

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BEXAR APPRAISAL DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
NOVEMBER 1, 2023**

The Board of Directors of the Bexar Appraisal District met for a meeting at 411 N. Frio in San Antonio, Texas on November 1, 2023 at 11:00 a.m. The items of business were acted upon as shown in the following minutes.

A. Call to Order

Ms. Cheri Byrom, Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. and acknowledged the presence of the following directors:

Ms. Cheri Byrom
Ms. Trish DeBerry
Mr. Jon Fisher
Councilwoman Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia
Mr. Dave Gannon

B. Public Comments Period

Ms. Byrom asked if there was anyone present for public comments. Ms. Jennifer Rodriguez answered that no members of the public were present.

C. Approval of the minutes

1. Approval of the minutes of the public hearing of September 13, 2023.

Ms. Byrom requested the board review the previous board meeting minutes. Ms. Rodriguez responded that there were minutes for the public hearing and the meeting that followed adding that they could be approved together.

Mr. Gannon moved to approve the minutes of the public hearing of September 13, 2023. Mr. Jon Fisher seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

2. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of September 13, 2023.

Councilwoman Garcia moved to approve the minutes of the meeting of September 13, 2023, Ms. DeBerry seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

D. Contract – Group Insurance

The board of directors may discuss and/or vote to authorize the chief appraiser to select the service providers and to enter into a contract with said providers for group insurance programs.

Chief Appraiser - Mr. Rogelio Sandoval announced that HR Director Ms. Laura McCloud would provide further detail regarding the group insurance bid for 2024. Ms. McCloud

introduced Mr. Bill Rusteberg, the district's insurance contract consultant, to present his findings and recommendations.

Mr. Rusteberg greeted the board and stated the district's current carrier United Healthcare had submitted a renewal offer. He added the district also received a proposal from Blue Cross Blue Shield, which had been the district's carrier for the previous year. He reminded the board that Blue Cross Blue Shield had submitted a bid for 2023; however, it was not received in time and had to be excluded.

Mr. Rusteberg recommended a one-year contract with Blue Cross Blue Shield as they would be matching current rates without an increase. He continued that they were offering a \$40,000 credit as a premium credit and offering a 9.5% rate cap next year, adding that benefits would be the same with only a few changes and minor improvements in the program.

Ms. DeBerry commented that with regard to entrepreneurship and as a small business owner she was curious about the bids remaining competitive. She asked Mr. Rusteberg for his stance regarding the healthcare landscape, along with increasing premiums and rising costs. Mr. Rusteberg indicated that next year would likely be a horrendous year for rate increases and the trend would be an average cost increase of 7%, adding the district had a rate cap.

Mr. Gannon also commented on rising healthcare costs.

Mr. John Fisher moved to approve Blue Cross Blue Shield as the district's provider for group health insurance. Councilwoman Garcia seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

Mr. Sandoval thanked Mr. Rusteberg & his wife, Martha, in front of the board for doing their due diligence to make sure the district had the best rates possible.

E. Contract – Aerial Orthophotography

The board of directors may discuss and/or vote to authorize the chief appraiser to enter into a contract for aerial orthophotography.

Ms. Crystal Khantharoth, Finance Director, informed the board that the district went out to bid for aerial orthophotography and that our current vendor was Nearmap. She specified the district received six bids which were evaluated by Mr. Keith Dailey, GIS Director. Mr. Dailey recommended the district proceed with a new contract with Nearmap in the amount of \$240,000 based on the highest evaluated score and pricing.

Ms. DeBerry moved to approve the district enter a contract with Nearmap for aerial orthophotography. Councilwoman Garcia and Mr. Gannon seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

F. Contract – Security Services

The board of directors may discuss and/or vote to authorize the chief appraiser to enter into a contract for security services.

Ms. Khantharoth informed the board that the district went out to bid for security services. She noted that the previous vendor, Lieutenant Martinez had retired. She continued that one bid had been received from Lieutenant Gabriel Villareal adding he is used to the district as he worked under Lt. Martinez. Ms. Khantharoth stated the contract amount is \$173,124 and requested approval from the board to move forward as recommended.

Mr. Fisher motioned to approve the district entering into a contract with Lt. Gabriel Villareal for security services. Ms. DeBerry seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

G. Contract – Audit Services

The board of directors may discuss and/or vote to authorize the chief appraiser to enter into a contract for audit services.

Ms. Khantharoth informed the board that the district goes out to bid for a new vendor for audit services every three years, two bids had been received for this year. As our current vendor is Weaver, the winning bid was given to ABIP based on their proposal and their previous experience with the district.

Ms. Byrom asked Ms. Khantharoth if the district has used them before. Ms. Khantharoth affirmed but added that it had been a while.

Councilwoman Garcia moved to approve the chief appraiser entering into a contract for audit services with ABIP, Mr. Fisher seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

H. Contract – Temporary Staffing Services

The board of directors may discuss and/or vote to authorize the chief appraiser to enter into a contract for temporary staffing services.

Ms. Khantharoth informed the board that the district currently had a contract with Dependable Business Solutions and received two bids for temporary staffing services. She recommended continuing with Dependable Business Solutions as they were a great fit with the district and their pricing was in line. She added the contract amount was \$185,000 and the district was asking the board for their approval.

Mr. Gannon asked how we utilized the temporary service personnel. Ms. Khantharoth answered that the district used them in customer service primarily during appeal season. Mr. Sandoval added that they help scan documents and enter protests.

Mr. Gannon moved to approve the chief appraiser enter into a contract with Dependable Business Solutions for temporary staffing services. Mr. Fisher seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

I. Backup/Disaster Recovery Solution Agreement

The board of directors may discuss and/or vote to authorize the chief appraiser to enter into a Backup/Disaster Recovery solution agreement.

Ms. Khantharoth informed the board that the district selected InNet Unitrends for a three-year total contract which was bundled together for the best pricing. She continued that this product will allow backup service to the cloud restoring service within 24 hours if something were to happen adding they were a DIR vendor.

Mr. Gannon asked for clarification that this is for data recovery not a cyber security response. Mr. Scott Griscom, Assistant Chief Appraiser, clarified it was a cloud backup which gave the district priority space if a disaster happened and would allow the servers to be operational within 24 hours. He added that was a huge part of why the district liked Unitrends, as they helped when the district had its IT issues two years ago. Discussion resumed.

Mr Gannon moved to approve the chief appraiser enter into a backup/disaster recovery solution agreement with InNet Unitrends. Ms. DeBerry seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

J. Network Upgrade

The board of directors may discuss and or/vote to authorize the chief appraiser to expend the fund to upgrade the district's network.

Ms. Khantharoth informed the board the district was asking to approve the expenditure of \$150,000 to upgrade its network by adding additional switches by the end of the year. She added the vendor, Weaver Dell EMC, was a DIR approved vendor.

Ms. Byrom asked if there were any questions or concerns, and requested a motion to use Weaver Dell EMC as our network upgrade provider. Mr. Fisher moved to approve the expenditure to Weaver Dell EMC to upgrade the district's network. Councilwoman Garcia seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

K. TCDRS Cost of Living Adjustment

The chief appraiser will ask the board of directors to vote to authorize the funding of a 1% contribution to the Texas County & District Retirement System towards a Cost of Living Adjustment for retirees, contingent upon final approval of the budget amendment to encumber funds scheduled for December 2023.

Mr. Sandoval informed the board of directors the district was asking for approval to authorize a 1% adjustment to its retirement system. He added the \$275,000 had been included in the district's budget for 2023 to be included with the restricted reserve fund for retiree COLAs.

Mr. Gannon asked if the 1% was the standard contribution on an annual basis. Mr. Griscom responded it is budgeted every year and paid at the end of the odd year to take effect for the even year. He added it is the same amount as previous years and is prefunded so it would not add to the district's unfunded liability with TCDRS. He noted that the district used to pull the funding out of the surplus in years past but in the last few years have added it to a reserve

account so there is not a one-time hit to the budget or potential issues with surplus from one year to the next.

Ms. Byrom asked for a motion to accept an encumbrance of funds of 1% increase COLA for the retirees. Councilwoman Garcia moved to approve the funding of a 1% contribution to the Texas County & District Retirement System towards a Cost of Living Adjustment for retirees, contingent upon final approval of the budget amendment to encumber funds scheduled for December 2023. Ms. DeBerry seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

L. Board of Directors Manual

The board of directors may discuss and/or vote to approve the proposed changes to Articles I and II of the district's board of directors' rules and procedures.

Ms. Rodriguez presented the board with two proposed changes to the current board manual. She stated that in Article I, the proposed additions are in response to Senate Bill 2 to include the three directors elected in the general election. She continued that the changes refer to the board serving in staggered, four-year terms as opposed to a two-year term that runs simultaneously. Ms. Rodriguez also informed the board that as a result of the additional members, the district was proposing an update to Article II which holds the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 10:00 am for a meeting if necessary. She added that this should help alleviate the issue of establishing a quorum. Ms. Rodriguez also noted the only exception to the set meeting date would be the December meeting during tax unit appointment years as the meeting would need to be held after the December 15th voting deadline.

Ms. Byrom asked if the board members who are chosen from the taxing entities for the following term will be for 1 year. Ms. Rodriguez confirmed that was correct, and added that in order to establish the changes from Senate Bill 2 anybody who is in office December 31st 2024 will have their term expire turning all terms into a four-year staggered term schedule. Councilwoman Garcia moved to approve the updated board of director's manual with the proposed changes. Mr. Fisher seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

Before moving on to the next item, Mr. Sandoval commented that he was happy to announce Ms. Rodriguez would no longer be Executive Assistant as she has been promoted to the district's Communications Director. He also introduced Mr. Jimmy Saiz as the new Executive Assistant.

M. Chief Appraiser Separation Agreement

The board of directors may discuss and/or vote to approve the standard terms of separation and release of claims for the retiring chief appraiser.

Ms. McCloud informed the board that the district was seeking approval to execute a separation agreement with Mr. Michael Amezcuita. She continued that this procedure has been in place since 2004 for the district's executive staff, adding that she wanted to present his to the board as he is the retiring chief appraiser. She added this separation agreement covers all release of claims for the district and guarantees any future cooperation from him in any legal matters that he would be a part. Lastly, she noted this was voluntary participation, and included

returning district property which is standard district policy. Ms. McCloud asked for board approval as the agreement will go into effect 21 days before he is set to leave employment and would be presented to him in early to mid-December.

Mr. Gannon moved to approve the standard terms of separation and release of claims for the retiring chief appraiser. Mr. Fisher seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

N. Signator Card

The board of directors may authorize the addition of Assistant Chief Appraiser Tommy Allison as signator to and the removal of retiring Chief Appraiser Michael Amezquita from all district bank accounts.

Ms. Byrom informed the board that Mr. Amezquita needed to be removed from the district accounts and Mr. Allison added.

For the record, Mr. Sandoval stated the district is asking for board approval to update the banking signature cards for Broadway Bank, adding the current signers on the district's Operating Account ending in 0047, Payroll Account ending in 0048, Money Market/Sweep Account ending in 8920, and Employee Event Committee Account ending is 0049 currently are:

Michael Amezquita
Rogelio Sandoval
Scott Griscom
Crystal Khantharoth

He restated the district was asking the board to approve removing Michael Amezquita and adding Tommy Allison to all the district accounts, as stated previously.

Ms. DeBerry moved to approve the addition of Assistant Chief Appraiser Tommy Allison as signator to and the removal of retiring Chief Appraiser Michael Amezquita from all district bank accounts. Councilwoman Garcia seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

O. Intent to Encumber Funds

The chief appraiser will inform the board of directors of the district's intent to amend the 2023 operating budget and encumber funds.

Mr. Sandoval informed the board that the district anticipates a budget surplus of \$1,336,000.00 and was asking for board approval to notify the taxing units its intent to encumber \$1,000,000.00 of those funds. The breakdown consists of \$500,000.00 to establish an election restricted fund, \$200,000.00 towards our current litigation expense restricted fund, \$100,000.00 towards our building capital restricted fund in the event that we need to move part of our operations off site in the future, and, per auditor's advice of having at least three months' worth of expenditures in reserve, \$200,000.00 towards the general restricted fund reserve. He restated the district was

seeking board approval to notify the taxing units so they can have the full 30 days to disapprove the encumbrance.

Ms. Byrom clarified with Mr. Sandoval that we have a surplus of \$336,000.00 to return to the taxing entities and suggested that we do not return money this year and instead add the surplus to the restricted fund reserve in order to reach a three-month reserve.

Mr. Griscom responded there were a few reasons to return monies, primarily, showing the taxing units that the district understands who funds its budget and that the projected surplus amount is about the same amount as the amount the district has sent back in previous years. He continued that the amount is projected, however, historically the district is likely to have additional funds leftover by the end of the year. Mr. Griscom added the district always tries to send something back and even though some only get back pennies, it is worthwhile so they see the district is a good steward of taxpayer money, adding that we are one of the few districts throughout the state that returns money and we have a proven track record of doing so.

Ms. Byron agreed and added that we should never try spend every penny in the budget. Mr. Fisher stated it is a good faith gesture especially in light of the new Chief Appraiser, adding he would be in favor of leaving it as it is.

Ms. DeBerry responded that it does send a bad signal as far as setting the pros and cons that would be weighed and associated with it. She added that the district would need to manage the taxing entities' expectations if they did not intend to return funds as the taxing entities have become accustomed to it.

Mr. Gannon asked if the district was encumbering \$500,000.00 for the election, adding his recollection of the estimate was \$750,000.00. Mr. Sandoval responded that the elections administrator was originally under the assumption that the election was going to take place in November which would be costlier.

Mr. Griscom added that the plan going forward was to add a line item in the budget for the election similar to pre-planning the retiree COLAs, to put aside a certain amount every year to cover it by the time it is needed. As this item did not require board approval, discussion was held before moving to the next item.

O. Adjourn to Executive Session

The board did not adjourn into Executive Session.

P. Executive Session

As the board did not adjourn into Executive Session, there was no action to be taken.

Q. Chief Appraiser's Report

The board of directors will receive the following reports from the chief appraiser:

1. Financial Condition

a. Funds Investment report for August & September, 2023

b. Statement of revenues and expenses as of September 30, 2023

c. Designated cash funds report as of September 30, 2023

Ms. Khantharoth presented the district's financial report providing the information from September. As of September 30, 2023, total deposits equaled \$11,990,793.19 earning an interest rate of 3.27%. Year to date interest on the district's money market account is \$168,598,11 and is over collateralized by \$635,805.30. She continued that total revenues collected are \$23,884,941 with a current surplus of \$7,545,019. She stated there were no changes to the designated cash funds report.

2. Appraisal Records

a. Presentation of appraisal roll report for the third quarter of the 2023 tax year as authorized by Section 25.25(b), Texas Property Tax Code.

Mr. Tommy Allison, Assistant Chief Appraiser, presented the board with the 25.25(b) report for the third quarter and noted there were two accounts listed. There were no questions from the board.

b. The board of directors will receive an update on the status of the work regarding the 2023 appraisal roll.

Mr. Allison informed the board that the district is continuing to work with the 2023 appraisal roll while building the 2024 appraisal roll. He stated that as of today, the district is in the 28th week of the 2023 appeal season. He continued that over 199,000 protests were received and staff has worked through 93% of that volume with 14,000 protests remaining. He added that ARB hearings would be held through November 15th with a short break for the Thanksgiving holidays and would then return for a week in December followed by monthly hearings to finish out the process. Mr. Allison noted that appraisers had started work on the 2024 appraisal records and are out in the field collecting data and making updates to the roll.

3. Recognition

The chief appraiser will inform the board of directors of the district's recognition as one of San Antonio Express News' Top Workplaces for 2023.

Ms. McCloud informed the board the district had won Top Workplace award for the fifth consecutive year and was also recognized with a special award for its training program. Mr. Sandoval took a moment to acknowledge staff as the district refers to itself as one team.

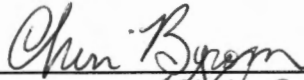
Mr. Allison presented the board with a copy of an email from a property owner sent to Ms. Sarah Durnell, Customer Information and Assistance Director, which commended staff for their service.

Mr. Allison commented that on week 28 of hearings, staff are still providing the same service as we did on day one and recognized Ms. Durnell as she oversees that department.

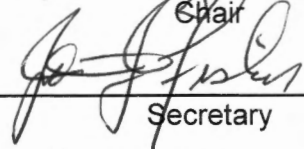
Ms. Byrom asked if there were any additional items to be discussed. Ms. Rodriguez indicated that the Appraisal Review Board Chair, Taxpayer Liaison Officer, and Community Outreach reports would be added to the next agenda.

S. Adjourn

There being no further business, the November 1, 2023 board of directors meeting adjourned at 11:49 a.m.



Chair



Secretary

28 DEC. 2023

Date