



**CITY OF LAREDO**  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

August 16, 2024

**Re: Downtown Business Improvement District Bi-Annual Report (January 2024 – June 2024)**

The Honorable Mayor and Members of the Laredo City Council  
1110 Houston Street  
Laredo, Texas 78040

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

On behalf of the Downtown Business Improvement District (BID), we would like to express our gratitude for the opportunity to submit our Bi-annual report that highlights the past six months of accomplishments and planned projects for the upcoming years. We thank you for your continued support as the Committee works to foster and encourage responsible economic development activities throughout the City of Laredo.

Within the last (6) six months, the Downtown BID did encounter one issue meeting quorum for the May 15, 2024 meeting, but did call a special meeting on May 23, 2024 to discuss pending items. Further, Board Member Rene Gonzalez resigned from the board leaving his position vacant for the reporting period. Still, the committee is very active and engaged.

During this reporting period, the Downtown BID has focused on the following key issues facing the city:

- Planning of a 5-year plan for the BID
- Organize and host a Downtown Summit
- Creation of a potential BID service plan
- Creation of a downtown parking committee
- Sought partnerships between the City and Webb County
- Crime statistics in downtown Laredo
- Creation of a downtown hospitality/entertainment subcommittee
- Application of grants

Our team continues to work hard to ensure that the Downtown BID is being proudly represented and engaged in the programs and initiatives held by the department and that align with the VIVA Laredo Economic Development Plan. Attached to this report, there will be the Committee's roster, attendance, agendas and minutes for the meetings.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the Downtown BID, please contact me at the Economic Development Office at 956-791-7397.

Sincerely,

Miriam Castillo  
Downtown BID Liaison  
City of Laredo, Economic Development Director



# Boards, Commissions and Committees

## City of Laredo

### **DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

Composition: 9 members appointed by City Council – **AS OF JUNE 31, 2024**

Created: By Motion made on October 18, 2021 at City Council meeting M2021-R-18

Liaison: Miriam Castillo (956) 791-7397

| Members                       | By           | Appointed |
|-------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Lawrence Freeman              | City Council | 10-18-21  |
| Jasveer Malik                 | City Council | 10-18-21  |
| Tomas Izaguirre               | City Council | 10-18-21  |
| Julian Rotnofsky              | City Council | 10-18-21  |
| Hilda Torres                  | City Council | 10-18-21  |
| (RESIGNATION) (Rene Gonzalez) | City Council | 10-18-21  |
| Justin Heather                | City Council | 10-18-21  |



## **BOARDS, COMMISSIONS & COMMITTEES CITY OF LAREDO**

### **DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

**TOTAL ABSENCES PER COMMITTEE MEMBER AS OF:  
JANUARY 1, 2024 - JULY 31, 2024**

**MEMBER: LAWRENCE FREEMAN**

**TOTAL ABSENCES: 0**

**DATES OF ABSENCES: NONE**

**\*APPOINTED: 10/18/21**

**MEMBER: JASVEER MALIK**

**TOTAL ABSENCES: 3**

**DATES OF ABSENCES: (01/11; 02/07; 05/29)**

**\*APPOINTED: 10/18/21**

**MEMBER: TOMAS IZAGUIRRE**

**TOTAL ABSENCES: 4**

**DATES OF ABSENCES: (01/11; 02/07; 03/14; 04/10)**

**\*APPOINTED: 10/18/21**

**MEMBER: JULIAN ROTNOFSKY**

**TOTAL ABSENCES: 0**

**DATES OF ABSENCES: NONE**

**\*APPOINTED: 10/18/21**

**MEMBER: HILDA TORRES**

**TOTAL ABSENCES: 1**

**DATES OF ABSENCES: (03/14)**

**\*APPOINTED: 10/18/21**

**MEMBER: RENE GONZALEZ (VOLUNTARY RESIGNATION)**

**TOTAL ABSENCES: 3**

**DATES OF ABSENCES: (03/14; 04/10; 05/29)**

**\*APPOINTED: 10/18/21 (TO BE REPLACED BY BOARD VOTE)**

**MEMBER: JUSTIN HEATHER**

**TOTAL ABSENCES: 0**

**DATES OF ABSENCES: NONE**

**\*APPOINTED: 10/18/21**

# PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF MEETING OF THE  
DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT  
CITY OF LAREDO, TEXAS

Thursday, January 11, 2024 @ 5:30 pm  
CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM #1, FIRST FLOOR

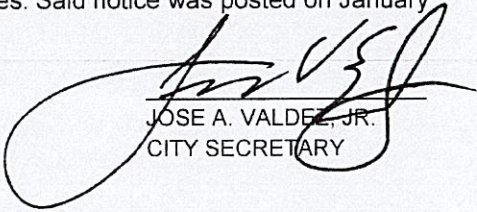
Written notice is hereby given of a meeting of the Downtown Business Improvement District Board of Directors Meeting, to be held on Thursday, January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024 from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at City Hall, Conference Room Number 1, First Floor, located at 1110 Houston Street, inside the boundaries of the District.

## MEETING AGENDA

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. ROLL CALL
- III. CITIZEN COMMENTS
- IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING HELD ON DECEMBER 12, 2023.
- V. ACTION ITEMS
  - A. Discussion with possible action on the election of officers, including Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary.
  - B. Discussion with possible action on the creation of a Planning Subcommittee to develop a 5-year plan for BID, including consideration of collection of assessments.
  - C. Discussion with possible action regarding making a formal request of the City of Laredo and Webb County for seed funding to support activation of the BID.
  - D. Discussion with possible action regarding support of the Downtown Summit scheduled for early March 2024.
- VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS
- VII. ADJOURNMENT

This notice was posted at the Municipal Government Offices, 1110 Houston Street, Laredo, Texas, at a place convenient and readily accessible to the public at all times. Said notice was posted on January \_\_\_\_\_, 2024 by 5:00 p.m.

REC'D CITY SEC OFF  
JAN 5 24 PM 4:30

  
JOSE A. VALDEZ, JR.  
CITY SECRETARY

**DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

**MINUTES**

**CITY OF LAREDO, TEXAS**

**January 11, 2024**

**5:30 PM**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Quorum established

**2. ROLL CALL**

**Committee Members**

- Lawrence Freeman – **Present**
- Jasveer Malik – **Absent**
- Tomas Izaguirre – **Absent**
- Julian Rotnofsky – **Present**
- Hilda Torres – **Present**
- Rene Gonzalez – **Present**
- Justin Heather – **Present**

Other Attendees Present:

- Miriam Castillo – City of Laredo / Economic Development Director

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Meeting on January 11, 2024.**

**Motion:** Julian Rotnofsky

**Second:** Lawrence Freeman

**For:** 4                    **Against:** 0

**Motion Passes**

**4. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Carole Alexander addressed the board to comment on action item 5.C. She expressed the importance of the structure regarding public-private partnerships including defined individuals decision making at the City and Webb County. She recommended to look at what other cities are doing for best practices in revitalization. She mentioned there is a responsibility to put a structure in place soon to address the property valuation for proper management of the fund.

**5. ACTION ITEMS**

- A.** Discussion with possible action on the election of officers, including Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary.

Rotnofsky motions to nominate Justin Heather to be the Chair of the Business Improvement District. Rene Gonzalez asked if all members could nominate followed by the nomination of Julian Rotnofsky by Lawrence Freedman, seconded by Rene Gonzalez. Miriam Castillo mentioned that the Chair position is a two-year term and recommended establishing a solid structure, appointments and bylaws.

Justin Heather clarifies that there is no limit on the term based on the statute, Chairman Rene Gonzalez mentioned that historically it has been for two years and proceeds to nominate him to serve as Vice-Chair.

**Motion:** Nomination of Justin Heather as Chair.

**Second:** Lawrence Friedman

**For:** 4                    **Against:** 1

**Motion:** Nomination of Julian Rotnofsky as Vice Chair.

**Second:** Lawrence Friedman

**For:** 5                    **Against:** 0

**Motion:** Nomination of Lawrence Freeman as Treasurer.

**Second:** Justin Heather

**For:** 5                    **Against:** 0

**Motion:** Nomination of Hilda Torres as Secretary.

**Second:** Julian Rotnofsky

**For:** 5                    **Against:** 0

- B. Discussion with possible action on the creation of a Planning Subcommittee to develop a 5-year plan for BID, including consideration of collection of assessments.

Miriam Castillo mentions that this was an item recommended by a committee member to start looking at a plan and the intention of approaching the City and the Webb County to request seed funding. Rene Gonzalez inquires on how both items are related, Julian explains that the funding is needed to provide services. Discussion on seed funding that at one point was considered at the beginning of the creation of the BID. Gonzalez asks if the intended request of seed funding will be from assessments. Julian addresses the citizen comment regarding the exempt properties that are not required to contribute, but benefit from the BID. He suggests that the approach to the entities is with the intention of discussing the possibility of their participation.

Motion: Motion to combine agenda items B and C.

Second: Justin Heather.

Rene Gonzalez inquires about what buildings are referred to, Ms. Alexander mentions that those are government buildings. Justin clarifies that usually government buildings are exempt including schools. Rene Gonzalez inquires how the non-assessed money will be requested. Justin Heather mentions that working on a 5-year plan will help understand how possible seed fund can help provide services. Rene Gonzalez asks how the seed funding differentiates from what the Downtown TIRZ is already capturing. Miriam Castillo comments that when the BID is activated, this will be an assessment that won't be tied in to the TIF.

Julian Rotnofsky mentions that in the development of the 5-year plan to include both the City and the County to understand what services are already being provided by them and see how they can contribute voluntarily to the BID to provide those services as a mutual benefit. Justin Heather adds that security services can also be considered to supplement the Laredo Police Department services in downtown. Julian mentions how Plano, TX uses the BID to provide security services. Hilda Torres inquires as to how the group would encourage the City if they are exempt; Julian mentions that the value that BID provides through the services to make downtown look better, the activation of the properties will benefit the City with the increase in sales and economic development. Rene Gonzalez asks if council members would be able to fund it through their discretionary funds. Julian mentions that discussions with the City could include start providing services funded by the City and County to show what BID's can do. Miriam Castillo mentions that the 5-year plan will help identify the benefits of any possible seed funding and the mechanisms of funding implementation and/or reimbursement. Rene Gonzalez asks if the plan is to ask for funding for 5 years and start assessments after 5 years. Justin Heather mentions that it would be for one year and volunteers to start the development of the plan. Julian Rotnofsky volunteers to be part of the sub-committee.

**Motion:** Motion to create a sub-committee to develop a subcommittee to develop a project plan and approach the City and the Webb County to request assistance.

**Second:** Hilda Torres

**For:** 5

**Against:** 0

- D. Discussion with possible action regarding support of the Downtown Summit scheduled for early March 2024.

Justin Heather mentions that he has been meeting with Councilmember Alyssa Cigarroa in the planning of a Downtown Summit tentatively schedule for mid-March with the assistance of the International Downtown Alliance to be part of it and meet with City leaders and stakeholders to develop a downtown strategy. Rene Gonzalez references a previous exercise that was held at TAMU on downtown strategies. Julian explains that this particular event is a three-day event where they will be presenting preliminary data on how the City could move forward followed by a final report on their final findings. Rene Gonzalez inquires about the audience and who will be included, Julian mentions that downtown major stakeholders will be, but that the planning committee is still working on the event structure. He mentions that they are in conversations with having the Chamber of Commerce to assist in the coordination of this project. Miriam Castillo mentions that even though there is not a program structure at the moment, this will be an outreach initiative involving other entities and players including the Downtown TIRZ and emphasizes on the importance of letting the public know on what projects are being put together by those entities, since many downtown stakeholders are not aware. Lawrence Freeman echoes the importance of implementing outreach initiatives.

## 6. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Justin Heather reports that the Downtown TIRZ went on bids for street improvements on three streets starting on Zaragoza and will be also issuing an RFP for their downtown murals program. Ms. Alexander mentions that the program will be funded by the TIRZ and will cover about ten murals to give local artists a priority. Lawrence Freeman asks if the engineer will be the one in charge of the street scape on Zaragoza and mentions concerns on the sidewalks that don't connect. Ms. Alexander mentions that the goal is to make this pedestrian friendly and walkable and offers to share the plans which are available online. Justin Heather mentions that engineers have been working on the challenges that have raised and explained that the fire department has also been working with everyone involved. Lawrence Freeman inquires about Salinas Street. Ms. Alexander mentions that project #2 does include Salinas, and the concerns regarding the way it is connected to the Mall and the improvements that prevent to offer pedestrian solutions. She reports that the project calls for nine blocks including 2 blocks on Zaragoza on the north side. Miriam Castillo recommends to invite the TIRZ board to give a presentation to the BID at a future meeting.

## 7. ADJOURNMENT

### **Motion to Adjourn Business Improvement District January 2024 Meeting**

**Motion:** Julian Rotnofsky

**Second:** Lawrence Freeman



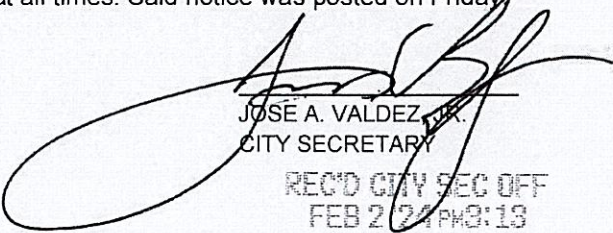
**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**NOTICE OF MEETING OF THE**  
**DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**  
**CITY OF LAREDO, TEXAS**  
**Wednesday, February 7, 2024 @ 5:30 pm**  
**CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM #1, FIRST FLOOR**

Written notice is hereby given of a meeting of the Downtown Business Improvement District Board of Directors Meeting, to be held on Wednesday, February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024 from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at City Hall, Conference Room Number 1, First Floor, located at 1110 Houston Street, inside the boundaries of the District.

**MEETING AGENDA**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**
- II. **ROLL CALL**
- III. **CITIZEN COMMENTS**
- IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024.**
- V. **ACTION ITEMS**
  - A. Update and discussion with possible action related to Downtown Summit.
  - B. Discussion with possible action regarding potential BID service plan.
- VI. **PRESENTATION ITEMS**
  - A. Discussion of any downtown related effort or activity of Board Members' interest or concern.
- VII. **ADJOURNMENT**

This notice was posted at the Municipal Government Offices, 1110 Houston Street, Laredo, Texas, at a place convenient and readily accessible to the public at all times. Said notice was posted on Friday, February 2, 2024 by 5:00 p.m.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JOSE A. VALDEZ, JR.  
CITY SECRETARY

REC'D CITY SEC OFF  
FEB 2 2024 PM 9:13

**DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

**MINUTES**

**CITY OF LAREDO, TEXAS**

**February 7, 2024**

**5:30 PM**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Quorum established

**2. ROLL CALL**

**Committee Members**

- Lawrence Freeman – **Present**
- Jasveer Malik – **Absent**
- Tomas Izaguirre – **Absent**
- Julian Rotnofsky – **Present**
- Hilda Torres – **Present**
- Rene Gonzalez – **Present**
- Justin Heather – **Present**

Other Attendees Present:

- Miriam Castillo – City of Laredo / Economic Development Director
- Rosario Cabello – City of Laredo Deputy City Manager

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Meeting on February 7<sup>th</sup> , 2024.**

**Motion:** Lawrence Freeman  
**Second:** Julian Rotnofsky  
**For:** 4            **Against:** 0

**Motion Passes**

**4. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

**5. ACTION ITEMS**

**A. Update and discussion with possible action related to Downtown Summit.**

Julian R. reported that discussions are being held with the International Downtown Association to get a working group and a plan to move forward for redevelopment of downtown. He stated that initial date was in March, but a request was made to move it to a later date. Justin H. mentioned that the BID is being included in the summit to give a presentation and also hear feedback from the community as the BID moves forward to identify services and activities.

**Motion:** To formally present at the Downtown Summit as an organization and to receive feedback from participants on the services that the BID will adopt.

**Motion:** Julian Heather  
**Second:** Julian Rotnofsky.  
**For:** 5            **Against:** 0

B. Discussion with possible action regarding potential BID service plan.

Justin Heather presented proposed activities of the BID that were presented in 2015 supplemented by internal discussions and review of other BIDs in the nation. The proposed budget included most to direct services and marketing services followed by 20% for administration and management. Rene Gonzalez inquired about the feedback that were considered and if the conversations to put together a service list include feedback from all stakeholders. Justin H. reported that it included activities being considered in 2015 and others based on conversations with Julian R., a couple of others and from what other BIDs do. Miriam C. recommended to include feedback to all organizations. Rosario C. added that it also helps avoid duplication of efforts, since the TIRZ and other entities are already engaging in some activities and allocating funding. Miriam C. recommended to include the creation of a grants program under the BID. Julian R. clarified that the intent of generating a preliminary service plan is to start gathering ideas and examples on how the structure could be. He agreed that feedback from all stakeholders should be included. Justin H. stated that it would be a working document where stakeholders will have an opportunity to share their feedback on services that need to be considered. He stated that different areas in downtown have different needs, and the plan will ideally cover all needs based on the area. Miriam C. recommended to establish a mechanism where there is feedback from the entire city via a survey. Justin H. suggested to consider allocating funding to complement other ongoing programs such as the murals program. Larry F. shared that the growth and development in El Paso was due to their BID, and added that its important to get everyone involved in selling downtown. Justin H. opened it up to other ideas from the board. Rosario C. inquired about parking, Julian R. mentioned that parking management can be considered, Miriam C. confirmed that the provisions of the district allows for that. Julian R. added that the problem is not the lack of parking, but the management of it adding that there are ways to create parking districts and have an entity manage it. Marketing and branding were also discussed as to the importance of promoting accordingly. Larry F. recommended to have roundtable discussions with stakeholders instead of doing it all at the summit. Justin H. mentioned that the TIRZ had an outreach meeting sharing some of their plans, which helped them plan accordingly and get community buy-in. Rene G. inquired if the notes presented are preliminary to be able to get to a service plan, Justin H. clarified that it is just a venue to start conversations.

Hilda T. asked if information on the Downtown Summit had been sent to all stakeholders. Julian R. mentioned that once a date is locked in, it will be sent to everyone. Justin H. shared that the idea is to be able to have a full-house and have the participation from as many people as possible.

I. **PRESENTATION ITEMS**

A. Discussion of any downtown related effort or activity of Board Members' interest or concern.

Rene G. inquired how the TIRZ decided to do Murals instead of painting buildings, given the façade challenges faced by downtown. Justin H. shared that it was part of a program to promote local artists, with the idea to add vibrancy to downtown. Rene G. inquired about the selection process, Justin H. stated that the TIRZ hired a consultant that recommended particular locations that aligned with the idea of beautifying and promoting walkability, but the artists will have the ability to recommend other locations.

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion to adjourn:** Rene Gonzalez  
**Second:** Julian Rotnofsky

# PUBLIC NOTICE

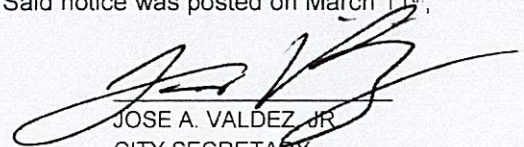
NOTICE OF MEETING OF THE  
DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT  
CITY OF LAREDO, TEXAS  
Thursday, March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024 @ 5:30 pm  
CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM #1, FIRST FLOOR

Written notice is hereby given of a meeting of the Downtown Business Improvement District Board of Directors Meeting, to be held on Thursday, March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024 from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at City Hall, Conference Room Number 1, First Floor, located at 1110 Houston Street, inside the boundaries of the District.

## MEETING AGENDA

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. ROLL CALL
- III. CITIZEN COMMENTS
- IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024.
- V. ACTION ITEMS
  - A. Discussion and possible action regarding crime stats for 2023 in downtown.
  - B. Discussion and possible action regarding City of Laredo Parking Committee.
  - C. Discussion and possible action regarding partnerships with Webb County and City of Laredo.
- VI. PRESENTATION ITEMS
  - A. Discussion regarding Downtown Summit.
- VII. ADJOURNMENT

This notice was posted at the Municipal Government Offices, 1110 Houston Street, Laredo, Texas, at a place convenient and readily accessible to the public at all times. Said notice was posted on March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024 by 5:00 p.m.

  
JOSE A. VALDEZ JR.  
CITY SECRETARY

REC'D CITY SEC OFF  
MAR 11 '24 AM 8:06

**DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

**MINUTES**

**CITY OF LAREDO, TEXAS**

**March 14, 2024**

**5:30 PM**

**1. CALL TO ORDER at 5:45pm**

Quorum established

**2. ROLL CALL**

**Committee Members**

- Lawrence Freeman – **Present**
- Jasveer Malik – **Present**
- Tomas Izaguirre – **Absent**
- Julian Rotnofsky – **Present**
- Hilda Torres – **Absent**
- Rene Gonzalez – **Absent**
- Justin Heather – **Present**

**Motion:** To excuse absent members

**Motion:** Justin Heather

**Second:** Julian Rotnofsky

**For:** 4 **Against:** 0

**Motion Passes**

Other Attendees Present:

- Jose A. Valdez Jr. – City of Laredo City Secretary
- Alyssa Cigarroa – District VIII City of Laredo Council Member
- Jaime Ortiz – City of Laredo / Economic Development

**3. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

- Carole Alexander – Ms. Alexander asked to know when the next meeting would take place to share with other downtown stakeholders so they may also participate in the Downtown Business Improvement District (BID). Ms. Alexander continued by mentioning the issue of security in the downtown area. She acknowledges that there are other stakeholders in the area that also feel security is an issue. Ms. Alexander has submitted open records request to Laredo PD regarding crime rate in the downtown area but has had no success. She asks the BID committee to obtain official statistics for the next meeting and asks the committee to work in coordination with the City of Laredo to increase patrol in the area.

Ms. Alexander mentions the Economic Development Advisory Committee Supported the creation/repopulating of the Downtown Parking Committee and asks for the support of the Downtown BID. She continues to mention how parking in the downtown area is a great concern and a barrier to business expansion in the area.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Meeting on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024.**

**Motion:** Justin Heather

**Second:** Julian Rotnofsky

**For:** 4 **Against:** 0

**Motion Passes**

## 5. ACTION ITEMS

### A. Discussion and possible action regarding crime stats for 2023 in downtown

Mr. Justin Heather mentions that the committee has requested the reports but have not received the crime stats.

Mr. Julian Rotnofsky mentioned that the Laredo Police Department has created a new plan to police the downtown area. He would like to know the crime stats of the before and after the implementation went into place to know if the plan is working. He adds Ms. Miriam Castillo; City of Laredo Economic Development Director is working to obtain these crime statistics for the committee.

### B. Discussion and possible action regarding City of Laredo Parking Committee

Mr. Julian Rotnofsky mentions that the City of Laredo paid for a parking study to be conducted in the downtown area that informs if downtown has enough parking and what the next steps would be if there are not. He adds that the report concludes there is a good amount of parking but not enough public parking; most of the parking is closed or locked up after a certain time. Mr. Rotnofsky adds that the report recommended the creation of a Parking Sub-Committee to give recommendations to the Parking Committee. He believes the Parking Committee "died away" was because not many City officials listened to recommendations set forth by the Parking Committee.

Mr. Lawrence Freeman discusses how previous talks with the City have included the creation of more angled parking throughout Convent St., from Grant St. all the way to Matamoros St.

Mr. Justin Heather adds that in 2023, engineers and the City went back and forth to find more angled parking in two blocks which added 9 more spots. City is currently working on re-striping and parking meters on the phase-1 of this project.

Mr. Jasveer Malik brought up the need for handicap parking in downtown as there is only one space on Santa Maria Ave and Grant St.

Mr. Julian Rotnofsky mentioned that the City is adding a handicap parking space on the new block where angled parking is being developed.

**Motion:** To City staff talk to council members to make appointments for Parking Committee open seats and to tie up all Committee members to all current and future parking spaces.

**Motion:** Julian Rotnofsky

**Second:** Justin Heather

**For:** 4 **Against:** 0

**Motion Passes**

### C. Discussion and possible action regarding partnerships with Webb County and City of Laredo.

Mr. Justin Heather informed the committee how tax receipts from TIRZ are lower than expected and how they are directly tied to commercial property values. Mr. Heather proposes to come up with a plan to obtain estimates and have a discussion with the City and the County to seek monetary support to support the BID on future plans to maintain downtown development, tourists' improvements, and/or address security concerns.

## I. PRESENTATION ITEMS

### A. Discussion regarding downtown Summit

Mr. Julian Rotnofsky informed the committee about finalized dates for the Downtown Summit occurring April 22-24, 2024. The agenda for the summit is still being worked on. The first two days, International downtown Association (IDA) will be assessing Laredo Downtown District. On the last day, IDA will be

presenting their findings while simultaneously, the BID will be scheduling a workshop to receive feedback from the property owners and stakeholders regarding their concerns.

Mr. Lawrence Freeman recommended for out of town stakeholders to bring them into the workshop virtually

## 6. ADJOURNMENT

**Motion to adjourn:** Julian Rotnofsky

**Second:** Lawrence Freeman

**Meeting Adjourned at 6:09pm**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
NOTICE OF MEETING OF THE  
DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT  
CITY OF LAREDO, TEXAS  
Wednesday, April 10, 2024 @ 5:30 pm  
CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM #1, FIRST FLOOR

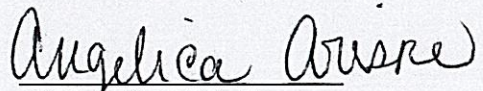
Written notice is hereby given of a meeting of the Downtown Business Improvement District Board of Directors Meeting, to be held on Wednesday, April 10th, 2024 from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at City Hall, Conference Room Number 1, First Floor, located at 1110 Houston Street, inside the boundaries of the District.

**MEETING AGENDA**

REC'D CITY SEC OFF  
APR 5 '24 PM2:42

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**
- II. **ROLL CALL**
- III. **CITIZEN COMMENTS**
- IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING HELD ON MARCH 14, 2024.**
- V. **ACTION ITEMS**
  - A. Discussion with possible action on the creation of a downtown hospitality/entertainment subcommittee and any other matters incident thereto.
  - B. Discussion with possible action regarding Downtown Summit scheduled for April 22-24, 2024 and any other matters incident thereto.
- VI. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- VII. **ADJOURNMENT**

This notice was posted at the Municipal Government Offices, 1110 Houston Street, Laredo, Texas, at a place convenient and readily accessible to the public at all times. Said notice was posted on April 5, 2024 by 5:00 p.m.

for:   
JOSE A. VALDEZ, JR.  
CITY SECRETARY



**DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

**MINUTES**

**CITY OF LAREDO, TEXAS**

**April 10, 2024**

**5:30 PM**

**I. CALL TO ORDER at 5:33pm**

Quorum established

**II. ROLL CALL**

In attendance:

**Committee Members**

- Lawrence Freeman – **Present**
- Jasveer Malik – **Present**
- Tomas Izaguirre – **Not Present**
- Julian Rotnofsky – **Present**
- Hilda Torres – **Present**
- Rene Gonzalez – **Not Present**
- Justin Heather – **Present**

Other Attendees Present:

- Jose A. Valdez Jr. – City of Laredo City Secretary
- Miriam Castillo– City of Laredo / Economic Development Director

**III. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

- *Ms. Carole Alexander* – Ms. Alexander expresses her wishes of this committee to partner and communicate with the Downtown Parking Committee that has been previously established by the City of Laredo.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Approval of Minutes for the March 14, 2024 Committee Meeting

**Motion to approve minutes.**

**Motion:** Julian Rotnofsky

**Second:** Justin Heather

**For:** 4      **Against:** 0

**Motion Passes**

**V. ACTION ITEMS**

- A. *Discussion with possible action on the creation of a downtown hospitality/entertainment subcommittee and any other matters incident thereto.*

*Mr. Julian Rotnofsky* mentions he has received public input specifically from the nightlife industry where they indicate they feel underrepresented. Mr. Rotnofsky indicates the importance of having this industry represented in the development of downtown Laredo as it forms a big part of the hospitality and entertainment industry. Mr. Rotnofsky further indicates he would like to see a sub-committee of the hospitality and entertainment industry where

owners and managers take part of this committee to further represent their interests when it comes to recommendations to City officials.

*Mr. Justin Heather* motions for the creation of a downtown hospitality/entertainment sub-committee.

*Ms. Miriam Castillo*, City of Laredo Economic Development Director recommends the downtown BID come back with a plan for the next scheduled meeting detailing the process whether this sub-committee will be formed from board members of the BID, and the process for appointing committee members in an advisory capacity.

*Mr. Julian Rotnofsky* mentions the BID should move forward in the creation of the hospitality/entertainment sub-committee whose members will be on a volunteer basis as they will have no voting power, only advisory capacity. The only rule Mr. Rotnofsky would like to add is that the volunteers for this sub-committee either own or operate a business in the hospitality or entertainment industry in downtown Laredo.

*Mr. Justin Heather* amends his motion to: The creation of a downtown hospitality and entertainment sub-committee subject to providing rules and procedures for the appointment of that sub-committee consisting of either-or members of the Downtown BID as well as members of the public in the entertainment or hospitality industry.

*Mr. Julian Rotnofsky* will further like to amend the motion by incorporating any person that would like to be currently nominated and appointed into this sub-committee.

*Mr. Jose A. Valdez*, City of Laredo City Secretary asks for the BID to consider adding in their motion “pending legal recommendation” as it is City Council’s duty to appoint members of the community into committees and sub-committees.

**Motion:** Pending Legal recommendation, the creation of a downtown hospitality and entertainment sub-committee subject to providing rules and procedures for the appointment of that sub-committee consisting of either-or members of the Downtown BID as well as members of the public in the entertainment or hospitality industry.

**Motion:** Justin Heather

**Second:** Julian Rotnofsky

**For:** 4                    **Against:** 0

**Motion Passes**

B. *Discussion with possible action regarding Downtown Summit scheduled for April 22-24, 2024 and any other matters incident thereto.*

*Mr. Justin Heather* informs the committee of the downtown Summit occurring at Laredo College on April 24, 2024. This Summit is free and open to the public. Mr. Heather thanks the committee as this Summit took years in planning and welcomes all members to be a part of the panel as the Downtown BID will be presenting in this Summit. Mr. Heather reminds the committee of the importance of this event as business owners, property owners, The City of Laredo, The County of Webb will all be in attendance and will be hearing from the public and taking their input. Projects that have been completed, current projects, and future projects in Downtown Laredo will be presented in this Summit as well.

*Mr. Julian Rotnofsky*, asks the committee if they would like to set up an official Downtown BID meeting after the Summit is over to discuss any potential items and vote on any necessary actions to be taken after the meeting.

*Mr. Justin Heather* recommends to look at the TIRZ Workshop and how a TIRZ board meeting was set up to mirror the process taken.

**VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

No announcements.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion to adjourn:** Julian Rotnofsky

**Second:** Lawrence Freeman

**For:** 4      **Against:** 0

**Motion Passes**

**Meeting Adjourned at 6:00pm**

*\*NO QUORUM*

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
NOTICE OF MEETING OF THE  
DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT  
CITY OF LAREDO, TEXAS  
Wednesday, May 15, 2024 @ 5:30 pm  
CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM #1, THIRD FLOOR

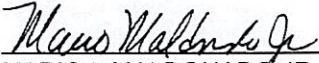
REC'D CITY SEC OFF  
MAY 10 '24 PM 3:02

Written notice is hereby given of a meeting of the Downtown Business Improvement District Board of Directors Meeting, to be held on Wednesday, May 15th, 2024 from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at City Hall, Conference Room Number 1, Third Floor, located at 1110 Houston Street, inside the boundaries of the District.

**MEETING AGENDA**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**
- II. **ROLL CALL**
- III. **CITIZEN COMMENTS**
- IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING HELD ON APRIL 10, 2024.**
- V. **DISCUSSION ITEMS (NO ACTION TO BE TAKEN)**
  - A. Discussion and feedback regarding Downtown Summit held April 22-24, 2024.
  - B. Discussion regarding meeting with City staff regarding structure and statutory provisions, including with respect to prior creation of downtown bar and nightlife committee.
- VI. **ACTION ITEMS**
  - A. Discussion with possible action on the creation of a downtown parking committee and any other matters incident thereto.
  - B. Discussion with possible action authorizing Board officers to submit or apply for grants and other appropriations without matter-specific board authorization and any other matters incident thereto.
  - C. Discussion with possible action authorizing Board to hold meetings, issue surveys and otherwise solicit feedback on potential scope of finance and project improvement plan and any other matters incident thereto.
- VI. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- VII. **ADJOURNMENT**

This notice was posted at the Municipal Government Offices, 1110 Houston Street, Laredo, Texas, at a place convenient and readily accessible to the public at all times. Said notice was posted on May 10, 2024 by 5:00 p.m.

  
MARIO I. MALDONADO JR.  
CITY SECRETARY

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT  
CITY OF LAREDO, TEXAS  
Wednesday, May 29, 2024  
CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM #1, FIRST FLOOR

Written notice is hereby given of a meeting of the Downtown Business Improvement District Board of Directors Meeting, to be held on Wednesday, May 29, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall, Conference Room Number 1, First Floor, located at 1110 Houston Street, inside the boundaries of the District.

**SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. ROLL CALL**

**III. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

**V. DISCUSSION ITEMS (NO ACTION TO BE TAKEN)**

- A. Discussion and feedback regarding Downtown Summit held April 22-24, 2024.
- B. Discussion regarding meeting with City staff regarding structure and statutory provisions, including with respect to prior creation of downtown bar and nightlife committee.

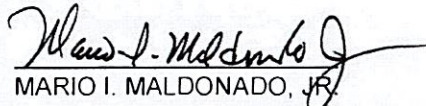
**VI. ACTION ITEMS**

- A. Discussion with possible action on the creation of a downtown parking committee and any other matters incident thereto.
- B. Discussion with possible action authorizing Board officers to submit or apply for grants and other appropriations without matter-specific board authorization and any other matters incident thereto.
- C. Discussion with possible action authorizing Board to hold meetings, issue surveys and otherwise solicit feedback on potential scope of finance and project improvement plan and any other matters incident thereto.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

This notice was posted at the Municipal Government Offices, 1110 Houston Street, Laredo, Texas, at a place convenient and readily accessible to the public at all times. Said notice was posted on Friday, May 24, 2024 by 5:00 p.m.

REC'D CITY SEC OFF  
MAY 24 '24 PM 12:10

  
MARIO I. MALDONADO, JR.  
CITY SECRETARY

# DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

## MINUTES

### CITY OF LAREDO, TEXAS

May 29, 2024

5:30 PM

**I. CALL TO ORDER at 5:30pm**

Quorum established

**II. ROLL CALL**

In attendance:

**Committee Members**

- Lawrence Freeman – **Present**
- Jasveer Malik – **Not Present**
- Tomas Izaguirre – **Present**
- Julian Rotnofsky – **Present**
- Hilda Torres – **Present**
- Rene Gonzalez – **Not Present**
- Justin Heather – **Present**

**III. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

- No citizens comments submitted.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**V. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**A. Discussion and feedback regarding Downtown Summit held April 22-24, 2024.**

*Mr. Justin Heather* provides a copy of the Executive Summary provided by the IDA regarding their findings presented at the Downtown Summit. Mr. Heather mentions the recommendations include the importance of the Downtown Business Improvement Districts involvement in the revitalization of downtown Laredo. Presentations from IDA included real life experiences from other cities in efforts to revitalize downtown districts. Feedback from attendees was well received and taken into consideration for the final recommendations.

*Ms. Amber Holmes*, City of Laredo Assistant City Attorney informs the committee that the Downtown BID Committee is considered a government entity and has to follow all procurement laws.

**B. Discussion regarding meeting with City staff regarding structure and statutory provisions, including with respect to prior creation of downtown bar and nightlife committee.**

*Mr. Justin Heather* informs the committee he, along with other Board Members, was able to meet with the City of Laredo Legal Department, to discuss the current BID structure and make sure the Committee followed Texas Municipal Statutory Law. Mr.

Heather informs the committee that during the meeting with Legal Department, the process to start the Downtown Bar and Nightlife Committee and the process to replace Mr. Rene Gonzalez from the BID Committee were discussed. The BID Committee will be able to nominate a candidate for the Board without having to taking to City Council for vacancies only. For empty or open seats, the Board may make recommendations but ultimately, Council Member decides.

## VI. ACTION ITEMS

### A. Discussion with possible action on the creation of a downtown parking committee and any other matters incident thereto.

*Mr. Justin Heather* informs the committee the TIRZ has been working on finalizing the parallel parking spaces downtown. Mr. Heather mentions he would like to create a Downtown Parking Committee that will be part of the Business Improvement District. Downtown Parking Committee would be tasked to find solutions for downtown parking and make their recommendations to the Business Improvement District Board. Mr. Heather mentions that members of the BID can be a part of the Parking Committee but would like to eventually fill all available seats.

*Mr. Julian Rotnofsky* asks how and if the creation of the new Parking Committee under BID will overlap with the current City of Laredo Parking Committee since currently this committee is not active.

*Ms. Amber Holmes* informs the committee that the newly created Parking Committee will report directly to the BID and not to the City of Laredo. The BID as a governmental entity, can decide what projects they would like to pursue based on the recommendations of the newly created Parking Committee and make their recommendation to the City.

*Mr. Julian Rotnofsky* asks if the BID can appoint committee members immediately or does the committee have to be created beforehand.

*Mr. Justin Heather* informs the BID they can motion to create the committee and nominate members. Mr. Heather adds if anyone in the BID would like to join the committee they are free to do so.

*Citizens Comments:* *Ms. Carole Alexander* informs the committee that her wishes are that the Parking Committee that reports directly to the City of Laredo under the traffic department be reactivated. Ms. Alexander mentions that the City does have a Parking Committee and the problem is that the Committee doesn't actively hold any meetings nor is the committee active. Her wishes were that the BID help activate the dormant committee and not create a new one.

*Mr. Julian Rotnofsky* offers to reach out to the Council Member for their assistance to reactivate the City of Laredo Parking Committee with no guarantees.

**Motion:** Motion to create a Parking Committee that will report to the Downtown Business Improvement District Committee.

**Motion:** Justin Heather

**Second:** Julian Rotnofsky

**For:** 5            **Against:** 0

**Motion Passes**

**B. Discussion with possible action authorizing Board officers to submit or apply for grants and other appropriations without matter-specific board authorization and any other matters incident thereto.**

*Justin Heather* informs committee that the BID is authorized to seek public funds, however some of the grant opportunities are available for only a limited time. The plan for this item is to authorize the Board Officers to apply for the grants and to come back and certify them later with the Board. This is important to be able to apply before deadlines, especially to not have to wait before the next Board meeting to approve to apply.

*Hilda Torres* recommends to hire a grant writer.

*Justin Heather* reinforces the recommendation however would like to wait until the Board has a budget in order to move forward with hiring a grant writer. Hiring a grant writer on a contingency would work best, but if the intent is to hire a grant writer for basis of the Board, there are no funds yet.

**Motion:** Authorize Board officers to submit or apply for grants or any other appropriations without matter-specific board authorization.

**Moved:** Julian Rotnofsky

**Second:** Lawrence Freeman

**For:** 5            **Against:** 0

**Motion Passes**

**C. Discussion with possible action authorizing Board to hold meetings, issue surveys and otherwise solicit feedback on potential scope of finance and project improvement plan and any other matters incident thereto.**

*Julian Rotnofsky* gives the committee an update on the surveying process, including a software that he is working with. He explains that if there is no face-to-face, there needs to be a filter in the survey to get the proper line of questioning to business owners taking the survey versus non-business owners; as both would likely be giving feedback. This way, the feedback being sought is from true property owners. He also gave a summary of the types of questions the surveys are focused on and what types of questions the Board would like to see answers to so that when the Board is developing the budget, it will know where to allocate the priority funds to. It will also help the Board get a better look at the types of issues being faced by business owners so that the Board could target on when trying to attract more businesses downtown such as signage, cleaner streets, public safety, better lighting, and more public seating. He also discussed what the process could look like to get the survey to business owners, including the potential cost to mail the letters with the QR code and to provide easier access to the survey.



The Board also discussed other potential ways to get the survey in front of business owners such as inviting the owners to hand out paper copies of the survey, posting on the City and Economic Development websites, and reaching out to other business support nonprofits to help circulate it.

*Lawrence Freeman* recommended to hold a small summit with the downtown owners to keep momentum.

**Motion:** Authorizing Board to hold meetings, issue surveys and otherwise solicit feedback on potential scope of finance and project improvement plan, including the cost of any mailing necessary in order to reach downtown business owners specifically in regards to the survey.

**Motion:** Justin Heather  
**Second:** Julian Rotnofsky  
**For:** 5      **Against:** 0  
**Motion Passes**

**VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS**  
No announcements.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion to adjourn:** Julian Rotnofsky  
**Second:** Lawrence Freeman  
**For:** 5      **Against:** 0  
**Motion Passes**

**Meeting Adjourned**

**NO DOWNTOWN BID  
MEETING HELD FOR THE  
MONTH OF JUNE 2024**

**NO MEETING, NO  
MINUTES**

**JUNE 2024**