



LAREDO COLLEGE DISTRICT
Laredo, Texas

The public hearing on the proposed fiscal year 2022 budget and 2021 property tax rate of the Laredo College Board of Trustees convened on Thursday, August 26, 2021, beginning at 6:02 p.m. in the Samuel A. Meyer Board Room located at the Elpha Lee West Building Room 105 at the Fort McIntosh Campus. Due to health and safety concerns related to the COVID-19 Coronavirus and pursuant to Governor Greg Abbott’s Temporary Suspension of Open Meetings Laws issued on March 16, 2020, some of Laredo College Board members participated via telephone call.

ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT

Lupita Zepeda, President
Jorge “JD” Delgado, Vice President
Jackie Leven-Ramos, Secretary
Cynthia Mares (*arrived at 6:07 p.m.*)
Mercurio Martinez, Jr.
Henry S. Carranza, Ph.D.
Esteban Rangel (*participated via telephone call*)
Karina “Kari” Elizondo
Tita C. Vela

OTHERS

Marisela Rodriguez Tijerina, Ed.D.
Rusty Meurer
Cesar E. Vela Jr.

MEMBERS ABSENT

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Zepeda called the meeting to order. Ms. Leven-Ramos called the roll. Ms. Zepeda announced that a quorum of the members was present, that this meeting was duly called, and that notice of this meeting was posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act.

**PUBLIC HEARING ON
PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR
2022 BUDGET AND 2021
PROPERTY TAX RATE – MR.
CESAR E. VELA, JR.**

Ms. Zepeda presided as Chair of the Public Hearing and provided background information. She announced that if anyone wanting to express their views on the proposed 2021 property tax rate and proposed fiscal year 2022 budget may do so now.

There being no speakers, Ms. Zepeda indicated that the public hearing is concluded.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:08 p.m., Ms. Leven-Ramos moved to close the public hearing. Ms. Vela seconded the motion; motion carried.

The Regular Board meeting of the Laredo College Board of Trustees convened at 6:09 p.m., immediately following the public hearing on the Proposed 2021 Budget.

ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT

Lupita Zepeda, President
Jorge “JD” Delgado, Vice President
Jackie Leven-Ramos, Secretary
Cynthia Mares
Mercurio Martinez, Jr.
Henry S. Carranza, Ph.D. (*did not return from executive session*)
Esteban Rangel (*participated via telephone call; disconnected telephone call at 9:15 p.m.*)
Karina “Kari” Elizondo (*left the meeting at 9:38 p.m.*)
Tita C. Vela

OTHERS

Marisela Rodriguez Tijerina, Ed.D.
Rusty Meurer
Nora R. Garza, Ph.D.
David V. Arreazola, Ed.D.
Javier Cano
Jaime J. Castro
Prakash Mansinghani
Rosario Dominguez
Cesar E. Vela Jr.
Rolando Ortiz
Myron Dornic
Hector Perez
Fred Solis

MEMBERS ABSENT

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Zepeda called the meeting to order. Ms. Leven-Ramos called the roll. Ms. Zepeda announced that a quorum of the members was present, that this meeting was duly called, and that notice of this meeting was posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act.

**APPROVAL OF THE
MINUTES FOR REGULAR
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MEETING OF JULY 29, 2021
AND SPECIAL BOARD OF
TRUSTEES MEETING OF
AUGUST 4, 2021, AND
BOARD RETREAT OF
AUGUST 14, 2021**

Judge Martinez moved to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Delgado; motion carried.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

No one signed up for public testimony.

**RECOGNITIONS,
COMMUNICATIONS,
INTRODUCTIONS OF
PERSONNEL, AND NEW
PERSONNEL ACTIONS FOR
THE MONTH**

- “Get It to the Finish Line” Grant – Dr. Nora R. Garza, Vice President for Resource Development, announced that Laredo College will receive a \$62,500 grant from Rio South Texas to assist individuals to complete a degree beginning Spring 2022.
- Texas A&M Kingsville Grant – Dr. Garza announced that as part of a grant with Texas A&M University-Kingsville, Laredo College will receive \$300,000 to increase the number of engineering students beginning at Laredo College and transferring to Texas A&M University-Kingsville.
- TikTok Health Heroes Starter Kit Distribution Event – Dr. David V. Arreazola, Interim Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs & Compliance, provided information on the event which took place on August 18, 2021. TikTok provided a grant which was used to purchase starter kits of instructional materials for nursing students worth at about \$500.
- CampusShield – Dr. Arreazola, Mr. Javier Cano, Safety & Risk Manager, and Mr. Jaime J. Castro, Interim Chief of Police, reported on CampusShield, an app which will be used to communicate with students, employees, and the community by sending mass notifications.
- Dr. Marisela Rodriguez Tijerina, Interim President, announced:
 - press conference for the Bachelor’s Degree in Organizational Leadership on August 31, 2021.
 - for the second time, Laredo College is named #1 Texas community college.
 - retirement of Mr. Luciano Ramon, Information Technology Officer, after 37 years of service.
 - announced personnel reclassifications, new hires, and promotions: Juan C. Tovar, Rebekah Herrera, Andrea Lopez, Olga I. Vazquez, Miguel A. Agüero, Dr. Michael M. Bailey, Jesus E. Carrizales, Norma E. Hachar, Jennifer A. Hernandez, Dr. Dacun Li, Francisco Mancillas, Blanca I. Magana de Corona, Norma L. Martinez, Jaime C. Perez, Jessica L. Rodriguez, Francisco Ruiz III, Jacqueline Villalon, Antonio Villarreal, and Eva Villarreal.

FACULTY SENATE REPORT

Mr. Prakash Mansinghani, Faculty Senate President, reported on: presidential search process, mask mandate, cost of living adjustment, and gratitude.

**CLASSIFIED STAFF
COUNCIL REPORT**

Ms. Rosario Dominguez, Classified Staff Council President, announced that she is stepping down due to her term ending as Classified Staff Council President. She indicated that an election of officers was done during Convocation at the CSC meeting and announced the new CSC President for 2021-2023 is Ms. Ciria Hernandez.

Ms. Mares moved to approve all of the following items under Consent Agenda.

- Item 8.A. – July 2021 Financial Report
- Item 8.B. – Approval to Enter into Agreement with Trane to Conduct Study for Cooling Needs Associated with the Lewis Energy Group Academic Center, Martinez Fine Arts Center, and Performing Arts
- Item 8.C. – Approval of Information Technology Service Expenditures as Approved by the FY 2022 Budget

Judge Martinez seconded the motion; motion passed.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION
FISCAL YEAR 2022 BUDGET AND 2021 PROPERTY TAX RATE – MR. CESAR VELA

Mr. Cesar Vela, Vice President of Finance, answered questions that the Board had during the Budget Workshop.

Item 9.A.1. – Resolution Adopting FY 2022 Budget

Mr. Rusty Meurer, college attorney, read the resolution adopting FY 2022 budget.

**Resolution Adopting Budget for
 Fiscal Year 2022**

WHEREAS, each year the Board of Trustees of the Laredo College District is required to have a budget prepared, showing the estimated revenue and proposed expenditures for the succeeding school year, and to cause the same to be filed in accordance with the rules and regulations prescribed by the Texas Higher Education Board; and

WHEREAS, such a budget has been prepared and the public has been given notice that such budget would be presented for discussion and adoption on August 26, 2021, at the time and place specified in such notice; and

WHEREAS, such budget has been discussed and a majority of the Board of Trustees wish to adopt same for Fiscal Year 2022;

BE IT RESOLVED THEREFORE, that such budget be adopted and same is hereby adopted in all things.

Adopted on this 26th day of August, 2021, by the Board of Trustees.

Ms. Mares so moved to approve the resolution. Mr. Delgado seconded the motion; motion carried. Ms. Elizondo opposed.

Item 9.A.2. – Resolution Adopting 2021 Property Tax Rate

Mr. Meurer read the resolution adopting 2021 property tax rate.

**Resolution of Laredo College District Board
 of Trustees Adopting Tax Rate for
 Fiscal Year 2022**

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of the Laredo College District, in order to levy ad valorem taxes, is required to set and establish a tax rate each year; and

WHEREAS, such Board of Trustees has considered this matter and desires to set the 2021 property tax rate;

BE IT RESOLVED, THEREFORE, that on August 26, 2021, the 2021 property tax rate be, and the same is hereby set at \$0.319441 per \$100.00 valuation of taxable property, of which \$0.252022 shall be for maintenance and operations and \$0.067419 shall be for debt retirement.

THIS TAX RATE WILL RAISE MORE TAXES FOR MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS THAN LAST YEAR’S TAX RATE.

THE TAX RATE WILL EFFECTIVELY BE RAISED BY EIGHT PERCENT (8%) AND WILL RAISE TAXES FOR MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS ON A \$100,000 HOME BY APPROXIMATELY NEGATIVE EIGHTY FOUR CENTS (-\$0.84).

Such taxes are to be assessed and collected by the tax officials designated by Laredo College.

Adopted this 26th day of August, 2021, by the Board of Trustees.

Ms. Leven-Ramos moved “that the property tax rate be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of .319441 for \$100 valuation of taxable property, of which .252022 shall be for maintenance and operations and .067419 shall be for debt retirement which is effectively a 6.45% increase in the tax rate and that the Board of Trustees approve and adopt the resolution which adopts the 2021 property tax rate”. Mr. Delgado seconded the motion; motion carried. Ms. Elizondo opposed.

Item 9.A.3. – Resolution Authorizing Collection of “General Use Fee” and Expenditure of Funds for FY 2022

Mr. Meurer read the resolution authorizing collection of general use fee and expenditure of funds for FY 2022.

**Resolution Authorizing Collection of
“General Use Fee” and Expenditure of Funds
for Fiscal Year 2022**

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of the Laredo College District is authorized to fix and collect tuition and fees from students for the use of its property, buildings, and facilities; and

WHEREAS, such Board of Trustees has deemed it necessary and advisable to collect a “General Use Fee” from students for the use of its property, buildings and facilities and to apply such proceeds to the payment of principal and interest of certain revenue bonds issued and sold in 2011, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2020 for expenses generally associated with construction, reconstruction, remodeling, and repair of its property, buildings, and facilities; and

WHEREAS, such Board of Trustees has determined that such “General Use Fee” should be set at \$50.00 per semester credit hour for Fiscal Year 2021, to be used as follows:

1. Approximately \$ 4,218,270.00 for revenue bond debt service;
2. Approximately \$ 500,000.00 to be retained as general revenue for expenses related to physical plant operations and maintenance;
3. The balance for payment of construction, reconstruction, remodeling, and repair of property, buildings, and facilities;

BE IT RESOLVED THEREFORE, that a “General Use Fee” be collected from students at the time of registration, in the amount of \$50.00 per semester credit hour for Fiscal Year 2022.

Adopted on this 26th day of August, 2021, by the Board of Trustees.

Ms. Leven-Ramos moved “that the Laredo College Board of Trustees approve and adopt the resolution authorizing the collection of a general use fee and expenditure of funds for FY 2022”. Mr. Delgado seconded the motion. Discussion took place. Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina noted that Laredo College has not raised tuition and fees since 2013 and Laredo College is not increasing tuition and fees. Ms. Zepeda called for the vote. Motion carried. Ms. Elizondo and Mr. Rangel opposed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:45 p.m., Mr. Delgado moved to go into executive session on the following items:

- Item 9.B. – Discussion and Possible Action on The Coves at Winfield Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) #2 – *Dr. Marisela Rodriguez Tijerina*
- Item 11.A. – Closed Session Discussion with Laredo College District Attorney to Receive Legal Advice Regarding the Building Lease Agreement Between The Imaginarium of South Texas and Laredo College, Pursuant to Texas Government Code Sections 551.071
- Item 11.B. – Closed Session Discussion Concerning Rescinding Acceptance of Real Property Donated to Laredo College, Pursuant to Texas Government Code Sections 551.071, 551.072 and 551.073
- Item 11.C. – Closed Session Discussion of Laredo College’s 2018-2021 Safety & Security Audit Per TEC 37.108(c), Pursuant to Texas Government Code Sections 551.071 and 551.076

Ms. Mares seconded the motion; motion carried. Ms. Zepeda indicated that the Board would go into executive session pursuant to Texas Government Code sections 551.071 and 551.074. Mr. Meurer cited the

codes for going into executive session on the items are 551.071, 551.072, 551.073, and 551.076.

The Board reconvened to open session at 8:52 p.m. Ms. Zepeda noted that no action was taken in executive session.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE COVES AT WINFIELD TAX INCREMENT REINVESTMENT ZONE (TIRZ) #2 – DR. MARISELA RODRIGUEZ TIJERINA

Dr. Rolando Ortiz, Chief Operating Officer from Killam Development, presented an overview of TIRZ #2 boundary, Coves Master Plan, proposed development, projected costs, TIRZ financing overview, terms and conditions, proposed LC north campus plan, project renderings, and actions and timeline. Dr. Ortiz and Myron Dornic, Senior Counsel, Jackson Walker LLP, answered questions from the Board. *(Mr. Rangel disconnected telephone call at 9:15 p.m.)* Ms. Mares moved to defer this item to the next Board meeting so Board president and/or Board officers, administration and Mr. Meurer can meet with Killam Development. Ms. Vela seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Ms. Zepeda called for the vote; motion carried. Ms. Elizondo and Judge Martinez opposed.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS TO THE LAREDO COLLEGE FACILITIES MASTER PLAN PHASE III BOND CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS – MR. CESAR VELA

Mr. Vela asked that the Board approve the addition of the Martinez Fine Arts Center for HVAC improvements and the Lamar Bruni Vergara Environmental Center for repairs and upgrades to the Facilities Master Plan Phase III Bond Construction Projects and the redistribution of \$2 million of Phase III Facilities Master Plan Bond funds originally allocated for the Ruben Garcia Building project to cover the cost of the MFA HVAC improvements. Judge Martinez moved to approve. Mr. Delgado seconded the motion; motion carried.

Mr. Delgado made a motion to move up Item 12.A. - *Approval of Building Lease Agreement Between The Imaginarium of South Texas and Laredo College*. Ms. Leven-Ramos seconded the motion; motion carried.

APPROVAL OF BUILDING LEASE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE IMAGINARIUM OF SOUTH TEXAS AND LAREDO COLLEGE

Mr. Hector Perez, Imaginarium of South Texas Board President, thanked the Board for the lease agreement. Mr. Delgado moved to approve the building lease agreement between The Imaginarium of South Texas and Laredo College. Ms. Leven-Ramos seconded the motion; motion carried.

ASSIGNMENT OF ARCHITECT FOR FACILITIES MASTER PLAN PHASE III PROJECTS – MR. CESAR VELA

Mr. Vela asked that the Board approve the assignment of Cavazos and Associates Architects as the architects of record for the Lamar Bruni Vergara Environmental Center project and the Law Enforcement Training Center project. Ms. Mares moved to approve. Ms. Vela seconded the motion; motion carried.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MEMBER TRAVEL AND REIMBURSEMENT OF REASONABLE TRAVEL EXPENSES AS PER LAREDO COLLEGE BOARD POLICIES BBG(LOCAL): BOARD MEMBERS, COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES, AND BBH(LOCAL): BOARD MEMBERS, CONVENTIONS, CONFERENCES, AND WORKSHOPS – MS. LUPITA ZEPEDA/DR. MARISELA RODRIGUEZ TIJERINA

Item 9.E.1. – 2021 Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) Leadership Congress

Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina noted that the Board member has rescinded this invitation to this conference; therefore, no action is needed on this item. Ms. Leven-Ramos noted for the record that she is rescinding her request due to schedule conflict.

Item 9.E.2. – Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA)/Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) txEDCON21

Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina noted the individuals who would benefit from this conference. Ms. Leven-Ramos moved that, based on this information, this “conference is not necessary or desirable to carry out the educational functions of the College district as required by a Board policy BBH(LOCAL)”. Ms. Mares seconded the motion; motion carried. Ms. Elizondo and Judge Martinez were not present for the vote.

INFORMATION ITEMS

ENROLLMENT UPDATE – DR.
FRED SOLIS

Dr. Fred Solis, Vice President of Student Success and Enrollment, presented preliminary numbers of Fall enrollment, semester credit hours, and contact hours. He indicated that there are plans for a Second Start beginning in October.

**LIABILITY, ETHICS, AND
CONFLICT OF INTEREST –**
MR. GUILLERMO R. GARCIA

Mr. Delgado moved to defer this item. Ms. Leven-Ramos seconded the motion; motion carried.

**RESCINDING ACCEPTANCE
OF REAL PROPERTY
DONATED TO LAREDO
COLLEGE**

Ms. Leven-Ramos moved to rescind the acceptance of real property donated to Laredo College as discussed in executive session. Judge Martinez seconded the motion. Mr. Meurer noted that the property was donated to Laredo College on December 15, 2020 and that the property is located on 1012 Vidaurri Avenue. Ms. Zepeda called for the vote. Motion carried.

**ACKNOWLEDGE LAREDO
COLLEGE'S 2018-2021
SAFETY & SECURITY AUDIT**

Ms. Mares moved to acknowledge Laredo College's 2018-2021 Safety & Security Audit report. Ms. Leven-Ramos seconded the motion; motion carried.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORTS
CAMPUS POLICE,
PERSONNEL, TRAVEL, AND
OTHER REPORTS**

Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina noted that the reports are in the Board materials.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

Thursday, September 30, 2021, 6:00 p.m. – Regular Board of Trustees Meeting

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:48 p.m., Mr. Delgado moved to adjourn the meeting. Judge Martinez seconded the motion; motion carried.