



LAREDO COLLEGE DISTRICT
Laredo, Texas

The regular monthly meeting of the Laredo College Board of Trustees convened on Tuesday, February 25, 2025, 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.

1. CALL TO ORDER Mr. Rangel called the meeting to order.

2. ROLL CALL Ms. Leven-Ramos called roll.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Esteban Rangel, President
Ernestina “Tita” Cantu Vela, Vice President
Jackie Leven-Ramos, Secretary
Cindy Liendo, Parliamentarian
Erica Benavides Garcia
Mercurio Martinez, Jr.
Adriana Alexander
Lizzy Newsome (*arrived at 6:03 p.m.; returned from executive session at 8:11 p.m.*)
Karina “Kari” Elizondo

OTHERS

Minita Ramirez, Ph.D.
Rusty Meurer
Cesar E. Vela, Jr.
Robert Tijerina
Ruben Villarreal
Gilberto Martinez, Jr., Ed.D.
Yamile Perez
Diana Y. Ortiz, Ph.D.
Cesar Vela
Albert Chavez
Robert Tijerina
Federico Solis, Jr., Ed.D.
Heriberto Hernandez, Ed.D.
Marisela Rodriguez Tijerina, Ed.D.

MEMBERS ABSENT

Ms. Leven-Ramos announced that a quorum of the members was present.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD RETREAT OF JANUARY 25, 2025 AND THE REGULAR MONTHLY BOARD MEETING OF JANUARY 30, 2025

Ms. Leven-Ramos moved to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Benavides Garcia; motion passed.

4. PUBLIC TESTIMONY

No one signed up for public testimony.

Ms. Liendo made a motion to move up Agenda Item 9.F. - *Consideration and Possible Adoption of a Resolution Authorizing the Issuance of “Laredo College District Limited Tax Refunding Bonds, Series 2025”; Delegating the Authority to Certain District Officials to Execute Certain Documents Related to the Sale of the Bonds; Entering into a Bond Purchase Agreement, an Escrow Agreement, and a Paying Agent/Registrar Agreement; Approving an Official Statement; and Authorizing and Approving Other Matters Related Thereto.* Ms. Benavides Garcia seconded the motion; motion passed.

9.F. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ADOPTION OF A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF “LAREDO COLLEGE DISTRICT LIMITED TAX REFUNDING BONDS, SERIES 2025”; DELEGATING THE AUTHORITY TO CERTAIN

Mr. Cesar Vela, Vice President of Finance and Administration, informed that this item is for the refinancing of \$7.7 million of the limited tax refunding bonds.

Mr. Rangel acknowledged the presence of Ms. Newsome.

DISTRICT OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE CERTAIN DOCUMENTS RELATED TO THE SALE OF THE BONDS; ENTERING INTO A BOND PURCHASE AGREEMENT, AN ESCROW AGREEMENT, AND A PAYING AGENT/REGISTRAR AGREEMENT; APPROVING AN OFFICIAL STATEMENT; AND AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO – MR. CESAR VELA

Mr. Robert Tijerina from Tijerina Financial Consulting presented Laredo College’s plan of financing limited tax refunding bonds, series 2025.

Ms. Liendo made a motion to approve. Ms. Vela seconded the motion.

Ms. Leven-Ramos read the resolution.

The Board of Trustees of Laredo College in regular session open to the public on February 25, 2025, designated in the notice a resolution authorizing the issuance of Laredo College limited tax refunding bonds, series 2025; delegating the authority to certain college officials to execute certain documents related to the sale of the bonds; entering into a bond purchase agreement, an escrow agreement, and a paying agent/registrar agreement; approving an official statement for use in the marketing of the bonds; and authorizing and approving other matters related thereto.

A vote was taken; motion passed.

5. RECOGNITIONS AND INTRODUCTIONS – MR. RUBEN VILLARREAL

5.A. INTRODUCTION OF PERSONNEL/PERSONNEL ACTIONS

Mr. Ruben Villarreal, Public Information Officer, introduced the new hires/personnel actions for the month – Steven A. Perez, Human Resources Records Specialist, and Ana Karen Granados, Assistant Director of Recruitment and Dual Enrollment.

6. FACULTY SENATE REPORT – DR. GILBERTO MARTINEZ, JR.

Dr. Gilberto Martinez, Jr., Faculty Senate President, reported on:

- Reviewing faculty titles
- Memorial brick project
- Annual memorial service
- New faculty ombudsman
- Faculty Senate elections
- Faculty Senate resolutions
- Lucky Stiff production

7. LAREDO COLLEGE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION REPORT – YAMILE PEREZ

Ms. Yamile Perez, SGA Vice President, provided SGA updates (Palomino Empire Dance Team, community college day, official SGA meeting, Hearts and Hooves, WBCA Youth and Grand parades, Mr. South Texas Luncheon, and LC FunFest).

8. INFORMATION ITEMS

8.A. COMMUNITY COLLEGE DAY/LAREDO DAY – MR. ESTEBAN RANGEL, MS. ERNESTINA “TITA” CANTU VELA, MS. CINDY LIENDO, MS. ERICA BENAVIDES GARCIA, DR. MINITA RAMÍREZ

Ms. Vela reported on Community College Day that she, Ms. Liendo, Ms. Benavides Garcia, and Dr. Ramirez attended on February 3.

Mr. Rangel reported on Laredo Day and legislative meetings that he and Dr. Ramirez attended February 4 - 6.

8.B. MODIFICATIONS TO FOREIGN TRADE ZONE DESIGNATION REQUESTS – DR. MINITA RAMÍREZ

Dr. Minita Ramirez, President, informed the Board that revised letters of concurrence supporting the establishment of a foreign trade zone designation for Integralis Solutions and Proactive Supply Chain Group USA Inc. were issued at the request of the Foreign Trade Administrator.

8.C. NOTIFICATION OF EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION DURING FORT MCINTOSH CAMPUS CLOSURE DUE TO STREET CLOSURES FOR THE WASHINGTON BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Dr. Ramirez informed the Board that, as per LC policy DEA(LOCAL), Fort McIntosh employees will be paid for the closure on February 20, 2025, for three (3) hours to avoid heavy traffic and congestion due to the WBCA parade routes and street closures.

**ASSOCIATION'S YOUTH
PARADE AS PER
LAREDO COLLEGE
POLICY DE(A)LOCAL)-
COMPENSATION AND
BENEFITS:
COMPENSATION PLAN –
DR. MINITA RAMÍREZ**

9. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

**9.A. APPROVAL OF
MATCHING FUNDS FOR
NEW ENDOWMENT
CONTRIBUTIONS AS PER
THE REQUEST OF THE
WOMEN'S CITY CLUB
DONOR – DR. DIANA Y.
ORTIZ**

Dr. Diana Y. Ortiz, Vice President of Institutional Advancement, asked that the Board approve matching funds for three new Women's City Club Endowment Funds. Ms. Elizondo motioned to approve. Ms. Alexander seconded the motion; motion passed.

**9.B. JANUARY 2025
FINANCIAL REPORT – MR.
CESAR VELA**

Mr. Cesar Vela, Vice President of Finance and Administration, presented the January 2025 Financial Report (revenues are \$65,994,148; expenses are \$30,187,079; Facilities Master Plan Phase III balance is \$1,401,742; M&O tax collections are at 82.6% of the tax levy; total investments and deposits are \$120,572,378; and the general operating fund balance is \$ 23,454,416). Ms. Leven-Ramos moved to approve. Ms. Benavides Garcia seconded the motion; motion passed.

**9.C. APPROVAL OF
TOUCHNET AGREEMENT
EXTENSION – MR. CESAR
VELA**

Mr. Vela asked the Board to approve an extension to the application subscription program agreement with TouchNet for the use of TouchNet's Commerce Management Suite for \$149,502. Ms. Leven-Ramos motioned to approve. Discussion followed. Ms. Liendo seconded the motion; motion passed with one against.

**9.D. APPROVAL FOR THE
PURCHASE OF AUDIO
VISUAL EQUIPMENT FOR
THE MOORE AND RUBEN
GARCIA BUILDINGS – MR.
CESAR VELA**

Mr. Albert Chavez, Associate Vice President of Information Technology, requested approval to purchase audio-visual equipment and services for the classroom technology refresh of the Moore Vocational Building and four (4) classrooms in the Ruben Garcia Building for a total amount of \$240,351.00. Ms. Benavides Garcia motioned to approve. Ms. Leven-Ramos seconded the motion; motion passed.

**9.E. APPROVAL OF
CONTRACT RENEWAL
WITH COLUMBIA
ADVISORY GROUP FOR
INFORMATION SECURITY
OFFICER AND
INFORMATION SECURITY
COMPLIANCE RISK AND
GOVERNANCE SERVICES
– MR. CESAR VELA**

Mr. Chavez asked the Board to approve a three (3) year contract renewal for the existing Columbia Advisory Group for Information Security Officer and Information Security Compliance Risk and Governance Services in the amount of \$60,000.00 for the cost of services for one year. Ms. Liendo motioned to approve. Ms. Vela and Mr. Martinez seconded the motion; motion passed.

**9.G. APPROVAL FOR THE
PURCHASE OF NEW
HEATER FOR THE FORT
MCINTOSH CAMPUS
SWIMMING POOL – MR.
CESAR VELA**

Ms. Liendo motioned to approve. Ms. Elizondo seconded the motion; motion passed.

**9.H. APPROVE
RESOLUTION OF
SUPPORT FOR
CONTINUED INVESTMENT
OF THE 88TH
LEGISLATIVE SESSION
HOUSE BILL 8 DYNAMIC
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
FUNDING MODEL – DR.
MINITA RAMÍREZ**

Dr. Ramirez informed the Board that the Texas Association of Community Colleges drafted a resolution for all community colleges to support House Bill 8. Ms. Leven-Ramos read the resolution.

***Resolution of Support
for Continued Investment in the Dynamic Community College Funding
Model***

Whereas, the State of Texas has demonstrated its commitment to student success and workforce development through the implementation of the outcomes-based funding model established by House Bill 8 during the 88th Legislature;

Whereas, this funding model represents a transformative approach to empowering community colleges to deliver measurable results in alignment with state workforce and educational goals;

Whereas, the funding model prioritizes student outcomes, including the attainment of credentials of value, dual credit opportunities, successful transfer to a four-year university, and support for economically disadvantaged students and adult learners;

Whereas, continued investment in this dynamic funding model will ensure Texas community colleges remain equipped to provide affordable, high-quality education that drives economic growth and mobility;

Whereas, Texas community colleges have requested support for formula funding recommendations made by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for the FY 2026-2027 biennium, alongside a supplemental appropriations request for the current biennium to sustain progress and innovation;

Whereas, amendments to the state funding Performance Tier to include students transferring to private or independent institutions in Texas will strengthen student success pathways and acknowledge the key role these institutions play in the state's higher education and workforce development ecosystem;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Trustees of Laredo College officially declares its support for:

1. Continued investment in the outcomes-based funding model established by House Bill 8.
2. Full funding for the supplemental appropriations request for the FY 2024-2025 biennium.
3. Formula funding recommendations for the FY 2026-2027 biennium as proposed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.
4. Amendments to the Performance Tier to include students who transfer to private or independent institutions of higher education in Texas.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution be included in the permanent minutes of this Board.

ADOPTED THIS 25th day of February, 2025, by the Board of Trustees of Laredo College.

Ms. Leven-Ramos motioned to approve. Mr. Martinez and Ms. Vela seconded the motion; motion passed.

Ms. Leven-Ramos motioned to table this item. Ms. Benavides Garcia seconded the motion; motion passed.

9.I. APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT THE LAREDO COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVES THE SUBMISSION OF A GRANT APPLICATION BY THE LAREDO COLLEGE GRANTS OFFICE TO THE STATE OF TEXAS, OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR, PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICE FOR THE 2025-2026 EDWARD BYRNE MEMORIAL FUND – JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT (JAG) FOR A TOTAL OF \$25,000 IN FUNDING – MR. GABRIEL LOZANO

9.J. APPROVAL OF REVISED CLIENT AGREEMENT WITH VECTOR SOLUTIONS – DR. DAVID A. ARREAZOLA/DR. FRED SOLIS

Dr. Fred Solis, Vice President of Student Success and Enrollment, asked the Board to approve the revised client agreement with Vector Solutions for a three-year term beginning April 12, 2025, at an annual cost of \$23,466. Ms. Liendo moved to approve. Ms. Leven-Ramos seconded the motion; motion passed.

9.K. APPROVAL OF ASSOCIATE IN APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE IN DATA ANALYTICS – DR. HERIBERTO HERNANDEZ

Dr. Heriberto Hernandez, Associate Provost, asked the Board to approve the Associate in Applied Science Degree in Data Analytics. Ms. Leven-Ramos so moved. Ms. Benavides Garcia and Ms. Vela seconded the motion; motion passed.

9.L. MODIFICATION TO THE APPROVAL OF OUT-OF-THE-COUNTRY TRAVEL FOR BACHELOR OF APPLIED SCIENCE IN ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM FACULTY AND STAFF AS PER LAREDO COLLEGE POLICY CJ(LOCAL)-TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT – DR. MARISELA RODRIGUEZ TIJERINA

Dr. Marisela Rodriguez Tijerina, Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs, asked that the Board revise approval for out-of-country travel for a faculty and a staff member of the Organizational Leadership program to a location to be determined. Ms. Elizondo made a motion to approve. Ms. Leven-Ramos seconded the motion; motion passed.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:16 p.m., Ms. Leven-Ramos moved to go into executive session on the following item:

- Discussion with Laredo College Attorney to Receive Legal Advice Relating to Laredo College Ad Valorem Tax Collections, Pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071

Ms. Liendo seconded the motion; motion carried.

The Board reconvened to open session at 8:03 p.m. Mr. Rangel noted that no action was taken during executive session.

11. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

11.A. LAREDO COLLEGE AD VALOREM TAX COLLECTIONS

Mr. Martinez made a motion to defer this item. Ms. Benavides Garcia seconded the motion; motion passed (Ms. Newsome was not present for the vote).

12. PRESIDENT'S REMARKS AND REPORTS

12.A. CAMPUS POLICE, PERSONNEL, AND TRAVEL REPORTS – DR. MINITA RAMÍREZ

Reports were provided to the Board in the meeting materials.

12.B. PRESIDENT'S REMARKS – DR. MINITA RAMÍREZ

Dr. Ramírez remarked on the following:

- LC events
- Legislative session and budget request for new programs

13. UPCOMING EVENTS:

Saturday, March 1, 2025, 12:00 p.m. – LC FunFest and Musicale

March 10 – 14, 2025 – LC Spring Break

14. NEXT MEETING DATE:

Thursday, March 27, 2025, 6:00 p.m. – Regular Monthly Board of Trustees Meeting

15. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:12 p.m., Ms. Leven-Ramos moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Benavides Garcia seconded the motion; motion carried.

Mr. Esteban Rangel
President

Ms. Jackie Leven-Ramos
Secretary