

Williamson Central Appraisal District

Board of Directors Meeting

Minutes of October 12, 2011

Harry Gibbs, chairman, called the regular meeting of the Williamson Central Appraisal District Board of Directors to order Wednesday, October 12, 2011 at 9:01 a.m. Board members present: Harry Gibbs, Brig Mireles, Robert Tagge, Deborah Hunt and Richard Templeton. Quorum declared.

Receipt of Public Comments

No public comments.

Taxpayer Liaison Officer's Report

Barbara Giovanetti Correspondence

Charley Rouse, the District's Taxpayer Liaison Officer, was present to report on a few issues this month. Property owner, Barbara Giovanetti had missed her protest deadline. Rouse explained the procedures to her and this issue was worked through successfully.

Richard Davis Correspondence

Rouse also reported on property owner, Richard Davis. Davis felt that personnel at the district did not treat him fairly. Rouse, after investigating further, reported the District having received no complaints previously regarding this particular employee and felt that the information that was requested was fair. Davis wanted to know the number of properties that had been presented to the Appraisal Review Board (ARB). Rouse reviewed this information with the Board members. He reported that, in general, property owners do not understand the Boards' position. Rouse pointed out to Davis that personnel issues are directed to the Chief Appraiser.

Lankford expounded on the issue. Davis owns a storage facility that has structural issues. The commercial appraiser that looked at this property confided with two other commercial appraisers. Davis was unable to go to arbitration this year due to the new value of his property. Lankford felt that a proper evaluation was conducted. He expressed that the appraiser did handle this situation appropriately.

Consider approval of minutes of the Board of Directors for the regular meeting – September 8, 2011.

Hunt moved for approval of the minutes as presented. Tagge seconded. Mireles inquired about the budget workshop. Lankford explained that the District was able to negotiate new prices on the HVAC and janitorial contracts and therefore the final budget amount was revised. The motion carried 4-0-1. Hunt, Tagge, Gibbs and Templeton voted for. Zero members voted no. Mireles abstained.

Consideration of Monthly Financials

August 2011 financials and expenditures were reviewed and filed for audit.

Appraisal Review Board Members

Executive session began at 9:15 a.m. and ended at 10:10 a.m.

Consideration and possible action on items discussed in executive session

No action was taken as a result of executive session.

Appointment of ARB Interview Committee

Gibbs asked for volunteers to serve on the ARB Interview Committee. Mireles mentioned that he would like to participate in this process. Templeton also volunteered. Hunt will be the alternate to fill in if Templeton is unable to assist. No action was taken.

Health Insurance

Debra Spellings and Yvonne Harper-Hill with Spellings & Humphries were present to discuss health insurance for retirees. Harper-Hill distributed legislative information pertaining to this issue. In 2009, the Texas Property Tax Code was amended stating that appraisal districts would offer health insurance to their retirees. Recently this has become an issue.

United Health Care (UHC), the District's current health care provider, felt this was not an insurance requirement, but rather an appraisal district requirement. If we are unable to attain coverage, we do not need to cover retirees. We will need to find a new vendor if the appraisal district wants to extend coverage to retirees. UHC will not provide this coverage. If we do add retirees, it will affect our rates. Presently there is no promise to retirees that this coverage will be provided.

Spellings reminded the Board that the District signed a contract with UHC. Hunt inquired about waiting until we go back out to the marketplace with this consideration in mind to compare these and then make a decision. Spellings explained that this legislation only applies to the larger population districts. She indicated that Spellings & Humphries could incorporate this into the renewal process next year. The Board asked that, at the appropriate time, a comparison be done showing costs both with and without this coverage. This will also impact the District's liability as we have more retirees. This will be discussed further next spring.

No action was taken.

Chief Appraiser's Report

Property Owner Surveys

Lankford reported that the property owner surveys presented this month would be the final property owner surveys for the year. He reviewed the survey results. Templeton expressed that the comments are great. Lankford indicated how very proud he was of staff.

2012 WCAD Goals

Lankford indicated that the District is still working on final details and further defining of the 2012 WCAD goals.

#1 – Field Device – We have made great progress with our field devices and are still defining our final goal.

#2 – Queue System – The queue system was a huge success this year, we want to continue working on improvements. The holding queue is still being worked on. We will create a web interface and internal data verification.

#3 – Disaster Recovery – Lankford indicated that Bastrop CAD removed servers from their office due to their recent disaster. It is pertinent to get a full disaster recovery plan.

#4 – Online Homestead Form – The District will attempt to provide a homestead exemption form that can be filled online and where information will automatically be entered into our data system. We are looking at a more automated format and are working towards being more efficient.

#5 – More Paperless Environment – Lankford expressed that the District wants the entire protest process to become paperless. Our first step is during the inquiry process, we would like to be able to fill out the information and not have to scan it back into the system. We are working on making our total exemption process paperless. We are also working towards a paperless financial process.

Lankford reported that these goals were created at management's annual Planning Session.

Board Election Update

Lankford informed the Board members that nomination forms were sent out to the entities in September with deadlines and a sample resolution to be returned by October 15th. He also mentioned that neither Tagge nor Templeton would be returning to the Board, which will leave two vacant positions. The three remaining members, Gibbs, Hunt and Mireles have been nominated and the District has received one additional nominee at this time.

There is a provision in the Code called filling a vacancy on the Board. If we do not get a fifth nominee, we will resend a notice to the taxing units; they can send in nominees, then the Board will make the final decision. There are a few more units that will be meeting prior to the deadline.

2011 WCAD Christmas Party

The 2011 WCAD Christmas Party will be held on Friday, December 9th at 6:30 p.m. at Mel's Lonestar Lanes in Georgetown. Lankford invited the board members.

Employee Evaluation Process

Lankford reported that the District has now gone through the first round of evaluations with our new system. The new system has worked well. He reported that including unscheduled absences as part of the evaluation process has made employees more accountable. The number of hours used for sick leave has reduced by 33% since this went into effect. If this trend continues, we will accumulate 2,000 extra hours by just including unscheduled absences as part of the evaluation process. The District will be making adjustments to the evaluation process over the coming year.

Lankford explained the merit raise calculation example sheet that was displayed for the Board members. Grades are department based. It was decided that this is a more fair way to distribute raises based on performance. It gives incentive to those employees that are not performing at their highest level and awarding the higher performers. This was done for each department.

WCAD Presentations

Lankford reported making a presentation to the Commercial Property Exchange where he reviewed the different aspects of commercial versus residential properties.

Lankford also reported having budget review meetings with several entities.

Lankford reminded the Board that they had asked that he involve other staff in these presentations. Chris Connelly, the District's Deputy Chief Appraiser, presented budget information to the Hutto ISD and the City of Hutto. The Northlake Landowners Association also asked that the District speak with them. Connelly conducted this general overview presentation as well.

Lankford also indicated that he spoke regarding sketch validation as well as the change detection program at the IAAO Conference. He attended a breakout session being presented by individuals from Canada who mentioned our District in their presentation. Lankford also spoke at the TAAO Conference.

Arbitration Report

Lankford reviewed the arbitration report.

Lawsuit Report

Lankford reviewed the lawsuit report.

Board Agenda Additions for Future Meeting

Tagge mentioned that the Texas agriculture industry is taking quite a hit this year. He inquired how this would affect agricultural exemptions. Lankford will place this on the agenda at the next meeting.

Mireles inquired about getting a follow-up report from the ARB. It was requested that this item be placed on the Board agenda for November in executive session. A report from the ARB interview committee will need to be presented by the December Board meeting.

The next regular meeting was set for November 9, 2011 at 9:00 a.m.

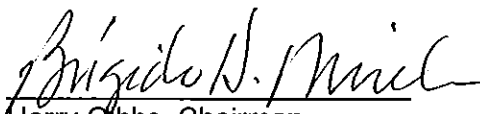
The December Board meeting was set for December 15, 2011 at 9:00 a.m.

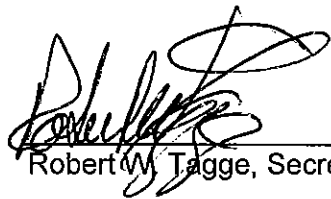
The January Board meeting was tentatively set for January 12, 2012 at 9:00 a.m.

Gibbs mentioned that he was asked to speak with the Williamson County Commissioners. He was very well received. Two of the Commissioners mentioned how much they enjoyed working with the appraisal district.

The meeting adjourned at 11:22 a.m.

Respectfully,

for 
Harry Gibbs, Chairman


Robert W. Tagge, Secretary