

The Board of Trustees of the Howard County Junior College District met for a training session, executive session, and regular meeting in the Board Room of the Student Union Building on the Big Spring campus on Monday, January 27, 2025.

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

Dr. John Freeman, Chairman
Mark Morgan, 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, 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
Brad Keller, Chief Institutional Research Officer
Laurie Kincannon, Chief Human Resources Officer
Dr. Brenda Madore, Ed.D., Chief of Staff/Institutional Advancement Officer - recorder
Fabian Serrano, Chief Operations and Safety/Security Officer
Cindy Smith, Chief Student Success/Public Information Officer
Steve Smith, Chief Business Officer/Internal Auditor

Others present were:

Stephanie Bissonette, Interpreter
Kim Hooker, Senior Architect, Parkhill (via Zoom)
Rene Porter, Interpreter
Rod Rodriguez, Security
Shannon Stuteville, Executive Assistant to the President
Shane Taiclet, District Director of Administrative Services
Jan Thomas, Partner, Logan, Thomas and Johnson LLC (via Zoom)
Rebecca Villaneuva, District Research and Reporting Officer
Mark Willis, Executive Director, Big Spring Economic Development Corporation
Allen Wood, Information Security Officer, Columbia Advisory Group (via Zoom)

The Board of Trustees of the Howard County Junior College District met for a training session, Executive Session, and Regular Meeting in the Board Room of the Student Union Building at Howard College on Monday, January 27, 2025.

Chairman Dr. John Freeman called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. Immediately afterward, the Board moved into a training session on Carver's Policy Governance Model. Dr. Sparks led Trustees and select members of the Executive Cabinet through a discussion and presentation on the model, explaining that Howard College had been a pioneer in adopting it in the early 1990s. She noted that the model was instituted to create a governance system focused on mission-driven outcomes and strategic leadership.

The training session covered key principles of the model, clarified the roles of board members and the President, and reviewed the organization of the Board Handbook and the rationale behind board meeting agendas. Following the training, the Board moved into an Executive Session at 9:35 a.m. to discuss a tax abatement request, the Information Technology Security Report, the Board Self Evaluation, and personnel matters. Upon concluding the Executive Session, the Board recessed for lunch.

The training session was open to the public in the Board Room of the Student Union Building at Howard College. The regular meeting was open to the public in the Board Room of the Student Union Building at Howard College and accessible online via Zoom. The regular meeting was recorded and will be available on the website, along with the minutes.

Dr. Freeman reconvened the meeting at 12:34 p.m. Mr. Barr led the invocation.

Dr. Freeman welcomed any communication to the Board but there was no one in attendance to provide comments.

Next, Trustees considered routine matters including the minutes from the December 16, 2024, Regular Meeting; the Financials for December 2024, monthly reports of auxiliary services, and personnel matters, and an internal audit report. Mr. Zeichick made a motion to approve the routine matters as presented. Mr. Barr seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Trustees then moved to New Business.

Next, Trustees considered a tax abatement request from Samsung. Mark Willis, Executive Director of the Big Spring Economic Development Corporation, gave a brief update on the request, which had been discussed in the executive session. He noted that the County had already approved an abatement for the project. He recommended a 100% abatement in year one and a 70% abatement in years two through five. The abatement request was for a battery storage facility. Mr. Barr made a motion to approve the abatement request as presented. Mr. Morgan seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Dr. Freeman determined to move certain agenda items up so that invited guests could make presentations.

Next, trustees considered the financial audit report. Jan Thomas of Thomas, Logan, and Johnson presented the financial audit via Zoom, confirming a clean opinion with no findings or internal control issues. She commended Howard College's strong financial management and accountability.

Key takeaways included a \$22.7 million unrestricted net position, a \$5.3 million net income driven by increased state appropriations and property tax revenue, and a healthy ratio of \$38 million in assets to \$8 million in liabilities. The audit also confirmed that Howard College has no excessive debt.

The single audit, focused on student financial aid, revealed no issues, with the program praised for its excellent management. Jan highlighted the leadership's supportive and responsible tone, reflecting the college's strong financial health.

Mr. Morgan made a motion to approve the financial audit as presented. Dr. Beck seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, trustees considered the Corrective Action Plan that was a result of the THECB Audit over the Office of Civil Rights requirements earlier in the year. Kim Hooker of Parkhill joined the board meeting via Zoom to provide an update on the Corrective Action Plan. She explained that this type of audit is conducted for two community colleges per year, meaning it only occurs at Howard College approximately once every 25 years. Kim focused on the accessibility aspects of the audit, and a final report from Dr. Patridge is expected within the next month or two.

Kim explained that Howard College contacted Parkhill to respond to the audit request from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). The resulting report includes a Corrective Action Plan (CAP), which is required under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The CAP is designed to identify where accessibility barriers exist and provide an opinion of probable cost (OPC) for addressing those barriers. This plan ensures accessibility improvements can be incorporated into the college's master plan and used for strategic decision-making. Kim emphasized that the ADA requires such planning, and THECB serves as the local oversight organization for compliance.

The CAP was developed by a team of civil engineers and specialists. For each finding, the team provided a reasonable correction and an associated OPC. These findings are now documented in a database, which can be updated every four years as necessary. This process allows Howard College to build on its initial investment by keeping the report current over time.

Kim noted that the team observed a high level of care and stewardship at Howard College. Despite the aging infrastructure, the facilities were clean, tidy, and well-maintained, leaving a positive impression. The audit revealed a total estimated cost of \$3.35 million for all recommended corrections, which include:

Category 1: \$10,000 (immediate issues)

Category 2: \$40,000 (short-term issues)

Category 3: \$3.3 million (long-term corrections)

Dr. Sparks related that she had already reviewed the lengthy document and signed it. She highlighted that the CAP will serve as a valuable tool for Fabian to incorporate into the deferred maintenance plan. Moving forward, the plan allows the college to address accessibility issues gradually, as funds become available. The CAP also provides evidence of the college's good-faith efforts to comply with ADA requirements.

Mr. Zeichick made a motion to approve the Office of Civil Rights Corrective Action Plan for facilities as presented. Mr. Morgan seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Eric Hansen provided an update on the Student Information Systems implementation and related projects, highlighting the progress of the CAMS conversion. While the system is functioning well overall, the team continues to work on reporting, developing custom processes, and addressing integrations and corrections. Efforts are also ongoing to validate and correct historical data and establish standard reporting. Dr. Amy Burchett noted that the system has been successfully integrated into advising and praised Eric and his team for their excellent work.

Next, Trustees considered a resolution expressing gratitude to the Dora Roberts Foundation for their grant of \$224,000. The grant includes funding for two Nursing Chair positions at \$124,000; \$55,000 for Open Roads Promise scholarships; and \$45,000 for Rodeo Arena infrastructure improvements. Howard College remains deeply appreciative of this strong and generous partnership.

Mr. Barr made a motion to approve the resolution. Mr. Zeichick seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Dr. Sparks provided an update on the FCI Program, noting the challenges posed by COVID-19 and the new funding model. To support the program during transitions in instructional delivery, \$250,000 was previously allocated. Positive outcomes are emerging, though concerns remain about funding flow.

Over the past four years, Howard College has maintained consistent communication with the FCI, which has been cooperative. FCI recently secured funding to operate the program for the next two months, covering salaries during the ongoing transition. Meetings with FCI and faculty last week confirmed continued progress.

Dr. Sparks emphasized the importance of the partnership. In response to a question about sustainability, she expressed cautious optimism, stating the program appears on track to be self-sustaining under the new funding model, though demographic shifts remain uncertain.

Next, Trustees considered the creation of a new Aviation Mechanic Program position. This decision follows two to three years of collaboration with the San Angelo community, driven by the success of the pilot training program at Angelo State University and the identified need for an aviation mechanic program. Dr. Sparks emphasized the importance of local support for such initiatives, as the San Angelo campus does not have a tax base to rely on. Encouragingly, an anonymous donor has come forward to fund the position. The recommendation for this new position marks a significant step forward in meeting community needs and expanding educational opportunities. Mr. Barr made a motion to approve the new position. Mr. Marquez seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Trustees received a report on initial spring enrollment, marking a shift to an earlier reporting schedule. Dr. Sparks explained that typically, enrollment numbers would be certified before being presented, but this new approach provides an early snapshot before the preliminary report is submitted to the state.

While enrollment figures appear concerning, much of the variance stemmed from changes in dual credit reporting last Fall 2023 and Spring 2024. In San Angelo, a significant portion of dual credit enrollment was reported later, making it seem as though there was a sharp decline. The actual decrease for the San Angelo campus was closer to 12%.

A discussion followed about enrollment trends, particularly the impact of dual credit on traditional freshman enrollment. Concerns were raised about whether an increased focus on dual credit might be affecting the overall college experience and revenue generation for the institution. Dr. Sparks and Dr. Burchett explained that Howard College ensures that dual credit courses maintain college-level rigor, whether taught by credentialed adjuncts or faculty, and continues to analyze revenue implications under the new funding model. They also discussed efforts to help school districts understand the value of clear educational pathways and workforce training programs.

Next, Dr. Amy Burchett provided an update on the 8-week implementation, building on a presentation from last March (see attached). Brad Keller shared positive news, noting that net changes in student success year-to-year

align with trends at comparable institutions. Students are succeeding at higher rates, with a 14-point improvement in grades, fewer failures, and reduced withdrawals.

The success of the 8-week implementation is evident in improved student outcomes and a rise in key success metrics, which should lead to increased funding under the new funding model. Although the data reflects only one year of implementation, similar results have been seen at other schools. Financial aid outcomes were notably positive, with a marked improvement in Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and a \$182,000 increase in Pell grant distribution.

Next, Trustees considered RFP #24-007 for Commercial Management Systems. Mr. Zeichick made a motion to approve the RFP. Mr. Marquez seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Trustees considered the recommended purchase of services related to the Continuity of Operations Plan. Steve Smith explained that the purchase would be completed under an interlocal agreement and was a one-time expense. Trustees had been briefed on the plan in the executive session by Eric Hansen, Fabian Serrano, and Allen Wood. Mr. Morgan made a motion to approve the purchase. Mr. Marquez seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Trustees considered handbook and catalog changes, including a revision to the nepotism policy. In addition to the policy required by law the update extends local guidelines to include teaching and overseeing students who are relatives in prohibited categories. While managing this in a small college setting is challenging, the updated local policy aims to address potential conflicts upfront and ensure that, in the event of a conflict, a family member will be removed from the situation and replaced with someone else. Other changes to the catalog included updates to international admissions and adjustments to assessment processes to ensure compliance with the law. Dr. Beck made a motion to approve the changes. Mr. Zeichick seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Fabian Serrano gave Trustees updates on several construction/renovation projects. The audiovisual project for the boardroom is expected to be completed between February 10-21. The Coliseum Air Handling Units (AHUs) should arrive on February 24 and will be stored until installation during spring break. Most of the transformer installation went smoothly, except for the Science building, where concerns about wiring size are being addressed with Parkhill. A temporary heating system is in place in the Coliseum. Duct work is needed, with some collapsed ducts needing to be replaced based on the electrician's observation. Dr. Sparks indicated she would proceed with the authority given to her to keep the project moving and report back. A meeting with Parkhill, Smith, and Cooper; and contractor Bosworth was scheduled for the next day to determine a plan.

For the baseball fence, two quotes have been received, with two more expected. The dugouts are being redone after poor-quality work was initially done. The softball field house has only one quote so far, with meetings scheduled for more bids. The SWCD Activity Center floor was completed earlier this month, and the residence halls at SWCD are nearly finished, with students already moved in. Finally, the Dental Lab Technology classroom project is still being worked on with input from the architect needed, with further details to be shared at the next meeting.

Next, Dr. Sparks discussed upcoming events and recognitions. Tuesday at 4:00 p.m., there will be a soft opening for the new floor at SWCD, followed by a mental health speaker for both students and the public at 6:30 pm. On Wednesday, a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the San Angelo Police Academy will take place at 2:00 pm, and on Thursday, Howard College will host the Chamber Banquet in the Coliseum.

She continued that next week, there will be a flurry of activity in Austin, including Community College Day at the Capitol on Monday and Howard County Day at the Capitol on Wednesday and Thursday. Budget hearings for community colleges may begin as early as Thursday, February 6th.

Athletic events are continuing, and the next Board Meeting is scheduled for February 24th. Dr. Sparks also noted the upcoming Meet the Hawks event later in the spring and highlighted that the different campuses have varying dates for spring break. The next board meeting after that will take place on March 24th.

In terms of recognitions, Dr. Sparks expressed pride in the Music students, who had been recognized in the All-State Choir and Band. Additionally, Jeri Farmer had notified Dr. Sparks about exciting news. In the Dental Hygiene Department, four clinicians have completed their certification in local anesthesia. They are now working on developing curriculum to offer this certification to students as well as local practitioners, giving them the opportunity to gain an additional credential in the field.

Next, Dr. Sparks provided a recap of the Howard County Leadership Summit, where several Trustees were able to participate. Howard College provided attendees with handouts outlining HC's legislative priorities. Dr. Sparks also provided an update on the legislative session, noting that state legislators had recently released the budgets for each chamber, with the process expected to evolve as the session progresses. While the initial budget request for community colleges has been included, supplemental funding will be addressed early in the session. SouthWest College for the Deaf (SWCD) is listed as a non-revenue special item in the state budget and received the same funding as last year in the initial release. Howard College had requested an increase due to several years without funding hikes. Dr. Sparks emphasized that while stable funding is a positive starting point, it will require extra effort to secure the necessary additional funding through the exceptional item. She also outlined how the process may continue moving forward.

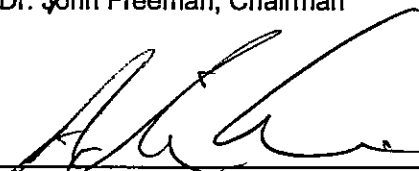
Next, trustees considered a resolution in support of continued investment in the dynamic community college funding model and SWCD exceptional funding. A copy of the resolution will be provided to Howard College's state legislators in both the House and Senate. Mr. Zeichick made a motion to approve the resolution as presented. Mr. Barr seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Dr. Sparks noted that Community College Day at the Capitol/February 2-3, 2025, and Howard County Day at the Capitol/February 5-6, 2025, had been addressed earlier in the meeting.

There being no other business, Trustees adjourned at 3:00 p.m.



Dr. John Freeman, Chairman



Adrian Calvio, Secretary
by Brenda Madore

The Board of Trustees of the Howard County Junior College District met for an executive session and regular meeting in the Auditorium of the Maddux Student Union Building on the SouthWest College of the Deaf campus on Monday, December 16, 2024.

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

Dr. John Freeman, Chairman
Adrian Calvio, Secretary
Dr. Marisha Beck
Raul Marquez (Executive Session by Zoom, in-person for Regular Meeting)
Mark Morgan
Ben Zeichick

Dr. Cheryl T. Sparks, Ed.D., President
Dr. Amy Burchett, Ed.D., Executive Vice-President
Jeff Anderson, 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 (by phone)
Brad Keller, Chief Institutional Research Officer
Laurie Kincannon, Chief Human Resources Officer
Dr. Brenda Madore, Ed.D., Chief of Staff/Institutional Advancement Officer - recorder
Fabian Serrano, Chief Operations and Safety/Security Officer
Cindy Smith, Chief Student Success/Public Information Officer
Steve Smith, Chief Business Officer/Internal Auditor

Others present were:

Stephanie Bissonette, Interpreter
Luci Gabehart, Dean of Health Professions
Rene Porter, Interpreter
Rod Rodriguez, Security
Shannon Stuteville, Executive Assistant to the President

Chairman Dr. John Freeman called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m. Immediately after calling the meeting to order, the Board moved into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. The regular meeting was open to the public in the Auditorium of the Maddux Student Center on the SWCD Campus and through remote connection utilizing a toll-free number. The meeting was recorded and will be available on the website. Minutes will also be available on the website. Upon conclusion of the Executive Session, the Board recessed for lunch.

As part of this meeting, Trustees, members of the Cabinet, and special guests participated in the annual Christmas luncheon.

Dr. Freeman reconvened the meeting at 12:46 p.m. Mr. Calvio led the invocation.

Next, Dr. Freeman noted that there were no guests in attendance.

Next, Dr. Freeman welcomed any communication to the Board, but there was no one in attendance to provide comments.

Next, Trustees considered routine matters including the minutes from the November 18, 2024, Executive Session/Regular Meeting and Special Meeting held on December 4, 2024; the Checklist for November 2024, monthly reports of auxiliary services, and personnel matters. Mr. Zeichick made a motion to approve the routine matters. Mr. Marquez seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Trustees then moved to New Business.

Next, Trustees considered a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of San Angelo. Dr. Sparks shared an update regarding active negotiations with the City to house the police academy on the college campus. Plans are ready to move forward with the project officially beginning in January. Pam Callan and her team are coordinating logistics, while Eric Hansen is ensuring IT support. A ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held in the spring to celebrate this collaboration. Mr. Zeichick made a motion to approve the MOU. Mr. Morgan seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Trustees considered a resolution thanking partner school board trustees for their service. Dr. Sparks shared that January is the Texas Education Agency's recognition month for school board trustees. The resolution will be sent to partner Independent School Districts.

Next, Trustees considered a new full-time Emergency Medical Services (EMS/Nursing) program position. Dr. Sparks explained the need to transition a part-time employee to full-time status, detailing the evolution of the EMT program and its strategic alignment across campuses. The program will now be centralized in Big Spring, with EMT basic classes starting in Lamesa in fall 2025, alongside the bridge program from EMS to Nursing. Mr. Zeichick made a motion to approve the position. Mr. Marquez seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, under Performance Measures/Outcomes, Dr. Sparks presented certified enrollment numbers showing an overall increase of 26%, highlighting specific increases at each campus and discussing the data nuances.

Next, Dr. Sparks introduced the Quick Facts report, providing metrics for each campus and the district. The report supports stakeholders such as legislators, donors, and accrediting bodies and emphasizes transparency in funding and short-term credentials development.

Next, Trustees considered the revised annual investment report. Brenda Claxton noted a minor addition made at the auditors' request. Mr. Calvio made a motion to approve the report. Mr. Morgan seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, under Monitoring, Trustees received updates and considered reaffirming approval on ongoing projects:

- Big Spring Softball Field House: Fabian Serrano is finalizing plans.
- Big Spring Baseball Field Fence and Dugouts: Input is being gathered; dugouts are nearly complete.
- SWCD Activity Center Floor: Resurfacing will begin before Christmas with new graphics and logo.
- SWCD Maddux Student Center Replacement Air Conditioning Units: Purchased through an interlocal agreement and exceeds \$50,000.

Mr. Calvio made a motion to reaffirm approval of the ongoing projects as presented. Mr. Marquez seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Trustees considered updates to the Handbook and Catalog. Dr. Amy Burchett discussed adjustments, including an electrical toolkit fee and state-mandated changes. Mr. Zeichick made a motion to approve the updates as presented. Mr. Marquez seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Trustees were updated on construction and renovation projects:

- Audio Visual Upgrade for Board Room & Tumbleweed Room: On track for January completion.
- Coliseum Restoration: Restoration from the water heater leak is nearly complete.
- Big Spring Campus/Coliseum Air Handling Units (AHU) and Transformers: Transformer replacement is progressing; AHUs are on track for February delivery.
- SWCD Residence Hall: On track for mid-January completion.

Next, Trustees were updated on recent audits. Brenda Claxton reported minor questions easily addressed by the team.

Next, Dr. Sparks reviewed the Board calendar, highlighting significant events such as the Howard County Summit on January 15 and Community College Day at the Capitol on February 2-3. Approval was granted for early staff

release on December 20, with Lamesa campus staff concluding at 5:00 the rest of the week due to their different campus work schedule. The new semester begins January 13, 2025.

Next, Dr. Sparks recognized achievements:

- Men's and Women's Basketball coaches celebrated 100 career wins.
- The Theater Department's successful production of "A Tuna Christmas."

Next, Dr. Sparks provided updates on upcoming legislative and general events:


- Howard County Summit (January 15, 2025)
- Community College Day at the Capitol (February 2-3, 2025)
- Howard County Day at the Capitol (February 5-6, 2025)

Next, Dr. Sparks discussed Board training opportunities, encouraging Trustees to confirm interest in attendance for the Board of Trustees Institute in Austin (February 27-28, 2025).

Next, Trustees were given opportunity to share knowledge from the 2024 Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) Annual Congress in Seattle.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 2:31 p.m.



Dr. John Freeman, Chairman

Adrian Calvio, Secretary
By Brenda Madore