

Williamson Central Appraisal District

Board of Directors Meeting

Minutes of April 6, 2023

Jon Lux, Chairman, called the regular meeting of the Williamson Central Appraisal District Board of Directors to order Thursday, April 6, 2023, at 9:02 a.m. Board members present; Jon Lux, Harry Gibbs, Lora Weber, Hope Hisle-Piper, Mason Moses, and Larry Gaddes. Quorum declared.

Some of the District's management staff were in attendance.

Pledges of Allegiance

Receipt of Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Taxpayer Liaison Officer's Report

Report on Property Owner Contacts

Glenda Williams, the District's Taxpayer Liaison Officer, was present to report on the status of her contact with property owners. Williams reported that most calls were regarding shortages in escrow accounts and that all issues had been resolved.

Consider approval of minutes of the Board of Directors for the regular meeting – March 9, 2023.

Moses made a motion to approve the March 9, 2023 minutes as presented. Weber seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Consideration of Monthly Financials

The February 2023 financials and expenditures were reviewed and filed for audit.

Appraisal Review Board Hearing Procedures

Lankford informed the members of a law change that requires the Board of Directors to approve the Appraisal Review Board (ARB) hearing procedures. Mary Bonnette, the newly appointed ARB Chair, reviewed the changes that were made. She indicated that these changes had been submitted to the Comptroller's office for approval and that she had yet to receive their response but that she did not expect any issues. Lankford commended Bonnette for the way she was overseeing items with the ARB.

Weber mentioned adding verbiage to the ARB procedures regarding ex parte communications. It was mentioned that this is covered in the property tax code. Bonnette to discuss with the ARB's attorney.

Moses moved to accept the Appraisal Review Board Hearing Procedures as presented. Weber seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Quantarium Group Contract

Lankford reminded the Board that the District had hired a company to conduct a roll back finder for agricultural properties. This company was hired to identify a change of use in the land from one year to the next.

Lankford informed the Board that the District planned to carry forward with this each year since it had shown such a high return on investment. He indicated that the previous company the District utilized no longer offers this service. Lankford mentioned that the number of images varies per year depending on how many agricultural properties are reviewed, but that the District estimated a cost of \$13,000 this year for this project. He also indicated that there were monies within the District's budget to cover this item.

Weber made a motion to approve the Quantarium Group contract for a total amount of \$0.45 cents per property image. Gibbs seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Compensation Policy for Employees

Lankford reminded the members that they had previously discussed a compensation policy for employees. Moses had inquired if there was such a policy for staff. The key point to this policy would be the importance of paying District employees at market levels. Lankford indicated that the District would review salaries each year but would look at doing a compensation study every three to five years. He expressed his appreciation to Moses for bringing this to his attention.

Moses moved to approve the Compensation Policy for Employees as presented. Hisle-Piper seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Prototype I.T. Contract

Lankford informed the Board that the District had researched an I.T. consulting company to provide technical services and assist with I.T. projects. The company that was chosen was Prototype I.T. He explained there would be a one-time service fee for this vendor to learn the District's infrastructure.

Hisle-Piper moved to approve the Prototype I.T. contract for 15 hours of monthly service for \$2,700 per month and a \$500 one-time fee for set up. Weber seconded. Gibbs inquired about the contract structure. It was indicated that this was a month-to-month contract. The motion carried unanimously.

Huntress Cybersecurity Contract

Lankford reminded the Board that he had participated in a panel of Chief Appraisers during the recent Texas Association of Appraisal Districts Conference regarding cybersecurity. He mentioned that all panel members had all been through cybersecurity attacks. He discussed the issues these attacks had caused within the District. Lankford explained that hiring Huntress Cybersecurity would help protect the District against another one of these attacks. He also indicated that there were monies within the professional services budget category that could cover this expense and that he planned to budget for this item in the 2024 budget. Discussion followed.

Gibbs made a motion to approve the contract with Core Recon, L.L.C. for the security monitoring software "Huntress" for a total amount of \$16,500 for one year. Hisle-Piper seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Chief Appraiser's Report

WCAD Presentations

Lankford discussed a presentation he had done with Gaddes for a local realtor group. He mentioned that this presentation video would be placed on the District's website to be able to share with the public.

Lankford also mentioned being contacted by Hisle-Piper regarding a possible webinar for new homeowners. He indicated that although information was included on the District's website, the District would, for the coming year, work to produce a video that would be placed on Nextdoor, a social networking site for neighborhoods.

Lankford informed the Board that Aaron Moore, the District's Director of Appraisal, had presented to realtors for RE/MAX. He also indicated that he had been on the local news recently regarding home values in Williamson County.

Lankford mentioned a presentation he had done regarding the technology used at the District. He indicated that this information was very well received.

WCAD Initiatives

Lankford displayed the District's website and explained that the market analysis portion of the property search function had been updated. He also discussed the interactive map, time adjusted sales, the website banner, and the property value notice.

Pictometry Change Finder Return on Investment

Lankford explained that change finder, a change detection software that the District utilizes, showed a 938% return on investment. This software helps detect changes to properties for appraisal purposes.

Budget Board Meeting Calendar

Lankford mentioned some upcoming important dates for this year's budget. He indicated that the proposed budget must be approved by the Board of Directors by June 14th in order to be sent to the taxing units. He also mentioned the September 14th Board meeting and indicated its importance for the Board to adopt the final budget and send it to the taxing units.

2022 Financial Audit

Lankford informed the Board that the financial audit, which would normally be received during this time frame, would be a bit delayed this year due to the auditor's schedule. He indicated that the audit would be presented to the Board at their June meeting.

Methods & Assistance Program Review Update

Lankford reminded the members that the Comptroller's office audits the District in two ways; one with the Property Value Study, to ensure appraisals are at market value and the other the Methods & Assistance Program (MAP) Review. He mentioned that this year the MAP Review was conducted. During this review, the District is audited to ensure the tax code is being followed. Lankford mentioned that the reviewer had a couple of recommendations for changes for 2023. He explained the reasons for these changes and mentioned that the reviewer would return for a final review.

2023 WCAD Entity Meeting

Lankford announced that the District's Entity Meeting was very well attended with sixty-three attendees from thirty-three different taxing units. He indicated that the taxing units were very appreciative for the information received.

Lawsuit, Arbitration and SOAH Reports

Lankford reviewed the lawsuit and arbitration reports. There were no State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH) on which to report. He reminded the Board that they were only receiving a summary report and that the full lawsuit report would be provided quarterly. He commended the lawsuit team for the work they had done.

Board Agenda Additions for Future Meeting

Lankford indicated that he would update the Board regarding legislation at their May or June Board meeting.

Board Announcements

There were no Board announcements.

The Board set their next meeting date for Thursday, May 4, 2023 at 9 a.m.

The Board had previously set the following meeting dates:

- Thursday, June 8, 2023 at 9 a.m.
- Thursday, July 13, 2023 at 9 a.m.
- Thursday, September 14, 2023 at 9 a.m.
- Wednesday, October 11, 2023 at 9 a.m.
- Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 9 a.m.

The regular meeting adjourned at 10:16 a.m.

Respectfully,



Jon Lux, Chairman



Lora Weber, Secretary