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Jesús Roberto Rodríguez, Ph.D.

**TEXAS SOUTHMOST COLLEGE DISTRICT**

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees

**November 18, 2021**

The Board of Trustees of the Texas Southmost College District convened in open session on November 18, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. Board Members present were Mr. Ruben Herrera, Chair; Dr. Tony Zavaleta, Vice Chair; Ms. Eva Alejandro, Secretary; Mrs. Adela Garza; Ms. Alejandra Aldrete; Mrs. Delia Saenz; and Mr. J.J. De Leon. Also present was Dr. Jesús Roberto Rodríguez, President of Texas Southmost College.

**REGULAR MEETING  
AGENDA**

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Herrera at 5:30 p.m. He called role and confirmed a quorum.

**2. Pledges of Allegiance**

Vice Chair Zavaleta led the United States Pledge of Allegiance and the Texas Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. Public Comment**

Chair Herrera asked if there were any speakers signed up for public comment. There were no public speakers.

**4. President's Report**

Chair Herrera called on President Rodríguez to give his report.

**TASA Award**

TSC Fine Arts Instructor Robert Andes won second place in the Texas Association of Schools of Art virtual art exhibition for his painting titled, *A Sense of Silent Contemplation*. His submission was one of 80 pieces that were submitted for the virtual exhibition, *Unmasked 2021: A Virtual Exhibit of Texas Art Faculty*. This follows Mr. Andes' third-place win last year for his photograph titled, *Santa Fe Woman*. President Rodríguez congratulated Mr. Andes for the recognition of his work and his dedication to our students.

**Respiratory Care Site Visit**

The Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care has approved scheduling for an on-site review for TSC's Respiratory Care program in 2022, following their review of the self-study report prepared by TSC Dean of Health Professions, Dr. David Pearse, and TSC Respiratory Care program director, Mr. Isidro Ramirez. President Rodríguez congratulated Dr. Pearse, Mr. Ramirez, and their teams for their work in preparing the report and advancing the Respiratory Care program in the reaccreditation process.

**Haunted House Drive Thru**

On October 29, TSC held a Haunted House Drive-Thru around the TSC Main Campus for students, faculty, staff, and community members. During the event attendees drove to six different campus stations and were treated to a goody bag at the end of the tour. It was a great turnout with 861 people participating in the event. President Rodríguez recognized Trustee Alejandra Aldrete for participating in the event and supporting our students.

**Día de los Muertos**

TSC celebrated the cultural tradition of Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, on November 2. President Rodríguez, Chair Herrera, Past Chair Garza, Trustee Aldrete, and Trustee Saenz participated in the event. The celebration featured presentations by TSC students as well as 21st Century Community Learning Center middle school and high school students. President Rodríguez thanked Sociology Instructor Dr. Leslie Meyer, her students, and the Divisions of Humanities and Student Services for keeping this tradition alive and celebrating the culture of our communities.

**RGV Partnership**

President Rodríguez participated in the RGV Partnership annual golf tournament on November 5, which raises money for scholarships to support Rio Grande Valley students. TSC was able to match scholarship funding donated to the college with scholarship funds from Workforce Solutions and the TSC Foundation.

**Harlingen CISD coin toss**

President Rodríguez participated in the coin toss for the Harlingen Cardinals vs. Brownsville Hanna Eagles football game on Friday, November 5 at Harlingen's Boggus Stadium. TSC Student Services staff also manned a recruitment booth during the game to connect with prospective students and their parents.

**BISD and Paragon VTOL Aerospace**

President Rodríguez participated in an industry workshop at BISD with Paragon VTOL Aerospace and other Brownsville leaders. He spoke to 600 students from grades 8 to 11 during the event at the Brownsville Events Center on November 9. The event received excellent media coverage, including a front page article in *The Brownsville Herald*.

**Autumn Mental Health Awareness Conference**

TSC's Autumn Mental Health Awareness Conference was held November 10. Students attended the free conference to gain mental health awareness, discover resources, and learn how to manage the stresses of daily life. President Rodríguez thanked Secretary Alejandro and Trustee Saenz for participating in the event.

**Veterans Day**

TSC honored the brave men and women of the U.S. armed forces during a Veterans Day Ceremony on November 11 at the TSC Performing Arts Center. The event featured Associate Vice President of Operations, Mr. Jaime Salazar, as the keynote speaker. President Rodríguez thanked Past Chair Garza for participating and speaking about her family's military service.

**Region One GEAR UP Institute**

Associate Vice President of Instruction, Dr. Angelica Fuentes, participated as a panelist for the Region One GEAR UP Building Leadership for College and Readiness Institute on November 12. Dr. Fuentes shared information about the efforts institutions of higher education are making to ensure students are successful in their postsecondary pursuits, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Photos for Virtual Graduation Participants**

TSC alumni who graduated during TSC's virtual commencement ceremonies during 2020 were invited to campus to take official photos in their regalia on Friday, November 12 -13 at the Jacob Brown Auditorium. President Rodríguez thanked the Student Services Division for suggesting and coordinating the event, as well as the Media services team for preparing the stage and lighting.

**Faculty/Staff Softball Tournament**

TSC employees took part in a round robin softball tournament on Saturday, November 13. The Student Services team dominated the tournament, defeating the teams from Facilities and Humanities, and Vice President Luis Villarreal was named MVP. President Rodríguez reported that, fortunately, no one was injured and all were able to report to work on Monday.

**Higher Education Entrepreneurial Success Stories**

Vice President of Instruction Dr. Joanna Kile has been invited to be included in a book titled *Higher Education Entrepreneurial Success Stories*. The author, Mary Darden, will conduct a series of interviews with Dr. Kile in December. President Rodríguez congratulated Dr. Kile for being recognized for her work, and expressed thanks for her dedication and leadership in building TSC's instructional division.

**Fall 2021 Commencement**

TSC's Fall 2021 Commencement ceremony will be held Saturday, December 11 at the Jacob Brown Auditorium. Due to the number of graduates, the college will hold two ceremonies, one at 10:00 am and the other at 2:00 pm. Brownsville native and TSC alumnus Mr. Jose Borjon will serve as the commencement speaker. He is a Senior Policy Advisor for Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP in Washington DC and has 12 years of experience on Capitol Hill having worked in the offices of many Texas elected officials including Congressmen Vicente Gonzalez, Filemon Vela, Pete Gallegos, Silvestre Reyes, Henry Cuellar, and Solomon Ortiz.

**95th Anniversary**

TSC's 95th Anniversary kickoff event, held October 30 at the TSC Performing Arts Center, was a great success. President Rodríguez said it was a spectacular evening for community members, students, faculty, and staff. He noted the feedback received from guests was very positive with participants enjoying the food, giveaways, entertainment, and dazzling fireworks display. Following a video recap of the event, President Rodríguez expressed thanks to the Board of Trustees for their strong support for the event.

**Department of Education update**

President Rodríguez called on Mr. Luis Villarreal, Vice President for Information Technology and Interim Vice President for Student Services to provide an update on the Department of Education desk review.

Mr. Villarreal reported on the U.S. Department of Education's program review of financial aid systems and processes, as well as the college's distribution of approximately \$14 million in financial aid each year. TSC received the DOE's initial report in September 2020 and has been working collaboratively to address items raised in the report. The college has submitted an appeal to DOE regarding the amount owed back to the DOE, based on internal reconciliations. The amount owed to DOE is less than previously reported which prompted the appeal process.

**Studies in Brownsville History**

Vice Chair Zavaleta presented the board with copies of the 18<sup>th</sup> volume of *Studies of Brownsville History*. The project began in the 1980s. It is the longest running Texas history project in the state. He said the team has started soliciting articles for the next volume.

To conclude his report, President Rodríguez thanked the Board for their continued support and commitment to the college, students and community, and he thanked the faculty and staff for their dedicated work throughout the fall semester.

**5. Consideration and possible action on the minutes of the following meetings:****a. Regular Meeting – October 21, 2021**

Vice Chair Zavaleta made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting on October 21, 2021. Secretary Alejandro seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

**b. Special Meeting – October 27, 2021**

Past Chair Garza made a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting on October 27, 2021. Secretary Alejandro seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

**6. Academic Committee**

Chair Herrera called on Trustee De Leon to present the report.

**a. Consideration and possible action to approve an amended Clinical Affiliation Agreement with Doctors Hospital at Renaissance**

Dr. Joanna Kile, Vice President of Instruction, and Dr. David R. Pearse, Dean of Health Professions, were called upon to present the item. Dr. Kile said the proposed amendment to the clinical affiliation agreement adds a paragraph indicating students may be required to provide personal protection equipment to participate in clinicals during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

**A motion was made by Trustee De Leon to approve the Clinical Affiliation Agreement amendment with Doctors Hospital at Renaissance for the Health Professions Programs and authorize President Rodríguez to sign the agreement. Past Chair Garza seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.**

## **7. Finance Committee**

Chair Herrera called on Past Chair Garza to present the report.

### **a. Monthly Financial Statement Report for the month ended September 30, 2021**

Dr. Gisela Figueroa, Vice President of Finance and Administration, was called upon to present the agenda item. She introduced Mr. Carlos Pecero, Controller, who presented the monthly financial statement report for the month ended September 30, 2021.

The item was for information only. No action was taken.

### **b. Update on grants awarded to Texas Southmost College for the month of October 2021**

Dr. Gisela Figueroa, Vice President of Finance and Administration, was called upon to present the item. Dr. Figueroa reported on the grants awarded to Texas Southmost College for the month of October 2021, as well as all grants awarded during the current fiscal year.

The item was for information only. No action was taken.

### **c. All Institutional CARES expenditures report**

Dr. Gisela Figueroa, Vice President of Finance and Administration, was called on to present the item. She reported on new institutional CARES grant fund expenditures.

The item was for information only. No action was taken.

### **d. Consideration and possible action on passing resolution to vote on position eight (8) of the Cameron Appraisal District Board of Directors**

Chair Herrera called upon Mr. Ruben Pena, Legal Counsel, to present the item. Mr. Pena reviewed the process for entities eligible to vote for the board position. Mr. Pena presented the following resolution to the Board to register the Board's vote for the current position:

**RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the Texas Southmost College District along with seven (7) other schools districts in Cameron County is represented by one (1) board member sitting as position eight (8) on the Cameron Appraisal District Board of Directors; and

**WHEREAS**, each of the eight (8) school districts represented by this director shall have the opportunity to **VOTE** for the representative of its choice for the period commencing January 2022; and

**WHEREAS**, the candidate receiving the greatest number of votes will hold director position eight (8);

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, this the 18th day of November, 2021 that the Board of Trustees of the Texas Southmost College District do hereby cast our **VOTE** for Mrs. Adela Garza to hold position eight (8) of the Cameron Appraisal District Board of Directors.

**APPROVED AND ADOPTED** this the 18th Day of November, 2021.

Ruben Herrera, J.D.  
Chair, Board of Trustees

Eva Alejandro  
Secretary, Board of Trustees

The board engaged in a discussion of the college's voting category and the election process.

**A motion was made by Chair Herrera to approve resolution to vote Ms. Adela Garza for position eight (8) of the Cameron Appraisal District Board of Directors. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Zavaleta and carried unanimously.**

**8. Student Services Committee**

Chair Herrera called on Vice Chair Zavaleta to present the report.

**a. Intramural Programs and Health and Wellness Report**

Mr. Luis Villarreal, Vice President of Information Technology and Interim Vice President of Student Services, was called on to present the item. He provided an update of TSC's intramurals and wellness programs, which included a review of Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 sports. He also presented data and lessons learned for best practices regarding the college's virtual events and webinars.

The item was for information only. No action was taken.

## 9. Facilities Committee

Chair Herrera called on Trustee Saenz to present the report.

### a. Consideration and possible action on award RFP 22-03 for "Theatrical Equipment Replacement"

Dr. Gisela Figueroa, Vice President of Finance and Administration, was called on to present the item. Dr. Figueroa said that the scope of work in the RFP is to furnish and install new counterweight rigging and motors for lighting battens at the Jacob Brown Auditorium and stage and acoustic curtain tracks for the Performing Arts Center at Texas Southmost College to enhance the facilities' safety. Dr. Figueroa reviewed the RFP timeline, equipment inspection findings, the scope of work, pricing tabulation, review criteria, and budget and financial impact. The college received a proposal from one qualified applicant.

The board engaged in a discussion of the current scope of work as well as past theatrical equipment replacements.

**Trustee Saenz made a motion to award RFP 22-03 for "Theatrical Equipment Replacement" to Texas Scenic Company, Inc. for base proposal 1, 2, and alternate proposal in the total amount of \$640,595 and authorize President Rodriguez to execute the contract, as presented. The motion was seconded by Trustee De Leon and carried unanimously.**

### b. Consideration and possible action to approve annual contract amendment for campus custodial services through RFP- 18-05 for FY 2021-2022

Dr. Gisela Figueroa, Vice President of Finance and Administration, was called on to present the item. Dr. Figueroa said the proposed item would increase the annual contract for Marcis & Associates for the remainder of the fiscal year to fund additional employees needed for intensive cleaning and disinfecting of TSC classrooms and shared spaces. The funding for the previous contract period was decreased when the campus was engaged in remote instruction, with reduced need for cleaning services.

**Trustee Saenz made a motion to approve campus custodial services contract amendment with Marcis & Associates, Inc. for additional employees through RFP- 18-05 and authorize the President to execute the purchase order contract. The motion was seconded by Secretary Alejandro and carried unanimously.**

### c. Facilities update

Dr. Gisela Figueroa, Vice President of Finance and Administration, was called on to present the item. Dr. Figueroa reported out on the status of the JC Penny's roof repair, Dillard's roof, TSC Courtroom and Criminal Justice Program project, and emergency repairs to the thermal plant chillers.

The board also engaged in a discussion of the status of the Oliveira Student Center project.

The item was for information only. No action was taken.

**10. Policy Committee**

Chair Herrera called on Secretary Alejandro to present the report.

**a. TASB LEGAL policies Update #42**

Mr. Frank E. Perez, TSC Legal Counsel, was called on to present the item. Mr. Perez reported out on the changes to legal policies based on legislation from the 87<sup>th</sup> Regular Legislative Session, the second special session, and federal and state rulemaking authorities.

The item was for information only. No action was taken.

**11. Executive Session**

The Board convened in Executive Session at 6:41 p.m.

The Board reconvened in Open Session at 7:24 p.m.

**12. Action on Executive Session Matters****a. Consultation with Attorney on Pending or Contemplated Litigation, Section 551.071 Texas Government Code**

Past Chair Garza moved that the Board of Trustees send a letter to the Cameron County Appraisal District as discussed in executive session. The motion was seconded by Trustee Aldrete and carried unanimously.

**b. Consultation with Attorney on Pending Real Estate Issues, Section 551.072 Texas Government Code**

Trustee De Leon made a motion to accept the recommendation of administration for the naming of the law library as discussed in executive session. The motion was seconded by Trustee Saenz and carried unanimously.

**c. Deliberation on Personnel Matters, Section 551.074 Texas Government Code**

Trustee Aldrete made a motion to accept the recommendation of administration regarding the FY 2020-21 salary schedule as discussed in executive session. The motion was seconded by Trustee De Leon and carried unanimously.

**13. Announcement of Proposed Meeting Dates**

- a. Regular Board Meeting – Thursday, December 16, 2021, 5:30 p.m.**
- b. Regular Board Meeting – Thursday, January 20, 2022, 5:30 p.m.**



**14. Adjournment**

**A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Trustee Saenz. The motion was seconded by Trustee Aldrete and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:26 p.m.**



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Mr. Ruben Herrera, J.D.  
Chair, Board of Trustees



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Ms. Eva Alejandro  
Secretary, Board of Trustees

The video recording of the Regular Board of Trustees meeting held on November 18, 2021, is available on the TSC.EDU website. These minutes were taken and transcribed by Dr. Angela K. McCauley, Director of Special Instructional Projects. Videotaping of the Board of Trustees' meetings began on April 11, 1996.