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TEXAS SOUTHMOST COLLEGE DISTRICT

Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees

February 21, 2024

The Board of Trustees of the Texas Southmost College District convened in open session on February 21, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. Board Members present were Ms. Adela Garza, Chair; Mr. J.J. De Leon, Vice Chair; Ms. Alejandra Aldrete, Secretary; Mr. Ruben Herrera, Immediate Past Chair; Dr. Tony Zavaleta, Ms. Eva Alejandro; and Mrs. Delia Saenz. 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 Garza at 5:30 p.m. She called role and confirmed a quorum.

2. Pledges of Allegiance

Trustee Zavaleta led the United States Pledge of Allegiance and the Texas Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Public Comment

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

4. Chairwoman's Report

Chair Garza presented the following items:

ACCT National Legislative Summit, Washington DC

Chair Garza, Immediate Past Chair Herrera, and President Rodríguez participated in the Association of Community College Trustees' National Legislative Summit, held in Washington D.C. on February 4th-7th. The summit brings together more than 1,000 community college leaders from across the nation. Chair Garza said that TSC continues to advocate for the federal Pell grant to be extended to workforce training programs.

Brownsville Chamber Texas Talks Luncheon

Chair Garza, Vice Chair De Leon, President Rodríguez, and Mr. Richard Mesquias attended the Brownsville Chamber Texas Talks Luncheon on January 30th, during which the featured speaker was Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts Glenn Hegar.

Tax Assessor's Office Grand Opening

Chair Garza and President Rodríguez attended the Tax Assessor's Office Grand Opening on February 9th. Chair Garza said she was very pleased that more services are being brought to the Southmost community.

Principal for a Day

Chair Garza served as Principal for the Day at Brownsville Independent School District's A.X. Benavides Elementary School. She said she was very happy to spend time with the children who will be the community's next generation of leaders.

5. President's Report

Chair Garza called on President Rodríguez to present his report.

RGV ADDYs

The Texas Southmost College Marketing team earned four ADDY awards during the Rio Grande Valley American Advertising Awards ceremony, held February 15th in McAllen. The recognitions consisted of the following:

- Gold medal for *Scorpion Soccer Branding & Campaign* in the category of: Online interactive advertising & promotion – campaign
- Silver medal for *Collegiate Kindergarten Experience* in the category of: Cross platform – online interactive campaign
- Silver medal for *Collegiate Kindergarten Experience* in the category of: Film, video, and sound – television advertising
- Bronze medal for *Every Graduate Has A Story* in the category of: Film, video, and sound – internet commercial

President Rodríguez congratulated the Marketing team and all of the faculty and staff across campus, who helped develop the award-winning work.

Service to Higher Education

President Rodríguez said that service to the community, including the greater higher education community, has always been an essential part of the TSC mission. The college has been an active member of the Texas Association of Community Colleges (TACC) for the past several years, including participating on committees that provided input on the design of Texas' new community college funding model. TSC will continue to have a seat at the table, as TACC has invited President Rodríguez to serve on the Strategic Planning Subcommittee, which is responsible for developing a comprehensive three- to five-year strategic plan for the association.

In addition, President Rodríguez has been invited to serve as a member of the Directorship Committee of the National Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities. As a member of this committee, he will participate in the yearly nomination of candidates for the national Governing Board openings and the ongoing assessment of its needs and effectiveness. He said being asked to serve on these state and national committees is a testament to the extraordinary results the college has achieved under the exceptional leadership and support from the Board of Trustees, as well as the strong dedication from the faculty and staff.

TSC Legal Center Ribbon Cutting

TSC marked a major campus milestone with the ribbon cutting for the new Texas Southmost College Legal Center, held on January 25th. The college has been a regional leader in preparing the next generation of criminal justice scholars, police officers, and federal and state agents, and the faculty sought to create a cohesive space where students in the Paralegal Studies and Criminal Justice programs could gain experience in a courtroom setting. The facility consists of a courtroom, jury/conference room, a 40-seat classroom, a 20-seat classroom, and a digital Law Library. President Rodríguez recognized the stellar team that collaborated on the project, including the entire Board of Trustees; the project subcommittee, consisting of Immediate Past Chair Herrera, Chair Garza, and Trustee Saenz; lead faculty members, Dr. Kevin O'Malley and Retired U.S. Judge Felix Recio; and members of the administration and key staff who helped bring the project to fruition.

Strengthening university partnerships

Over the past month, TSC finalized two memorandums of understanding with university partners to expand higher education pathways for the communities TSC serves. The college hosted Sam Houston State University President Alisa White and her team on campus January 26th. The MOU includes a template for developing 2+2 programs for TSC students who chose to pursue a bachelor's degree. This provides maximum transferability for the credits students earn at Texas Southmost College, as well as a streamlined transfer admissions process. President Rodríguez thanked Chair Garza, Vice Chair De Leon, Secretary Aldrete, Trustee Alejandro, and Trustee Saenz for participating in the event.

TSC also signed an MOU with Texas A&M University Kingsville (TAMUK) on February 12th. The college hosted TAMUK President Robert Vela and his team on campus, as well as several VIP guests, including State Senator Morgan LaMantia. The agreement marks an expansion of the partnership with TAMUK, through additional 2+2 programs, which streamline credit transfer for TSC students who continue on to earn a bachelor's degree. The two institutions will also continue to collaborate on raising awareness of the new pathways and the opportunities to earn stackable credentials. President Rodríguez thanked Chair Garza, Vice Chair De Leon, Immediate Past Chair Herrera, Trustee Alejandro, and Trustee Saenz for participating in the event.

Leadership Brownsville

President Rodríguez met with the 39th Leadership Brownsville Class, during their session exploring local education, held on January 18th. He said that by sharing the good news happening at Texas Southmost College with our local leaders, they become knowledgeable ambassadors and great recruiters for the college.

Faculty Art Exhibit

The Faculty Art Exhibit was held February 1st in the ITECC Art Gallery. President Rodríguez said the exhibit was an excellent example of showing art's great capacity for capturing human emotion and helping the public to better understand our world. He thanked the faculty for organizing this event, as well as Vice Chair De Leon for his participation.

Binational Literary Conference

The Communication and Language department held the 22nd annual Binational Literary Conference, which is free and open to the public, on February 16th. The event brings together published authors of fiction and poetry from the Rio Grande Valley, across South Texas, and throughout Mexico. During the conference, the authors shared their literary works, discussed the process of writing, and raised awareness for the

importance of publishing and promoting Spanish-language literature. President Rodríguez thanked the faculty for organizing the event, as well as Chair Garza for her participation.

PCT Pinning Ceremony

The Workforce Training division graduated another class of Patient Care Technicians on February 20th. President Rodríguez said the graduates are fulfilling a need identified by industry partners, building upon the TSC Certified Nurse Assistant program, to include instruction in administering EKGs and phlebotomy. He thanked Vice Chair De Leon, Trustee Alejandro, and Trustee Saenz for participating in the ceremony.

Student Services events

The Student Services Division has been hard at work engaging students to support them in their studies and building networks that will serve them well after graduation. Among these events were: Stop by Student Life, Employer Connections, Student Leadership Academy, and a Valentine's Day event. President Rodríguez thanked the hard-working Student Services team for their dedication to the students.

Video Presentation

President Rodríguez shared a video highlighting college activities since the last regular board meeting.

President Rodríguez invited TSC's newest Vice President, Dr. David Plummer, to introduce himself. Dr. Plummer, the new Vice President of Student Development, brings great expertise to the position, including higher education and corporate experience, as well as 20 years of military service. He said that as he researched the position and was pleased to learn about the great things happening at Texas Southmost College, and he is glad to be a part of the team serving the communities of the Rio Grande Valley.

President Rodríguez thanked the Board of Trustees for their continued commitment and support to the college and the communities it serves, and thanked the faculty and staff for providing a strong start to the Spring 2024 semester.

6. Consideration and Possible Action on the Minutes of the following meetings:

a. Regular Meeting – January 18, 2024

Vice Chair De Leon made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting on January 18, 2024. Trustee Saenz seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

7. Finance Committee

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

a. Consideration and Possible action to approve the Contract for Election Services with the Cameron County Elections Department for a general election to be held on Saturday, May 4, 2024.

Mr. Ruben Pena, College Leal Counsel, said that he had reviewed the contract and he provided an overview of the differences in the contract from those of previous years.

Immediate Past Chair Herrera made a motion to approve the contract with the Cameron County Elections Department for Election Services and authorize President Rodríguez to execute the contract. Secretary Aldrete seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

b. Consideration and Possible action on approval of Budget Amendment 24-001 to recognize tuition and fee revenue.

Dr. Gisela Figueroa, Vice President of Finance and Administration, was called upon to present the item. She said that the proposal would allocate the excess revenue for IT infrastructure and adjunct faculty expenses to support enrollment.

Immediate Past Chair Herrera made a motion to approve Budget Amendment 24-001 for Fiscal Year 2024, as presented. Trustee Saenz seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

c. First Quarter Investment report for Fiscal Year 2024

Dr. Gisela Figueroa, Vice President of Finance and Administration, and Mr. Carlos Pecero, Controller, were called upon to present the item. Mr. Pecero presented the First Quarter Investment Report for the period from September 1, 2023 to November 30, 2023.

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

d. Monthly Financial Statement Report for the month ended December 31, 2023

Dr. Gisela Figueroa, Vice President of Finance and Administration, and Mr. Carlos Pecero, Controller, were called upon to present the item. Mr. Pecero presented the Monthly Financial Statement Report for the month ending December 31, 2023.

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

e. Fund Balance Operation Report

Dr. Gisela Figueroa, Vice President of Finance and Administration, was called upon to present the item. She reported out on funding for the current number of days of operation for the college.

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

f. Grant Update

Dr. Gisela Figueroa, Vice President of Finance and Administration, was called upon to present the item. She reported out on the grants received during the month of January 2024.

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

8. Facilities Committee**a. Facilities update**

Dr. Stella Garcia, Vice President of Institutional Advancement/Chief of Staff, and Mr. Gerardo Mascorro, HVAC Supervisor, were called on to present the item. Mr. Mascorro reported out on the status of the following project: dedicated chiller plant for TSC Recreation Center and the Child Care Center project.

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

9. Academic Committee

Chair Garza called on Trustee Zavaleta to present the report.

a. Consideration and possible action to approve a Renewal Affiliation Agreement with Knapp Medical Center for Diagnostic Medical Sonography and Radiology Technology Program

A motion was made by Trustee Zavaleta approve the Renewal Affiliation Agreement with Knapp Medical Center for the Diagnostic Medical Sonography and Radiologic Technology Programs and authorize President Rodríguez to sign the agreement. Trustee Alejandro seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

b. Consideration and possible action to approve an Affiliation Agreement with Palms Behavior Health for Associate Degree Nursing and Vocational Nursing Programs

A motion was made by Trustee Zavaleta to approve the Affiliation Agreement with Palms Behavior Health for Associate Degree Nursing and Vocational Nursing Programs and authorize President Rodríguez to sign the agreement. Immediate Past Chair Herrera seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

c. Consideration and possible action on approval of a new Structural Welding Certificate of Proficiency Level 1 (CERT1.WLDG) and Welding Certificate of Proficiency Level 2 (CERT2.WLDG) with initial implementation in Spring 2025

A motion was made by Trustee Zavaleta to approve the proposed new Certificate Level I (CERT1.WLDG) and Certificate Level II (CERT2.WLDG) with an initial implementation of the proposed certificates in Spring 2025. Secretary Aldrete seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

d. Consideration and possible action on approval of matching grant support for year two of the AmeriCorps Texas Operational grant

A motion was made by Trustee Zavaleta to approve the allocation of matching grant in-kind support of up to \$144,947 for the 2024-25 AmeriCorps Texas Operational Grant, contingent on the Notice of Grant Award from the OneStar Foundation. Immediate Past Chair Herrera seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

e. Consideration and possible action on approval of matching grant support for the Texas Workforce Commission's Jobs and Education for Texans (JET) grant program

A motion was made by Trustee Zavaleta to approve the allocation of matching grant support in the amount of \$17,500 to purchase equipment, contingent on the Notice of Grant Award from Texas Southmost College for \$332,500 (\$350,000 with match) and to authorize President Rodríguez to execute related documents. Trustee Alejandro seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

f. Consideration and possible action to approve an amended Clinical Affiliation Agreement with Valley Regional Medical Center to include the proposed non-credit Phlebotomy Program

A motion was made by Trustee Zavaleta to approve the amendment of the Clinical Affiliation Agreement with Valley Regional Medical Center to include the Phlebotomy Program and authorize President Rodríguez to sign the agreement, as presented. Vice Chair De Leon seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

10. Student Services Committee

a. Scorpion Opportunity Hub Update

Dr. David Plummer, Vice President of Student Development, and Mr. John Rodríguez, Perkins Coordinator, were called upon to present the item. Mr. Rodríguez provided an overview of the Scorpion Opportunity Hub, which included target resources, participating community-based organizations, a calendar of activities, number of students served and their programs of study, and satisfaction survey scores. The board engaged in a discussion of additional activities conducted under the grant, which is the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Perkins Equitable Access and Opportunity Grant program, as well as future plans to continue to grow student participation.

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

b. TSC Scorpion Athletics NJCAA Spring Update

Dr. David Plummer, Vice President of Student Development, and Dr. Armando Ponce, Executive Director of Athletics and Civility, were called upon to present the item. Dr. Ponce provided an update of the men's and women's soccer programs including, conference record, Scorpion I.D. soccer camp and soccer tryouts, soccer player recognitions, student athletes' academic progress, and the spring game schedule.

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

11. Policy Committee

Chair Garza called on Vice Chair De Leon to present the report.

a. Annual Review of CAK (LOCAL): Appropriations and Revenue Sources-Investments

Mr. Frank Perez, Board Legal Counsel, was called upon to provide an overview of the policy.

A motion was made by Vice Chair De Leon to acknowledge annual review of CAK Local: Appropriations and Revenue Sources – Investments. Trustee Saenz seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

b. Consideration and possible action on the following (LOCAL) policies: DEC, EBA, ECC, FFDA, FLB, and GCB

Mr. Frank Perez, Board Legal Counsel, was called upon to present the item. He reviewed the proposed changes to the following policies:

- DEC(LOCAL) Compensation and Benefits: Leaves and Absences
- EBA(LOCAL) Alternative Methods of Instruction: Distance Education
- ECC(LOCAL) Instructional Arrangements: Course Load and Schedules
- FFDA(LOCAL) Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation: Sex and Sexual Violence
- FLB(LOCAL) Student Rights and Responsibilities: Student Conduct
- GCB(LOCAL) Public Information Program: Requests for Information

A motion was made by Vice Chair De Leon to approve the policy revisions as presented for the following policies: DEC, EBA, ECC, FFDA, FLB, and GCB. Trustee Alejandro seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

12. Audit Subcommittee Report

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

Immediate Past Chair Herrera said the committee considered two options—conduct in-house (with TSC employees) or through a third party vendor—for when the trustees requested an audit or review of a college component, such as a program, department, grant, or particular budget.

The trustees engaged in a discussion of the committee’s review of the issue, the proposed scope of work, and the professional qualifications required for conducting the audits.

A motion was made by Immediate Vice Chair Herrera to approve option two and authorize President Rodríguez to develop an RFP/RFQ. Vice Chair De Leon seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

13. Executive Session

The Board convened in Executive Session at 7:11 p.m.

The Board reconvened in Open Session at 8:12 p.m.

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

No action was taken.

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

No action was taken.

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

Vice Chair De Leon made a motion to approve the Salary Schedule for FY 2023-24, as discussed in Executive Session. Immediate Past Chair Herrera seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

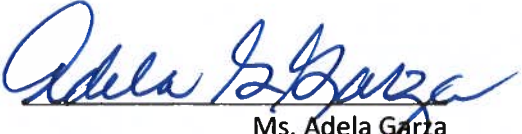
15. Announcement of Proposed Meeting Dates

a. Regular Board Meeting – Thursday, March 28, 2024, 5:30 p.m.


b. Regular Board Meeting – Thursday, April 18, 2024, 5:30 p.m.

14. Adjournment

Vice Chair De Leon made a motion adjourn. Immediate Past Chair Herrera seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 p.m.



Ms. Adela Garza
Chair, Board of Trustees



Ms. Alejandra Aldrete
Secretary, Board of Trustees

The video recording of the Regular Board of Trustees meeting held on February 21, 2024 is available on the TSC.EDU website. These minutes were taken and transcribed by Dr. Angela K. McCauley, Director of Special Projects. Videotaping of the Board of Trustees' meetings began on April 11, 1996.