



Board of Directors Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 23 at 1:30 PM

Virtual Meeting Through Google Meet

Public	P/A/PY	Low Income Rep.	P/A/PY	Private	P/A/PY
Gabriella M. Reed	P	Marla Jo St. Leon	P	Fernando Escobedo	P
Judge Nina Serna	P	Sylvia Carreon	P	Alberto Mesta	P
Commissioner David Stout	P	Laurencio Bosquez	P	Loren Cartagena	P
Senator César Blanco	PY	Vacant		Fred Perea	P

P=Present, A=Absent, PY=Proxy

STAFF

Laura Ponce, Executive Director	Ema Marciscano, Community Services Manager
Andrea Cortez, Exec. Assistant & Outreach Coord.	Mike Martinez, WAP Manager
Mona Jacobs, Chief Programs Officer	Martha Hernandez, HR Specialist
Martin Dominguez, Chief Financial Officer	Martha Vargas, COVID Relief Program Manager

GUESTS

Carlos A. Martinez, Office of Commissioner Stout

PROCEEDINGS

- I. **Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 1:40 PM by Gabriella Reed.
- II. **Certification of Quorum** – Quorum was certified by Ms. Ponce, Executive Director.
- III. **Public Comment** – There was no public comment.
- IV. **Consent Agenda:**
 - A. A motion was made by Fernando Escobedo to approve the Consent Agenda which consisted of the following: January 26, 2021 Board Minutes, January 2021 Community Services Report, January 2021 Weatherization Program Report, January 2021 Housing Services Report, January 2021 Human Resources Report, and the January 2021 Strategic Plan Report. The motion was seconded by Judge Nina Serna. The motion passed unanimously.

V. Committee Reports:

- A. Executive Committee:** Ms. Ponce went over the Contract Activity Report, Program Monitoring Report, Board Roster Report, and Organizational Standards Report. Ms. Ponce gave her Executive Director's Report. Ms. Ponce issued a call to board members to join the Reimagine Conference hosted by the Paso Del Norte Community Foundation. Ms. Ponce informed the board of updates to the new Open Application Periods process. Ms. Ponce informed the board that 3,025 applications were received during the first period, which ran from January 4 through January 22. 314 incomplete applications were received during the first application period. The second application period opened on Monday, February 15, 2021. To date, 728 applications have been received with 124 pending review, and 396 incomplete applications. If the number of applications continue to follow these trends,, the Open Application Periods may be extended, or kept permanently. **No action was taken.**
- B. Financial Committee: Review and accept the January 2021 Finance Reports:** A prior request by Martin Dominguez to table the January 2021 Finance Reports in place of the 2021 Project BRAVO Salaries & Operations Budget was discussed. **A motion was made by Laurencio Bosquez to table the January 2021 Finance Reports. Fernando Escobedo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

VI. New Business:

- A. Presentation of the 2021 Project BRAVO Salaries & Operations Budget per Organizational Standard 8.9:** Mr. Dominguez presented the 2021 Project BRAVO Salaries & Operations Budget. Mr. Dominguez reported that the 2021 Project BRAVO Salaries & Operations Budget was thoroughly reviewed and approved for presentation to the Board by the Finance Committee. Mr. Dominguez provided an overview of key budget areas to include funding sources and salaries and fringe benefit amounts. Ms. Reed asked for clarification regarding the budget allocated for travel, to which Mr. Dominguez responded that the allocation for travel was taken into account in hopes of travel being an option later in the year per guidelines by health and government officials. **A motion was made by Alberto Mesta to Approve the 2021 Project BRAVO Salaries & Operations Budget per Organizational Standard 8.9. Judge Serna Seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Review and Approve Mileage Allowance Decrease from 57.5 Cents per Mile to 56.0 Cents per Mile per IRS Guidelines:** Mr. Dominguez informed the Board of the changes to the mileage reimbursement amount that was updated in the IRS guidelines and recommended the Board's approval to ensure compliance with the guidelines. **A motion was made by Alberto Mesta to Approve Mileage Allowance Decrease from 57.5 Cents per Mile to 56.0 Cents per Mile per IRS Guidelines. Fernando Escobedo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**
- C. Review and Approve Resolution for a Proposed Budget Amendment to the 2020 CSBG Contract:** Mr. Dominguez presented a resolution to the Board requesting an amendment to support activities related to the organization's response to the COVID-19 pandemic by moving \$65,000 from Personnel, Fringe Benefits, and Travel to budget items for General Equipment Purposes, Contractual, and Other (Direct Services) budget line items. **A motion was made by Commissioner Stout to approve Review and Approve Resolution for a Proposed Budget Amendment to the 2020 CSBG Contract. Fred Perea seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

- D. Update on the Low-Income Representative Elections for District I: Westside, District II: Central & East, District III: Lower Valley & Far Eastside Under the Direction of the Low-Income Representative Election Committee:** Ms. Ponce updated the board on the process for interested individuals to become candidates and the remote election that will be completed through mail in ballots. Notices regarding the election have been posted at all centers, on social media, and on the El Paso Times. Clients will receive a text with information regarding the board vacancy and election process. Ms. Ponce urged Board members to share information and encourage interested individuals to participate. Ms. Ponce reminded Board members that are up for reelection that they must submit a Letter of Intent if they are interested in being a candidate in the election. Ms. Reed inquired how campaigning efforts will be taken during the pandemic, to which Ms. Ponce stated, candidates may urge anyone residing within the designated areas to participate in the voting process. **No action was taken.**
- E. Review and Approve Compensation for the Executive Director, per Organizational Standard 7.5:** Ms. Reed directed Board members to review the Executive Director compensation study that compares Project BRAVO's Executive Director's salary with other local nonprofits. The report included organization information from public Form 990s such as organization budgets and number of staff members. Ms. Ponce explained the salary listed for 2021 includes the 3% cost of living increase for all Project BRAVO staff, but the board has final discretion as to whether or not to accept the increase. **A motion was made by Commissioner Stout to approve Compensation for the Executive Director as listed in the report for 2021. Alberto Mesta seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

VII. Old Business:

- A. Discuss and Accept the Annual Performance Appraisal for the Executive Director:** Ms. Reed discussed the completed evaluation for the Executive Director and the review of Ms. Ponce's self-evaluation. The findings of the evaluation resulted in a score that "Exceeds expectations." **A motion was made by Judge Serna to accept the Annual Performance Appraisal for the Executive Director as presented by the Executive Committee. Fernando Escobedo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Update on the 2021 Community Assessment for the County of El Paso, per Organizational Standards 1.2:** Ms. Ponce announced to the Board that Crescendo has been selected as the consulting firm for the 2021 Community Assessment and provided the Executive Report for the procurement results. Ms. Ponce announced that Crescendo has initiated the process, and will be reaching out to members of the board to participate in surveys, focus groups, and/or individual interviews. **No action was taken.**

VIII. Adjourn to Executive Session:

This meeting is to be closed to review and discuss personnel matters under Tex. Gov't Code 551.074. Should any final action, decision, or vote be required in the opinion of the Board of Directors with regard to any matter considered in such closed meeting, then the Board may take action, decision, or vote on a matter posted for closed meeting when it reconvenes in open session.

There was no Executive Session.

- IX. Community Updates:** Ms. Reed announced that there was a vacancy in the Executive Committee and called for volunteers to serve, interested members were asked to contact Gabriella Reed or Laura Ponce. Ms. Reed shared that UMC continues to provide COVID vaccines and will provide a phone number for community members requesting updates. Commissioner Stout spoke on the importance of continuing safety guidelines and getting vaccinated when the time arrives. Cassandra Urrutia from Senator Blanco's office announced a partnership between the Senator's office and GECU to provide free tax filing services to the community through the VITA program. The event is to be held on Friday, February 26 at 6:00 PM at Bowie High School. **No action was taken.**
- X. Confirm Next Meeting Date/Time:** The meeting was confirmed for Tuesday, March 30, 2021 at 1:30 PM through Google Meet.
- XI. Adjournment:** Loren Cartagena made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Judge Serna seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 2:40 PM.