

The Board of Trustees of the Howard County Junior College District met for an executive session and regular meeting in the Board Room of the Student Union Building on the Big Spring campus on Monday, May 19, 2025.

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

Dr. John Freeman, Chairman
Maxwell Barr, Vice-Chairman
Adrian Calvio, Secretary
Mark Morgan
Dr. Marisha Beck (Executive Session: in person; Zoom: Regular Meeting)
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 (via Zoom)
Dr. Hanna Carter, Chief High School Partnerships Officer
Monica Castro, Provost, Lamesa
Brenda Claxton, Chief Fiscal Officer/Controller
Eric Hansen, Chief Technology Systems/Data Security 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
Robert Creswell, Security
Phil Furqueron, Architect
Dee Lindsey, Campus Dean of Workforce Development/Big Spring
Andreia Medlin, Coliseum Event & Mailroom Delivery Coordinator/Big Spring Campus Reporter
Renee Porter, Interpreter
Shannon Stuteville, Executive Assistant to the President
Shane Taiclet, District Director of Administrative Services (via Zoom)

At the request of President John Freeman, Vice-Chair Maxwell Barr called the meeting to order at 11:09 a.m. Immediately after, the Board moved into an Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. Upon concluding the Executive Session at 11:49 a.m., the Board recessed for lunch. 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 meeting was recorded and will be available on the website, along with the minutes.

Mr. Barr reconvened the meeting at 12:40 p.m. Dr. Hanna Carter was welcomed as the new Chief High School Partnerships Officer. Mr. Barr then led the invocation.

Mr. Barr welcomed any communication to the Board but there were no comments.

Next, Trustees considered routine matters including the minutes from the April 28, 2025, Regular Meeting; the Financials for April 2025, monthly reports of auxiliary services, personnel matters, and an internal audit report. Mr. Zeichick made a motion to approve the routine matters as presented. Dr. Freeman seconded the motion. All Trustees voted in favor of the motion.

Trustees then moved to New Business.

Next, Dr. Sparks shared that the San Angelo Focus Meeting has been rescheduled from June 12 to September 11 to align with the launch of the Aviation Mechanics Program. She also announced the upcoming opening of a campus café in San Angelo operated by Great Western Dining, which will not be added as an addendum to the existing contract but handled as a concession.

Next, Jeff Anderson, Provost of SWCD, provided a summary of the SWCD Advisory Council meeting. He noted that in the meeting Dr. Sparks delivered a legislative update and discussed the request for increased state funding, citing no increases over the past eight years. The council reviewed renovation needs underway, enrollment and student services updates, and emphasized the urgency of updating recruitment strategies. Priorities discussed also included filling the recruiter position, targeting students not accepted to Gallaudet or NTID, developing an entrepreneurship program, online course offerings, mentorship, micro-credentials, and addressing student needs such as transportation.

Next, Dee Lindsey presented an overview of the upcoming Oncor Lineman Training Program and Lab. The location for the utility poles needed for training students will be east of the McKinney Center. The program will launch in July with donated equipment including poles, transformers, and T-bars. An adjunct faculty member has been identified and is already working on curriculum. They are also exploring possible grant opportunities for the program.

Next, Trustees considered the Quarterly Investment Report. Mr. Zeichick made a motion to approve the Quarterly Investment Report as presented. Mr. Morgan seconded the motion. All Trustees voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Trustees affirmed the actions taken on the SWCD Dental Lab Technology Classroom/Lab project. Dr. Sparks reminded the Board that she had been given authority in a previous meeting to proceed with necessary changes and commencement of the project. An adjustment in the amount of \$148,398 was made as a change to an existing change order. The project is on track for completion before July 11. Dr. Freeman made a motion to affirm the actions as presented. Mr. Zeichick seconded the motion. All Trustees voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Trustees considered two interlocal agreement renewals as presented by Steve Smith: the Region 17 Education Service Center 2025–2026 West Texas Food Service Cooperative Agreement (which supports daycare food services) and the Region 18 Education Service Center Purchasing Cooperative Agreement. Mr. Morgan made a motion to approve the agreements as presented. Mr. Zeichick seconded the motion. All Trustees voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Trustees considered the purchase of the Quick Launch Multifactor Authentication product. Dr. Sparks explained that although the purchase did not exceed the threshold for board approval in a single year, the three-year total surpasses \$50,000, and was therefore brought to the Board for information. Eric Hansen described the product as a single sign-on portal that will streamline account access for students and address known issues, including access concerns for dual credit students in schools with no-phone policies. Dr. Freeman made a motion to approve the agreements as presented. Mr. Barr seconded the motion. All Trustees voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Trustees considered handbook and catalog changes. Dr. Amy Burchett noted that the catalog was in process of being audited in preparation for the new academic year. Updates presented to Trustees reflected compliance with state and federal guidelines, expanded curriculum options, and revisions to the Associate of Arts in Teaching program in line with statewide changes. Dr. Sparks added that full catalog reaffirmation will be presented next month. Mr. Zeichick made a motion to approve the handbook and catalog changes as presented. Dr. Freeman seconded the motion. All Trustees voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Trustees considered the addition of three new positions to the current year's budget. These include a full-time, non-exempt bus driver due to challenges in hiring CDL drivers; a new position to support growth in the health professions area in Big Spring, offset by grant funds in the nursing program; and a second music instructor, relieving Mark Watt who has been covering both roles in choir and band. Additionally, Dr. Sparks informed Trustees that the college is working to reinstate the art instructor position in the next budget cycle. Mr. Zeichick made a motion to approve the new positions as presented. Mr. Morgan seconded the motion. All Trustees voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Trustees received updates on several construction and renovation projects. Phil Furqueron and Fabian Serrano presented plans for the Big Spring Softball Field House. The new structure will be located in the same area as the previous building, reoriented in a north-south direction. Dr. Sparks then discussed the need/requirements for padding and signage at both the baseball and softball fields. It had been determined that only the hard surfaces at the softball field require padding, while the baseball field will feature graphic enhancements.

Dr. Sparks also noted that the Board had toured the dorms in the fall and discussed renovation needs in high-touch areas. Dorm renovations will be included in the same construction package as the Softball Field House that will be released for bid.

The McKinney Center for Career Technical Education was also discussed. The building is in need of significant updates and has been used for storage in some instances. Phil presented design plans featuring modular, flexible spaces that can adapt to new program needs, which includes input from faculty, staff, and the local Workforce Solutions staff. The Opinion of Probable Cost (OPC) will be completed in time for budget planning. Fabian provided an update on the Big Spring Coliseum. The engineer and Bosworth confirmed that all components for the HVAC control center for the new equipment have arrived and will be properly balanced in the next few days. Ventilation issues in the west end of the Coliseum are being addressed to include the women's locker room, and new ADA-compliant lockers are in development. The HVAC unit for the Coliseum East Room also had to be replaced due to lightning.

The Big Spring Rodeo Arena is upgrading pens through a grant from the Dora Roberts Foundation. Trustees also heard that several treadmills and other equipment at the Harold Davis Fitness Center, one of the college's most frequently used facilities, need replacement and will be addressed this summer.

The relocation of the Vietnam Memorial from the SWCD campus was discussed. The memorial will be moved to Hangar 25, and the original site will be restored based on a local effort of veterans and family members of veterans.

Dr. Sparks requested approval from the Board to proceed with all ongoing projects utilizing existing, donated, and grant monies, citing that the current schedule of Board meetings may delay progress if additional approvals are needed. Dr. Sparks will update at each Board Meeting. Mr. Zeichick made a motion to give authority to Dr. Sparks to proceed with all ongoing projects as presented. Dr. Freeman seconded the motion. All Trustees voted in favor of the motion.

Next, Dr. Sparks provided an update on upcoming activities as part of the President's Report, including the San Angelo pinning ceremonies and graduation, the Scenic Mountain Medical Center 50th anniversary celebration, summer hours, and the sendoff for rodeo student Jeryn Ellerd. The West Texas Legislative Summit and the Board planning workshop are also upcoming. Dr. Sparks also shared that The San Angelo building plumbing and electrical program had been recognized by Lowe's as a top performer grantee.

Next, Dr. Sparks provided a legislative update, noting that the session is two weeks away from sine die. The state budget remains in conference committee, and the College continues to advocate for community college funding, including additional support for SWCD. She shared that the cleanup bill for House Bill 8 has advanced to the governor's desk. In addition, a bill concerning limitations on remote instruction is being closely monitored.

Next, Trustees were pleased to hear that the required cybersecurity training for the Board will be a new 30-minute video version. The deadline is July 30, and completions will be recorded in the Board minutes at the June 23 and July 30 meeting.

There being no other business, Trustees adjourned at 2:00 p.m.



Dr. John Freeman, Chairman



Adrian Calvio, Secretary
by Dr. Brenda Madore