



## LAREDO COLLEGE DISTRICT

Laredo, Texas

The regular meeting of the Laredo College Board of Trustees convened on Tuesday, November 30, 2021, beginning at 6:09 p.m. in the Samuel A. Meyer Board Room located at the Elpha Lee West Building Room 105 at the Fort McIntosh Campus.

### ROLL CALL

#### MEMBERS PRESENT

Lupita Zepeda, President  
Jorge "JD" Delgado, Vice President  
Jackie Leven-Ramos, Secretary  
Mercurio Martinez, Jr.  
Esteban Rangel (*arrived at 6:35 p.m.*)  
Karina "Kari" Elizondo  
Tita C. Vela

#### MEMBERS ABSENT

Cynthia Mares (*at 7:13 p.m., participated via telephone conference call – as per Texas Government Code Sec. 551.122, a Board member participating by telephone conference call is considered absent from the meeting for purposes of Section 130.0845, Education Code*)  
Henry S. Carranza, Ph.D.

#### OTHERS

Marisela Rodriguez Tijerina, M.S., Ed.D.  
Rusty Meurer  
Veronica Martinez, Ph.D.  
Maria Luisa Ramirez  
Brenda Ramirez  
Cliffe Killam  
Prakash Mansinghani  
Alan Cantu  
Michael Gonzalez  
Cesar E. Vela Jr.  
Margarita Araiza  
Orlando Zepeda  
Andrea Lopez  
Diana Ortiz  
Steven Aguilar

### CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Zepeda called the meeting to order. Mr. Delgado 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 MEETING OF OCTOBER 28, 2021 AND SPECIAL BOARD MEETING OF NOVEMBER 9, 2021

Mr. Delgado moved to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Leven-Ramos; motion carried unanimously.

### PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Ms. Zepeda provided information from the Board Policy BDB(LOCAL) to clarify the topics presented under public testimony.

"An individual's comments to the Board shall not exceed three minutes per meeting. When there are six or less speakers scheduled, the Board President may extend each speaker's time to five minutes. Time may not be ceded from one speaker to another. The Board President may also limit the total amount of time for public testimony but not to less than thirty minutes. The speaker may not speak on personnel or student matters that refer to individuals by name or title. After a speaker's comments, the Board President shall make whatever response, if any, or take whatever action, if any, is deemed appropriate to handle the matter. Such response or action may include the following: referring the matter to the College President for action or for further recommendations, referring the matter to a later meeting or to a Board committee for further discussion or study, indicate that the matter shall be taken under advisement. If the Board President determines that a person has not attempted to resolve a matter administratively, the person shall be directed to the appropriate policy for attempted resolution before bringing the matter to the Board."

Mr. Robert A. Tijerina from Tijerina Galvan Lawrence LLC introduced himself and thanked the Board for selecting his firm to be Laredo College's Financial Advisor.

**RECOGNITIONS,  
COMMUNICATIONS,  
INTRODUCTIONS OF  
PERSONNEL, AND NEW  
PERSONNEL ACTIONS FOR  
THE MONTH  
TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION  
COORDINATING BOARD  
REPORTING  
MODERNIZATION GRANT -  
DR. VERONICA  
MARTINEZ/MS. MARIA LUISA  
RAMIREZ**

Dr. Veronica Martinez, Interim Dean of Assessment and Research, reported on a grant that LC received for \$50,000 for modifying how reports are submitted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Ms. Maria Luisa Ramirez, Director of Research & Planning, explained how the grant will be used.

**TEXAS RESKILLING AND  
UPSKILLING THROUGH  
EDUCATION (TRUE)  
INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY  
GRANT PROGRAM - MS.  
SANDRA CORTEZ/MS.  
BRENDA MARTINEZ**

Ms. Brenda Martinez, Director of Continuing Education, reported that the department received a grant for \$253,499 to provide high demand training programs. She thanked Ms. Denise Flores, Dr. Nora Garza, and Ms. Susan Carreon for their assistance in the proposal of the grant.

Mr. Delgado moved to bring up Item 9.A. - *Approval of Participation Agreement Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) No. 2 Also Known as The Coves at Winfield Between the City of Laredo, Texas and Laredo College District.* Ms. Leven-Ramos seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF  
PARTICIPATION  
AGREEMENT TAX  
INCREMENT  
REINVESTMENT ZONE  
(TIRZ) NO. 2 ALSO KNOWN  
AS THE COVES AT  
WINFIELD BETWEEN THE  
CITY OF LAREDO, TEXAS  
AND LAREDO COLLEGE  
DISTRICT - DR. MARISELA  
RODRIGUEZ TIJERINA**

Dr. Marisela Rodriguez Tijerina, Interim President, presented a draft of the participation agreement that LC's legal counsel and Killam Development's legal counsel have put together based on conversations from the last Board meeting. Mr. Rusty Meurer, college attorney, went over the participation agreement. He noted that the only update to the agreement is the name of the street. Judge Martinez moved to approve the agreement. Mr. Delgado seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously. Mr. Meurer noted that the agreement referenced a land donation to the college and recommended that the Board authorize the college president to negotiate the terms of the approximate 1.8 acres of land and \$1,600,000 for construction and bring to the Board for approval. Ms. Leven-Ramos so moved. Mr. Delgado seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously. Mr. Cliffe Killam thanked the Board for the agreement.

**INTRODUCTIONS OF  
PERSONNEL/PERSONNEL  
ACTIONS - DR. MARISELA  
RODRIGUEZ TIJERINA**

Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina recognized Dr. Marissa Guerrero, Dr. Veronica Martinez, and Dr. David Arreazola for their work in obtaining the second Bachelor's Degree that will be offered by Laredo College.

Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina introduced personnel actions and new hires for the month: Ms. Ana C. Proa, Workforce Education Coordinator, and Ms. Rosaura A. Sanchez, Diagnostic Medical Sonography Instructor.

**FACULTY SENATE REPORT**

Mr. Prakash Mansinghani, Faculty Senate President, thanked the Board for approving a one-time stipend for employees. He noted the difficult decisions the Board needs to make in the future for the success of the college and its mission.

Ms. Zepeda acknowledged the presence of Mr. Rangel.

**ASSOCIATED STUDENT ORGANIZATION REPORT**

Mr. Alan Cantu, Associate Student Organization President, reported on: New Vision Community Church pantry event, ASO Friendsgiving Chick-fil-A event, mental health awareness fair, holiday market by sister cities event, toy drive, and club/organization events (PTK scavenger hunt, EMS fundraisers, MAES toy drive donation collection and leadership conference).

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Mr. Delgado moved to approve all of the following items under Consent Agenda.

- September 2021 Financial Report
- August 2021 Quarterly Investment Report and FYE 2021 Annual Investment Report
- Approval of Annual Energy Management System Maintenance
- Ratification for Purchase of Truck for Truck Driving Program
- Approval of Annual Cyberbit Cyber Range Licenses
- Ratification of the Cisco Smartnet Hardware Maintenance Renewal

Judge Martinez seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION**

**APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO LAREDO COLLEGE STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE – MS. JACKIE LEVEN-RAMOS**

Ms. Leven-Ramos moved to appoint Ms. Lupita Zepeda to the Student Success Committee. Ms. Vela seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL TO ALLOW INTERIM COLLEGE PRESIDENT TO ENTER INTO A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE CITY OF LAREDO TO PROVIDE WORKFORCE SKILLS TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT TRAINING, AND REDEVELOPMENT TRAINING FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO EXPERIENCED LAY-OFF, FURLOUGH, OR UNDER-EMPLOYMENT DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LAREDO CARES 2.0 WORKFORCE TRAINING PROGRAM (CARES 2.0) – MS. CYNTHIA MARES/MR. MICHAEL GONZALEZ**

Mr. Michael Gonzalez, Senior Director of External Affairs, asked that the Board authorize the Interim College President to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Laredo to establish the Laredo CARES 2.0 Workforce Training Program. In addition, staff recommends that the Board authorize Laredo College to match \$1,000,000 using the Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF). Some of the training includes truck driving, bus driving, certified nursing assistant, and bookkeeping. Mr. Rangel moved to approve. Mr. Delgado seconded the motion. Ms. Zepeda asked Mr. Cesar Vela, Vice President of Finance, if the \$1,000,000 is available; Mr. Vela indicated yes. Mr. Meurer noted that the MOU that is presented will have minor edits but is ready to be signed. Ms. Zepeda called for the vote; motion carried unanimously.

**OPTIONS TO IMPLEMENT FOR FACILITATING COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN LAREDO COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND/OR ADMINISTRATION – MR. ESTEBAN RANGEL**

Mr. Rangel noted that he met with Mr. Meurer regarding Board communications. Mr. Meurer indicated that he also met with the College President and Board President on the options in addition to his law partner. He recommends that the dissemination of college business information be directed from the College President and there be no reply from Board members. Also, if Board members request information, they can email or call the President's Office to make the request. Mr. Rangel moved to adhere to Mr. Meurer's recommendations. Ms. Elizondo seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Ms. Zepeda called for the vote; motion carried unanimously.

**ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION AND ORDER OF THE LAREDO COLLEGE DISTRICT BOARD TO CAST VOTES FOR WEBB COUNTY**

Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina asked the Board to approve the resolution to cast votes (519) for the candidate, Mr. Delgado, on the election ballot for the Webb County Appraisal District Board of Directors. Judge Martinez

**APPRAISAL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS CANDIDATES ON THE VOTING BALLOT – DR. MARISELA RODRIGUEZ TIJERINA**

moved to approve to cast all 519 for Mr. Delgado. Ms. Leven-Ramos seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF BUILDING LEASE AGREEMENT BETWEEN WEBB COUNTY HERITAGE FOUNDATION AND LAREDO COLLEGE – MR. CESAR VELA**

Mr. Vela asked that the Board approve a one-year building lease agreement with the Webb County Heritage Foundation for building P-128 at the Fort McIntosh Campus. He and Ms. Margarita Araiza, Executive Director of the Webb County Heritage Foundation, answered questions from the Board. Mr. Rangel moved to approve the lease agreement. Judge Martinez seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

**ADOPT A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING UNIMEX TRADE & LOGISTICS LLC APPLICATION TO BECOME A USAGE-DRIVEN FOREIGN TRADE ZONE #94 DESIGNATION, LOCATED AT 13604 INTERSTATE 35 FRONTAGE RD., LAREDO TEXAS 78045 – DR. MARISELA RODRIGUEZ TIJERINA**

Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina presented an application from Unimex Trade & Logistics LLC to become a usage-driven foreign trade zone #94 designation for approval. Discussion followed.

Mr. Zepeda acknowledged that Ms. Mares joined the meeting via telephone conference call.

Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina recommended to schedule a presentation from Webb County Appraisal District to the Finance & Audit Committee and develop a process to address the questions from the Board. Mr. Delgado moved to defer this item. Ms. Leven-Ramos seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

**INFORMATION ITEMS**

**INFORMATION ON OPPORTUNITY FOR OIL & GAS TRAINING PROGRAM – JUDGE MERCURIO MARTINEZ, JR.**

Judge Martinez reported that Mr. Orlando Zepeda, Director of Plant Operations & Maintenance, made a presentation to PEMEX officials regarding the opportunity of offering introductory courses in oil & gas to their employees. Mr. Zepeda provided information on possible courses/training.

**2022 LAREDO INTERNATIONAL FAIR & EXPOSITION (L.I.F.E.) PAGEANT AGREEMENT – MS. CYNTHIA MARES**

Ms. Mares announced that this is the first year that L.I.F.E. will hold their pageant at Laredo College Martinez Fine Arts Center.

**ENROLLMENT UPDATE – MS. ANDREA LOPEZ**

Ms. Andrea Lopez, Associate Dean of Enrollment Management & Student Success, presented information on Wintermester and Spring 2022 enrollment.

**NOTIFICATION OF THE SERVING OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AT FRIENDS OF LC HOLIDAY PARTY AS PER LAREDO COLLEGE BOARD COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS POLICY GDA(LOCAL): COMMUNITY USE OF COLLEGE DISTRICT FACILITIES - CONDUCT ON COLLEGE DISTRICT PREMISES – DR. MARISELA RODRIGUEZ TIJERINA**

Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina announced that the annual LC Holiday Party will be held on December 9<sup>th</sup> and is notifying the Board of the serving of alcohol at this event as per Laredo College Policy GDA(LOCAL).

**OFFICE OF STRATEGIC RECRUITMENT UPDATE ON OCTOBER APPLICATION DRIVES AT SCHOOL**

Dr. Diana Ortiz, Associate Dean of Strategic Recruitment, presented information on October 2021 application drives. She answered questions from the Board.

**DISTRICTS AND UPDATE ON  
FINANCIAL AID FAFSA  
BLITZ – DR. DIANA  
ORTIZ/MR. STEVEN AGUILAR**

Mr. Steven Aguilar, Director of Financial Aid, presented a financial aid update on FAFSA Blitz events. He answered questions from the Board.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 8:25 p.m., Mr. Delgado moved to go into executive session on the following items:

- Closed Session Meeting to Conduct Hearing on Appeal to the Board or Trustees Filed by Laredo College Student, Including Consultation with Laredo College Attorney to Discuss Legal Issues, as per Board Policy FLB(LOCAL): STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES – STUDENT CONDUCT, Pursuant to Texas Government Code Sections 551.071, 551.074, 551.082, and 551.0821
- Closed Session Consultation with Laredo College Attorney to Discuss the Status of the Following Lawsuit: *Dr. Cin Bickel, Individually and on Behalf of All Other Similarly Situated Plaintiffs vs. Laredo College FKA Laredo Community College*, Cause No. 2020CV1001621D1, Pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071

Ms. Leven-Ramos seconded the motion; motion carried.

The Board reconvened to open session at 9:36 p.m. Ms. Zepeda noted that no action was taken in executive session.

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE  
ACTION**

**APPEAL TO THE BOARD OF  
TRUSTEES FILED BY A  
LAREDO COLLEGE  
STUDENT AS PER BOARD  
POLICY FLB(LOCAL):  
STUDENT RIGHTS AND  
RESPONSIBILITIES –  
STUDENT CONDUCT**

Ms. Leven-Ramos moved “to uphold the administrative decision made to temporarily suspend the appellant from the Laredo College Homeland Security Studies program effective September 30, 2021 for the reasons stated in the College President’s November 1, 2021 letter to the appellant”. Mr. Delgado seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

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

The reports were provided for information purposes.

**NEXT MEETING DATES:**

Tuesday, December 7, 2021, 6:00 p.m. – Special Board Meeting

Tuesday, December 21, 2021, 6:00 p.m. – Regular Board of Trustees Meeting

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:38 p.m., Mr. Delgado moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Mares seconded the motion; motion carried.