

Williamson Central Appraisal District
Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes of September 7, 2017

Harry Gibbs, Chairman, called the regular meeting of the Williamson Central Appraisal District Board of Directors to order Thursday, September 7, 2017 at 9:03 a.m. Board members present: Harry Gibbs, Deborah Hunt, Cecilia Crowley, Rufus Honeycutt, Charles Chadwell and Larry Gaddes. Quorum declared.

Pledges of Allegiance

Receipt of Public Comments

Lankford introduced Jessica Miller, the District's new manager for the Information Systems department.

Taxpayer Liaison Officer's Report

Report on Property Owner Contacts

Charley Rouse, the District's Taxpayer Liaison Officer (TLO), was present to report on the status of his contact with property owners. Rouse reviewed a number of phone calls he had received since the Board's last meeting.

Rouse informed the Board that he had been in discussions with Lankford regarding the particular property owner issues he handles. He expressed that, with these situations, he felt someone needed to be in contact with the owner; not to necessarily handle the issue, but to be able to communicate with them and let them know they are being heard.

Rouse reiterated that he felt property owners appreciate the follow up he has been able to provide.

Lankford informed the Board members that their next meeting agenda would include a suggested revision to the District's website; relocating Rouse's contact information and then providing the most commonly asked questions for property owners. Hunt agreed with Rouse and felt that property owners need a voice.

Discussion followed. The Board expressed their appreciation to Rouse for his continued efforts in assisting property owners.

2018 Budget Workshop

Employee Insurance Presentation

Debra Spellings and Yvonne Harper-Hill, the District's insurance consultants with Benefits360, were present. Spellings informed the Board that the renewal had been accepted with United Health Care (UHC); she distributed a packet of information. The summary of benefits were discussed. Spellings announced that the rates had dropped slightly since her last reporting; down to a 5% rate increase. She indicated that under the affordable care act plan, the rating structure increases a bit. She reminded the Board of their previous decision to accept the renewal with UHC; which has been implemented.

Spellings indicated that the District's dental insurance was currently with Lincoln Financial and that a rate pass had been granted; the insurance has been renewed for 12 months. These rates were reviewed.

Spellings also mentioned that the District had its vision insurance through VSP (Vision Service Plan). VSP had given a 24-month rate guarantee. The District's short term disability plan was also discussed. This plan is sponsored by Sun Life Financial and is self-funded. Spellings indicated that the rate on the administration fees have not changed. She also reviewed the rates for long term disability and indicated that the premium had increased a little less than \$100 per month.

Spellings informed the Board that overall the UHC plan has been a good one for employees. The Board expressed their appreciation to Spellings.

Entity Budget Overview Meetings

Lankford mentioned to the Board that, upon adoption of the proposed budget, he, Chris Connelly, the District's Deputy Chief Appraiser and Kimberly Gamboa, the Business & HR Manager visit the largest of the District's taxing units to provide an overview of the District's operations. He reviewed the budget overview packet and information regarding comparable appraisal districts.

Lankford informed the Board that these meetings had been conducted for a number of years and that every year they have been well received. He also indicated that those who are not visited with personally are sent the packet of information.

The Board members congratulated Billy White, the District's Director of Appraisal, on achieving his CAE (Certified Assessment Evaluator) with the IAAO (International Association of Assessing Officers).

2018 Budget Review

Lankford reviewed the entity salary survey which had been distributed to the members. He mentioned that the District seemed to be in line with the 3% proposed salary increase that had been conveyed to the entities. Hunt noted that, at the County, they consistently eliminate raises for elected officials.

Lankford reviewed the updates to the budget since the Board's last meeting. He mentioned a few items including company shirts and the homestead audit program. He explained the process of checking for double homesteads and indicated that it would be very costly. He noted that this item could be considered for the future.

Lankford reminded the Board that the District shares a full-time employee with Capitol Appraisal Group, the District's outside appraisal vendor. He indicated that this person is assigned to the District's accounts. He also mentioned parcel fabric and his wishes to spend monies out of reserve accounts for this purchase.

Lankford announced that the total budget is showing to be about a 2.3% increase and if the Board chooses to buy down the budget by \$200,000, this would come to a 2.98% allocation increase; which represents the 3% salary increase.

Public Hearing on 2018 Proposed Budget

Gibbs opened the public hearing on the 2018 Proposed Budget. The public hearing was closed.

Approval of 2018 Budget (Resolution #2017-04)

Lankford announced that the proposed budget had been sent to the entities at the 3% merit salary raise.

Chadwell moved for approval of the 2018 budget with a 3% merit salary raise as submitted; in the amount of \$8,619,200. Hunt seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Authorize Chief Appraiser to Accept Proposals on Appraisal District Depository

Lankford mentioned that it was time again for the District to request bids for its financial depository.

Hunt made a motion to authorize the Chief Appraiser to seek bids for a depository. Honeycutt seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Chief Appraiser Job Description

Lankford announced that changes had been made to the Chief Appraiser job description per previous discussions; dividing the duties into statutory and non-statutory responsibilities.

Chadwell moved to accept the updated Chief Appraiser job description as presented. Honeycutt seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Chief Appraiser Review Questions

Lankford reported this to be the typical time of year that the Board would consider any possible revisions to the Chief Appraiser review questions and asked the members if they wished to make any changes. Honeycutt thought the format of the current document worked well. The Board requested no changes.

Board Annual Retreat

Lankford mentioned to the members that Honeycutt had suggested the Board conduct an annual retreat. Honeycutt explained that he felt it would be beneficial for the members to discuss various items of which they should be aware. He reviewed references of information.

Honeycutt suggested a half-day session to review these references to provide a better understanding of these items. This would incorporate an overview of the duties and responsibilities of the members. The Board also mentioned asking Debbie Wheeler or Carla Pope-Osbourne to facilitate this discussion.

Lankford reviewed the current procedure when a new member is elected; indicating that a brief overview and packet of information is provided. The Board discussed also incorporating some of the parliamentary meeting information. Chadwell added that he would like to review the District's website on a regular basis. Gaddes and Hunt offered to work together with Honeycutt for the planning of this retreat. They discussed a timeframe of the first week in February. Gibbs assigned Honeycutt, Gaddes and Hunt to this committee. Honeycutt will serve as the Chairman.

Employee Holiday Approval

Lankford informed the Board that the County had approved their holiday calendar. Gaddes asked that this item be postponed until later in the meeting in order to get the details regarding the County's floating holiday that the Commissioners Court had approved.

Resolution of Commitment to Assist in Hurricane Relief Efforts for Texas Appraisal District's

Lankford mentioned the devastation caused by Hurricane Harvey along the gulf coast and indicated that this had been a topic with other appraisal districts on how assistance could be provided. Lankford reported that another district had discussed a resolution for a commitment to assist in the disaster efforts. He reviewed the resolution and explained the process. He commented that, if these districts were asked to reappraise the properties, this would be a very difficult task with their current staff.

The Board discussed revising the wording in the resolution regarding the time commitment to change "not to exceed 30 days" to "at the discretion of the Chief Appraiser or presiding officer".

Gibbs inquired about the liability for the District; which Lankford indicated he would have to investigate. Lankford informed the Board that he would be willing to commit equipment at this time and possibly personnel at a later date. The Board asked that Lankford use his judgement and keep them informed of any needs as they occur.

Hunt moved for approval of the commitment to assist resolution with the amendment stating the timeframe should be at the discretion of the Chief Appraiser or presiding officer. Chadwell seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Chief Appraiser Compensation Process

Executive Session began at 11:08 a.m. and ended at 12:27 p.m.

Consideration and possible action on items discussed in Executive Session

Chief Appraiser Compensation Process

The Board members requested that Lankford provide the Chief Appraiser salary comparisons from 2016 and 2017. They mentioned the possibility of forwarding another survey to gather this information. It was decided that the current information would be updated.

Gibbs set a special called meeting for discussion, in executive session, regarding the Chief Appraiser compensation process on September 27, 2017 at 9 a.m. This meeting was scheduled to take place at 904 South Main Street in Georgetown, Texas.

No action was taken.

Gibbs left the meeting at 12:30 p.m. Hunt acted as Chairman for the remainder of the meeting.

Consider Approval of Minutes of the Board of Directors for the regular meeting – July 13, 2017

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

Consideration of Monthly Financials and Quarterly Investment Report

The June 2017 financials and expenditures were reviewed and filed for audit. The investment report was also reviewed and filed.

Chief Appraiser's Report

Property Owner Surveys

Lankford announced that the property owner surveys were final for the 2017 protest season and that the District had received around 3,500 responses. He expressed that District staff had done an outstanding job again this year and reviewed the results.

Lankford reminded the Board that appraisers and customer service personnel have access to their scores individually and mentioned that follow-up is conducted with those owners who leave contact information. It was mentioned that the negative responses are generally beyond the control of the District. Honeycutt and Chadwell had participated in the ARB (Appraisal Review Board) process and encouraged other members to do the same. Gaddes inquired about including a comment on the appraisal notices regarding the District's online videos concerning the protest process.

Protest Season Update

Lankford displayed a graph showing the total protests and inquiries. He indicated that 44% of property owners, who were able to, agreed to their value online this year. He also mentioned that, on average, each appraiser is visiting with 1,500 to 2,000 property owners yearly. Lankford discussed the postcard that is sent to certain owners.

WCAD Presentations

Lankford informed the Board that he and Gaddes presented to a variety of realtors at a Property Tax Chat for Independence Title and Keller Williams.

Property Value Study

Lankford discussed the Property Value Study from the Comptroller's office. He indicated that Bartlett ISD was reviewed and the District had passed through the appeal process. Lankford communicated that the District is investigating ways to change procedures. He commended Charles Vasquez, the District's lead appraiser, for his work on this project.

Board of Directors Election Process Update

Lankford reviewed the Board election process. He discussed the correspondence that had been sent to the taxing units regarding the details about the process.

Lankford informed the Board that, each election year, he attempts to inform the units which members are willing to serve again so they may timely nominate individuals. He indicated that the entities prefer to get this information by the first of September. Lankford reviewed the important statutory election deadlines; informing the Board that written resolutions for nominations, from the taxing units, were due back to the Chief Appraiser before October 15th.

Hunt informed the other members that she would not be returning to serve on the Board. She expressed her enjoyment of working with the other members and District staff and mentioned she had been serving on this Board for 22 years. Hunt offered her future assistance and expressed how proud she was of the District and the facility. Crowley also offered to help with the audit in the future since she too would be leaving the Board. Chadwell thanked both Hunt and Crowley. Lankford expressed his appreciation as well.

Lawsuit, Arbitration and SOAH Reports

Lankford reviewed the lawsuit, arbitration and SOAH reports. Chadwell inquired of the possibility of including information regarding DBA (Doing Business As). Lankford mentioned that new arbitrations should be coming to an end.

WCAD Christmas Party

Lankford reminded the Board members that the District's Christmas party was scheduled for Saturday, December 9th. The party will take place on Lake Austin.

Employee Holiday Approval

Previously during the meeting, the Board had postponed the employee holiday discussion. Gaddes indicated that the Commissioners Court had granted the County employees twelve holidays with two floating holidays and two bereavement days.

Honeycutt moved for approval of the holiday schedule as presented with the addition of the Tuesday after Labor Day (2018) and the Wednesday before Thanksgiving (2017). Chadwell seconded. The motion carried.

Board Agenda Additions for Future Meeting

- A special called meeting was set for September 27th
- Chief Appraiser Compensation may be added to the October Board agenda
- Letter received from the ARB to be added to the October agenda

Board Announcements

- There were no Board announcements.

The Board set their next regular meeting date as follows:
Thursday, October 12, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

The meeting adjourned at 1:14 p.m.

Respectfully,


Deborah Hunt, Vice Chairman


Cecilia Crowley, Secretary