

# **Williamson Central Appraisal District**

## **Board of Directors Meeting**

### **Minutes of March 16, 2017**

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Deborah Hunt, Vice Chairman, called the regular meeting of the Williamson Central Appraisal District Board of Directors to order Thursday, March 16, 2017 at 9:06 a.m. Board members present: Deborah Hunt, Cecilia Crowley, Rufus Honeycutt, Charles Chadwell and Larry Gaddes. Harry Gibbs arrived later in the meeting. Quorum declared.

Pledges of Allegiance

Receipt of Public Comments

Lankford introduced the District's two new members of management; Richard Quinlan and Amy Urbanek. He announced that Quinlan was now the manager of the Commercial Appraisal Department and that Urbanek was the District's new Maps and Records manager. He indicated that Urbanek would be taking over for K.C. McDade. Lankford announced that, with Dave Matheny retiring soon, McDade would step into Matheny's previous position of Director of Operations. The Board offered their congratulations.

There were no other public comments.

Employee of the Year Recognition

Lankford recognized the District's employees of the year. He introduced Bart Edsell who, he indicated, had revolutionized mailroom processing. He informed the Board that Edsell would now be working on projects in the Appraisal department.

Lankford also recognized Amber Simpson, who was named the Appraisal employee of the year. He reported that Simpson had also been moved to another department and was currently working with the Business Personal Property team. Lankford indicated that Simpson's statistics were right in line with what the District looks for in a great employee.

Hunt congratulated both Edsell and Simpson.

Taxpayer Liaison Officer's Report

Report on Property Owner Contacts

Charley Rouse, the District's Taxpayer Liaison Officer, was present to report on the status of his contact with property owners. Rouse reported having a slow month; however, he did receive an anonymous letter regarding a possible exemption issue. He reported that, after contacting the District, all issues addressed in the letter were researched and the District's exemption valuation was found to be accurate. Lankford assured the Board that the property owner referred to in the letter was meeting the requirements of the exemption. He also mentioned that, had this anonymous owner provided their contact information, he would have reached out to them. Chadwell suggested contacting neighbors to let them know the issue had been addressed.

Hunt commented on what a great resource Rouse was for the District's property owners.

Consider approval of minutes of the Board of Directors for the regular meeting – February 3, 2017.

Chadwell moved for approval of the minutes as presented. Honeycutt seconded. The motion carried.

#### Consideration of Monthly Financials

Lankford reviewed the monthly expenditures. He mentioned that the District's financial auditor would be in the office the first week in April. Hunt thanked Crowley for her continued contribution to the District's audit.

The January 2017 financials and expenditures were reviewed and filed for the audit.

#### Depository Check Signers

Lankford announced this to be the last Board meeting that Jennifer Austin, the District's Director of Appraisal, would be in attendance, since she would be retiring at the end of the month. He also indicated that Dave Matheny, the District's Director of Operations, would be changing positions and then retiring in November of 2017. He mentioned that the contributions of these two individuals would be greatly missed. Hunt commented that both had been significant contributors to the appraisal district and thanked them for their service. Lankford invited the Board to Austin's retirement party on March 29<sup>th</sup>.

Lankford announced that, with Austin and Matheny departing, the District would need two new check signers. He indicated that currently two signatures were required on every check. Lankford discussed replacing the depository signer's names of Austin and Matheny with that of William White and K.C. McDade as indicated in resolution #2017-02.

Honeycutt made a motion to approve resolution #2017-02 adding William J. White and K.C. McDade to the District's check signing authority. Chadwell seconded. The motion carried.

#### TAAD Conference Follow-Up

Lankford announced this to be the Board's opportunity to discuss items noted from the recent TAAD (Texas Association of Appraisal Districts) Conference. He mentioned that Colleen McElroy, the District's Administrative Assistant, attends the Board breakout sessions to note items for possible revisions in the Board's Policy. McElroy mentioned that, for the most part, the sessions were a review of prior years. Among a few others, one of the items noted were the rules concerning Gaddes, the Board's ex-officio member, making and seconding motions. Hunt also commented on the time limit set aside for citizen communication at the Board meetings. McElroy confirmed that this item had previously been noted in the Board's policy; to include a three minute limit, which the Chairman may waive at his or her discretion. The Board Policy will be reviewed at a future meeting

Discussion followed. No motion was made.

#### District Survey

Lankford indicated that Honeycutt had presented suggestions concerning a survey for District staff.

Honeycutt discussed the purpose of this survey would be to give District employees the opportunity to provide input on how the District could improve its operations. The survey results would be provided to the Board.

Lankford discussed the anonymity of the current employee survey process and mentioned he would be happy to share the results with the Board. The Board expressed their wishes to allow employees to freely express their thoughts.

The survey questions were discussed. Lankford reviewed recommended wording.

Gibbs arrived at 9:41 a.m.

Lankford indicated that he would bring the revised survey back to the Board at their next meeting. It was discussed that this survey would be conducted twice a year; directly following the April Board meeting; and then during the non-protest season.

No action was taken.

#### Review and Compensation of Taxpayer Liaison Officer

Executive Session began at 10:00 a.m. and ended at 10:28 a.m. Lankford joined the meeting at 10:02 a.m. for one minute. Rouse joined the meeting at 10:10 a.m. and left at 10:26 a.m.

#### Consideration and possible action on items discussed in Executive Session

##### Review and Compensation of Taxpayer Liaison Officer

Chadwell commended Rouse for his work with property owners and commented on his valuable demeanor.

Chadwell make a motion to increase Rouse's travel stipend by \$50 per month. Crowley seconded. Chadwell thanked Rouse and mentioned how impressed he was with his response and attention to detail. Lankford also complimented Rouse on how he handled property owner issues. The motion carried unanimously.

Honeycutt left the meeting at 10:30 a.m.

#### Chief Appraiser's Report

##### Property Value Study

Lankford discussed the Comptroller's Property Value Study announcing that the District had passed all school districts with the exception of one; Bartlett ISD. He indicated this to be the first time since 2005 that this had occurred.

Lankford informed the Board that the District had reviewed the values and then contacted the Bartlett ISD Superintendent. He indicated that Bartlett had also failed in all three surrounding counties. Lankford informed the Board that the District had researched each data point used and found discrepancies in the Comptroller's values. He gave examples of the findings and indicated that he fully anticipated the values coming back in line; mentioning that the new results would be available sometime in August.

Discussion followed. Lankford reported that if the research submitted was found favorable, the District would not be required to participate in a hearing.

## Comptroller's Appraisal Review Board Survey Results

Lankford announced that the Comptroller's Appraisal Review Board survey results had been included in the Board's packet. He reported these to be overall statewide numbers. He indicated that, although the District's participation numbers had decreased, the overall results throughout the state were positive. Discussion followed regarding possible ways of increasing the District's participation numbers.

A letter received from the Comptroller's office concerning an issue that occurred during the Comptroller's ARB training was discussed.

## Legislation Update

Lankford indicated that he, along with Hunt and Gaddes, had visited the Capitol during the legislative session. He reported there to be over 200 legislative bills affecting tax offices and appraisal districts.

## Lawsuit, Arbitration and SOAH Reports

Lankford reviewed the lawsuit and arbitration reports. There weren't any State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH) on which to report.

## Board Agenda Additions for Future Meeting

- District Surveys
- Chief Appraiser Compensation Policy Development

## Board Announcements

- Chadwell announced that on Tuesday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, the Central Texas School Board Association (CTSBA) would be open to everyone; he mentioned that all legislators had been invited to this meeting at the Capitol. Legislative bills to be mentioned were discussed.

The Board had previously set the following meeting dates:

Thursday, April 13, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

Wednesday, May 17, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

The Board set additional meeting dates as follows:

Thursday, June 1, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

Thursday, July 13, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

The meeting adjourned at 11:14 a.m.

Respectfully,

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Deborah Hunt, Vice Chairman

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Cecilia M. Crowley, Secretary