



Board of Directors Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 28, 2021 at 1:30 PM

Hybrid Meeting Through Google Meet and

in person at 8908 Old County Rd. El Paso TX 79907

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

P=Present, V=Virtual, A=Absent, PY=Proxy

STAFF

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

GUESTS

Carlos Martinez, Office of Commissioner Stout

Lucy Vargas, Office of Judge Serna

Cassandra Urrutia, Office of Senator Blanco

Phillip Strickler, CPA.CITP, Managing Partner, Strickler & Prieto, LLP

PROCEEDINGS

- I. **Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 1:30 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 Senator Blanco to approve the Consent Agenda which consisted of the following: August 24, 2021 Board Minutes, August 2021 Community Services Report, August 2021 Weatherization Program Report, August 2021 Housing Program Report, August 2021 Human Resources Report, August 2021 COVID Relief Programs Report, and the August 2021 Strategic Plan Report. The motion was seconded by Judge 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 announced the CAP plan and CSBG budget were approved by TDHCA. Ms. Ponce provided an update regarding TACAA duties as their board president due to the voluntary resignation of the Executive Director. Ms. Ponce expressed the importance of successfully supporting TACAA during this transition. Ms. Ponce announced that the Texas Eviction Diversion Program and the rent and mortgage assistance programs are in the process of being closed. The programs were funded through CARES funds that were temporary and the programs will close by mid October. Ms. Ponce announced the final allocation of LIHWAP funds to Project BRAVO in the amount of \$3.4 Million and we are waiting for the contacts from TDHCA to begin providing services. The funds will go to a temporary water assistance program that must be obligated by September 2023 and expended by December 2023. CSBG funds have been used for water assistance in limited amounts, but LIHWAP will allow for more assistance to be given to families. **No action was taken.**
- B. Financial Committee: Review and accept the July and August 2021 Finance Reports:** Fernando Escobedo announced that the reports were reviewed in detail at the September Finance Committee Meeting and called on the board to approve the reports. **A motion was made by Sylvia Carreon to approve the July and August 2021 Finance Reports. The motion was seconded by Judge Serna. The motion passed unanimously.**

VI. New Business:

- A. Review and Approve the 2020 Form 990:** Phillip Strickler presented the 2020 Form 990 to the board of directors. Ms. Ponce stated that the Finance Committee reviewed the form in detail at their previous meeting and invited members of the committee to share their experience. Ms. Reed asked a question regarding increases in expenditures in 2020 from 2019. Martin Dominguez and Ms. Ponce both stated that the increases in expenditures were due to increases in funds related to the CARES Act and the pandemic. . **A motion was made by Fernando Escobedo to Approve the 2020 Form 990. The motion was seconded by Sylvia Carreon. The motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Review and Approve Contract Amendment 4: Extension to HVAC/Heating and Cooling Service Agreement & Amendment 4: Extension to Weatherization Service Agreement with High Ridge Construction:** Ms. Ponce announced a final amendment to the Weatherization vendor's contract and stated that this would be the fourth and final amendment to the contract per state and federal regulations, and that the procurement for a new weatherization contract will begin late in 2020. Ms. Mona Jacobs presented key factors to the amendment and reasoning for pricing changes. Questions were asked by Mr. Mesta, Mr. Escobedo, Ms. Lopez, and Ms. Reed regarding the terms of the amendment, how prices are negotiated, how the price increases impact services, and language in the contract. Ms. Jacobs answered the questions and Ms. Ponce provided clarification on language in the contract. Regarding the contract language, Ms. Ponce stated that section "1" of the amendment would be corrected and state that the Agreement is the fourth and final Amendment. **A motion was made by Paulina Lopez to Approve the Contract Amendment 4: Extension to HVAC/Heating and Cooling Service Agreement & Amendment 4: Extension to Weatherization Service Agreement with High Ridge Construction with language change. Fernando Escobedo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

- C. **Presentation of the 2020 Annual Report:** Ms. Ponce presented the 2020 Annual Report which listed the achievements and outcomes of the organization and stories from clients that benefited from the services with the support of staff and the Board. Ms. Reed congratulated Project BRAVO staff for their hard work and success in 2020. She stated that Project BRAVO is a trusted organization in the community and it is reflected in the funds we received and put out into the community to help people during the pandemic. **No action was taken.**

VII. Old Business:

- A. **Update on the Low-Income Representative Elections and Call for Volunteer to Serve on the Counting Committee:** Ms. Ponce updated the board on the timeline of the election. The elections will be held on October 11 and the votes will be counted on October 15. Loren Cartagena volunteered to serve on the Counting Committee. **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:** Senator Blanco announced his office will host a Citizenship workshop on October 16. The senator asked to have clients interested in a probonno appointment to reach out to his office. Commissioner Stout announced that the FY 2022 budget has been adopted. The commissioner touched on highlights of the \$500 million budget. Ms. Reed announced UMC's plans to host vaccination clinics for children pending approval for the COVID vaccine for children ages 6-12. The clinic will take place at the end of October. **No action was taken.**
- X. **Confirm Next Meeting Date/Time:** The meeting was confirmed for Tuesday, October 26, 2021 with time and location To be Determined.
- XI. **Adjournment: Senator Blanco made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 2:32 PM.**