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VETERANS LAND BOARD (VLB) POLICIES

100- VLB MISSION STATEMENT

October 19, 2023

100.01 VLB MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Veterans Land Board is to ensure the veterans of Texas can access land loans, home loans, skilled nursing care and the cemetery services they are eligible for in recognition of their honorable service to our country.

AUTHORITY: Texas Constitution, Article 3. Legislative Department section 49-b VETERANS' LAND BOARD

EFFECTIVE: October 19, 2023



VETERANS LAND BOARD (VLB) POLICIES

110- AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

October 19, 2023

110.10 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define the authority and responsibility of the Board, the executive management and the VLB staff.

110.20 Responsibilities of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors plays a crucial role in the strategic governance and long-term success of the Veterans Land Board. Their primary responsibilities include:

- A. Providing strategic direction: The Board sets the overall strategic direction and goals of the VLB, ensuring alignment with VLB's mission and statutory authority.
- B. Oversight and accountability: The Board monitors the performance of the executive management team, ensuring that they operate in compliance with legal, ethical, and financial standards.
- C. Risk management: The Board identifies and assesses significant risks facing the VLB and establishes appropriate risk management policies to safeguard the interests of veterans, bondholders, and the public.
- D. Appointment and guidance: The Board appoints and evaluates the Executive Secretary and the Assistant Executive Secretary, providing guidance and support in matters of executive leadership and succession planning.
- E. Financial stewardship: The Board ensures the VLB's financial stability, approves budgets, monitors financial performance, and safeguards the interests of veterans, taxpayers, and bondholders.

110.30 Delegations to the Executive Secretary and Assistant Executive Secretary

The Board of Directors delegates to the Executive Secretary the general powers and duties in the VLB enabling legislation, other applicable law, VLB Board policies necessary to accomplish VLB's purpose, plans and objectives as approved by the Board, except for those specifically reserved for the Board by provisions in VLB's enabling legislation, Bond resolutions and other Board policies. In the absence of the Executive Secretary, the Assistant Executive Secretary has the authority of the Executive Secretary. Duties not delegated to the Executive Secretary and reserved for the Board include:

- A. Authorize settlements of any dollar amount which results in VLB paying claims or funds to another party;
- B. Authorize and execute negotiable bonds as provided by law;
- C. Approval of any sale of real property;
- D. Setting rates charged to residents of Veterans Homes;
- E. Resident capacity, location and name of Veterans Homes and Veterans Cemeteries;
- F. Eligibility for burial in a Veterans Cemetery;
- G. Provide by resolution for use of the fund in a manner that will effectuate the intent of the constitution and the law;
- H. Prescribe and revise the interest rates as provided by law;



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- I. Provide for the forfeiture of contracts of sale and purchase and resale of forfeited land;
- J. Conduct Board initiated investigations it considers necessary;
- K. Obtain and review any components of internal audit plans that relate to board functions and approve those plans as appropriate during public meetings of the board;
- L. Obtain and review any internal audit reports that relate to board functions and discuss those reports during public meetings of the board; and
- M. Formulate policies and rules necessary and not in conflict with the law to ensure the proper administration and to carry out the intent and purposes of the law.

110.40 Responsibilities of the Executive Secretary

The executive management of the VLB is delegated to the Executive Secretary. The Executive Secretary is responsible for executing the strategies and day-to-day operations of the VLB, with the following key responsibilities:

- A. Strategy implementation: Develops and implements the strategic plans and initiatives outlined by the Board, aligning resources, and guiding the VLB toward its goals.
- B. Operational leadership: Managing daily operations, making operational decisions, and overseeing functional areas to ensure efficiency, productivity, and profitability.
- C. Team management: Recruits, develops, and leads the talented individuals who form the backbone of the VLB, ensuring a motivated workforce and fostering a positive culture.
- D. Financial management: Manage the financial resources of the VLB, including budgeting, financial planning, reporting, and ensuring effective use of funds to achieve objectives.
- E. Stakeholder communication: Maintains transparent and effective communication with stakeholders, including veterans, the Board, employees, customers, investors, legislative and regulatory bodies, representing the VLB's interests and upholding its reputation.

110.50 Responsibilities of VLB Staff

- A. Execution of Strategy: Responsible for implementing the strategies and plans devised by the executive leadership. They translate high-level goals into actionable tasks and ensure their timely and effective execution.
- B. Day-to-Day Operations: Manage the day-to-day activities of the VLB. They oversee various departments, coordinate workflows, and ensure smooth operations across different functions.
- C. Expertise and Specialization: Possess specific skills and expertise in their respective fields. Bring their knowledge and experience to execute tasks and contribute to the success of the organization.
- D. Collaboration and Coordination: Collaborate with colleagues within and across departments. Coordinate efforts, share information, and work together to achieve common objectives.
- E. Reporting and Documentation: Generate reports, collect data, and maintain documentation related to their areas of responsibility. Provide regular updates to the executive leadership and support decision-making processes.
- F. Quality Control and Efficiency: Focus on delivering high-quality products or services. Establish and enforce standards, implement quality control measures, and continuously seek ways to improve efficiency and productivity.



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110.60 AUTHORITY

Natural Resources Code, Title 7, Chapter 161, Subchapter A. Sec. 161.061 GENERAL DUTIES OF THE BOARD

Natural Resources Code, Title 7, Chapter 161, Subchapter A. Sec. 161.0141. SEPARATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES.

EFFECTIVE: October 19, 2023



VETERANS LAND BOARD (VLB) POLICIES

120- ETHICS

February 13, 2024

120.10 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to the Veterans Land Board Directors regarding standards of ethical conduct and conflicts of interest.

120.20 Ethical Standards of Conduct

VLB Directors must conduct themselves so as to bring continued respect to the VLB and avoid any questionable conduct that would bring discredit to the VLB. In accordance with state law, no director should:

- A. Accept or solicit any gift, favor or service that might reasonably tend to influence him or her in the discharge of his or her official duties, or that he or she knows or should know is being offered to him or her with the intent to influence his or her official conduct;
- B. Accept or solicit employment or engage in any business or professional activity that he or she might reasonably expect would require or induce him or her to disclose confidential information acquired by reason of his or her official position;
- C. Accept or solicit other employment or compensation that could reasonably be expected to impair his or her independence of judgment in the performance of his or her official duties;
- D. Make personal investments that could reasonably be expected to create substantial conflicts between his or her private interest and the public interest;
- E. Intentionally or knowingly solicit, accept, or agree to accept any benefit for having exercised his or her official powers or performed his or her official duties in favor of another; or
- F. Misapply or misuse VLB property, services, or personnel for personal benefit.

120.30 Conflicts of Interest

Directors will avoid conflicts of interest and conduct themselves so as to avoid even the appearance of conflicts of interest in the discharge of their official duties.

- A. Before any vote or decision on a business entity or real property in which a director has an interest, a director will publicly disclose the interest during a meeting of the Board, file an affidavit with the Secretary of the Board, and abstain from further participation in the matter if:
 - a. The action on the matter will have a special economic effect on the business entity that is distinguishable from the effect on the public; or
 - b. It is reasonably foreseeable that a board action on the matter will have an economic effect on the value of the property.
- B. Regarding hiring, no director will appoint, confirm the appointment, or vote for the appointment of any individual if that individual:
 - a. Is related to that director or any other director within the third degree of consanguinity or second degree of affinity (defined as a spouse, parent, child, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, great-grandparent, great-grandchild, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, son-in-law, or daughter-in-law); and
 - b. That individual will receive or be compensated from VLB funds.



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- C. Directors also must file a conflicts disclosure statement whenever a director becomes aware that a vendor or contractor of VLB, or a potential vendor or contractor, has an employment or business relationship with a director or a family member of the director (defined as the director's spouse, parent, child, father-in-law, mother-in-law, sons-in-law, and daughters-in-law). The disclosure statement also must be filed in the following circumstances:
- a. When a director or a family member of a director receives taxable income from an VLB vendor or contractor or a potential vendor or contractor, other than investment income, that exceeds \$2,500 during the 12-month period preceding the date a contract is signed or first considered by VLB;
 - b. When a vendor has given to a director or a family member of a director one or more gifts that have an aggregate value of more than \$100 in the 12-month period preceding the date a contract is signed or first considered by VLB; or
 - c. When a director has a family relationship with an VLB vendor. A director must sign the disclosure statement (available from the general counsel) before a notary, under oath, acknowledging that it applies to the director's family members, then file it with the VLB records custodian by the seventh business day after the director becomes aware of facts requiring the form to be filed.

120.40 Annual Financial Disclosures

The Directors shall file an annual financial statement with the Texas Ethics Commission in accordance with Texas Government Code, Chapter 572.

102.60 Executive Secretary Authority

The Executive Secretary is authorized to develop and enforce a written policy of ethical conduct, which may be more restrictive than state law, applicable to employees of the VLB.

120.70 Donations Received by the VLB

The authority to accept grants, gifts, devises, trusts, and requests, for programs outside of Natural Resources Code, Title 7. Resources Program, Chapter 164. Veterans' Financial Assistance Program is reserved for the Chair of the Veterans Land Board, in his or her capacity as Commissioner of the General Land Office as specified in Natural Resources Code, Title 2. Public Domain, Subtitle C. Administration, Chapter 31. General Land Office, Subchapter A. General Provision, Section 31.065.

120.80 AUTHORITY

Natural Resources Code, Title 2. Public Domain, Subtitle C. Administration, Chapter 31. General Land Office, Subchapter A. General Provision, Section 31.065

Natural Resources Code, Title 7. Resources Program, Chapter 164, Section 164.005 RIGHTS AND POWERS OF BOARD

EFFECTIVE: October 19, 2023, Amended February 13, 2024



VETERANS LAND BOARD (VLB) POLICIES

130 – COMMUNICATION WITH THE BOARD AND COMPLAINT HANDLING

October 19, 2023

130.10 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to the Veterans Land Board on communicating with the public.

130.20 Public posting of board meeting documents

The Executive Secretary shall implement a plan to post agendas, board packets, board rules and approved minutes on the internet. The agenda and board packet shall be posted on the internet prior to the meeting. The minutes shall be posted after the Board approves the minutes.

130.30 Communication with the Board via the internet

The Executive Secretary shall implement a method to allow the public to send communication to Directors via the internet.

130.40 Public comment during board meetings

The Executive Secretary shall include an agenda item allowing public comment during all regularly scheduled meetings, special called meetings, workshops, and work sessions. In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, the board may adopt reasonable rules governing public comment including requiring speakers to sign in in advance, establishing reasonable limits on the length of presentation or the total time a member of the public can address the board on a given item.

130.50 Employee complaint handling

Internal employee related complaints will be addressed by VLB management in accordance with the Employment Practices published in the Texas General Land Office Employee Handbook.

130.60 External complaint handling

The board secretary shall maintain information about parties to the complaint, the subject matter of the complaint, a summary of the results of the review or investigation of the complaint, and the disposition of the complaint.

- A. Complaints regarding the Executive Secretary shall be referred to the Chair of the VLB.
- B. All other complaints shall be referred to the Executive Secretary.
- C. The party responsible for addressing the complaint shall exercise due diligence to resolve the complaint in a timely manner. The Executive Secretary shall inform the Board if the matter is resolved, with the details on the parties involved, the nature of the complaint, the actions taken to address the complaint and any other relevant information the Board may need to understand the final disposition of the complaint.



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130.70 AUTHORITY

Natural Resources Code, Title 7, Chapter 161, Subchapter A. Section 161.034. COMPLAINTS.

Natural Resources Code, Title 7, Chapter 161, Subchapter A. Section 161.035. USE OF TECHNOLOGY.

Government Code, Title 5, Subtitle A, Chapter 551, Subchapter A, Section 551.007 (c)

EFFECTIVE: October 19, 2023



VETERANS LAND BOARD (VLB) POLICIES

140 – USE OF TECHNOLOGY

October 19, 2023

140.10 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance regarding the Veterans Land Board's use of technology.

140.20 Technology Solutions

The Executive Secretary shall ensure that technology employed by the VLB enhances productivity, is supported by the manufacturer, is cost effective, and balances availability of data with the confidentiality of data and ensures the integrity of data.

140.30 AUTHORITY

Natural Resources Code, Title 7, Chapter 161, Subchapter A. Section 161.035. USE OF TECHNOLOGY.

EFFECTIVE: October 19, 2023



VETERANS LAND BOARD (VLB) POLICIES

150 – CONTRACT POLICY

February 13, 2024

150.10 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the Board is informed of, and approves, Major Contracts and to provide guidance to the staff on delegation of authority and reporting.

150.20 Contract definition

A "Contract" means any written agreement of the Board for goods or services provided by a vendor or government entity, including agreements, binding letters of intent, memoranda of understanding, interagency agreements, amendments, renewals, revisions, and extensions.

150.30 Major Contract Definition

The Board approves Major Contracts. A Major Contract means any of the following: a Contract valued at or above \$1,000,000.00, and any amendment, contemplated amendment, extension, change order, or renewal that increases the present value of a Contract to \$1,000,000.00 or more, whether automatic or by written agreement.

150.40 Material Change Definition

The Board must approve a material change to a Major Contract. A "Material Change" means any change that would cause a Major Contract to not substantially comply with the terms contained in a written solicitation for the Major Contract and the terms considered in awarding the Major Contract, including terms regarding cost of materials or labor, duration, price, schedule, or scope. A Material Change shall also include (1) extending the length of or postponing the completion of a contract for six months or more; or (2) increasing the total consideration to be paid under a contract by at least 10%, including substituting certain goods, materials, products, or services.

If a Material Change is required after a Major Contract has been awarded, the Board must consider, review, and approve such Material Change.

150.50 Contracts not requiring Board approval

Any Contract that is not a "Major Contract" does not require Board review and approval. The Chair hereby designates the Executive Secretary of the Board to execute contracts on their behalf.



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150.60 Execution of Contracts

Only the Chair, Acting Chair, or if delegated by the Chair, the Executive Secretary or Assistant Executive Secretary, may execute Contracts. The Chair hereby designates the Executive Secretary to execute contracts on their behalf.

150.70 Report to Board

At least one time per fiscal year, during a public meeting of the Board, the Executive Secretary shall ensure that the Board receives a report on the status of all current Contracts. The report shall include:

- A. The number of Contracts in place as of the date of the report;
- B. A listing of all Contracts, with each Contract's expiration date and renewal date, if applicable;
- C. The number of Contracts designated as Major Contracts;
- D. Identification of a Major Contract awarded, approved and executed
- E. Major Contracts expiring within the then-current or following fiscal year, as of the date of the report;
- F. Major Contracts pending renewal or extension, including each such Major Contract's renewal date and term length; and
- G. Other information necessary for the Board to perform its duties.

150.80 AUTHORITY

Natural Resources Code, Title 7, Chapter 161, Subchapter A. Sec. 161.061 GENERAL DUTIES OF THE BOARD

EFFECTIVE: February 13, 2024



VETERANS LAND BOARD (VLB) POLICIES

160 – NEGOTIATED RULEMAKING AND ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

October 19, 2023

160.10 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage the use of negotiated rule making and alternative dispute resolution.

160.20 Negotiated Rulemaking

The Board encourages the use of negotiated rulemaking in accordance with Chapter 2001, Subchapter B of the Texas Government Code.

160.202 Alternative Dispute Resolution

The Board encourages the use of alternative dispute resolution consistent with Chapter 154, Civil Practice and Remedies Code and Government Code 2001.

160.30 AUTHORITY

Sec.161.036 NEGOTIATED RULEMAKING; ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION.

Chapter 2008, Government Code

Chapter 2009, Government Code

EFFECTIVE: October 19, 2023