

Dawn Buckingham, M.D.
Commissioner, General Land Office
Chairwoman

James Rothfelder
Board Member



Tony Dale
US Army Veteran
Executive Secretary

Judson Scott
Rear Admiral, US Navy (Retired)
Board Member

TEXAS VETERANS LAND BOARD

NOTICE OF SPECIAL CALLED MEETING, TEXAS VETERANS LAND BOARD

The Texas Veterans Land Board will conduct a special called meeting to be held in person on April 30, 2024, at 10:00 A.M. at Stephen F. Austin Building, 1700 N. Congress Ave., Room 170, in accordance with the Texas Government Code §551 (Open Meetings Act).

Access to the meeting by members of the public will be published in advance in the Texas Register in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act. A link to access the meeting via video conference call will be posted on the Texas General Land Office's website on the morning of the meeting.

Any member of the public who wishes to address the Veterans Land Board on a matter within the authority of the Veterans Land Board should indicate so at the start of the meeting or during any public comment period.

AGENDA

1. Call to order
 - a. Roll call/quorum established
 - b. Invocation
 - c. Pledge of Allegiance to the US and Texas flags
 - d. Presentation of Alamo flag by Board to Chaplain
2. Approval of minutes from the meeting of February 13, 2024.
3. Citizen communication (Two Minutes each. No deliberations with the Board. The Board may respond only with factual statements, recitation of existing policy, and requests for an item to be placed on a future agenda.)
4. Chair and Board Member Opening Comments.
5. Veterans Land Board Bond Funds Management
 - a. Quarterly Veterans Land, Housing and Home Improvement Program Production Update for Fiscal Year 2024 2nd Quarter.
6. Veterans Land Board Land and Housing
 - a. Consideration and possible action to set aside bids received from the Online Bidding Forfeited Land Sale held April 18, 2024, on any tract where the account holder is making an appeal.
 - b. Consideration and possible action to accept and award all qualified high bids received from the Online Bidding Forfeited Land Sale held April 18, 2024.
 - c. Consideration and possible action on request to forfeit VLB delinquent land accounts.
 - d. Consideration and possible action on request to Order for Sale land tracts that may be included in the next Online Bidding Forfeited Land Sale and to set the next Quarterly Electronic Forfeited Land Sale bidding period to begin June 3, 2024, through July 18, 2024.

- e. Consideration and possible action on authorizing staff to conduct rulemaking related to the definition of “Veteran” for the purpose of establishing eligibility to qualified Veterans for participation in the land loan program.
- 7. Texas State Veterans Cemeteries
 - a. Report on Texas State Veteran Cemetery operations.
- 8. Texas State Veterans Homes
 - a. Report on Texas State Veterans Homes operations.
 - b. Consideration and possible action on resident room rates in the David A. Gloier Texas State Veterans Home Program, and other matters in connection therewith.
- 9. Construction Services
 - a. Report on construction projects.
- 10. Executive Secretary Report
 - a. Report on Veterans Land Board operations.

II. EXECUTIVE SESSION

In accordance with Chapter 551, Government Code, the Texas Veteran Land Board will now convene in Executive Session pursuant to the following provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, of the Texas Government Code:

- a. Section 551.071 - Consultation with attorney regarding issues concerning construction and warranty at the Richard A. Anderson Texas State Veterans Home in Houston, Texas.
- b. Section 551.071 - Consultation with attorney regarding issues concerning construction at the Tuskegee Airmen Texas State Veterans Home in Fort Worth, Texas.

III. RECONVENE REGULAR AGENDA

- 10. Consider Action, If Any, On Items Discussed in Executive Session.
- 11. Chair and Board Member Closing Comments.
- 12. Adjournment.

An unscheduled Closed Executive Session may be called to discuss any item on this posted agenda provided it is within one of the permitted categories under Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code.

The above agenda schedule represents an estimate of the order for the indicated items and is subject to change at any time. All agenda items are subject to final action by the Board. Separate agenda items may be combined and discussed together at the discretion of the Chair. Any final action, decision, or vote on a matter deliberated in Closed Executive Session shall be made in an open meeting pursuant to the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code. Certain information may be presented to and by the Board, under the headings of “Citizen Communications”, and “Board Comments” however, by law, the Board shall not discuss, deliberate, or vote upon such matters except that a statement of specific factual information, a recitation of existing policy, and deliberations concerning the placing of the subject on a subsequent agenda may take place. The General Counsel has approved the Executive Session Items on this agenda.

The meeting room is wheelchair accessible and accessible parking spots are available. Requests for accommodation or interpretive services must be made 48 hours prior to this meeting. Please contact (800)998-4456 for further information.



ANTHONY W. DALE
Executive Secretary



TEXAS VETERANS LAND BOARD
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
Tuesday, February 13, 2024, 10:00 A.M.
1700 Congress Avenue, Room 170, Austin, TX 78701

1. Opening

- a. Chief Clerk Mark Havens called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M.
- b. The Chair declared a quorum present.

Members present were:

Chief Clerk Mark Havens
Board Member Judson Scott
Board Member James Rothfelder

Also present:

Executive Secretary Tony Dale
Assistant Executive Secretary Darren Fitz Gerald
General Counsel Jeff Gordon

- c. Invocation was led by Chaplain Amanda Williams, Texas Army National Guard.
 - d. The Chair led the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. and Texas flags.
 - i. Presentation to Chaplain by the Board of a flag flown over the Alamo in honor of her contributions to veterans and service members.
2. Approval of the minutes from the regular Board meeting of October 19, 2023. Approved with no objections.
3. Citizen Communications. No members of the public testified during citizen communications.
4. Chair and Board Member Opening Comments. Members Rothfelder and Scott made comments thanking everyone for attending and taking part in the meeting.
5. Veterans Land Board Bond Funds Management.
- a. Quarterly Veterans Land, Housing and Home Improvement Program Production Update for Fiscal Year 2024 1st Quarter. No action required; therefore, no action was taken.
6. Veterans Land Board Land and Housing.
- a. Consideration and possible action to set aside bids received from the Online Bidding Forfeited Land Sale held January 25, 2024, on any tract where the account holder is making an appeal. No action required; therefore, no action was taken.

- b. Consideration and possible action to accept and award all qualified high bids received from the Online Bidding Forfeited Land Sale held January 25, 2024. Motion was made by Mr. Scott and seconded by Mr. Rothfelder, to approve, according to staff recommendations. The motion carried unanimously.
 - c. Consideration and possible action on request to forfeit VLB delinquent land accounts and accounts involved in tax suits. Motion was made by Mr. Scott and seconded by Mr. Rothfelder, to approve, according to staff recommendations. The motion carried unanimously.
 - d. Consideration and possible action on request to Order for Sale land tracts that may be included in the next Online Bidding Forfeited Land Sale and to set the next Quarterly Electronic Forfeited Land Sale bidding period to begin March 4, 2024, through April 18, 2024. Motion was made by Mr. Scott and seconded by Mr. Rothfelder, to approve, according to staff recommendations. The motion carried unanimously.
 - e. Report on the Veterans Administration pause on foreclosures of VA-guaranteed loans and extension of the COVID-19 Refund Modification program through May 31, 2024. No action required; therefore, no action was taken.
7. Texas State Veterans Cemeteries.
- a. Report on State Veterans Cemetery operations. No action required; therefore, no action was taken.
 - b. Presentation of Operational Excellence Award from the National Cemetery Administration. No action required; therefore, no action was taken.
8. Texas State Veterans Homes.
- a. Report on State Veterans Homes. No action required; therefore, no action was taken.
 - b. Consideration and possible action to set resident room rates for the Tuskegee Airmen Texas State Veterans Home in Fort Worth and other related matters. Motion was made by Mr. Scott and seconded by Mr. Rothfelder, to approve, according to staff recommendations. The motion carried unanimously.
9. Contract Management.
- a. Presentation and discussion on the Annual Report of VLB Contracts & Major Contracts. No action required; therefore, no action was taken.

10. Executive Secretary Report.

- a. Consideration and possible action on Board policies. Motion was made by Mr. Scott and seconded by Mr. Rothfelder, to approve, according to staff recommendations. The motion carried unanimously.
- b. Report on Veterans Land Board operations. No action required; therefore, no action was taken.

II. EXECUTIVE SESSION **10:56 A.M.**

In accordance with Chapter 551, Government Code, the Texas Veteran Land Board convened in Executive Session pursuant to the following provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, of the Texas Government Code:

- a. Section 551.071 - Consultation with attorney regarding issues concerning construction and warranty at the Richard A. Anderson Texas State Veterans Home in Houston, Texas.
- b. Section 551.071 - Consultation with attorney regarding issues concerning construction at the Tuskegee Airmen Texas State Veterans Home in Fort Worth, Texas.

III. RECONVENE REGULAR AGENDA **11:27 AM**

11. Consider Action, If Any, On Items Discussed in Executive Session. No action required; therefore, no action was taken.
12. Chair and Board Member Closing Comments.
13. Adjournment. **11:28 A.M.**

ATTEST:**APPROVED:**

Anthony W. Dale
Executive Secretary

James Rothfelder
Board Member



MEMORANDUM

TEXAS VETERANS LAND BOARD • CHAIRWOMAN DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

Date: April 30, 2024

To: Dawn Buckingham, M.D., Chairwoman
Judson Scott, Member
James Rothfelder, Member

From: John Barton, Director of VLB Bond Funds Management

Subject: Agenda Item 5 a - Quarterly Veterans Land, Housing and Home Improvement Program Production Update for Fiscal Year 2024 2nd Quarter.

Recommendation: This agenda item requires no action from the Board.

Loan Demand – Housing

In 1983, the Legislature created the VLB Veterans Housing Assistance Program to assist Texas Veterans and Military Members in purchasing a home. Through this program, eligible Texas Veterans and Military Members have an opportunity to purchase a home with a low-interest loan with little or no money down.

Consumer demand for home loans is down across the country in response to elevated interest rates. Loan interest rates are at a 20-year high and many buyers who locked in low-interest rate mortgages are hesitant to give up their existing mortgages. On average, the VLB closes loans that are valued at about \$40-\$50 million per month. Demand for FY2024 Q2 averaged \$36.2 million per month. Correspondingly, the VLB home loan program experienced a 63.8% decrease in FY 2024 Q2 versus FY 2023 Q2. The decrease was not unexpected as borrowers rushed to lock-in interest rates as they were rising during the previous year's quarter and the historically high interest rates seen during the current quarter likely kept some borrowers on the sideline.

	FY2024 Q2	FY2023 Q2	Variance
Housing Loan Value	\$108,500,000	\$177,700,000	\$(69,200,000)
Housing Loans Closed	276	470	(194)

Reservations to lock loan rates in FY2024 Q2 indicate demand in the range of \$400-\$500 million for the full fiscal year. Demand could also increase as rates are anticipated to begin to decrease later this year.

Loan Demand – Home Improvement

VLB offers qualified veterans or military members loans to help pay for home repairs or upgrades through the Texas Veterans Home Improvement Program (VHIP). This program was introduced in 1986 and provides the same below-market interest rate as the housing loans.

	FY2024 Q2	FY2023 Q2	Variance
VHIP Loan Value	\$463,756	\$592,940	\$(129,184)
VHIP Loans Closed	20	25	(5)

Housing Loan Interest Rate Setting Process

VLB's current weekly rate-resetting process revolves around setting a "base" rate that is 15-150 basis points (0.15% to 1.50%) below the benchmark. Eligible borrowers with a service-connected disability rating of 30% or higher are then allowed a 50-basis point (0.50%) reduction to the "base" rate. FY2024 Q2 base rates averaged 6.35% while FY2023 Q2 base rates averaged 5.68%. Since the beginning of March base rates have averaged 6.55%.

Loan Demand - Land

The VLB Veterans Land Loan Program is the only one of its kind in the nation. It provides Texas Veterans and Military Members the opportunity to borrow money to purchase land at favorable interest rates and terms while only requiring a minimum 5% down payment.

Demand for land loans remains strong. Comparing the same quarter year-over-year there is an increase of 27.9% more in loan value with a 22.5% increase in the number of loans closed.

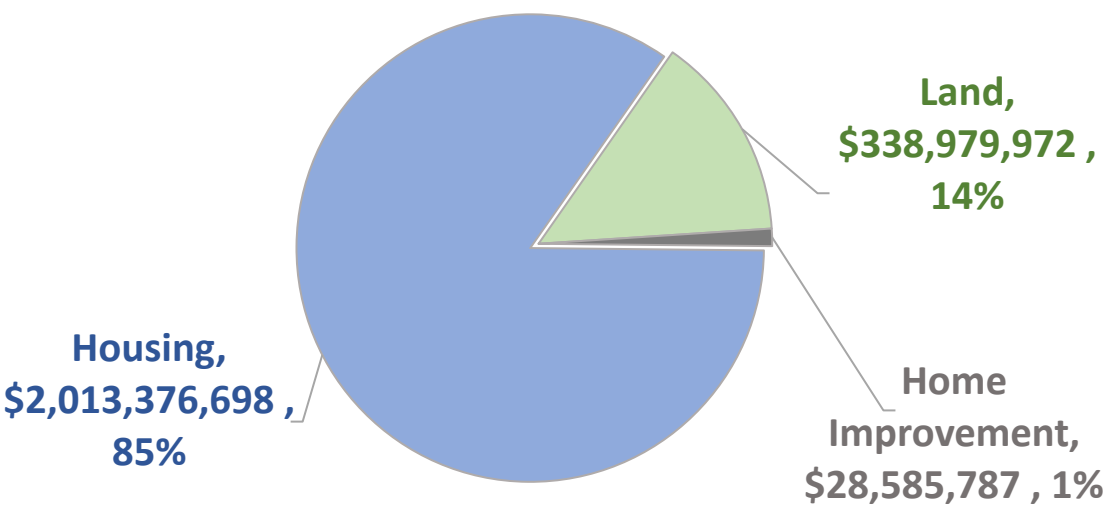
The current loan rate for the land program is 7.25%.

	FY2024 Q2	FY2023 Q2	Variance
Land Loan Value	\$22,900,000	\$17,900,000	\$5,000,000
Land Loans Closed	207	169	38

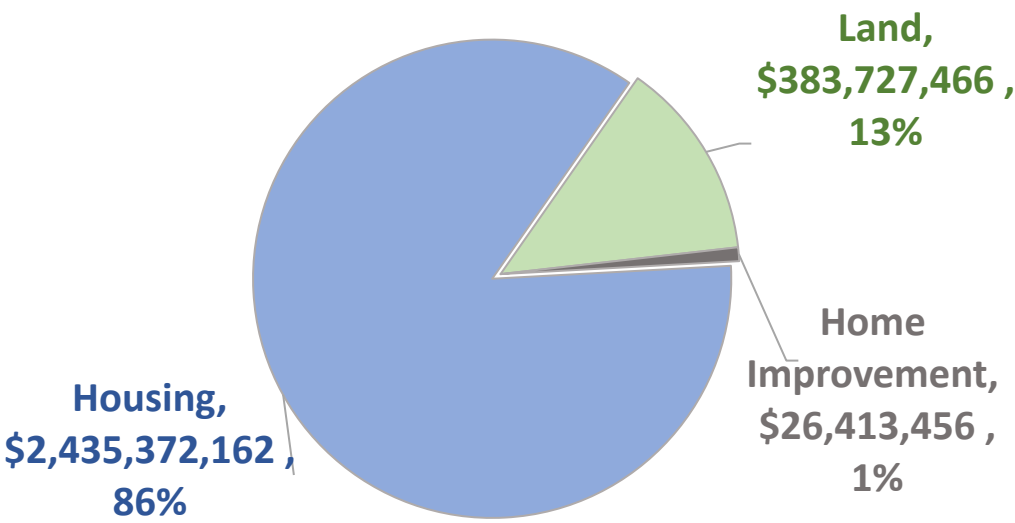
Fiscal Year 2024-Q2 Loan Summary Report



LOAN PORTFOLIO - FY 2023 Q2

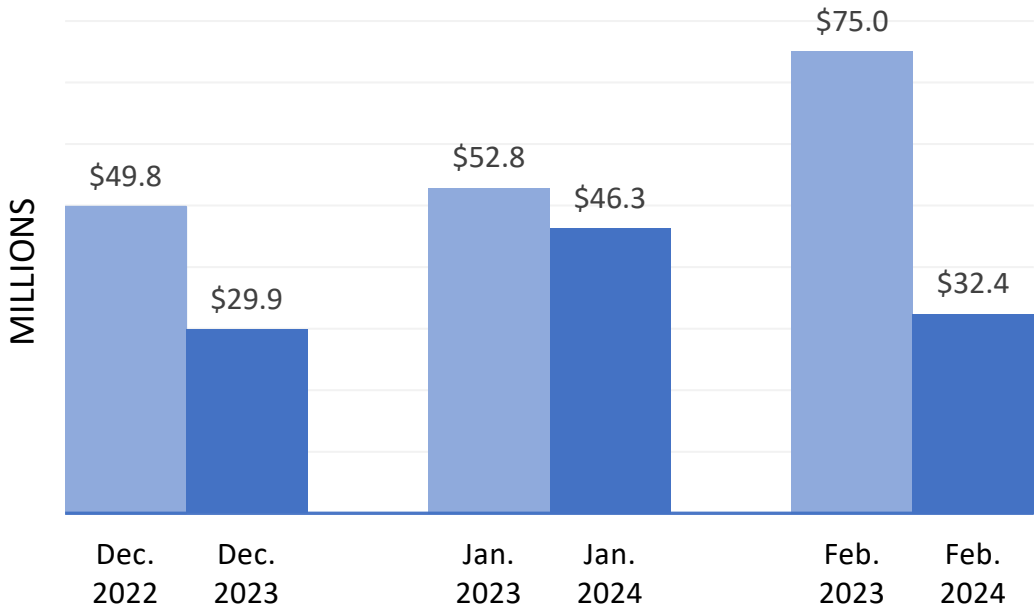


LOAN PORTFOLIO - FY 2024 Q2

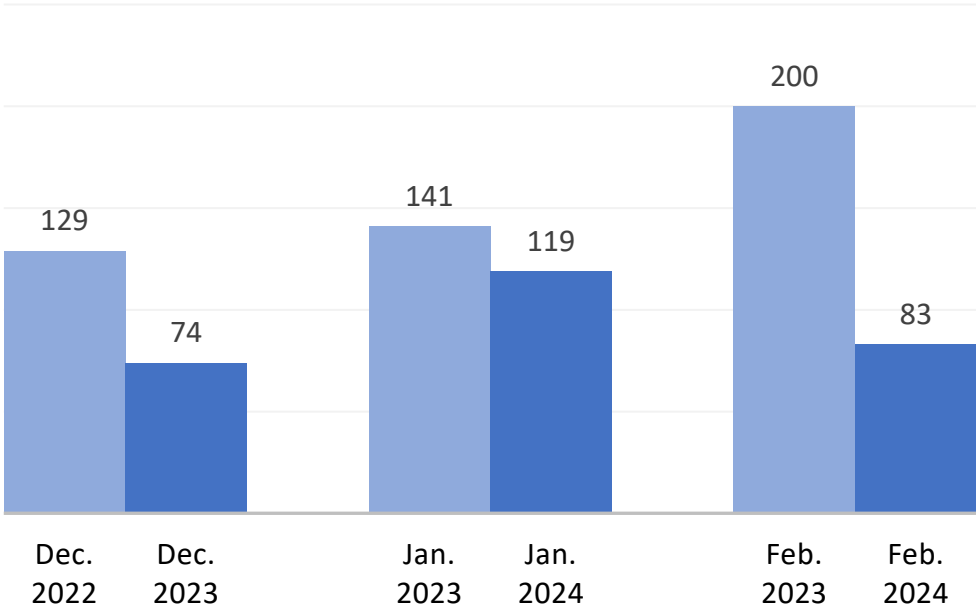


Housing Loans

Housing Loans Purchased



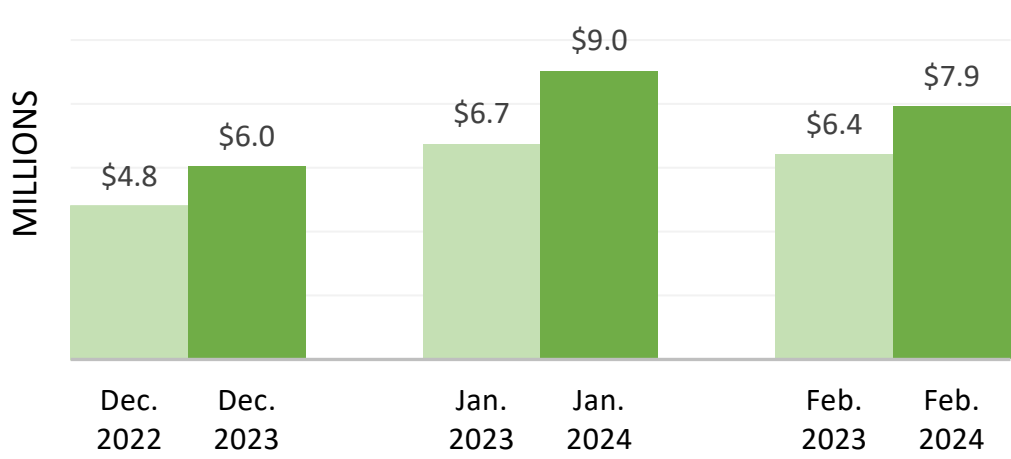
Number of Housing Loans



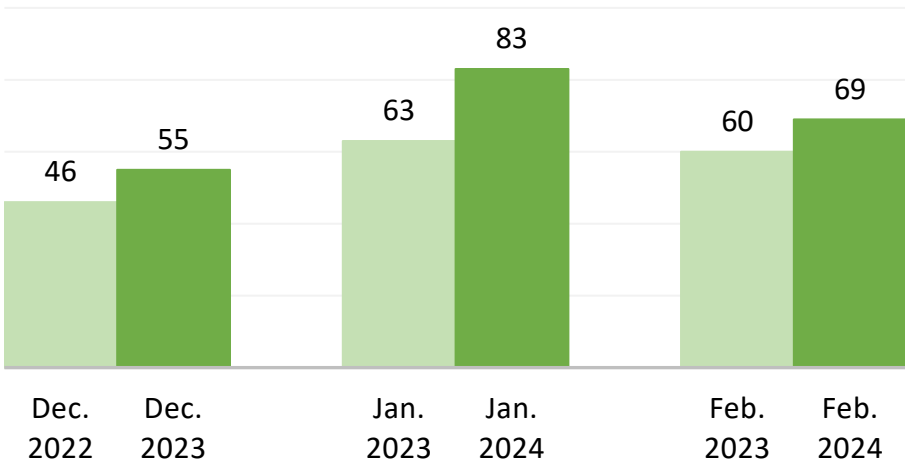
- \$108.5 million in Housing Loans
- \$393,293 Average Housing Loan
- 6.35% Average Interest Rate

Land Loans

Land Loans



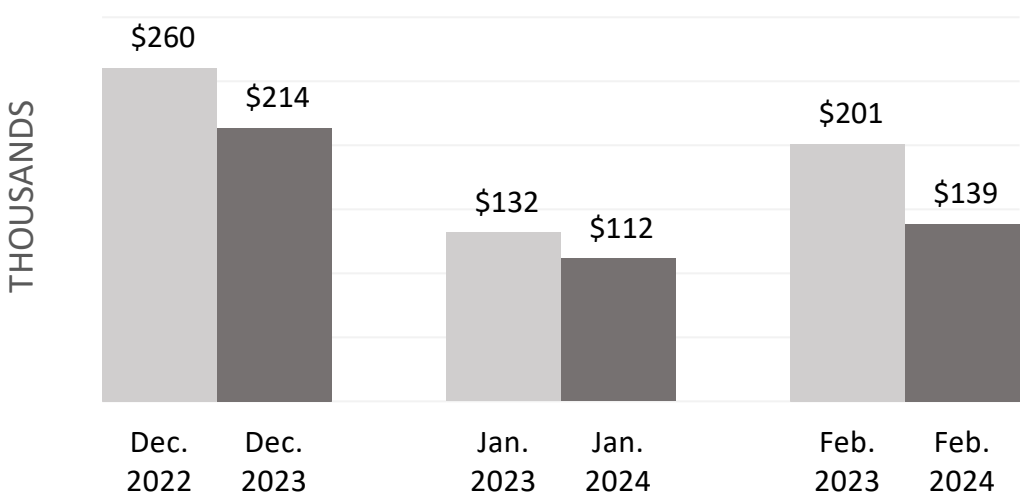
Number of Land Loans



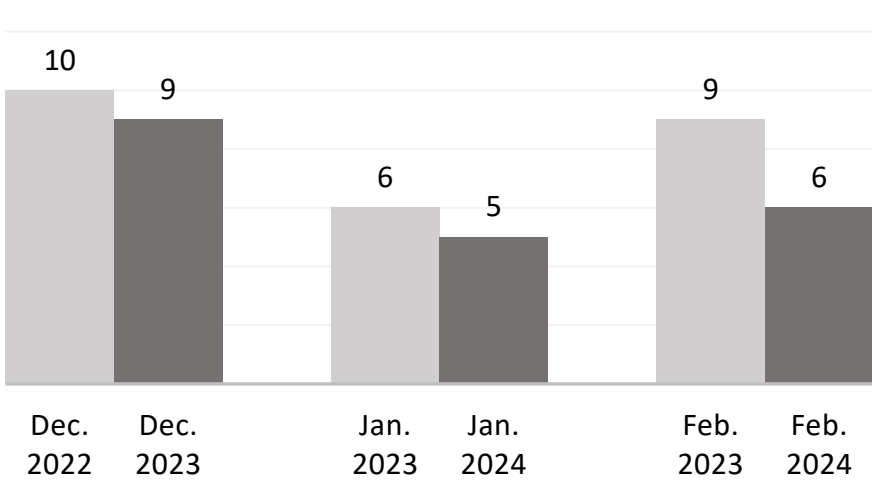
- \$22.9 million in Land Loans
- \$111,053 Average Land Loan
- 207 Total Land Loans

Home Improvement Loans

Home Improvement Loans



Number of Home Improvement Loans



- \$463,756 in Home Improvement Loans
- \$23,188 Average Home Improvement Loan Amount



MEMORANDUM

TEXAS VETERANS LAND BOARD • CHAIRWOMAN DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

Date: April 30, 2024

To: Dawn Buckingham, M.D., Chairwoman
Judson Scott, Member
James Rothfelder, Member

From: Raul Gonzales, Deputy Director of Land & Housing

Subject: Agenda Item 6 a - Consideration and possible action to set aside bids received from the Online Bidding Forfeited Land Sale held April 18, 2024, on any tract where the account holder is making an appeal.

RECOMMENDATION: There were no appeals submitted; therefore, Agenda Item 6 a is a non-action item.



MEMORANDUM

TEXAS VETERANS LAND BOARD • CHAIRWOMAN DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

Date: April 30, 2024

To: Dawn Buckingham, M.D., Chairwoman
Judson Scott, Member
James Rothfelder, Member

From: Raul Gonzales, Deputy Director of Land & Housing

Subject: Agenda Item 6 b - Consideration and possible action to accept and award all qualified high bids received from the Online Bidding Forfeited Land Sale held April 18, 2024.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Board award all high bids that meet qualifications for the land program.

BACKGROUND: There were four tracts offered during the Veteran's Land Sale online bidding period from March 4, 2024, through April 18, 2024. A total of XXX bids were received for the tracts listed resulting in XXX high bids totaling \$XXX,XXX.XX.

MEMORANDUM

TEXAS VETERANS LAND BOARD • CHAIRWOMAN DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

Date: April 30, 2024

To: Dawn Buckingham, M.D., Chairwoman
Judson Scott, Member
James Rothfelder, Member

From: Raul Gonzales, Deputy Director of Land & Housing

Subject: Agenda Item 6 c - Consideration and possible action on request to forfeit VLB delinquent land accounts.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Board take forfeiture action on the Resolution before you, except on accounts where sufficient funds are received to avoid that action.

PURPOSE: For consideration and approval of forfeiture on the one account that is being presented for forfeiture action today. The account is being recommended for forfeiture due to non-payment of principal and interest.

BACKGROUND: The account holder has been contacted and has been given an opportunity to either bring the account current or make payment arrangements. To this date, we have not been successful in reaching an agreement with the account holder being presented today.

RESOLUTION OF FORFEITURE MONTHLY ACCOUNTS

WHEREAS, the Veterans Land Board of the State of Texas made and entered into contracts, or approved the transfer thereof, under the provisions of Chapter 318, Acts of the 51st Legislature, 1949, as amended, with the following named contract-holders on the dates indicated:

CONTRACT HOLDER	ACCOUNT NUMBER	COUNTY OF LAND	SALE DATE	DELINQ AMOUNT	PAYMENTS DELINQ	LOAN AMOUNT	PRINCIPAL BALANCE
P. NEILL MCGEE	153983	WILSON	12/10/1999	\$2,050.00	10	\$33,245.00	\$10,470.68

AND WHEREAS, these contract-holders have failed and refused to make payments of principal and interest due on such contracts,

AND WHEREAS, in compliance with the Statutes in such case made and provided, notice of such delinquency and/or default and impending forfeiture has been given to each of these contract-holders at his/her last-known address at least thirty days previous to this date;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Veterans Land Board of the State of Texas that the Chair be and is hereby directed to endorse upon the wrappers containing the papers of each of the above-referenced sales or upon each purchase contract filed in the office of the Veterans Land Board the word 'Forfeited', with the date of this action, and to sign the same officially, effective April 30, 2024.

I, Anthony W. Dale, Executive Secretary, of the Texas Veterans Land Board, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution appearing in the minutes of the Veterans Land Board meeting held April 30, 2024.

Anthony W. Dale, Executive Secretary
Texas Veterans Land Board

_____ Legal

Sworn to and subscribed before me by the above party this _____ day of _____, _____.

Notary Public in and for Travis County, Texas

MEMORANDUM

TEXAS VETERANS LAND BOARD • CHAIRWOMAN DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

Date: April 30, 2024

To: Dawn Buckingham, M.D., Chairwoman
Judson Scott, Member
James Rothfelder, Member

From: Raul Gonzales, Deputy Director of Land & Housing

Subject: Agenda Item 6 d - Consideration and possible action on request to Order for Sale land tracts that may be included in the next Online Bidding Forfeited Land Sale and to set the next Quarterly Electronic Forfeited Land Sale bidding period to begin June 3, 2024, through July 18, 2024.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Board approve the Order for Sale of the land tracts listed and set the next quarterly land sale period to begin June 3, 2024, through July 18, 2024.

PURPOSE: For consideration and approval of listing the accounts to be considered for the Order for Sale action today. Staff requests the Board's authority to pull any account that reinstates prior to the sale date. In addition, staff is also requests that the Board set the next Quarterly Land Sale bidding period to begin June 3, 2024, at 8:00 A.M. with a bidding deadline of July 18, 2024, at 5:00 P.M.

BACKGROUND: On two accounts presented today, the veterans are deceased. We have contacted the heirs on one of the accounts and we are working on reinstating that account. On the second account we will continue to attempt to contact the heirs. To this date, we have not been successful in reaching an agreement with the account holders presented today.

RESOLUTION TO ORDER FOR SALE

WHEREAS, the Veterans Land Board of the State of Texas made and entered into contracts, or approved the transfer thereof, under the provisions of Chapter 318, Acts of the 51st Legislature, 1949, as amended, with the following named contract-holders on the dates indicated:

CONTRACT HOLDER	ACCOUNT NUMBER	COUNTY OF LAND	CONTRACT DATE	LOAN AMOUNT	PRINCIPAL BALANCE
C. WALKER	148876	HOUSTON	05/19/1997	\$38,000.00	\$6,490.09
D. WELCH	158587	NAVARRO	01/04/2003	\$30,000.00	\$11,392.56
C. VARGAS	160713	WILSON	04/01/2005	\$32,756.00	\$19,934.73
K. BROOKS	162661	FORT BEND	01/12/2007	\$25,473.00	\$15,978.37

AND WHEREAS, the Veterans Land Board has set a Forfeited Land Sale on April 30, 2024.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Veterans Land Board of the State of Texas that the listed tracts will be advertised for sale in the quarterly electronic Forfeited Land Sale, which bidding period will begin June 3, 2024, 8:00 A.M. and end July 18, 2024, 5:00 P.M.

Anthony W. Dale, Executive Secretary
Texas Veterans Land Board

_____ Legal

Sworn to and subscribed before me by the above party this _____ day of _____,
_____.

Notary Public in and for Travis County, Texas

MEMORANDUM

TEXAS VETERANS LAND BOARD • CHAIRWOMAN DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

Date: April 30, 2024

To: Dawn Buckingham, M.D., Chairwoman
Judson Scott, Member
James Rothfelder, Member

From: Raul Gonzales, Deputy Director of Land & Housing

Subject: Agenda Item 6 e – Consideration and possible action on authorizing staff to conduct rulemaking related to the definition of “Veteran” for the purpose of establishing eligibility to qualified Veterans for participation in the land loan program.

BACKGROUND: For the purposes of the land loan program, an eligible Texas Veteran is defined as a person who has served not less than 90 cumulative days of active-duty or active-duty training in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Air Force, Space Force, United States Public Health Service, or a recognized reserve component of the listed branches of service. Currently, the maximum loan amount under the land loan program may not exceed \$150,000. Today married couples who are both eligible veterans may use the land loan program to each buy separate tracts of land to a maximum loan amount of \$150,000 each, but they cannot combine their benefits to obtain a single tract of land with a loan amount above \$150,000.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the Board approve the staff to conduct rulemaking to publish a proposed rule in the *Texas Register*. The purpose of the proposed rule is to allow dual-veteran spouses to be eligible to buy a single tract with a loan limit that exceeds the current maximum loan amount. If the new rule is adopted the dual-Veteran couple could decide to be consider one Veteran and take advantage of the higher loan limit, or they could use the program under the existing rules and each purchase separate tracts at the approved maximum loan limit. This will not prohibit any Veteran from using their eligibility individually even if married to another eligible Veteran. All underwriting guidelines will apply.

Staff analysis determines that there is no significant financial impact on the program’s ability to support this proposed change. While no official data source states the number of dual-Veteran couples in Texas, based on the current number of active-duty military dual spouses, the staff estimates the percentage is between 7-10% of Texas Veterans.

Proposed Amendment to the Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Part 5, Chapter 175, Subchapter B, §175.72.

“If both a husband and wife are individually eligible to participate in the program, nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit them from applying for a loan to jointly purchase the same tract of land. The Board may make a loan for the purchase of the same tract of land by two Veterans who are husband and wife, but only if both spouses together satisfy the loan qualification requirements of the program. The total amount of this loan shall not exceed the maximum amount allowable for this type of loan.”

If approved by the Board, the staff will start the rulemaking process and open the proposed rule to public comment. At the end of the notice period the staff will seek final approval from the Board. At that point, the Board may finalize the proposed change, make amendments to the proposal, and re-publish any proposed changes, or withdraw the proposed changes.

Date: April 30, 2024

To: Dawn Buckingham, M.D., Chairwoman
Judson Scott, Member
James Rothfelder, Member

From: Dr. John Kelley, Director, Texas State Veterans Cemeteries

Subject: Agenda item 7 a - Report on Texas State Veteran Cemetery operations.

Recommendation: This agenda item requires no action from the Board.

Veterans Administration (VA) Developments:

- The Coastal Bend State Veterans Cemetery expansion project (TX-23-33) in Corpus Christi is on schedule and on budget with work ongoing at the columbaria, irrigation repairs, and pre-positioned crypts arriving and being installed. Photos are provided below.
- The West Texas State Veterans Cemetery in Lubbock construction project (TX-23-34) continues on schedule and on budget. The groundwork is complete and met the environmental requirements for the prairie dogs and the ground nesting owl. There are a significant number of pre-registrations already received which are indicative of public interest. Photos are provided below.
- The VA grant expansion application for an \$11.853 million expansion at the Central Texas State Veterans Cemetery in Killeen (TX-23-35) continues to await funding decisions from the National Cemetery Administration (NCA). Expected funding is on or about October 1, 2024.

VLB Initiatives:

- Four war monuments will be unveiled at the Coastal Bend State Veterans Cemetery in Corpus Christi on May 2, 2024, at an 11:00 a.m. ceremony. The monuments will honor service in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf. The stones will feature a map of the area of conflict, the war period and a simple statement on the back welcoming these Veterans home. The stones were funded with local donations and will be emplaced between the points of the main star in clockwise chronological order. See attached pictures.
- A Vietnam monument will be unveiled at the Rio Grande Valley State Veterans Cemetery in Mission on U.S. Armed Forces Day on May 18, 2024. The monument honors all who served during the Vietnam conflict and is like the stone unveiled at the Texas State

Veterans Cemetery in Abilene last September. The stone was paid for with local donations.

- The City of Abilene offered to donate an additional approximately 100 acres for the Texas State Veterans Cemetery in Abilene. The acreage is south of the current cemetery and will extend the cemetery usage by an additional 100 years. We are grateful to the City of Abilene for their generous donation.

Other Items of Interest:

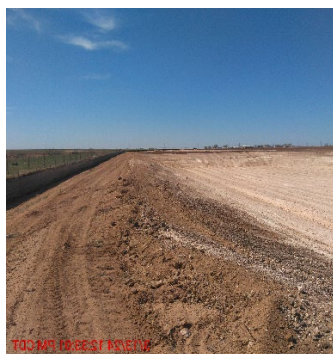
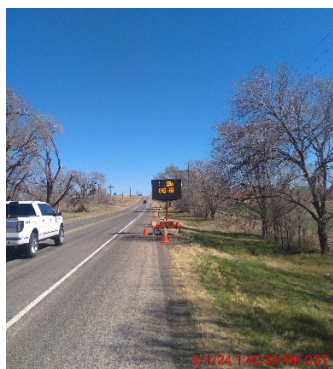
- Memorial Day, May 27, 2024, will feature the changes successfully implemented in 2023. All cemeteries will be open 24-hours a day all weekend. The Avenue of Flags and the headstones of those Missing in Action (MIA) and Killed in Action (KIA) will be illuminated. At the Memorial Day ceremonies, a traditional roll call will be held for all interred MIAs and KIAs, including the reading of each name three times. We encourage everyone to come to our State Veterans Cemeteries and honor those who gave their all for our Nation.
- The Texas State Veterans Cemeteries continue to modernize the fleet of equipment. UW56 Tool Cats were recently purchased through statewide solicitation and delivered to all four cemeteries. This equipment replaces the Skid steers and tractors used at the cemeteries and can also perform Utility Vehicle (UTV) roles. The two-person cab features air conditioning, heat, and rear-wheel steering. These vehicles also reduce storage space, have lower maintenance costs, and are easier to maneuver in plot areas.

TX-22-33 Corpus Christi Expansion





TX-22-34 Lubbock Establishment



Coastal Bend State Veterans Cemetery War Monuments



UW56 Tool Cat Deployed at all Texas State Veterans Cemeteries



TX-23-33 Columbaria Wall Foundation



TX-23-33 Columbaria Wall Foundation



TX-23-33 Columbaria Wall Foundation



TX-23-33

Crypt Field



TX-23-33

Crypt Field Drainage



TX-23-33

Crypt

Arrivals



TX-23-34

Crypt Field



3/6/24 11:33:09 AM CST

TX-23-34

Safety Signage



3/1/24 1:42:30 PM CST

TX-23-34

Grading and Forming



3/6/24 10:16:13 AM

TX-23-34 Irrigation Pond



3/13/24 12:33:01 PM CDT

TX-23-34 Entry Wall Formwork



4/3/24 10:14:11 AM CDT

TX-23-34 Entry Wall Pouring



UW56 Tool
Cat
Fielded at all
cemeteries



Date: April 30, 2024

To: Dawn Buckingham, M.D., Chairwoman
Judson Scott, Member
James Rothfelder, Member

From: Kathy Johanns, Deputy Director of Texas State Veterans Homes

Subject: Agenda item 8 a - Report on Texas State Veterans Homes Operations.

Recommendation: This agenda item requires no action from the Board.

Quarterly Meetings with Operators:

In March and April 2024, we started quarterly meetings with senior leadership from the VLB and the operators. The purpose of the meeting is for senior leaders to discuss quality of care, operations, finance, and focused areas of effort. The meetings increase collaboration and communication and are intended to ensure there is an open and collaborative environment to address the needs of the Veterans and residents. The agenda for this past quarter included the following:

- Operations Overview
- Center for Medicare and Medicaid Star Ratings
- Activities/Volunteer Programs
- Emergency Action Plans/Exercise Planning and Dates
- Clinical/Pharmacy Issues
- Financial Services
- Construction Services

Hurricane Exercise at the Richard A. Anderson Texas State Veterans Home in Houston:

Hurricane season in the United States is from June 1, 2024, to November 30, 2024. In preparation, representatives from the VLB, the operator Texas VSI and the Texas Military Department met in Houston to do a walk thru of the home's emergency action plan. The discussion-based exercise included extensive discussion of the evacuation plan for the residents and staff. The VLB staff is conducting a review of each home's emergency action plan and assessing if evacuation plans are up to date, to include contracting for transportations services.

Ussery-Roan Texas State Veterans Home in Amarillo:

The operations contract for this home is currently out for public bid. The current operator, ML Cares, is in year three of a three-year contract. The current contract expires at the end of August 2024. When the posted bid closes a panel will review the bids and contact the selected operator to begin contract negotiations.

Assisting Veterans with Veterans Administration (VA) Disability Claims:

The VA offers disability compensation (pay) in the form of monthly tax-free payments to Veterans who got sick or injured while serving in the military and to Veterans whose service made an existing condition worse. Veterans may qualify for VA disability benefits for physical conditions (like a chronic illness or injury) and mental health conditions (like PTS) that developed before, during, or after service. In cooperation with the Texas Veterans Commission, the On-site Representatives from each home are identifying Veterans that may benefit from either filing an initial claim or a review of their existing claim status. The intent is to ensure that our residents receive a full review of their claim to ensure they maximize the benefits to which they may be entitled.

Veteran Home Operations:

The State Veterans Homes owned by the Veterans Land Board have the total capacity to serve 1,300 veterans, eligible family members, and Gold Star families. Maintaining a high occupancy, which we refer to as a daily census, is important to serve the maximum number of Veterans and to ensure the financial stability of the home. The nine homes have been averaging around a 94% occupancy. That is about 1,222 residents served. While the daily number fluctuates, there are about 78 beds available. The national average monthly census for skilled nursing homes is ~67%. All Texas State Veterans Homes are above 90% occupied except for Big Spring.

Lamun-Lusk-Sanchez Texas State Veterans Home in Big Spring:

At the February 2024 VLB meeting the Board was updated that the combined VLB and Touchstone teams met in January 2024 to refocus the strategy to increase the census in Big Spring. The action plan was revised and is being executed. The efforts are showing signs of progress. As of the writing of this memo, Big Spring's census is increasing and now has the highest census since December 2013.

Big Spring

- a. Capacity: 160
- b. Census as of April 9, 2024: 129 (Increase of 19 residents since last VLB meeting.)
- c. Percentage full as of April 9, 2024: 81% (Increase of 12% since last VLB meeting.)
- d. Additional residents required to hit 90%: 15

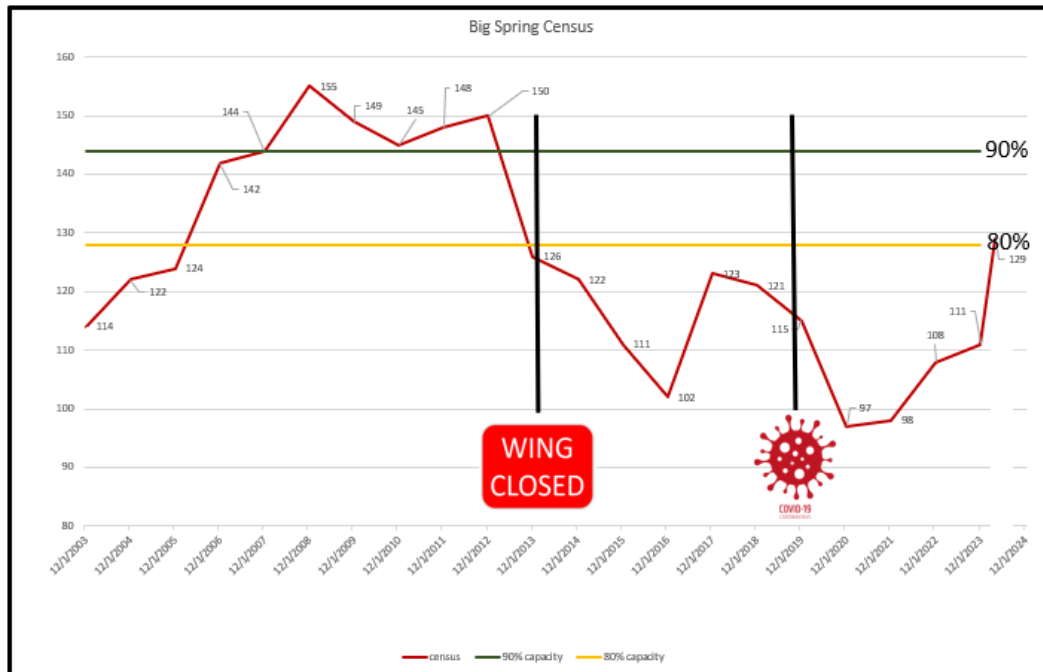


Figure 1. Big Spring opening to date year-end census. The yellow line is the census required to be 80% full (128 residents). The green line is the census required to be 90% full (144 residents).

MEMORANDUM

TEXAS VETERANS LAND BOARD • CHAIRWOMAN DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

Date: April 30, 2024

To: Dawn Buckingham, M.D., Chairwoman
Judson Scott, Member
James Rothfelder, Member

From: John Barton, Director of VLB Bond Funds Management

Subject: Agenda Item 8 b - Consideration and possible action on resident room rates in the David A. Gloier Texas State Veterans Home Program, and other matters in connection therewith.

Recommendation: Staff recommends the Board adopt the proposed resident room rates in the supporting document.

Background

The Board has the authority to set room rates for Texas State Veterans Homes in accordance with Board Policy 110, Authority and Responsibilities, section 110.30, item D.

The Veterans Land Board receives reimbursements from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for Veteran residents in its homes. The payments from the VA to the VLB are used by the VLB to cover the costs related to operating the home and providing the expected level of skilled nursing care.

There are two categories of payments received by VLB. The payment for each category is related to the Veterans' Service-Connected Disability (SCD) rating as determined by the VA. This agenda item is related only to room rates for Veterans for which the VLB receives the Basic Per Diem reimbursement. It does not impact reimbursement rates or room rates related to veterans with a SCD rating of 70% or above.

This recommendation applies to specific Texas State Veterans Homes as each home has its own unique mix of residents and operating costs. The reimbursements from the VA are based on a formula. These calculations vary by home based on the total cost to operate the home. The monthly costs fluctuate due to changes in the operating expenses the VLB pays such as therapy costs, pharmaceutical costs, construction, and maintenance costs.

The VA reviews the maximum Basic Per Diem paid to state veteran homes on an annual basis. If the VA makes a change to the Basic Per Diem, the VLB annually reviews if room rate adjustments are appropriate on a home-by-home basis. In October 2022 the VA increased the Basic Per Diem. The VLB voted in April 2023 to align with the VA's increase in the maximum Basic Per Diem.

Effective October 1, 2023, the VA increased the maximum Basic Per Diem from \$129.97 to \$138.29, an increase of \$8.32 per day.

One example of how the VA reimbursement change may have impacted a Veteran is explained here. When the VA provides a Basic Per Diem reimbursement to a home, the home credits the account of the

specific Veteran for whom the reimbursement is intended. When the VA raised the Basic Per Diem from \$129.97 to \$138.29 the Veteran's account was credited an additional \$8.32 per day. As a result, the Veteran's daily out of pocket expense correspondingly was reduced by \$8.32 per day. For this example, this recommendation would result in room rates paid by this Veteran returning to rates like what they were paying in October 2023.

Hypothetical Houston example:

	September 2023	Oct 2023 to present	Proposed June 1, 2024
Daily Room Rate charged to Veteran:	\$260.80	\$260.80	\$269.12
Basic Per Diem reimbursement from VA to VLB:	\$129.97	\$138.29	\$138.29
Daily Out of Pocket Expense to Veteran:	\$130.83	\$122.51	\$130.83

Table 1: Example of Houston Veteran out of pocket expenses September 2023 compared to June 2024.

Difference in Daily Room Rate if adopted:

When the VA increased the Basic Per Diem in October 2023, this resulted in residents in this category experiencing a discounted daily room rate from October 2023 to present. This recommendation would return out of pocket costs to at or below their out-of-pocket costs in September 2023. Daily room rate charges to Veterans eligible for Basic Per Diem reimbursement will change by amounts shown in Table 2.

Big Spring	Bonham	El Paso	Floresville	Houston	Tyler
\$4.00	\$4.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$8.32	\$8.32

Table 2: Change in room rate per day for Veterans eligible for Basic Per Diem reimbursement.

Rate Setting Considerations:

Staff routinely reviews room rates whenever the VA makes changes to Basic Per Diem reimbursements. Staff reviewed the past six months of calculated Basic Per Diem amounts prior to making this recommendation. Approval of this recommendation is justified due to sustained increases in inflation, persistently high healthcare expenses, particularly nursing and staffing expenses. Additionally, construction costs for the Fort Worth Home reduced the surplus fund balance of the Veteran Home program. The VLB also has upcoming deferred maintenance and renovations costs due to the increasing age of many homes.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends adopting resident room rates, as shown on the supporting document, effective June 1, 2024.

Texas State Veterans Home Program Room Rates Effective February 13, 2024

Veterans	Big Spring	Bonham	El Paso	Floresville	Houston	Tyler
Private Room, Non-A&A	202.80	202.80	200.00	200.00	260.80	246.80
Private Room, A&A	190.80	190.80	188.00	188.00	248.80	234.80
Private Room, Alzheimer Unit, Non-A&A	216.80	216.80	214.00	214.00	272.80	258.80
Private Room, Alzheimer Unit, A&A	204.80	204.80	202.00	202.00	260.80	246.80
Private Room, Medicaid	149.80	149.80	147.00	147.00	260.80	246.80
Semi-Private, Non-A&A	149.80	149.80	147.00	147.00	-	-
Semi-Private, A&A	137.80	137.80	135.00	135.00	-	-
Semi-Private, Alzheimer Unit, Non-A&A	163.80	163.80	161.00	161.00	-	-
Semi-Private, Alzheimer Unit, A&A	151.80	151.80	149.00	149.00	-	-
Semi-Private, Medicaid	149.80	149.80	147.00	147.00	-	-

Proposed Room Rates Effective June 1, 2024

Veterans	Big Spring	Bonham	El Paso	Floresville	Houston	Tyler
Private Room, Non-A&A	206.80	206.80	202.00	202.00	269.12	255.12
Private Room, A&A	194.80	194.80	190.00	190.00	257.12	243.12
Private Room, Alzheimer Unit, Non-A&A	220.80	220.80	216.00	216.00	281.12	267.12
Private Room, Alzheimer Unit, A&A	208.80	208.80	204.00	204.00	269.12	255.12
Private Room, Medicaid	153.80	153.80	149.00	149.00	269.12	255.12
Semi-Private, Non-A&A	153.80	153.80	149.00	149.00	-	-
Semi-Private, A&A	141.80	141.80	137.00	137.00	-	-
Semi-Private, Alzheimer Unit, Non-A&A	167.80	167.80	163.00	163.00	-	-
Semi-Private, Alzheimer Unit, A&A	155.80	155.80	151.00	151.00	-	-
Semi-Private, Medicaid	153.80	153.80	149.00	149.00	-	-

Date: April 30, 2024

To: Dawn Buckingham, M.D., Chairwoman
Judson Scott, Member
James Rothfelder, Member

From: Ray Minjarez, Deputy Director for Construction Services

Subject: Agenda Item 9 a – Report on Construction Projects.

RECOMMENDATION: This agenda item requires no action from the Board.

Construction and Capital Improvements:

The VLB is currently managing over \$113,000,000 in construction projects across the state. The three largest projects are the Veteran's home in Fort Worth, construction of the Lubbock state Veterans cemetery and COVID heating, ventilation, air conditioning (HVAC) upgrades. These three projects represent \$71,000,000 of the total \$113,000,000. Other projects include cemetery expansions, fire and alarm upgrades, personal protective equipment (PPE) storage, various furniture, fixture and equipment (FF&E) projects.

Construction of Tuskegee Airmen Texas State Veterans Home, Fort Worth:

The contract to build the Tuskegee Airmen Texas State Veterans Home was awarded to Bartlett Cocke General Contractors on Nov 14, 2019. The contractor was authorized to start construction on August 27, 2021. Construction continues with a projected substantial completion in the 4th quarter of FY2024. The anticipated opening of the facility is in the 1st quarter of FY2025.

HVAC upgrades at Veteran Homes:

Pursuant to authority delegated by the Board in October 2023 to VLB staff, four contracts covering nine Veteran Homes were issued, respectively COVID 1, COVID 2, COVID 3 and COVID 4. All four contracts have been executed and under varying early stages of completion, (attachment a.1).

Roof Repairs at Richard A. Anderson Texas State Veterans Home, Houston:

On November 9, 2023, a "Settlement Agreement and Release of Claims" was entered into between General Land Office and the Kitchell, the contractor that built the Houston home. The limited settlement is for the contractor to complete work specified in the "Breeze Report" to address roof leaks. Repairs were initiated late January 2024 with repairs continuing through March 2024. On April 3, 2024, representatives from Kitchell and the GLO/VLB met at the Houston home to assess next steps. The GLO/VLB expects additional repairs to begin the week of April 15.

Attachment a.1

	TSVH	Project Scope Of Work	Contractor Name	Construction Contract Number Notice to Proceed Date	Contract Award Amount	Project Status Completion %	Projected Completion (FY)
COVID 1	Big Spring Bonham Floresville Temple	HVAC Equipment Replacement, New HEPA Filter Unit, and Negative Pressure COVID Wards	Falkenberg	23-016-001-D716 NTP: 1/4/2024	\$ 16,197,981	10%	3rd Quarter 2025
COVID 2	El Paso Amarillo	HVAC Controls Replacement, New HEPA Filter Units, and Negative Pressure COVID Wards	FH Paschen	23-016-004-E367 NTP: 1/4/2024	\$ 5,792,953	5%	1st Quarter 2026
COVID 3	McAllen Houston	HVAC New HEPA Filter Units, and Negative Pressure COVID Wards	Falkenberg	23-016-001-E366 NTP: 1/4/2024	\$ 5,300,000	5%	4th Quarter 2024
COVID 4	Tyler	HVAC New HEPA Filter Units, and Negative Pressure COVID Wards	Basic SDV	23-016-003-E340 NTP: 1/4/2024	2,303,000	20%	1st Quarter 2025

MEMORANDUM

TEXAS VETERANS LAND BOARD • CHAIRWOMAN DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

Date: April 30, 2024

To: Dawn Buckingham, M.D., Chairwoman
Judson Scott, Member
James Rothfelder, Member

From: Tony Dale, Executive Secretary

Subject: Agenda Item 10 a - Report on Veterans Land Board operations.

RECOMMENDATION: This agenda item requires no action from the Board.

Promotions:

Bobby Breeden – (U.S. Army Veteran) promoted from Director II to Director III.

Texas State Veterans Cemetery Committee:

During the October 2023 meeting the Board authorized burial benefits for members of the Texas Military Forces killed in the line of duty. The VLB staff and Legal Services are actively working with the Texas Military Department on a memorandum of understanding to ensure eligible personnel can take advantage of the benefit.

To expand the eligibility of the burial benefit it is necessary to gain approval of the Texas State Veterans Cemetery Committee. The Texas Natural Resources Code, §164.005, paragraph (f) creates the committee. The committee consists of the three members of the Texas Veterans Land Board, the chair of the Texas Veterans Commission, and two representatives of the Veterans community selected by the chair of the Texas Veterans Commission.

The powers of the committee include:

- (1) establish the guidelines for determining:
 - (A) the location and size of veterans cemeteries; and
 - (B) the eligibility for burial in a veterans cemetery; and
- (2) select up to seven locations across the state for veterans' cemeteries.

The current members of the committee are:

Dawn Buckingham, M.D., Chairwoman of the Texas Veterans Land Board
Laura Koerner, Chairwoman, Texas Veterans Commission, U.S. Navy Veteran
Kevin Barber, Member, Texas Veterans Commission, U.S. Army Veteran
Kitty Meyers, Citizen Member, U.S. Air Force Veteran
James Rothfelder, Member, Texas Veterans Land Board
Jud Scott, Member, Texas Veterans Land Board, U.S. Navy Veteran

The committee will meet on June 25, 2024, at 10:00 A.M. in Room 107 of the Stephen F. Austin Building. The meeting is prior to the already scheduled Special Called Meeting of the Texas Veterans Land Board. Once the Texas State Veterans Committee completes its business and adjourns, we will take a short break to reset the hearing room and then will conduct the VLB Board meeting.

5-Year Plan on major projects:

The staff developed a 5-year estimate of capital expenditures that are beyond normal operations and maintenance. Examples of the projects include remodeling of veterans homes and replacement of durable goods such as kitchen equipment. The forecast also includes technology items such as software and hardware requirements. The consolidation of these capital needs assists in planning to ensure we maintain and improve the assets and programs that serve Texas veterans.

VLB Operational Strategic Plan:

In November 2023 the senior staff of the VLB created an operationally focused strategic plan. The plan lists 38 objectives to accomplish in FY24. As of April 2024, 21 of the 38 objectives are complete. The staff will focus on incomplete objectives. At the end of the fiscal year the Board will be updated on the status of achieving the plan's objectives.

VLB Marketing

The VLB Marketing Team is in the process of working with the Texas Real Estate Commission (TREC) on a training for real estate professionals. Every two years real estate agents in Texas are required to renew their license with TREC. Part of that requirement is to complete 18 hours of TREC approved Continuing Education courses. VLB's goal is to educate and inform Texas real estate agents, so that they can properly educate their Veteran clients about the process and benefits of using our VLB Loan program. As of early April, VLB Marketing is officially a state licensed Continuing Education Provider. The next step is to create and submit a 50-minute VLB Loans Course to the TREC for approval. We plan to have this completed by the end of May.

Upcoming Dates of Importance:

May 3, 2024 – War Monument dedication at Coastal Bend State Veterans Cemetery - Corpus Christi, 10:00 A.M.

May 7, 2024 – GLO & VLB Veterans Appreciation Day – Stephen F. Austin Building, 12:00 P.M. to 1:30 P.M.

May 12, 2024 – Wreath Laying at Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Arlington National Cemetery, 9:00 A.M.

May 18, 2024 – Armed Forces Day – Dedication of Vietnam War Monument at the Rio Grande Valley State Veterans Cemetery – Mission at 10:00 A.M.

May 27, 2024 – Memorial Day

Chairwoman Buckingham – attending ceremony in Killeen

Member Scott – attending ceremony in Mission

Member Rothfelder - attending ceremony in Corpus Christi

Tony Dale – attending ceremony in Abilene

June 25, 2024 – Meeting of the Texas State Veterans Cemetery Committee, Stephen F. Austin Building, 10:00 A.M.

June 25, 2024 – Special Called meeting of the Texas Veterans Land Board, Stephen F. Austin Building, immediately following the Texas State Veterans Cemetery Committee meeting.

July 30, 2024 – Special Called meeting of the Texas Veterans Land Board, June 25, 2024, Stephen F. Austin Building, 10:00 A.M.

November 12, 2024 – Special Called meeting of the Texas Veterans Land Board, Stephen F. Austin Building, 10:00 A.M.

February 4, 2025 - Special Called meeting of the Texas Veterans Land Board, Stephen F. Austin Building, 10:00 A.M.

June 10, 2025 - Special Called meeting of the Texas Veterans Land Board, Stephen F. Austin Building, 10:00 A.M.

August 5, 2025 - Special Called meeting of the Texas Veterans Land Board, Stephen F. Austin Building, 10:00 A.M.