



LAREDO COLLEGE DISTRICT
Laredo, Texas

The regular meeting of the Laredo College Board of Trustees convened on Thursday, October 28, 2021, beginning at 6:00 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
(did not return to the meeting after executive session)
Jackie Leven-Ramos, Secretary
Cynthia Mares *(arrived at 6:14 p.m.)*
Mercurio Martinez, Jr.
Henry S. Carranza, Ph.D. *(arrived at 6:05 p.m.; did not return to the meeting after executive session)*
Esteban Rangel
Karina "Kari" Elizondo
Tita C. Vela *(arrived at 6:07 p.m.)*

OTHERS

Marisela Rodriguez Tijerina, M.S., Ed.D.
Rusty Meurer
Obed Guerrero
Marissa Jimenez,
Jose Luis Santos
Prakash Mansinghani
Alan Cantu
Cesar E. Vela Jr.
Heriberto Hernandez
Fred Solis,
Andrea Lopez

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
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2021
AND SPECIAL BOARD
MEETING OF OCTOBER 14,
2021**

Ms. Leven-Ramos moved to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Delgado; 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 person. 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 comment, 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: 1) referring the matter to the College President for action or for further recommendations, 2) 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."

Jaime D. Donjuan, Christina Garcia, Melanie Gamboa, Linda Fahara, Curt Brian Flood, Maria de Lourdes Gutierrez, Karla Ramirez, Joann De Hoyos, Daniel Perez, Genesis Garza, and Tania Castro expressed their opinions and concerns of the athletics program.

Ms. Zepeda acknowledged the presence of Dr. Carranza, Ms. Vela, and Ms. Mares.

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

**2021 NATIONAL COUNCIL
FOR MARKETING & PUBLIC
RELATIONS DISTRICT 4
CONFERENCE – MR. OBED
GUERRERO**

**ACCREDITATION
COMMISSION FOR
EDUCATION IN NURSING –
DR. DIANNA MILLER**

Mr. Obed Guerrero, Director of Community and Media Relations, reported on the 2021 National Council for Marketing & Public Relations Conference competition and announced the 12 awards that Laredo College received.

On behalf of Dr. Dianna Miller, Dr. Marissa Jimenez, Bachelor's Degree Nursing Operations Manager, and Mr. Jose Luis Santos, Professor of Bachelor's of Science in Nursing, announced that Laredo College Bachelor's of Science in Nursing Degree has received full accreditation from the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing. Mr. Santos provided an update on the program.

**TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION
COORDINATING BOARD
COMMITTEE**

**APPOINTMENTS – DR.
MARISELA RODRIGUEZ
TIJERINA**

Dr. Marisela Rodriguez Tijerina, Interim President, announced that the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) appointed three Laredo College faculty to serve on State committees.

Ms. Selinda Martinez, Associate Professor of Biology/Natural Sciences Department Chair – THECB Texas Transfer Advisory Committee

Ms. Brianna Underbakke, Professor of Criminal Justice – Transfer Framework Field of Study for Criminal Justice

Mr. George E. Macdonald, Jr., Professor of Management/Business Management Department Chair – THECB Texas Transfer Framework Field of Study for Business Management

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

Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina introduced personnel actions and new hires for the month: Adriana Craddock, Director of Special Services and Counseling; Rene Montemayor, Professor of English/Spanish/Speech; Norma L. Martinez, Vocational Nursing/Nursing Assistant Instructor & Nursing Laboratory Coordinator; Mary C. Sosa, Special Services Coordinator; Nancy Vela Herrera, Vocational Nursing Instructor; Sara E. Ortiz, Project Secretary/Clerical; Tracey Ramos, Academic Advisor/Career Coach; Gerardo O. Riojas, Data Effectiveness Coordinator; Sara Saldana, Academic Advisor/Career Coach; Gabriela D. Solis Cavazos, STEM Coordinator; Janette Vazquez, Academic Advisor/Career Coach; Reynaldo R. Ramos, Full Stack Developer/Programmer; and Sam H. Tovar, Gym Attendant (South).

FACULTY SENATE REPORT

Mr. Prakash Mansinghani, Faculty Senate President, informed the Board of: Faculty Senate's leadership team – Prakash Mansinghani, President; Victoria Rodriguez, Vice President, and Leticia Spillane, Secretary; Memorial brick project; faculty awards project; and support for Agenda Item 10.H. - *Hearing and Approval of Proposed One-Time Stipend to Eligible Laredo College Employees Funded by the U.S. Department of Education Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) and Other Sources, Including Discussion of the Public Purpose Served.*

**ASSOCIATED STUDENT
ORGANIZATION REPORT**

Mr. Alan Cantu indicated that there is no report for this meeting.

**CLASSIFIED STAFF
COUNCIL REPORT**

No report.

CONSENT AGENDA

Judge Martinez moved to approve all of the following items under Consent Agenda.

- Approval to Extend Collection Agency Contract
- Approval of Information Technology Support and Maintenance Fees as Approved by the FY 2022 Budget
- Approval of Contract for Course Syllabus Management Platform

Mr. Rangel seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

APPOINTING AN INDIVIDUAL TO REPRESENT THE LAREDO COLLEGE DISTRICT AS A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CITY OF LAREDO TAX INCREMENT REINVESTMENT ZONE (TIRZ) NO. 2 ALSO KNOWN AS THE COVES AT WINFIELD – MS. LUPITA ZEPEDA/DR. MARISELA RODRIGUEZ TIJERINA

Mr. Rangel recommended that the Board appoint someone instead of choosing someone by draw. He then moved to nominate himself to the TIRZ Board. Ms. Elizondo seconded the motion. Dr. Carranza moved to nominate Judge Martinez. Mr. Rusty Meurer, college attorney, noted that there is a motion and a second on the floor and that action needs to take place prior to acting on the second motion. A vote appointing Mr. Rangel took place; motion did not pass with a vote of 4 to 5. Judge Martinez seconded Dr. Carranza’s motion; motion passed with a vote of 5 to 4.

ADOPT RESOLUTIONS SUPPORTING APPLICATIONS TO BECOME A USAGE-DRIVEN FOREIGN TRADE ZONE #94 DESIGNATION – DR. MARISELA RODRIGUEZ TIJERINA

Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina indicated that the following applications for usage-driven foreign trade zone #94 designations are being submitted for approval:

- American Air Freight Inc., Located at 5812 East Drive, Laredo, Texas 78041
- Capin Vyborny LLC., Located at 11302 Eastpoint Drive, Laredo, Texas 78044

Mr. Meurer explained the foreign trade zone designation. He answered questions from the Board. Ms. Mares moved to approve. Mr. Rangel seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON OBTAINING INTERNAL AUDITING SERVICES – MR. CESAR VELA

Mr. Cesar Vela, Vice President of Finance, presented options for internal auditing services. Ms. Mares moved to ask the college’s external auditors to offer a proposal for internal auditing services. Ms. Leven-Ramos seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

SELECT INTERNAL ARCHITECT AND DELEGATE TO COLLEGE PRESIDENT THE AUTHORITY TO NEGOTIATE A CONTRACT AND FEES – MR. CESAR VELA

Mr. Vela reported that a request for qualifications for architectural and engineering services was issued. The college received six responses and the committee evaluated the qualifications and the results are:

- 1st – Cavazos & Associates Architects
- 2nd – Sepulveda Associates, Inc.
- 3rd – Able City, LLC
- 4th – Garza/Bomberger & Associates
- 5th – Armko Industries, Inc.
- 6th – Raba Kistner, Inc.

Mr. Vela asked that the Board approve the rankings as scored by the committee and delegate to the college president the authority to negotiate a contract and fees with the highest ranked proposer. Mr. Delgado moved “to select Cavazos & Associates Architects and delegate to the college president the authority to negotiate a contract and fees”. Ms. Leven-Ramos seconded the motion; motion carried with a vote of 8 to 1. Ms. Elizondo stated for the record that she was not allowed to submit a scoresheet for financial advisor/auditor firms due to only being present for two out of the six presentations; however, a Board committee

member was allowed to submit their scoresheet for the internal architect despite the member being present for only two out the six presentations.

ANNEXATION OF NEW PROPERTY WHICH HAS BEEN ANNEXED BY THE CITY OF LAREDO PURSUANT TO TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION CODE SECTION 130.066 – MR. CESAR VELA

Judge Martinez moved to annex the new property as presented. Mr. Delgado seconded the motion. Mr. Meurer asked that the tracts of land be identified.

Mr. Vela noted that the City of Laredo had two cycles for property annexations (one in March and one in May). A third cycle will be finalized in December. The properties being annexed by the City are:

Properties annexed in March
Tract 1 - Rodriguez Ranch Tract
Tract 2 - Cuevas Stanley Tract
Tract 3 - Martinez Tract
Tract 4 - Mario Palos Garza Tract
Tract 5 - Islitas Farms Tract

Properties annexed in May
Tract 1 - Emerald Riverview Tract
Tract 2 - Cinco 28 Tract
Tract 3 - Ema Comercial Tract
Tract 4 - Marquez Tract

Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE MANAGEMENT (ASSOCIATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE) PROGRAM – MR. HERIBERTO HERNANDEZ

Mr. Heriberto Hernandez, Dean of Workforce Education, asked the Board to approve a new Emergency Response Management (Associate of Applied Science Degree) program. He provided program information. Mr. Delgado moved to approve. Ms. Vela seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF 2022 – 2023 LAREDO COLLEGE ACADEMIC CALENDAR – DR. FRED SOLIS

Dr. Fred Solis, Vice President of Student Success and Enrollment, asked that the Board approved the 2022-2023 Laredo College academic calendar. Ms. Mares moved to approve. Mr. Rangel seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

HEARING AND APPROVAL OF PROPOSED ONE-TIME STIPEND TO ELIGIBLE LAREDO COLLEGE EMPLOYEES FUNDED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HIGHER EDUCATION EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND (HEERF) AND OTHER SOURCES, INCLUDING DISCUSSION OF THE PUBLIC PURPOSE SERVED. POSSIBLE CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS LEGAL ISSUES WITH LAREDO COLLEGE COUNSEL PURSUANT TO TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 551.071 – MS. CYNTHIA MARES/MR. CESAR VELA

Mr. Vela asked the Board to approve a one-time performance-based stipend to all eligible full-time employees with funding coming from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF). Mr. Meurer reported that the Finance & Audit Committee discussed the sourcing of funds, gifting of public funds, and conditions of the grant. The stipend has to be used for additional duties due to COVID that employees undertake, which the employees will be undertaking several COVID trainings. Ms. Mares moved that “Laredo College award a one-time performance pay stipend to each full-time Laredo College employee in the gross amount of \$5,000. While most employees will receive the performance pay stipend from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund, those employees who are not eligible to receive pay from HEERF fund will be paid from the Laredo College general operating fund. As a condition to receiving the funds, all employees who receive a performance pay stipend must fully participate in a COVID 19 related training program to be administered over a defined period of time as implemented by our Interim Laredo College President. The public purpose served for disbursing the performance pay stipend will be the additional COVID 19 training and other activities that faculty and other employees will receive under the program, beyond the duties they are required to perform according to their job descriptions and employment contracts. That is my motion”. Mr. Rangel seconded. Discussion followed and Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina and Mr. Vela answered questions from the Board. Mr. Rangel called for the question; motion carried unanimously.

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 - 2021 HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE
– DR. MARISELA RODRIGUEZ
TIJERINA

Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina noted that the Higher Education Leadership Conference is offered to new trustees; therefore, Ms. Elizondo has expressed interest in attending. The conference is related to Board duties and the expenses (hotel, registration, mileage) to be reimbursed are \$1,150.49. Ms. Mares moved to approve. Mr. Rangel seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE A BOARD MEMBER TRAVEL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST CONSIDERED BY THE LAREDO COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES ON AUGUST 19, 2021, UNDER LAREDO COLLEGE BOARD POLICIES BBG(LOCAL): BOARD MEMBERS, COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES, AND BBH(LOCAL): BOARD MEMBERS, CONVENTIONS, CONFERENCES, AND WORKSHOPS – MS. KARINA
“KARI” ELIZONDO

Ms. Elizondo noted that she brought this item back to approve reimbursement of travel expenses for Mr. Rangel. Judge Martinez moved to approve reimbursement of \$1,918.03 to Mr. Rangel. Dr. Carranza seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Ms. Mares called for the question. Motion carried with a vote of 5 to 4.

APPROVAL OF LAREDO COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES’ GOALS – MS. JACKIE LEVEN-RAMOS

Ms. Leven-Ramos presented the proposed 2021 – 2022 Board goals, which were obtained from the August Board retreat, for approval. Ms. Leven-Ramos moved to approve the proposed goals. Ms. Mares seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

ENROLLMENT UPDATE – MS. ANDREA LOPEZ

Ms. Andrea Lopez, Associate Dean of Enrollment Management & Student Success, provided enrollment information on Second Start and continuing education. She reported that registration for Wintermester and Spring begins on Monday.

STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE REPORT – MS. CYNTHIA MARES

Ms. Mares reported on the first Student Success Committee meeting held on Monday which discussed goals and objectives.

STATUS OF CONTRACTING WITH A NEW FOOD VENDOR TO PROVIDE VEGETARIAN/VEGAN MENU OPTIONS – MS. KARINA
“KARI” ELIZONDO

Mr. Vela reported that they are working with a vendor in providing vegan menu options. Due to low number of patrons who are visiting the food vendors, invitations will be sent out in the Spring to provide more food vendor services. Discussion followed.

LAREDO COLLEGE PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE – MS. LUPITA ZEPEDA

Ms. Zepeda reported that the presidential search process has begun. Dr. Veronica Martinez is the liaison between the Board and ACCT. There will be public forums on November 8th at 9:00 a.m. at LC South, and 12:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. at Fort McIntosh. She noted that the Board members on the search committee are herself, Ms. Mares, Mr. Delgado, and Ms. Leven-Ramos. She will send the complete committee to the Board. Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina explained the search process and will poll the Board on the times of their attendance at the public forums.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:46 p.m., Mr. Rangel moved to go into executive session on the following items:

- Agenda Item 12.A. – Consultation with Laredo College Attorney to Discuss Former Employee Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Complaint and Dismissal Notice, Pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071
- Agenda Item 12.B. – Consultation with Laredo College Attorney to Discuss the Status of the Following Lawsuit: *United States of America v. 202.893 acres of Land, More or Less Situated in Webb County, State of Texas; and Laredo College*, Case No. 5:20-CV-067, Pending in the US District Court for the Southern District of Texas, Laredo Division., Pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071
- Agenda Item 12.C. – Consultation with Laredo College Attorney to Discuss Legal Issues Concerning Communications Under the Texas Open Meetings Act Between Board Members and/or Administration Outside of a Duly Noticed Meeting, Pursuant to Texas Government Code Sections 551.071 – *Mr. Esteban Rangel*
- Agenda Items 12.D. – Discussion Concerning the Feasibility and Sustainability of the Laredo College Camilo Prada Child Development Center, Including a Possible Change to the Current Status of the Center, Pursuant to Texas Government Code Sections 551.071 and 551.074 – *Dr. Marisela Rodriguez Tijerina*
- Agenda Item 12.E. – Discussions Concerning Legal Issues Related to the Feasibility and Sustainability of the Laredo College Athletics Program, the Possible Disbanding of the Athletics Program, and the Personnel Employed in the Athletics Program. Pursuant to Texas Government Code Sections 551.071 and 551.074 – *Dr. Marisela Rodriguez Tijerina*
- Agenda Item 12.F. – Discussion Concerning the Laredo College Athletics Program as it Relates to Action Taken by the Laredo College Board of Trustees During Meetings Held on April 29, 2021 and May 10, 2021, and Reinstating All or Part of the Laredo College Athletics Program, Pursuant to Texas Government Code Sections 551.071 and 551.074 – *Ms. Karina “Kari” Elizondo*

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

The Board reconvened to open session at 11:13 p.m. Ms. Zepeda noted that no action was taken in executive session.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

Ms. Elizondo moved to bring up Agenda Item 13.F. - *Action Concerning the Laredo College Athletics Program as it Relates to Action Taken by the Laredo College Board of Trustees During Meetings Held on April 29, 2021 and May 10, 2021, and Reinstating All or Part of the Laredo College Athletics Program*. Mr. Rangel seconded the motion; motion carried.

ACTION CONCERNING THE LAREDO COLLEGE ATHLETICS PROGRAM AS IT RELATES TO ACTION TAKEN BY THE LAREDO COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES DURING MEETINGS HELD ON APRIL 29, 2021 AND MAY 10, 2021, AND REINSTATING ALL OR PART OF THE LAREDO COLLEGE ATHLETICS PROGRAM – MS. KARINA “KARI” ELIZONDO

Ms. Elizondo presented information on the LC athletics program. Mr. Vela explained the preliminary general operating fund balance. Ms. Elizondo moved to reinstate all athletic programs. Mr. Rangel seconded the motion; motion did not pass with a vote of 4 to 3.

FORMER EMPLOYEE EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION (EEOC) COMPLAINT AND DISMISSAL NOTICE

Mr. Meurer noted that no action is required.

ACTION RELATING TO UNITED STATES OF AMERICA V. 202.893 ACRES

Judge Martinez moved to deny. Mr. Rangel seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

**OF LAND, MORE OR LESS
SITUATED IN WEBB
COUNTY, STATE OF TEXAS;
AND LAREDO COLLEGE,
CASE NO. 5:20-CV-067,
PENDING IN THE US
DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF
TEXAS, LAREDO DIVISION**

**APPROVAL OF OPTIONS TO
IMPLEMENT FOR
COMMUNICATIONS
BETWEEN BOARD
MEMBERS AND/OR
ADMINISTRATION – MR.
ESTEBAN RANGEL**

Mr. Rangel moved that “staff meet with counsel and/or the Board president to come up with a recommendation by next Board meeting”. Judge Martinez seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

**FEASIBILITY AND
SUSTAINABILITY OF THE
LAREDO COLLEGE CAMILO
PRADA CHILD
DEVELOPMENT CENTER,
INCLUDING A POSSIBLE
CHANGE TO THE CURRENT
STATUS OF THE CENTER –
DR. MARISELA RODRIGUEZ
TIJERINA**

Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina asked the Board to approve the reopening of the Camilo Prada Child Development Center and transfer of staff back to the center beginning February 1st due to accreditation and educational programs. The reopening will be in March 2022 at 50% capacity. Mr. Rangel moved to approve. Ms. Leven-Ramos seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

**THE FEASIBILITY AND
SUSTAINABILITY OF THE
LAREDO COLLEGE
ATHLETICS PROGRAM,
INCLUDING THE POSSIBLE
DISBANDING OF THE
ATHLETICS PROGRAM AND
THE EMPLOYMENT STATUS
OF THE ATHLETICS
PROGRAM EMPLOYEES –
DR. MARISELA RODRIGUEZ
TIJERINA**

Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina explained the financial impact and sustainability of the athletics program due to revenues/enrollment. The administration’s recommendation is to disband the athletics program due to feasibility and sustainability of the program is not available due to the increase of other academic programs. Ms. Vela moved to approve. Ms. Leven-Ramos seconded the motion; motion did not pass with a vote of 3 to 4. Ms. Elizondo noted for the record her disappointment of funding of programs. Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina noted for the record that the programs are developed by Laredo College employees for the Laredo College community.

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

The reports were provided for information purposes.

NEXT MEETING DATES:

Tuesday, November 9 2021, 6:00 p.m. – Special Board Meeting

To Be Determined, December 16 or 21, 2021, 6:00 p.m. – Regular Board of Trustees Meeting

ADJOURNMENT

At 11:38 p.m., Mr. Rangel moved to adjourn the meeting. Judge Martinez seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.