

Nueces County Appraisal District  
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*Ramiro "Ronnie" Canales*  
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**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**NUECES COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT**

The Board of Directors held a Regular Meeting on Wednesday June 12, 2024.

**INVOCATION**

Irene Lugo led the invocation

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mr. Garcia led the Pledge of Allegiance

**ROLL CALL OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**DIRECTORS:**

Jerry Garcia, Chair	<u>Present</u>
Luis Elizondo, Vice Chair	<u>Absent</u>
Leo Gonzalez, Secretary	<u>Absent</u>
Deven Bhakta	<u>Present</u>
DeeAnna Heavilin	<u>Absent</u>
Caitlin Chupe	<u>Present</u>
Gabriele Hilpold	<u>Present</u>
Susie Sullivan	<u>Present</u>
Kevin Kieschnick, Ex Officio	<u>Absent</u>

**NON-DIRECTORS:**

Ramiro Canales, Chief Appraiser	<u>Present</u>
Leticia Roberts, Asst. Chief Appraiser	<u>Present</u>
Melissa Vela, Attorney	<u>Present</u>
Terri Noack, TLO	<u>Present</u>

**CALL TO ORDER & DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

The meeting of the Board of Directors of the Nueces County Appraisal District was duly called to order at 9:12 am. A quorum was present, with notice properly posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code 551, and that any conflict-of-interest affidavits have been received and placed on file as required by law.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION, CONSENT AGENDA**

- a) Approval of the May 15, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes
- b) Receipt of the June 2024 Litigation Report

Mr. Bhakta motioned to approve the consent agenda as presented and Ms. Hilpold seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**TAXPAYER LIAISON OFFICER'S REPORT.**

Ms. Noack reported that she had received two complaints to make the Board aware in case these situations escalate. The first complaint an agent stating that she had not timely received preliminary appraisal rolls requested under the Public Information Act. The rolls were sent to her on May 6 after the District's entities receive them first. The problem was that she had requested the rolls as evidence for an informal hearing for which protests had been filed. Evidence is normal exchanged at the informal hearings, and the District is not required to abide by the 14-day evidence rule for informal hearings. The appraiser provided the comp/equity grids to the agent for each of the protested properties. The agent did not appear for the informal hearing scheduled for May 20, 21 and 22. The second complaint was regarding informal hearing with an appraiser. Taxpayer alleged that she was misled regarding the value and the offer from the appraiser and that she did not sign the settlement agreement. Ms. Noack stated that upon speaking with the property owner and the appraiser, reading the emails sent between the two parties, and listening to the phone conversation between the property-owner and the appraiser, she determined that there was no violation of policy or the Tax Code. The offer was rescinded, the case was re-opened with an ARB hearing scheduled. All ARB members have completed required training and plan to hold more panels.

**PRESENTATION ON 2025 PROPOSED BUDGET.**

Mr. Sissamis referenced the proposed budget document previously provided to the Board members and provided a summary of the changes between the 2024 adopted and 2025 proposed budgets. The 2025 proposed budget represents an increase \$1.1 million, or 10.91%, over the 2024 approved budget. The major changes are a proposed cost of living increase, anticipated increases in employee health insurance, inflation and higher utilization of supplies and maintenance, removal of the \$575,000 election expenses budgeted in 2024, net increased budget for various technology arrangements, addition of annual homestead audits previously approved by the Board, ARB legal costs due to higher use of legal services, and \$1.2 million to replace the District's organization-wide appraisal software. There was discussion over whether to ask the entities for the whole \$1.2 million estimated cost of the new system or to request a smaller annual financed payment plan arrangement that would be more costly to the funding entities in the long term. The Board opted to request the whole amount up front.



Mr. Sissamis then confirmed board concurrence with the major changes. Consensus was to leave the changes in the draft proposed budget to be sent to the entities.

**DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION TO AWARD A 60-MONTH RENTAL AGREEMENT FOR POSTAGE MACHINE AND INSERTING-FOLDING MACHINE.**

Mr. Sissamis stated that the current lease with Pitney Bowes for a postage machine and insert/fold/stuff machine will reach the end of the five-year lease term in July 2024. The US Postal Service (USPS) issued regulations on office equipment suppliers to upgrade to the Information Based Indica (IMI) which will provide USPS with more detailed real-time transaction data that will enable USPS to automate operations, employ improved security standards, and ensure correct postage is used. The new regulations become effective December 2024. BuyBoard Purchasing Cooperative has a negotiated contract of 30% discount available to Texas governments with IMI compliant equipment, acceptable terms, and discounted pricing. The lease payment will be \$3,327.60 per quarter (66,552 per five years.). Staff would like the Board of Directors to approve the Chief Appraiser to finalize and execute a 60-month State and Local Fair Market Value Lease with Pitney Bowes for these two machines. Ms. Sullivan motion to approve and Ms. Chupe seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** PUBLIC NOTICE is given that the Board of Directors may elect to go into Executive Session anytime during the meeting to discuss matters listed anywhere on the agenda, when authorized by the Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code. Should the Board of Directors elect to go into Executive Session, the section or sections of the Open Meetings Act authorizing the Executive Session will be publicly announced by the presiding officer. Upon completion of Executive Session, the Board of Directors may take such action as appropriate in open session.

*The Board of Directors went into executive session at 10:01 am.*

*The Board of Directors returned to open session at 10:41 am.*

**DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION RELATIVE TO ITEMS DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION**

No action.

**CHIEF APPRAISER'S REPORT**

Mr. Canales stated that there were approximately 30,000 protests to date, of which 20,000 were open. Mr. Sissamis anticipates the financial audit at the July meeting. The cost of the election held on May 4, 2024, was approximately \$160,000, and the run-off election will be less. The run-off election will have to be canvassed by June 26.



*Ramiro "Ronnie" Canales, Chief Appraiser*

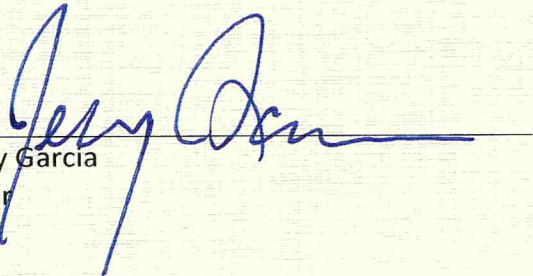
**SUGGESTED ITEMS FOR NEXT REGULAR MEETING**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting ended at 10:43am when Ms. Chupe left and there was no longer a quorum present.

SIGNED:

  
Jerry Garcia  
Chair

