



LAREDO COLLEGE DISTRICT
Laredo, Texas

The public hearing on the proposed fiscal year 2024 budget and 2023 property tax rate of the Laredo College Board of Trustees convened on Thursday, August 24, 2023, beginning at 6:04 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	<u>MEMBERS PRESENT</u>	<u>OTHERS</u>
	Lupita Zepeda, President	Minita Ramirez, Ph.D.
	Jorge "JD" Delgado, Vice President	Rusty Meurer
	Erica Benavides Garcia	
	Cindy Liendo	
	Tita C. Vela	

MEMBERS ABSENT
Jackie Leven-Ramos, Secretary
Mercurio Martinez, Jr. *(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)*
Esteban Rangel
Karina "Kari" Elizondo

CALL TO ORDER Ms. Zepeda convened the public hearing. Mr. Delgado called the roll.

PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUDGET AND 2023 PROPERTY TAX RATE – MR. CESAR VELA Ms. Zepeda presided as Chair of the public hearing and provided background information. She reported that the Laredo College 2023 property tax rate is proposed to be set at \$0.267675 per \$100.00 valuation of taxable property, of which \$0.220895 shall be for maintenance and operations and \$0.046780 shall be for debt retirement. She announced that if anyone wanting to express their views on the proposed 2023 property tax rate and proposed fiscal year 2024 budget may approach the podium.

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

ADJOURNMENT At 6:08 p.m., Mr. Martinez moved to close the public hearing. Mr. Delgado seconded the motion; motion carried.

The regular Board meeting of the Laredo College Board of Trustees convened at 6:08 p.m., immediately following the public hearing on the proposed 2024 budget and 2023 property tax rate.

1. CALL TO ORDER Ms. Zepeda called the meeting to order.

2. ROLL CALL

Mr. Delgado called roll.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Lupita Zepeda, President
Jorge “JD” Delgado, Vice President
Jackie Leven-Ramos, Secretary
(arrived at 6:25 p.m.)
Erica Benavides Garcia
Cindy Liendo
Tita C. Vela

OTHERS

Minita Ramirez, Ph.D.
Rusty Meurer
Marisela Rodriguez Tijerina, Ed.D.
Diana Y. Ortiz, Ph.D.
Ms. Juliana Kelley
Cesar E. Vela, Jr.
Federico Solis, Jr., Ed.D.
Jessica Treviño
Carmelino Castillo
Steven Aguilar
Sara A. Pompa

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mercurio Martinez, Jr. *(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; did not re-join the meeting after executive session)*

Esteban Rangel
Karina “Kari” Elizondo

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.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF JUNE 1, 2023, BUDGET WORKSHOP OF JUNE 3, 2023, SPECIAL BOARD MEETING OF JULY 13, 2023, SPECIAL BOARD MEETING OF AUGUST 3, 2023, AND AUGUST 17, 2023

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

4. PUBLIC TESTIMONY No one signed up for public testimony.

5. RECOGNITIONS, INTRODUCTIONS OF PERSONNEL, AND NEW PERSONNEL ACTIONS FOR THE MONTH

5.A. JOINT REVIEW COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN RADIOLOGIC TECHNOLOGY (JRCERT) ACCREDITATION APPROVAL STATUS – DR. MARISELA RODRIGUEZ TIJERINA

Dr. Marisela Rodriguez Tijerina, Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs, announced that the Radiologic Technology program has received an extension for accreditation for an additional three years. She recognized Ms. Hortencia Gonzalez, program director; Ms. Jessica Rodriguez, assistant professor; Mr. Alonzo Laurel, clinical coordinator/radiation safety officer; Dr. Dianna Miller; and Mr. Oscar Gomez.

5.B. NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE EXCELLENCE (ASE) ACCREDITATION APPROVAL STATUS FOR MASTER AUTOMOBILE SERVICE TECHNOLOGY – DR. MARISELA RODRIGUEZ TIJERINA

Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina announced that the automobile technician training program met the standards for the master automobile service technology accreditation. She recognized Mr. Heriberto Hernandez, Dean of Workforce Education; Mr. Frank Ramirez, Transportation Technology Department Chair; Mr. Roberto Garcia, instructor; Mr. Carlos Vela, and Mr. Eduardo Mata, lab assistant.

5.C. IMEXSOL DONATION – DR. DIANA Y. ORTIZ

Dr. Diana Y. Ortiz, Vice President of Institutional Advancement, reported that Laredo College’s import/export logistics center has

received a software donation valued at \$23,000 from Mr. Jorge Cavazos, owner of IMEXSOL.

5.D. INTRODUCTION OF PERSONNEL/ PERSONNEL ACTIONS – DR. MINITA RAMÍREZ

Dr. Ramírez, President, introduced the new hires and promotions for the month:

Bryanda Enriquez, Workforce Education Engagement Specialist; Cecy E. Macias, Faculty Secretary Business Management; Dr. Alfonso J. Hinojosa, Engineering, Design, and Construction Management Technology Director; Roberto G. Sanchez, Academic Advisor/Career Coach; Lourdes K. Valenciano, Director of Event Services; David A. McGinnis, Theatrical and Performing Arts Director; Dr. Gilberto Martinez Jr., Drama/Speech Instructor; Stephanie A. Sanchez, Faculty Secretary Social Sciences; Jose L. Solis Jr., Logistics/Distribution Management Instructor; Ivan Cano, Director of Recreational and E-Sports; Rosalinda Montemayor, Vocational Nursing Instructor and Program Director; Melissa S. Garcia, Faculty Secretary Theatrical & Performing Arts; Ana Maria Gutierrez, Faculty Secretary Allied Health; and Ana Lilia Salazar, Faculty Secretary Emergency Medical Services.

Ms. Zepeda acknowledged the presence of Ms. Leven-Ramos.

6. FACULTY SENATE REPORT – MS. JULIANA KELLEY

Ms. Juliana Kelley, Faculty Senate President, presented information on consumer price index stats, cost of living, average price data, wages and salaries, TASB recommendations, proposed Master’s degree schedule, 3.0% cost model, LC vision, faculty achievements, positive outcomes and proposed percentage increase for faculty.

7. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

7.A. FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUDGET AND 2023 PROPERTY TAX RATE – MR. CESAR VELA

Mr. Cesar Vela, Vice President for Finance and Administration, reported that the proposed 2024 budget is \$71,748,958. He summarized the budget details.

Mr. Vela reported that the proposed tax rate is \$.267675, the certified tax roll values are \$21,274,779,624, and a tax levy of \$56,452,763.

Mr. Delgado moved “that the fiscal year 2024 budget be adopted as presented by administration.” Ms. Leven-Ramos and Mr. Martinez seconded the motion; motion carried.

Ms. Zepeda read the resolution adopting the FY2024 budget.

7.A.1. RESOLUTION ADOPTING FY 2024 BUDGET

Resolution Adopting Budget for Fiscal Year 2024

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 24, 2023, 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 2024;

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

Adopted on this 24th day of August, 2023, by the Board of Trustees.

Mr. Delgado moved “that the Board of Trustees adopt the Resolution adopting the fiscal year 2024 budget as presented.” Ms. Vela seconded the motion; motion carried.

**7.A.2. RESOLUTION
ADOPTING 2023
PROPERTY TAX
RATE**

Mr. Vela reported that the proposed tax rate for fiscal year 2024, tax year 2023 is \$.267675 of which \$.220895 is for maintenance and operations and \$.046780 is for debt service. The proposed tax rate will yield a tax levy of \$56,452,763.

Mr. Delgado moved “that the property tax rate be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of \$0.267675 per \$100 valuation, which is effectively a 5.61% percent increase in the tax rate.” Ms. Leven-Ramos seconded the motion; motion carried.

Ms. Zepeda read the resolution adopting the 2023 property tax rate.

*Resolution of Laredo College District Board
of Trustees Adopting Property Tax Rate for
Fiscal Year 2024*

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;

WHEREAS, said Board of Trustees conducted a public hearing on August 24, 2023, on the property tax rate in accordance with the requirements of the Texas Tax Code; and

WHEREAS, such Board of Trustees has considered this matter and desires to set the 2023 property tax rate;

BE IT RESOLVED, THEREFORE, that on August 24, 2023, the 2023 property tax rate be, and the same is hereby set at \$0.267675 per \$100.00 valuation of taxable property, of which \$0.220895 shall be for maintenance and operations and \$0.046780 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 FIVE POINT SIXTY-ONE PERCENT (5.61%) AND WILL RAISE TAXES FOR MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS ON A \$100,000 HOME BY APPROXIMATELY NEGATIVE NINE DOLLARS AND THIRTY CENTS (-\$9.30).

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

Adopted on this 24th day of August 2023, by the Board of Trustees.

Mr. Delgado moved “that the Board of Trustees adopt the Resolution adopting the 2023 property tax rate as presented.” Mr. Martinez seconded the motion; motion carried.

**7.A.3. RESOLUTION
AUTHORIZING
COLLECTION OF
GENERAL USE FEE
AND EXPENDITURE
OF FUNDS FOR
FISCAL YEAR 2024**

Mr. Delgado moved “that the Board of Trustees authorize the collection of a General Use Fee and the expenditure of funds for fiscal year 2024 as presented by administration.” Ms. Leven-Ramos seconded the motion; motion carried.

Ms. Zepeda read the resolution adopting the 2023 property tax rate.

*Resolution Authorizing Collection of
“General Use Fee” and Expenditure of Funds
for Fiscal Year 2024*

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 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 2024, to be used as follows:

1. Approximately \$4,328,771.00 for revenue bond debt service;
2. Approximately \$1,000,000.00 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 2024.

Adopted on this 24th day of August, 2023, by the Board of Trustees.

Mr. Delgado moved "that the Board of Trustees adopt the resolution authorizing collection of general use fee and expenditure of funds for Fiscal Year 2024 as presented." Ms. Vela seconded the motion; motion carried.

7.B. APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF LAREDO FOR THE USE OF THE COLLEGE'S RECREATIONAL FIELDS – MR. CESAR VELA

Mr. Vela asked that the Board authorize the College President and Legal Counsel to negotiate a contract with the City of Laredo for the use of the college's recreational fields at the Fort McIntosh and South campuses. Ms. Leven-Ramos so moved. Mr. Delgado seconded the motion; motion carried.

7.C. APPROVAL OF CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT FOR ARECHIGA HALL RESTORATION PROJECT – MR. CESAR VELA

Mr. Vela asked the Board to authorize the College President to negotiate a contract with Leyendecker Construction of Texas, the highest ranked proposer for the Arechiga Hall restoration project as scored by the Building Committee. Also, to approve the use of \$1,020,400 from the deferred maintenance fund to cover the difference needed to complete the project. Ms. Leven-Ramos so moved. Mr. Delgado seconded the motion; motion carried.

7.D. APPROVAL OF BUILDING PLAQUE FOR BUILDING P-14 – MR. CESAR VELA

Mr. Vela presented the building plaque for the P-14 Building for approval. Ms. Leven-Ramos so moved. Ms. Vela seconded the motion; motion carried. Discussion took place on the plaque wording.

7.E. APPROVAL OF BUILDING PLAQUE FOR DIESEL SHOP EXPANSION PROJECT – MR. CESAR VELA

Mr. Vela presented the building plaque for the diesel shop expansion project for approval. Ms. Leven-Ramos so moved. Ms. Benavides Garcia seconded the motion; motion carried.

7.F. ADOPT A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING JAMCO INTERNATIONAL, INC. APPLICATION TO BECOME A USAGE-DRIVEN FOREIGN TRADE ZONE #94 DESIGNATION, LOCATED AT 114 ROSS KHALEDI DR., LAREDO TEXAS 78045 – DR. MINITA RAMÍREZ

Dr. Ramírez presented the request for usage-driven foreign trade zone #94 designation for approval. Mr. Delgado so moved. Ms. Vela seconded the motion; motion carried. Ms. Leven-Ramos was not present for the vote.

7.G. ADOPT A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING BRUNI SUPPLY CHAIN SOLUTIONS, INC. APPLICATION TO BECOME A USAGE-DRIVEN FOREIGN TRADE ZONE #94 DESIGNATION, LOCATED AT 214 FLECHA LANE, LAREDO TEXAS 78045 – DR.
MINITA RAMÍREZ

Dr. Ramírez presented the request for usage-driven foreign trade zone #94 designation for approval. Mr. Delgado moved to approve. Ms. Benavides Garcia and Mr. Martinez seconded the motion; motion carried.

7.H. ADOPT A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING CRANE WORLDWIDE LOGISTICS LLC APPLICATION TO BECOME A USAGE-DRIVEN FOREIGN TRADE ZONE #94 DESIGNATION, LOCATED AT 6110 BOB BULLOCK LOOP, LAREDO TEXAS 78041 – DR.
MINITA RAMÍREZ

Dr. Ramírez presented the request for usage-driven foreign trade zone #94 designation for approval. Mr. Delgado moved to approve. Ms. Vela seconded the motion; motion carried.

7.I. DESIGNATE LAREDO COLLEGE PRESIDENT TO PROVIDE LETTERS OF SUPPORT FOR FOREIGN TRADE ZONE REQUESTS – DR.
MINITA RAMÍREZ

Dr. Ramírez requested that the Board authorize her to provide letters of support when these requests are received due to time constraints. Ms. Leven-Ramos so moved. Mr. Delgado and Ms. Vela seconded the motion; motion carried. Any letters of support for foreign trade zone requests will be brought to the Board as informational items.

8. CONSENT AGENDA

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

- Agenda Item 8.A. – July 2023 Financial Report
- Agenda Item 8.B. – May 2023 Quarterly Investment Report
- Agenda Item 8.C. – Approval to Purchase Computer Equipment for E-Sports Program
- Agenda Item 8.D. – Approval of Annual Subscription for the Library SirsiDynix Enterprise System
- Agenda Item 8.E. – Ratification of Purchase of Audio Visual Equipment for the Memorial Hall and De La Garza Buildings
- Agenda Item 8.F. – Approval for Purchase of Video Conferencing Equipment
- Agenda Item 8.G. – Approval to Purchase Furniture for the De La Garza Building
- Agenda Item 8.H. – Approval of Five-Year Extension with Campus Logic for Financial Aid Services
- Agenda Item 8.I. – Approval to Renew Licenses and Support for Softdocs Etrive Document Management System
- Agenda Item 8.J. – Approval to Purchase Wireless Access Points
- Agenda Item 8.K. – Approval of STARS, Border API, and Laredo Daybreak Rotary Scholarship Matching Funds as Per Donors' Request
- Agenda Item 8.L. – Approval of Renewal of Laredo College Property Insurance

Ms. Leven-Ramos and Mr. Martinez seconded the motion; motion carried.

9. INFORMATION ITEMS

9.A. STUDENT ENROLLMENT REPORT –
DR. FRED SOLIS/MS. JESSICA TREVIÑO

Dr. Fred Solis, Vice President for Student Success and Enrollment, presented the enrollment numbers for Fall 2023 and continuing education courses.

Ms. Jessica Treviño, Associate Vice President of Enrollment Management, provided a recap of summer commencement.

Discussion took place on recruitment efforts.

9.B. LAREDO COLLEGE STUDENT HANDBOOK – DR. FRED SOLIS

Mr. Carmelino Castillo, Associate Vice President of Student Life and Engagement, presented the Laredo College student handbook.

9.C. UPDATE ON STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE – MS. ERICA BENAVIDES GARCIA

Ms. Benavides Garcia presented a recap of the August 23, 2023, Student Success Committee meeting. Mr. Steven Aguilar, Director of Financial Aid, and Ms. Trevino provided information on FASFA changes.

9.D. GIFTS, DONATIONS, GRANTS, AND ENDOWMENTS REPORT – DR. DIANA Y. ORTIZ/MS. SARA A. POMPA/MR. GABRIEL LOZANO

Dr. Ortiz reported that no new grants have been awarded, but work is in progress on submitting several grant applications.

Ms. Sara A. Pompa, Associate Director of Donor Relations, presented a summary of endowment scholarships and other gifts received from April – July. Ms. Leven-Ramos inquired about the alumni association and Friends for Life association. Discussion followed. Dr. Ortiz noted that work is being done for the Friends for Life to become the official alumni association.

9.E. CREDIT RATINGS UPDATE – MR. CESAR VELA

Mr. Vela announced that S&P Global Ratings for Laredo College has been raised from A to AA. At the same time, the long-term rating has been raised from AA- to AA.

9.F. GATEWAY COMMUNITY CLINIC REQUEST TO UPGRADE BUILDING SIGNAGE AT SOUTH CAMPUS CLINIC – MR. CESAR VELA

Mr. Vela presented the building signage that Gateway Community Health Center has requested to upgrade at their South Campus Clinic located at Laredo College South.

9.G. APPOINTMENT OF ACTING DEAN OF HEALTH SCIENCES – DR. MARISELA RODRIGUEZ TIJERINA

Dr. Rodriguez Tijerina announced that as the Dean of Health Sciences position is being advertised, Dr. Esmeralda Vargas has been appointed as Acting Dean of Health Sciences. She provided her background information.

9.H. UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TITLE IV AND HIGHER EDUCATION ACT PROGRAMS – DR. MINITA RAMIREZ

Dr. Ramirez provided information on the Title IV and the Act programs. She thanked the Financial Aid office for their work in complying with requirements.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:04 p.m., Mr. Delgado moved to go into executive session on the following items:

- Agenda Item 10.A. – Consultation with Laredo College Attorney to Discuss Laredo College Faculty Member’s Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Complaint, Pursuant to Texas Government Code Sections 551.071 and 551.074
- Agenda Item 10.B. – Closed Session Discussion Pursuant to Texas Government Code Sections 551.071 and 551.074 with Laredo College Attorney Concerning Update on Pending Litigations Filed Against Laredo College

Ms. Benavides Garcia, Ms. Vela, and Ms. Leven-Ramos seconded the motion; motion carried.

The Board reconvened to open session at 8:52 p.m. Ms. Zepeda noted that no action was taken during executive session and will take appropriate action on items necessary as discussed in closed session.

11. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

- 11.A. LAREDO COLLEGE FACULTY MEMBER'S EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION (EEOC) COMPLAINT** No action was taken on this item.
- 11.B. UPDATE ON PENDING LITIGATIONS FILED AGAINST LAREDO COLLEGE** No action was taken on this item.
- 12. PRESIDENT'S REMARKS**
- 12.A. CAMPUS POLICE, PERSONNEL, AND TRAVEL REPORTS** – *DR. MINITA RAMÍREZ*
Dr. Ramírez noted that she and several Board members will be attending the Community College Association of Texas Trustees (CCATT) Annual Conference in Fort Worth, Texas. She briefly went over the reports.
- 12.B. PRESIDENT'S REMARKS** – *DR. MINITA RAMÍREZ*
Dr. Ramírez remarked on the following:
- Welcome week activities
 - Storm update
 - Board member IDs
- 13. NEXT MEETING DATE & UPCOMING EVENTS:**
- Thursday, September 28, 2023, 6:00 p.m. – Regular Board of Trustees Meeting
- Wednesday, October 18, 2023, 9:00 a.m. – PNC Marker Unveiling
- 14. ADJOURNMENT**
At 9:03 p.m., Mr. Delgado moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Leven-Ramos, Ms. Liendo, and Ms. Benavides Garcia seconded the motion; motion carried.