Architecture for an additional year, as allowable by Contract No. 2022-0516-4 Architectural & Engineering Services, effective May 16, 2026, through May 15, 2027. Mrs. Silvia Madrid, Vice-Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- F.** 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 Architectural & Engineering Services, effective May 16, 2026, through May 15, 2027. This represents the fifth year of the contract maximum of five years.

Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to approve to extend the contract with Able City for an additional year, as allowable by Contract No. 2022-0516-3

Architectural & Engineering Services, effective May 16, 2026, through May 15, 2027. Mrs. Silvia Madrid, Vice-Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- G. Discussion and possible action to renew the Employee Health Insurance with Blue Cross Blue Shield, effective June 1, 2026, through May 31, 2027.**

Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to approve the renewal of the Employee Health Insurance with Blue Cross Blue Shield, effective June 1, 2026, through May 31, 2027. Mrs. Yolanda Santos, Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- H. Discussion and possible action to renew the Commercial Property Insurance with the HAI Group for the Laredo Housing Facilities Corporation effective June 27, 2026 through June 26, 2027.**

Mrs. Sylvia Madrid, Vice-Chair, moved to approve the c renew the Commercial Property Insurance with the HAI Group for the Laredo Housing Facilities Corporation effective June 27, 2026 through June 26, 2027. Ms. Myrna Flores, Resident Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- I. Discussion and possible action to accept into public record the Housing Authority of the City of Laredo Audited Financial Statements for Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2025.**

Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to accept into public record the Housing Authority of the City of Laredo Audited Financial Statements for Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2025, as presented by Mr. Jason Hyde, Partner at Garza/Gonzalez & Associates, Mrs. Yolanda Santos, Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- J. Discussion and possible action to approve the Capital Fund Amendment to the Consolidated Annual Contribution Contract (ACC) for Calendar Year 2026.**

Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to approve to approve the Capital Fund Amendment to the Consolidated Annual Contribution Contract (ACC) for Calendar Year 2026. Mrs. Silvia Madrid, Vice-Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- K. Discussion and possible action to award RFP No. LHA 2026-0326-1 Bathroom Renovations at AMP 5 – Meadow Acres & South Laredo and authorize the Executive Director to finalize negotiations and contract with the selected firm, as recommended by staff.**

Mrs. Valeria De Leon, Procurement Officer, resented Action Item 13K. Discussion took place. Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to award RFP No. LHA 2026-0326-1 Bathroom Renovations at AMP 5 – Meadow Acres & South Laredo to De La Vega Investments and authorize the Executive Director to finalize negotiations and contract. Mrs. Yolanda Santos, Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- L. Discussion and possible action to renew the contract for off-duty police officers.**

Mrs. Christina Ramos, Human Resource Manager, presented Action Item 13L. Discussion took place. Ms. Myrna Flores, Resident Commissioner, moved to renew the contract for off-duty police officers Mrs. Silvia Madrid, Vice-Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session-Pursuant to Chapter 551, Subchapter D Texas Government Code at any time during the meeting of the Board of Commissioners for the Housing Authority of the City of Laredo,

the Board may meet in executive session for consultation concerning attorney-client matters (real estate, litigation, contract, personnel, and security) pursuant to Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code.

- A. Deliberation regarding contract for RFP No. LHA 2026-0313-1 General Legal Counsel Services, pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Section 551.072.**
- B. Deliberation regarding contract for RFP No. LHA 2026-0313-2 Specialized Legal Services, pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Section 551.072.**
- C. Consultation with legal counsel with respect in regards to the policies and procedures for the Texas Homeless Network (THN) Innovation Funds Grant, pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Section 551.071.**
- D. Consultation with legal counsel with respect in regards to the policies and procedures for the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) Reentry Grant, pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Section 551.071.**
- E. Consultation with legal counsel with respect in regards to the housing project located at 508 Gonzalez Street, Laredo, Texas, 78040, and matters related thereto pursuant to Texas Government Code, Section 551.071.**
- F. Consultation with legal counsel with respect in regards to the Permanent Supportive Housing project (City of Laredo HOME-ARP Grant), and matters related thereto pursuant to Texas Government Code, Section 551.071.**

Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to go into Executive Session. Mrs. Silvia Madrid, Vice-Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

Board of Commissioners went into Executive Session at 11:27 a.m.

Board of Commissioners returned from Executive Session at 12:33 p.m. where no action was taken.

15. OPEN SESSION

- A. Discussion, consideration, and possible action regarding the award of RFP No. LHA 2026-0313-1 General Legal Counsel Services and authorize the Executive Director to finalize negotiations and contract with the selected firm(s), as recommended by staff.**

Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to authorize the Executive Director to award of RFP No. LHA 2026-0313-1 General Legal Counsel Services and authorize the Executive Director to finalize negotiations and contract with the Law Office of Sergio Lozano & Trautmann/Garcia as discussed in Executive Session. Mrs. Silvia Madrid, Vice-Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- B. Discussion, consideration, and possible action regarding the award of RFP No. LHA 2026-0313-2 Specialized Legal Services and authorize the Executive Director to finalize negotiations and contract with the selected firm(s), as recommended by staff.**

Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to authorize the Executive Director to award of RFP No. LHA 2026-0313-2 Specialized Legal Services and authorize the Executive Director to finalize negotiations and contract with the Law Office of Sergio Lozano & Trautmann/Garcia as discussed in Executive Session. Mr. Aranda motioned also authorized both legal services contracts to commence

on May 19, 2026, for a five-year term. Ms. Myrna Flores, Resident Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- C. Discussion, consideration, and possible action regarding the policies and procedures for the Texas Homeless Network (THN) Innovation Funds Grant.

Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to approve the policies and procedures for the Texas Homeless Network (THN) Innovation Funds Grant as discussed in Executive Session. Mrs. Yolanda Santos, Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- D. Discussion, consideration, and possible action regarding the policies and procedures for the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) Reentry Grant.

Ms. Cynthia Mares, Board Chair, moved to approve the policies and procedures for the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) Reentry Grant as discussed in Executive Session. Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- E. Discussion, consideration, and possible action regarding the housing project located at 508 Gonzalez Street, Laredo, Texas, 78040, and authorizing the Executive Director to proceed with procurement of this project.

Mrs. Silvia Madrid, Vice-Chair, moved to authorize the Executive Director to proceed with procurement of the housing project located at 508 Gonzalez Street, Laredo, Texas, 78040, as discussed in Executive Session. Mrs. Yolanda Santos, Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

- F. Discussion, consideration, and possible action regarding the Permanent Supportive Housing project (City of Laredo HOME-ARP Grant) and authorizing the Executive Director proceed with procurement of this project.

Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to authorize the Executive Director to proceed with procurement of the Permanent Supportive Housing project (City of Laredo HOME-ARP Grant), as discussed in Executive Session. Mrs. Silvia Madrid, Vice-Chair, seconded the motion; motion carried.

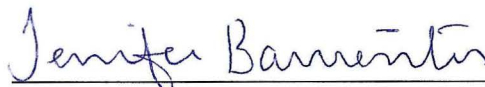
16. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Joe E. Aranda, Commissioner, moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Myrna Flores, Resident Commissioner, seconded the motion; motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 12:39 p.m.



Cynthia Mares, Board Chair



Jennifer Barrientos, Executive Director