

COUNTY OF HOWARD

The Board of Trustees of the Howard County Junior College District met for an executive session, budget workshop, and special meeting in the Fireplace Room in the Student Union Building on the Big Spring site and by telephone conference call on Monday, August 15, 2022.

The following members of the Board and District Administration were present:

Dr. John Freeman, Chairman
Maxwell Barr, Vice-Chairman, by phone
Adrian Calvio, Secretary
Dr. Marisha Beck
Raul Marquez
Mark Morgan
Ben Zeichick

Cheryl T. Sparks, Ed.D., President
Amy Burchett, Ed.D., Executive Vice-President
Danny Campbell, Provost, SWCD
Pam Callan, Provost, San Angelo, by phone
Monica Castro, Executive Dean/Lamesa, by phone
Brenda Claxton, Chief Fiscal Officer/Controller
Eric Hansen, Chief Technology Systems/Data Security Officer, by phone
Terry Hansen, Chief Special Projects
Rhonda Kernick, Chief Human Resources Officer
Brenda Madore, Chief of Staff/Institutional Advancement Officer
Fabian Serrano, Chief Operations and Safety/Security Officer
Steve Smith, Chief Business Officer/Internal Auditor
Bryan Stokes, Chief Institutional Effectiveness Officer

Others present were:

Lee Bryant, Security
Roger Cline, *Big Spring Herald*
Phil Furqueron, Architect
Emma Garcia, Executive Assistant
Cindy Smith, Dean Student Success/Public Information Officer

Chairman John Freeman called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. in accordance with Texas Government Section 551.045 with Maxwell Barr positioned in remote connection and Dr. Freeman, Adrian Calvio, Dr. Marisha Beck, Raul Marquez, Mark Morgan, and Ben Zeichick with Dr. Sparks located in the Fireplace Room in the SUB on the Big Spring campus. Roll call was taken by voice response. Based on the suspended proceedings of the Open Meetings Act in accordance with Section 418.016 of the Texas Government Code, the meeting was open to the public through a remote connection utilizing a toll-free number. The public was also entitled to participate and address the Board onsite. The meeting was recorded and will be available on the website.

Trustees moved into Executive Session at 10:08 a.m. to discuss the evaluation of the President. Upon conclusion of the Executive Session, the Board recessed for lunch at 11:32 a.m.

After a recess for lunch, Trustees reconvened at 12:36 p.m. Mr. Morgan gave the invocation, and Dr. Sparks recognized guest Phil Furqueron.

Next, Dr. Sparks asked for permission to address three items out of order on the agenda to allow for personnel making presentations to attend to other matters. The Chair agreed. Terry Hansen and Architect Phil Furqueron provided information on the Library and Music Building Projects on the Big Spring Campus. The projects recently had a second round of Request for Bids sent out, and the response was much better than when this was done in the spring. However, the bids came in higher than anticipated due to supply chain issues, inflation, labor shortages, and other factors. Bids were scored based on several factors, and the bids most beneficial to Howard College were selected to be recommended to the Board. Both recommended bids were the lowest submitted. It was recommended that the bid submitted by J. C. Roberts Construction Company of Odessa at \$1,338,216 be approved for the Library project. Fund balance was recommended to be utilized to make up the difference between donated funds and the bid amount. For the Music Building Project, it was recommended that the bid submitted by J.C. Roberts Construction Company of Odessa of \$1,683,700 be approved. Fund balance was recommended to be utilized to make up the difference between

donated funds for the project and the bid amount. Mr. Calvio made a motion to approve the recommendation presented for the Library Project. Mr. Zeichick seconded the motion. All Trustees voted in favor of the motion. Then, Mr. Morgan made a motion to approve the recommendation presented for the Music Building project. Mr. Calvio seconded the motion. All Trustees voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Dr. Sparks moved to the agenda item under New Business – Visioning/Future Directions dealing with insurance policies and premiums. Steve Smith updated trustees on the impacts on insurance rates that have occurred because of the weather-related incidents in the last year as well as years past. It was recommended that the Board approve a change in companies to Liberty Mutual for the benefit of the College. Howard College must sign an Interlocal Agreement with the Political Subdivision Alliance of Texas to make the change. Mr. Zeichick made a motion to approve the recommendation as presented. Mr. Marquez seconded the motion. All Trustees voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Dr. Sparks moved to the budget workshop items. Trustees were informed that the approved Vision and Values were the backbone of the budgeting process, with the strategic goals of access, student success, community, and workforce development, and performance excellence at the forefront of budget planning as directed by the Board and outlined in the Strategic Plan. She pointed out that the updated HCJCD Projects, Deferred, and Preventative Maintenance plan contained budgeting needs relative to the physical resources on each campus that could be included in the budget.

Dr. Sparks then provided an overview of the HC (Big Spring, Lamesa, and San Angelo) and SWCD preliminary budget preparations for Board consideration. She explained that the four campus budgets (Big Spring/District, Lamesa, San Angelo, and SWCD) are "balanced" for daily operations, with specific initiatives included for the strategic goals on the different campuses. All operating budgets were balanced for daily operations and include the implementation of the faculty pay project effort, which is a \$7,000 increase in the faculty schedule base pay, load based on Instructional Load Units particular to the course plus overall simplification of the load policy, competitive pay for some administrative positions as discussed in the last Executive session and other positions with changes in responsibility as well as schedule steps. There was already built-in step/longevity raises for each schedule.

Dr. Sparks related that, for the most part, the budget covers "business as usual" with specific initiatives for the strategic goals. However, all budgets were impacted by increases in utilities and insurance plus overall increases in costs. Dr. Sparks shared that unrestricted revenue in all budgets was approached conservatively as we proceed with the COVID-19 third academic year and its uncertainties. However, we are trying to proceed with an expectation of recovery. We also reduced expenditures in many instances.

The San Angelo budget was increased by +451,199 with the increase in tuition revenue, funding from Shannon for a position and \$250,000 of the need-based allocation received in the last session. The SWCD budget increased by +\$164,325, mainly due to increases in tuition and non-resident enrollment. The Lamesa budget increased by +\$29,570, mainly due to tuition increases. The Big Spring budget decreased by -\$785,147, mainly due to the loss of the GEO revenue, the allocation from Howard County for the shared librarian position, and tuition decrease based on student mix. The monies put into deferred maintenance projects last year were transferred into those initiatives mentioned above for the competitive pay effort and other strategic initiatives. Based on the directions received at the Board meeting, the budgets will continue to be prepared and finalized for presentation at the August 29 Board meeting. The Big Spring, San Angelo, and SWCD budgets will be deficit budgets utilizing fund balance to cover specific initiatives. Mr. Zeichick made a motion to approve the preliminary 2022-2023 budgets for Howard College and SWCD. Mr. Morgan seconded the motion. All Trustees voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Trustees considered the proposed tax rate and certain base salary increases discussed in Executive Session. After a lengthy discussion, Mr. Zeichick made the motion to approve a tax rate of \$0.151492 M & O (Maintenance and Operation) combined with the I & S (debt rate) of \$0.016453 equaling a total proposed rate of \$0.168395; a \$2,000 base increase on the non-exempt salary schedule; and a \$20,000 base increase on the CEO schedule to begin to align that position's pay with other similarly sized institutions in the State. Dr. Beck seconded the motion. All Trustees voted in favor of the motion. With the approval of a tax rate increase, a Tax Hearing will be scheduled for August 22 at 12:30 p.m. Trustees will have a budget hearing, approve the budget, and adopt the final tax rate at the August 29th board meeting.

Next, Dr. Sparks shared that the *Open Howard College* plan will be updated to align with new CDC guidance. She communicated that we are moving towards normalcy.

Next, Trustees received information on the final Legislative Appropriation Requests.

Next, Trustees listened to a presentation from Bryan Stokes, District Chief Institutional Effectiveness Officer, who reported on Texas Pathways Key Performance Indicators. All groups of students are showing growth in completing college level courses in a timely manner. Howard College has been successfully utilizing the co-requisite model.

Next, under Monitoring, Trustees considered renewing the copy machine lease and RFP#22-011 for Creative Partner Services. Mr. Morgan made the motion to approve the copy machine lease and RFP#22-011. Mr. Calvio seconded the motion. All Trustees voted in favor of the motion.


Next, Trustees considered updates to the Employee Handbook. The Policy 9.4 recommendation updates Part-time Faculty pay from \$800 to \$900. The Policy 4.2 recommendation includes updates to improve safety, allow for GPS technology to be utilized in college vehicles, and increases the mileage reimbursement rate. In addition, a recommendation was made to add a section to the Purchasing Handbook for Property Management Procedures. Dr. Beck made a motion to approve the recommended updates to the Employee Handbook and Purchasing Handbook as presented. Mr. Marquez seconded the motion. All Trustees voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Dr. Sparks provided the President's Report and reviewed the Board calendar of significant events. She noted that recognitions would be done at the upcoming meeting on August 29.

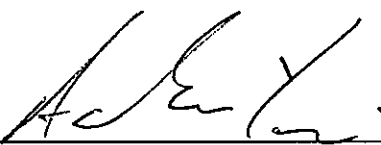
Next, Dr. Sparks shared legislative and general updates under Board Education and Development. The work completed by the Texas Association of Community Colleges concerning recommendations for the Commission on Community College Finance is moving forward. Upon completion of the Commission's work, leaders will work diligently to communicate the Commission's recommendations to elected officials prior to and during the legislative session. The State will have a \$27-billion-dollar surplus this session, and advocacy for community colleges to receive a portion of that will be necessary.

Finally, Dr. Sparks reminded Trustees that Cybersecurity training must be completed by the end of the month. New Trustee Marquez is working his way through the required training.

There being no other business, Trustees adjourned the meeting at 2:46 p.m.



Dr. John Freeman, Chairman



Adrian Calvio, Secretary
By Julie Bailey