



Board of Directors Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 24, 2022 at 5:30 PM
at 715 Lomita Dr, El Paso, TX 79907

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

P=In Person, A=Absent, PY=Proxy

STAFF

Laura Ponce, Executive Director	Martin Dominguez, Chief Financial Officer
Andrea Cortez, Exec. Assistant & Outreach Coord.	Mona Mangloña Jacobs, Chief Program Officer
Ema Marciscano, Community Services Manager	Martha Hernandez, HR Representative

GUESTS

PROCEEDINGS

- I. **Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 5:32 PM by Fred Perea.
- 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 Loren Cartagena to approve the Consent Agenda which consisted of the following: March 04, 2022 Board Minutes, January, February, March & April 2022 Community Services, Weatherization & HVAC, and Housing Services Reports, January, February, March & April 2022 Human Resources Report, and the January, February, March & April 2022 Strategic Plan Report. The motion was seconded by Sylvia Carreon. The motion passed unanimously.
- V. **Committee Reports:**
 - A. **Executive Committee:** Before continuing with the reports, Ms. Ponce called for a Moment of silence for the community of Uvalde, TX, following the events at Robb Elementary School. Ms. Ponce went over the Contract Activity Report including the addition of the LIHWAP contract for water assistance, Program Monitoring Report, Board Roster Report, and Organizational Standards Report. Ms. Ponce gave her

Executive Director's Report. Ms. Ponce announced the beginning of the Low Income Household Water Assistance Program at Project BRAVO and stated Ms. Jacobs would provide details during her presentation. Ms. Ponce announced that elections for two Low Income Representative positions would be held soon to replace two representatives whose terms are ending and one representative who will be resigning. Ms. Ponce announced Ms. Paulina Lopez, LIR for District I: Westside was resigning as she will move out of town to accept a new position. Ms. Ponce and the board thanked Ms. Lopez for her service as a board member. Ms. Ponce announced that May is Community Action Month, and is honored to have Project BRAVO serve as the designated Community Action Agency for El Paso County. Ms. Ponce announced the new stage of return to office procedures, including having staff return to a fully in-office schedule Monday through Thursday effective May 31st with Fridays continuing to be virtual. Return to office procedures also include a tentative opening to the public in July pending repairs at the 2000 Texas Ave. office. In regards to remote operations currently in place, Ms. Carreon asked Ms. Ponce if there were concerns from the public regarding the current application process. Ms. Ponce detailed the options for community members to apply online or in person via the drop boxes. Ms. Jacobs clarified that the processes have made applying more accessible. Ms. Ponce announced that TDHCA made a temporary change in rules that extended the cap on utility assistance and allowed for utility assistance to be granted through one lump sum payment to utilities as opposed to providing monthly payments. Ms. Ponce provided a brief update regarding the spending status of 2021 CEAP funds for utility assistance, as additional funds are expected at the end of the year. As for current funds, all direct services funds are fully obligated and spent as of March and staff are actively working on spending 2022 CEAP funds. Ms. Ponce announced two conference opportunities for board members and asked for members wanting to attend to submit a request to the Executive Department. The two conferences were the 2022 CAPLAW conference and the UnidosUS 2022 Annual Conference. **No action was taken.**

- B. Financial Committee: Review and accept the January, February, March and April 2022 Finance Reports:** Board members were provided with a copy of the financial presentation that reviews organization-wide reports on revenue and expenditures that compares budget to actual, categorized by program, and the balance sheet or statement of financial Position. Mr. Mesta announced that the Finance committee reviewed the documents in detail at the previous Finance Committee meeting and called on the board to approve the finance reports. **A motion was made by Christina Sanchez to accept the January, February, March and April 2022 Finance Reports, Laurencio Bosquez seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

VI. New Business:

- A. Presentation on the Low Income Household Water (LIHWAP) Assistance Program:** Ms. Jacobs provided a presentation covering the client regulations and program parameters on the new program providing water assistance in El Paso County through March 2023. Ms. Jacobs thoroughly answered questions from the board. **No action was taken.**
- B. Approve the Fifth Member of the Executive Committee:** Ms. Ponce explained that the Executive Committee is composed of five members: the four board officers and another member from the board. Ms. Ponce announced that a fifth member had not been selected and that the Executive Committee had suggested having Ms. Christina Sanchez serve as the fifth member after board approval, which she agreed to serve.. A motion was made by **Senator Blanco to Approve Christina Sanchez as the Fifth Member of the Executive Committee, Loren Cartagena seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

- C. **Discuss and Approve Fernando Escobedo, Jr.'s Designation as the Private Sector Representative to the Makios Technology Organization:** Ms. Ponce explained that Prudential Financial held the board seat occupied by Fernando Escobedo. Due to Mr. Escobedo's change in employment Ms. Ponce asked the board to transfer the seat from Prudential Financial to Makios Technology and approve Mr. Escobedo's designation to continue serving as a Private Sector Representative on Project BRAVO's Board of Directors. **A motion was made by Christina Sanchez to approve Fernando Escobedo, Jr.'s Designation as the Private Sector Representative to the Makios Technology Organization. The motion was seconded by Senator Blanco. The motion passed unanimously.**

- D. **Review and Approve a Change in the Mileage Rate to from 56.0 Cents per Mile to the 2022 IRS Mileage Rate of 58.5 Cents per Mile:** 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 Christina to Approve a Change in the Mileage Rate to from 56.0 Cents per Mile to the 2022 IRS Mileage Rate of 58.5 Cents per Mile. The motion was seconded by Paulina Lopez. The motion passed unanimously.**

- E. **Review and Approve Resolution for Acceptance of the 2022 CSBG Contract:** Ms. Ponce presented the item which requires an annual approval from the Board. **A motion was made by Paulina Lopez to Approve Resolution for Acceptance of the 2022 CSBG Contract. The motion was seconded by Loren Cartagena. The motion passed unanimously.**

- F. **Update on the 2021 Fiscal Audit and Filing of 2021 Form 990, per Organizational Standards 8.1 & 8.6:** Mr. Dominguez provided an update on the start of the 2021 Financial Audit. Mr. Dominguez announced that this is the final year Strickler & Prieto will serve as auditors, and auditing services will have to be procured in 2023. **No motion was taken.**

VII. Old Business:

- A. **None.**

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 the services his office will be providing in the following weeks including a session for seniors to write their last will and testament, a box fan giveaway for seniors, a backpack giveaway for students, and an event to celebrate Texas Womens' Veterans Day. Sylvia Carreon provided an update regarding the ongoing redistricting in the area. Commissioner Stout announced a brunch event to celebrate Texas Women's Veterans Day on June 10. Christina Sanchez mentioned EL Paso City Council's establishment of the El Paso Commission for Women, and mentioned the need for input and in the future, calls for individuals to serve on the commission. Alberto Mesta announced TRLA has benefits for victims of the Uvalde mass shooting, and will have a response in Uvalde for victims of the 05/24 shooting. **No action was taken.**

- X. **Confirm Next Meeting Date/Time:** The meeting was confirmed for Tuesday, June 21, 2022, with time and location To be Determined.

- XI. **Adjournment:** Sylvia Carreon made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Laurencio Bosquez seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 6:36 PM.