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TEXAS SOUTHMOST COLLEGE DISTRICT

Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees

September 27, 2023

The Board of Trustees of the Texas Southmost College District convened in open session on September 27, 2023 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; Ms. Eva Alejandro; Mrs. Delia Saenz; and Dr. Tony Zavaleta. 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. President's Report

Chair Garza called on President Rodríguez to present his report.

Convocation & Welcome Week

TSC welcomed back approximately 250 faculty and staff during convocation on August 21st in the Jacob Brown Auditorium. Guest speaker Kevin Tutt provided an inspirational message about the collective impact we have as individuals. President Rodríguez said it was a high energy event, and he thanked Chair Garza and Trustee Saenz for their participation in the event.

The following week the college welcomed its Scorpions to a new academic year. The Student Life department coordinated an exciting array of activities for students, such as Waffle Wednesday, a scavenger hunt, and a pep-rally on our first Friday of the semester. They also held the first Scorpion Sting event, with 500 students and their families participating in several fun activities as they learned

about programs and clubs on campus. As of September 27th, TSC's Fall 2023 enrollment stands at 8,193 students, representing a 7.1% increase over the Fall 2022 semester.

El Jardin Groundbreaking Ceremony

Chair Garza and President Rodríguez attended the groundbreaking for the historic El Jardin hotel on August 31st. The 1927 landmark will soon be the new home to more than 40 affordable housing units, as well as some commercial space, slated to open March 2025.

Rally in the Valley 2.0

Dr. Stella Garcia served as a panelist for the Greater Brownsville Incentives Corporation's Rally in the Valley conference. The event was held September 14th at the Brownsville Events Center. The networking event was designed to connect local high school students with internship opportunities, potential career paths, and engagement with industry. President Rodríguez thanked Dr. Garcia for sharing all of the great things that are happening at TSC at the event.

Change of Command

Next, TSC's 21st Century Community Learning Center students performed at the Border Patrol Change of Command Center Ceremony on Friday September 15th at the Harlingen Performing Arts Center. The Porter High School Conjunto La Leyenda welcomed Jose L. Garza as the new Patrol Agent in Charge of the Harlingen Station, Rio Grande Valley Sector. President Rodríguez thanked the 21st Century grant program, administered by Dr. Prisci Tipton, for maintaining strong connections in the community.

16 de Septiembre event

Secretary Aldrete participated and represented TSC in the Mexican Consulate's El Grito De Independencia at the TSC Performing Arts Center on September 15th, which was a lively event filled with traditional music and dancing.

CJI National Night out

TSC's Criminal Justice Cadets participated in Rancho Viejo's National Night Out on September 15th, at the invitation of Rancho Viejo PD Chief of Police Robert Tyler. The cadets benefitted by receiving community service hours for their participation. President Rodríguez said it was also a great opportunity to promote the program.

Dual Credit Symposium

The office of Transition Services hosted a Dual Credit Symposium on Tuesday, September 19th at the Oliveira Student Services Center, during which principals and counselors gathered for a morning of professional development. Sessions were provided on registration, course requests, requesting recruiter visits, and a number of important administrative functions.

President Rodríguez said the sessions are an excellent way to stay connected to school partners as the Dual Credit program continues to grow. Six new schools have recently selected TSC as its dual credit partner, bringing the total to 21 school districts, charter schools, and private schools. He thanked Chair Garza for participating in the event, and offered congratulations to Ms. Vanessa Vasquez, Interim Associate Vice President for Student Services, and her entire team for leading a very successful symposium.

School partner visits

In addition to the Dual Credit symposium, over the last month TSC hosted several one-on-one visits with school partners. First, Dr. Rodríguez visited Lasara School District Superintendent Alejos Salazar on his campus on August 29th. Discussions included an exploration of Career and Technical Education program offerings that would be a good fit for the community and enhance service to the Lasara school district. Next, Dr. Garcia and the Dual Credit team met with officials from Harmony Schools on September 20th. The Harmony delegation enjoyed a campus tour and the opportunity to meet with members of TSC's administrative, instruction, and dual credit team.

Fall Semester Events

In addition to the fun-filled welcome week events held in August, TSC's Student Services team coordinated several events during the month of September to strengthen student engagement. Among the events were: Dunk for Donuts, Club and Resource Fair, Employer Connection Kick-off, National Day of Service and Remembrance, Piñata on the Paseo, and Constitution Day.

Employees' service to professional organizations

Several TSC employees were recognized for providing important service in their respective fields. First, Mrs. Marisela Nava, Director of the TSC Child Care Center, was appointed to the Texas Early Learning Council by Governor Greg Abbot. The organization serves as Texas' State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care, charged with the goal of improving school readiness. President Rodríguez said he is confident Mrs. Nava will be a great asset to the council.

Next, two of administrative leaders are serving on committees for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, better known as SACS COC. VP of Finance and Administration Dr. Gisela Figueroa is serving as a member of the Finance Committee on Fifth-year Interim Reports, and AVP of Institutional Effectiveness and Educational Technologies Oscar Hernandez is serving as a member of Institutional Effectiveness Substantive Change Committee. President Rodríguez thanked them for their service to the higher education community.

NJCAA Soccer

This semester ushered in TSC's inaugural year in the NJCAA league. The soccer teams started the season off strong, with both the men's and women's teams winning against Trinity College. While the competition in the NJCAA is tough, TSC is holding strong and the teams are starting to gel. The men's team is now 2-3 and the women's team is 2-4. The next home game is Tuesday, October 3rd vs Angelina College. President Rodríguez thanked the board for their support - in attending scrimmages, the Meet the Scorpions event, pep-rally, Scorpion Family day, and the home matches. President Rodríguez thanked Chair Garza, Secretary Aldrete, Trustee Alejandro, and Trustee Saenz for coming out to cheer on the Scorpions.

Golf Tournament

TSC's 3rd annual Scorpion Classic Golf Tournament will take place on October 14th, and is expected to be a day of fun and fundraising. A limited number of sponsorships are still available, and there is space for a few more teams. President Rodríguez thanked the Texas Southmost College Foundation Board for their hard work in organizing the event.

Nite Lions

The Brownsville Nite Lions Club made a \$2,000 donation to the TSC Foundation student scholarship fund on September 27th which was received by Chair Garza and President Rodríguez. President Rodriguez thanked the organization for their investment in TSC students.

Video Presentation

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

Accreditation Status and Program updates

President Rodríguez provided a briefing on TSC's regional accreditation by SACS COC, which is important to maintain to ensure that college credits transfer to universities in the same degree area. In addition, maintaining regional accreditation allows TSC to draw down federal financial aid for its students. President called upon Associate Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and Educational Technologies Oscar Hernandez for an update about future accreditation visits.

Mr. Hernandez reported that Texas Southmost College is applying to move to level two status, which would allow TSC to offer baccalaureate degrees. As part of the process seeking this substantive change, SACS COC representatives will engage in an official site visit to TSC, which is expected to take place in Spring 2025. In addition, TSC's 5th year report for reaffirmation of accreditation is also due in Spring 2025.

President Rodríguez shared a list of accreditations TSC's seven Health Professions programs hold from external agencies. He noted that the Respiratory Care program recently earned reaccreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care, affirming that the program meets the thresholds for success for the required outcome measures. He congratulated Program Director Isidro Ramirez, Faculty Member Alberto Vasquez, and Dean Pearse for their exceptional work in ensuring students are well prepared to care for respiratory patients in our communities. In addition, the TSC Certified Nurse Assistant program also recently received reaccreditation from the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, with the program meeting all of the requirements for nurse aid training specified in the Texas Administrative Code. President Rodríguez congratulated Program Director Maria Celia De la Garza and Faculty Member Ofelia Hess for their dedicated work.

The board engaged in a discussion of the accreditation requirements for health professions programs, as well as recruitment and enrollment efforts. President Rodríguez also provided updates for the Criminal Justice Institute and the Welding program, at which point, the Trustees requested additional information to be presented to them.

5. Consideration and Possible Action on the Minutes of the following meeting:**a. Public Hearing and Regular Meeting – August 17, 2023**

Secretary Aldrete made a motion to approve the minutes of the Public Hearing and Regular Meeting on August 17, 2023. Vice Chair De Leon seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

6. Finance Committee

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

a. Consideration and possible action on agreement with City of Brownsville/Multimodal Transportation to provide transportation services to Texas Southmost College students to and from the College campus as well as all routes of the Brownsville Metro

Dr. Gisela Figueroa, Vice President of Finance and Administration, was called upon to present the item. She said TSC has had agreements in place for Brownsville Metro service since 2019. The proposed agreement adds an extended route connecting the Fort Brown campus and ITECC building and extends operational hours for the campus connecting route.

Immediate Past Chair Herrera made a motion to approve the agreement between Texas Southmost College and the City of Brownsville/Multimodal Transportation in the amount of \$41,250 and authorize President Rodríguez to execute the agreement. Secretary Aldrete seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

b. Monthly Financial Statement Report for the month ended July 31, 2023

Mr. Carlos Pecero, Controller, was called upon to present the item. Mr. Pecero presented the monthly financial statement report for the month ended July 31, 2023.

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

c. 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.

d. 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.

e. Grants Update

Dr. Gisela Figueroa, Vice President of Finance and Administration, was called on to present the item. She reported on the new grants received during the months of July and August 2023.

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

7. Facilities Committee

Chair Garza called on Secretary Aldrete to present the report.

a. Facilities update

Dr. Gisela Figueroa, Vice President of Finance and Administration was called on to present the item. She reported out on the status of the following projects: TSC Courtroom and Criminal Justice Project and Oliveira Student Services Building second floor restroom additions project.

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

8. Academic Committee

Chair Garza called on Trustee Zavaleta to present the report.

a. Consideration and possible action on approval of a Memorandum of Understanding between Texas Southmost College for the Criminal Justice Academy Basic Peace Officer Certification Program and the City of Brownsville, Texas Police Department

Dr. Angelica Fuentes, Associate Vice President of Workforce Training and Continuing Education, was called upon to present the item. The proposed agreement would facilitate training from the Brownsville Police Department and reserve space in the program for the department's pre-hired peace officers.

A motion was made by Trustee Zavaleta to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Texas Southmost College for the Criminal Justice Academy Basic Peace Officer Certification Program and the City of Brownsville, Texas Police Department and authorize President Rodríguez to execute the contract as presented. Immediate Past Chair Herrera seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

b. Consideration and possible action on approval of a Memorandum of Understanding between Texas Southmost College for the Criminal Justice Academy Basic Peace Officer Certification Program and the City of Harlingen, Texas Police Department

A motion was made by Trustee Zavaleta to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Texas Southmost College for the Criminal Justice Academy Basic Peace Officer Certification Program and the City of Harlingen, Texas Police Department and authorize President Rodríguez to execute the contract as presented. Trustee Alejandro seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

c. Consideration and possible action on approval of Letter of Agreement between Texas Southmost College and Brownsville Independent School District Adult Continuing Education

A motion was made by Trustee Zavaleta to approve Letter of Agreement between Texas Southmost College and Brownsville Independent School District Adult Continuing Education for GED and ESL education and authorize President Rodríguez to execute the contract as presented. Vice Chair De Leon seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

- d. **Consideration and possible action on approval of a Memorandum of Understanding between Texas Southmost College and Brownsville Independent School District Career and Technical Education**

A motion was made by Trustee Zavaleta to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Texas Southmost College and Brownsville Independent School District for Workforce Training and authorize President Rodríguez to execute the MOU as presented. Secretary Aldrete seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

- e. **Consideration and possible action on approval of a Memorandum of Understanding between Texas Southmost College and Texas A&M University Kingsville**

A motion was made by Trustee Zavaleta to approve an MOU between Texas Southmost College and Texas A&M University-Kingsville and authorize President Rodríguez to sign the agreement. Immediate Past Chair Herrera seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

- f. **Consideration and possible action to approve an affiliation agreement renewal between Texas Southmost College and South Texas Emergency Care Foundation, Inc.**

A motion was made by Trustee Zavaleta to approve Affiliation Agreement renewal between Texas Southmost College and South Texas Emergency Care Foundation for Emergency Medical Science Program and authorize President Rodríguez to sign the agreement. Immediate Past Chair Herrera seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

9. **Student Services Committee**

Chair Garza called on Trustee Saenz to present the report.

- a. **Consideration and possible action on approval of the Memorandum of Understanding between Texas Southmost College and IDEA Public Schools.**

Ms. Vanessa Vasquez, Interim Associate Vice President of Student Services, was called upon to present the item. Through the proposed MOU, TSC will support the college acceptance, matriculation, retention, and completion for IDEA Public School students and alumni. IDEA Public Schools will provide TSC with an IDEA-designated Liaison to provide admissions and persistence support services to IDEA students who enroll at TSC.

Trustee Saenz made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Texas Southmost College and IDEA Public Schools and authorize President Rodríguez to sign the agreement. Immediate Past Chair Herrera seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

b. Consideration and possible action on approval of the Interlocal Agreement between Texas Southmost College and Region One Education Service Center

Ms. Vanessa Vasquez, Interim Associate Vice President of Student Services, and Dr. Angelica M. Fuentes, Associate Vice President of Workforce Training and Continuing Education, were called upon to present the item. The proposed agreement facilitates the development of TSC program services and activities for nine different programs at Region One ESC Office of College, Career, and Life Readiness.

Trustee Saenz made a motion to approve the Interlocal Agreement between Texas Southmost College and Region One Education Service Center and authorize President Rodríguez to sign the agreement. Vice Chair De Leon seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

10. Policy Committee

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

a. Consideration and possible action on the following (LOCAL) policies: CT, FFE and GD

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

- CT (LOCAL) Intellectual property
- FFE (LOCAL) Student welfare: Freedom from bullying
- GD (LOCAL) Community expression and use of college facilities

A motion was made by Vice Chair De Leon to approve revisions to the following LOCAL policies: CT Intellectual Property, FFE Student Welfare: Freedom from Bullying, and GD Community Expression and Use of College Facilities. Trustee Saenz seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

11. Executive Session

The Board convened in Executive Session at 7:09 p.m.

The Board reconvened in Open Session at 8:15 p.m.

12. 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

No action was taken.

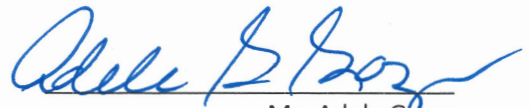
13. Announcement of Proposed Meeting Dates

a. Regular Board Meeting – Thursday, October 26, 2023, 5:30 p.m.

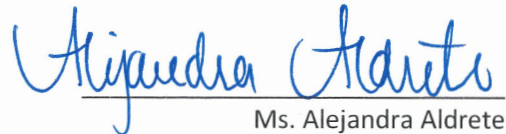
b. Regular Board Meeting – Thursday, November 16, 2023, 5:30 p.m.

14. Adjournment

Vice Chair De Leon made a motion adjourn. Trustee Alejandro seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 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 September 17, 2023 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.