

The Board of Trustees of the Howard County Junior College District met for an executive session and a regular board meeting in the Board Room of the Student Union Building at Howard College on Monday, September 25, 2023.

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

Dr. John Freeman, Chairman  
Maxwell Barr, Vice-Chairman  
Dr. Marisha Beck  
Raul Marquez  
Mark Morgan  
Ben Zeichick

Dr. Cheryl T. Sparks, Ed.D., President  
Dr. Amy Burchett, Ed.D., Executive Vice-President  
Jeff Anderson, Interim Provost, SWCD  
Pam Callan, Provost, San Angelo  
Monica Castro, Executive Dean, Lamesa  
Brenda Claxton, Chief Fiscal Officer/Controller  
Eric Hansen, Chief Technology Systems/Data Security Officer  
Rhonda Kernick, Chief HR Officer  
Brenda Madore, Chief of Staff/Institutional Advancement Officer - recorder  
Fabian Serrano, Chief Operations and Safety/Security Officer  
Bryan Stokes, Chief Institutional Effectiveness Officer  
Steve Smith, Chief Business Officer/Internal Auditor

Others present were:

Stephanie Bissonnette, Interpreter  
Lee Bryant, Security  
Nick Cantu, Leadership Big Spring  
Phil Furqueron, Architect  
Terry Hansen, Chief Special Projects Officer  
Beth Henry, Leadership Big Spring  
Andreia Medlin, Big Spring Herald  
Renee Porter, Interpreter  
Cindy Smith, Dean of Student Success/Public Information Officer  
Shannon Stuteville, Executive Assistant  
Mark Willis, Executive Director, Big Spring EDC

Chairman Dr. John Freeman called the meeting to order at 11:20 a.m. The regular meeting was open to the public in the Board Room on the Big Spring Campus and through remote connection utilizing a toll-free number. The regular meeting was recorded and will be available on the website. Minutes will also be available on the website. Shortly after calling the meeting to order, the Board moved into Executive Session to meet with Mark Willis, Executive Director of the Big Spring Economic Development Corporation to discuss economic development projects. Upon conclusion of the Executive Session, the Board recessed for lunch at 11:35 a.m.

After a short recess for lunch, Trustees reconvened at 12:31 p.m. The invocation was given by Dr. Beck. The public was invited to address the Board. There were no comments.

Next, Trustees considered routine matters, including the minutes of the regular meeting on August 28, 2023, checklist for 2023, personnel matters, an internal audit report, and reports related to Education Code 51.252, which will be posted appropriately. Mr. Zeichick made a motion to approve the routine matters. The motion was seconded by Mr. Marquez. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Trustees moved to New Business Visioning/Future Directions.

Next, Trustees considered the Crusoe Howard County Data Center Project Tax Abatement as presented by Mark Willis in executive session. He recommended that the College align with the offer that was given to Crusoe by the County utilizing the tax abatement allowances. The 5-year tax abatement will provide a 100% tax abatement in year 1 and a 70% abatement in the following four years. The Data Center will be an investment that

exceeds \$100 million dollars. Dr. Beck made a motion to approve the Crusoe Howard County Data Center Project Tax Abatement as presented. Mr. Marquez seconded the motion. Five Trustees voted in favor of the motion. Mr. Morgan abstained.

Next, Trustees considered nominating candidates to the Howard County Central Appraisal District Board of Directors. Dr. Sparks explained that nominations are made by the member taxing units. Following the submission of nominations, the election for the Appraisal District Board members would take place. It is expected that Howard College will vote in this election during the November or December Howard College Board Meeting. The college's voting influence in this election is determined by its percentage of 2022 tax levies, granting Howard College 580 votes out of 5000. Dr. Sparks explained that Trustees have the option to nominate one or more candidates or choose not to nominate anyone. It was noted that the current five members of the Appraisal District Board were all willing to serve again. After some discussion, Mr. Barr made a motion to nominate Jordan Partee to the Howard County Central Appraisal District Board. Dr. Beck seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Dr. Sparks provided an overview and update on the executed lease agreement for the Rodeo arena, which had been successfully finalized with Delek. The Board had granted her authority to complete the agreement once it received approval from the college attorney and insurance company. The lease spans a 30-year term and offers the possibility of renewal with the same conditions up to four times, each renewal extending the lease by 5 years, totaling 50 years. This extended commitment from Delek demonstrates their dedication to the partnership and community.

Next, as part of the focus on the San Angelo campus, Terry Hansen and Phil Furqueron gave Trustees an update on the work of the Facilities Master Plan and findings specific to the San Angelo campus. Dr. Sparks reminded trustees that the typical monthly Board meetings generally address district-wide and regular agenda items. However, in response to the Board's decision during their annual January self-evaluation, they introduced strategically placed campus-focused meetings to delve into specific campus updates more comprehensively. On June 14, a Special Meeting was held in San Angelo. This gathering allowed the Board to visit the campus, recognize the achievements of students, staff, donors, business partners, and community members, and officially kick off the 50th anniversary celebration of the campus. The meeting held today was phase 2 of that focused meeting. It addressed any outstanding matters that weren't covered during the initial event. She further explained that it was worth noting that next year, there would be only one Special meeting for the San Angelo campus. Phil and Terry then provided Trustees with a QR code and/or a paper copy of the survey instrument for the Facilities Master Plan to fill out for the San Angelo campus. Dr. Sparks explained that Trustees will have the opportunity to complete the survey instrument for each campus at the correlated focused meeting for that campus. Tours of those campuses will be provided at those meetings. Phil and Terry also discussed that they were soliciting survey responses from students, faculty, staff, and community members at each campus. Currently, there are 137 responses for the San Angelo campus. That information will be analyzed and used to inform recommendations in the final report.

Next, Dr. Sparks, Pam Callan, Phil Furqueron, and Terry Hansen updated Trustees on progress made on the Plumbing and Electrical Building that is slated to be built on the San Angelo campus. They held a well-attended groundbreaking ceremony on September 14<sup>th</sup> and had support from various local leaders and dignitaries. There is a lot of excitement surrounding the achievement of Howard College receiving a \$400,000 grant from the Lowe's Gable Grant Foundation to fund the project. It was a very competitive grant process and a significant accomplishment for Howard College. Phil reported that the drawings are nearly complete, and he is reaching out to get accurate bids. The project is making good progress.

Next, continuing with the San Angelo campus focus and in alignment with Board strategic priorities, Dr. Sparks reviewed the most recent San Angelo Student Roundtable results. She gave trustees background information on student roundtable procedures and the care that is taken to respond in a timely way to student comments and concerns. She then discussed specific comments brought up by students at the San Angelo campus.

Next, Trustees moved to Performance Measures/Outcomes.

Next, Trustees received a presentation by Bryan Stokes on SACSCOC Student Achievement Data as related to Standard 8.1. There was a discussion on the many changes occurring with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) reporting requirements based on the new funding model. Thus, the enrollment and contact hour report will be presented at the next Board meeting. Dr. Sparks informed Trustees that a new internal accountability calendar was being developed to align with all the changes.

Next, Brenda Claxton informed Trustees that Howard College had received an unchanged Fitch Bond Rating of AA- with a Stable Outlook.

Next, Trustees moved to Monitoring.

Next, Trustees considered giving authority to Dr. Sparks to approve an RFP for vending once a suitable offer has been received. Only one response has been received so far, and the college will wait until further responses come in before considering them. With that authority, Dr. Sparks would make the determination at that time and then update the Board. Dr. Beck made a motion to give Dr. Sparks authority to approve an RFP for vending. Mr. Barr seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Trustees considered affirming the purchase of a Rodeo Trailer. The Board had given authority to Dr. Sparks to purchase the trailer in the last meeting once a lease had been executed with Delek. Mr. Barr made a motion to affirm the purchase of the Rodeo Trailer. Mr. Marquez seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Trustees considered entering an interlocal purchasing agreement with Region 18. The interlocal agreement consists of more than 360 potential vendors and in the cooperative the College could purchase many needed items and services. Mr. Morgan made a motion to approve entering the interlocal purchasing agreement with Region 18 as presented. Mr. Zeichick seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Trustees considered entering an interlocal cooperative agreement with Region VI as requested by the IT Department to purchase a variety of products through competitively procured proposals. Mr. Zeichick made a motion to enter into the interlocal cooperative agreement with Region VI as presented. Mr. Barr seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Trustees considered a bid to replace two boilers at SWCD as budgeted. Mr. Zeichick made a motion to approve the bid to replace the boilers at SWCD as presented. Mr. Barr seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Trustees considered an update to the Employee Handbook related to the pay that tutors receive (see attached). Mr. Barr made a motion to approve the Employee Handbook updates as presented. Mr. Zeichick seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Trustees received an update on the Library and Music building projects from Terry Hansen and Dr. Sparks. Delays have caused the postponement of the dedication of both buildings. The library dedication has been moved to December 7. The Music Building dedication is still to be determined. Dr. Sparks has worked with the donor to finalize the names of the practice rooms in the Music Building Hall of Fame. They will be dedicated to:

- Mrs. Mildred Jarrett
- Mrs. Mary Louise Barnes
- Mrs. Patricia Iden
- Mrs. Sally Wilson
- Mrs. Nora Hambrick
- Mrs. Ann Houser
- Piano Guild Judges

A bronze plaque will be placed outside each room.

Next, Fabian Serrano reported that work had begun on the John Weeks Press Box in preparation for the October 21 Dedication and 2009 Baseball Championship Team Reunion.

Next, Eric Hansen, Bryan Stokes, and Dr. Amy Burchett gave an update on the student information system project implementation. The team is working on data validation and fixing errors. Day-to-day integration, reporting, and financial aid refunds are all in progress. Everyone is working great together, however, there will be bumps in the road each time a process occurs in the new system for the first time. It is taking time to adapt.

Next, Dr. Sparks provided the President's Report.

Next, Dr. Sparks reviewed legislative and general updates. She reminded everyone Representative Darby will be here this Wednesday to do a presentation titled Constitutional Amendments 101.

Next, Dr. Sparks reviewed the Board calendar of significant events. The 2009 Baseball reunion will be October 21 and is paired with the Howard Harvest. The next Board meeting will be October 23 and held on the SWCD campus.

Next, Dr. Sparks gave an update on successes throughout the district. John Weeks has been inducted into the WJCAC Hall of Fame.

Next, Dr. Sparks and Trustee Ben Zeichick gave an update on The Community College Association of Texas Trustees (CCATT) Conference, which was held Sept. 15 & 16. Trustee Zeichick was on the ballot for election to the CCATT Board in the position of Small College representative. While he did not secure a seat, he was immediately approached about serving on various committees and represented Howard College well.

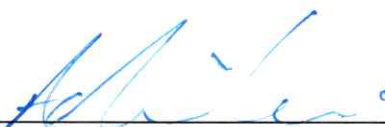
Next, Dr. Sparks discussed the upcoming 2023 Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) Annual Conference. This year's ACCT Annual Conference is in Las Vegas from October 9th to 12<sup>th</sup>. Travel arrangements have been made and final details are in progress for those attending. Rachel Deller, our San Angelo student who was selected as the New Century Workforce Scholar for Texas will be recognized at a ceremony.

There being no other business, the Trustees adjourned at 2:21 p.m.



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Dr. John Freeman, Chairman



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Adrian Calvio, Secretary  
By Brenda Madore