

Williamson Central Appraisal District

Board of Directors Meeting

Minutes of January 11, 2024

Lora Weber, acting Secretary, called the regular meeting of the Williamson Central Appraisal District Board of Directors to order Thursday, January 11, 2024, at 9:01 a.m. Board members present: Lora Weber, Hope Hisle-Piper, Michael Wei and Larry Gaddes. Harry Gibbs attended virtually, and Jon Lux was absent. Quorum declared.

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

Pledges of Allegiance

Lankford introduced the District's new Board member, Michael Wei. Wei was welcomed to the Board.

Oath of Office by Board Members

District Judge Bill Gravell, Jr. thanked the Board members for their service and mentioned what a privilege it is to serve in the community.

Gravell administered the oath of office to the newly elected Board of Director members for 2024 who were in attendance; Lora Weber, Hope Hisle-Piper, Michael Wei and Larry Gaddes.

Election of Officers

Weber made a motion to nominate Lux to serve as the Board Chairman. Hisle-Piper seconded. The motion carried.

Gibbs moved to nominate Weber to serve as the Vice Chairperson. Hisle-Piper seconded. The motion carried.

Weber made a motion to nominate Hisle-Piper to serve as the Board Secretary. Wei seconded. The motion carried.

Receipt of Public Comments

Lankford announced that his predecessor, Bill Carroll, had passed away recently. He mentioned that Carroll was his personal mentor and expressed how much he would be missed.

Board of Director Recognition

Former Board member, Mason Moses, was in attendance. Lankford thanked Moses for his service and all he had done for the District. Weber expressed her appreciation to Moses as well especially through the compensation process. Lankford announced that the Texas flag that was presented to Moses had been flown over the District's building. Moses expressed his appreciation to everyone for the job that is done by the District.

Employee of the Year Recognition

Lankford announced that the District annually selects two staff members who are named Employee of the Year. One is chosen from the Appraisal department and one from Operations.

Abby Anderson, one of the District's newer appraisers, was introduced by Lankford. Lankford announced that Anderson, who is a quick learner, was doing a great job. He thanked Anderson for everything she had done for the District.

Lankford introduced Kat Rehmann from the Operations Department. He announced that Rehmann had done outstanding in taking over the role of another employee at her exit.

Employee of the Year certificates were presented to Anderson and Rehmann.

Introduction of Key District Staff

Lankford introduced key District staff. Colleen McElroy, the Administrative Office Manager was introduced, as well as Deputy Chief Appraiser, Chris Connelly who, Lankford mentioned, was the key behind the District changing their appraisal methodology.

Lankford also introduced Jessica Miller, the Director of Operations, who had recently taken on this role and was doing an excellent job. Amanda Bayler, the Assistant Director of Operations, who Lankford announced had filled this role very well, was also introduced. Lankford mentioned that Aaron Moore, who was not in attendance, is the District's Director of Appraisal and Johnny Robins, also not in attendance at the time, is the Assistant Director of Appraisal.

Lankford introduced Michael Page, the I.T. Manager, Nicole Giannelli who assists the Appraisal Review Board (ARB) and Kimberly Gamboa, the Business and HR Manager who also handles the District's budget related items. Glenda Williams, the District's Taxpayer Liaison Officer (TLO) for the Board was also introduced.

Taxpayer Liaison Officer's Report

Report on Property Owner Contacts

Williams reported on the status of her contact with property owners.

Update on Appointment of Appraisal Review Board Members by Administrative Law Judge

Williams also reported on the appointment of the ARB members by the Administrative Law Judge. She announced that the ARB appointments had been made and although there had been one auxiliary member who would not be able to serve, as of January 1, 2024, a full ARB with auxiliary members had been appointed.

Williams announced that the TLO is also responsible for sending information to the Comptroller's office regarding comments and suggestions filed concerning ARB hearing procedures or any other matter related to the fairness and efficiency of the ARB. These comments are to be sent to the Comptroller yearly on December 31st. Williams announced that this document was sent on December 18, 2023 and that there were four issues reported.

Executive Session began at 9:31 a.m. and ended at 9:55 a.m.

Review & Compensation of Taxpayer Liaison Officer

Consideration and possible action on items discussed in Executive Session

Review & Compensation of Taxpayer Liaison Officer

Gaddes made a motion to move the auto allowance of \$200 into the regular salary budget line item for the Taxpayer Liaison Officer (TLO). He also moved to increase the total monthly salary amount by \$150.00. With the move and the increase, the new total monthly salary for the TLO will be \$1,250.00. This amount will be exclusively in the salary line item. Hisle-Piper seconded. The motion carried.

Gaddes announced that he serves as an ex officio Board member and although he can make motions, he cannot vote because he is not a voting member of the Board. It was mentioned that this would change in July when the new publicly elected members take office, at that time Gaddes will become a voting member.

Consider approval of minutes of the Board of Directors for the regular meeting – November 20, 2023.

Hisle-Piper made a motion to approve the November 20, 2023, minutes as presented. Wei seconded. The motion carried.

Consideration of Monthly Financials

The October and November 2023 financials and expenditures were reviewed and filed for audit.

Sidwell Company Authorization

Lankford mentioned the Sidwell Company, a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) company that the District uses to help coordinate their GIS with their Maps and Records team. He announced that the District's ARC GIS will discontinue their support in March of this year. Lankford mentioned that the contract provided had been reviewed by the District's attorney. He commented that this migration should not affect the user experience, but that communication would take place with the entities. Gaddes inquired about historical data, which Lankford indicated the District would look into providing. Discussion followed.

Wei moved to approve the GIS Professional Services contract with the Sidwell Company in the amount of \$36,712. Hisle-Piper seconded. The motion carried.

Resolution Calling Election for May 4, 2024 for the Purpose of Electing Board of Directors (Resolution #2024-01)

Lankford announced that in July of 2024, the District would have three new Board members as a result of the general election. He indicated that this general election process was completely new to all appraisal districts. He also mentioned that Williamson County had hired a new Elections Administrator, Bridgette Escobedo. Lankford informed the Board that he had been working with the City of Round Rock and that the first step in the process was for the Board to call for an election. He announced that if changes were needed to the resolution form presented that these would be brought to them at their next meeting. Lankford reviewed the public Board election process.

Hisle-Piper made a motion to order a public election be held on May 4, 2024 to fill three places on the Board of Directors – Resolution #2024-01. Wei seconded. The motion carried.

2024 TAAD Conference & Voting Delegate

Lankford informed the Board that each year, during the Texas Association of Appraisal District's (TAAD) Conference, votes are conducted regarding changes to the bylaws, the officers, etc. He announced that typically the Chief Appraiser is named the voting delegate and the Deputy Chief the alternate.

Wei moved to designate Alvin Lankford as the 2024 TAAD voting delegate and Chris Connelly as the alternate. Hisle-Piper seconded. The motion carried.

Lankford discussed the agenda for this conference which takes place in Houston this year and asked that the Board notify the District if they would like to attend. He indicated that the agenda lists specific items for Board members and that these items generally are addressed on Tuesday of the conference.

Chief Appraiser's Report

New WCAD Website

Lankford displayed the District's newly updated website.

WCAD Resources Videos

Lankford also discussed videos located on the website. He thanked Hisle-Piper for the idea of a new service video. Instead of a webinar, the District had constructed a web video. Lankford displayed the website resources video for the Board. He thanked Connelly for producing this video. Wei inquired about expanding to a Spanish version. Lankford confirmed that the items listed on the District's website page can be translated to another language, with the exception of the video.

Assessment Tax Pro (ATP) User's Group Meeting

Lankford reminded the Board that Assessment Tax Pro (ATP) was the company who provides the computer software for the District's appraisals. He announced that annual user's group meetings are conducted for all users in the state. He indicated that these meetings were started over ten years ago mainly to help with development of forms. Lankford indicated that the most recent meeting, which was well attended, had been held in early December in College Station.

Lankford announced that there were over 40 people from various areas of the state in attendance along with associates from the District's software provider. He announced that ATP would not exist five years from now and that all software would be converted to the cloud. He indicated that this may be a little concerning regarding pricing and that he would be providing additional information as it becomes available. Gaddes indicated that the tax office had moved to cloud services which were significantly more expensive; however, this did improve their response times.

Lawsuit, Arbitration and SOAH Reports

Lankford reviewed the lawsuit, binding arbitration and SOAH process. There were no State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH) on which to report. He discussed these as options available to a property owner and indicated that he reports monthly on all of the District's litigation, arbitration and SOAH activity.

Lankford announced that the District's lawsuit numbers had jumped from 150 to over 300 per year, and now over 700 lawsuits were filed for this past year. He indicated that currently these duties are handled by others in the office, the District would need a full litigation team to handle this workload. He did mention that this is not unique to Williamson County, that it is like this across the state. Lankford explained the arbitration process.

Board Agenda Additions for Future Meeting

Lankford discussed the current budget process and how most appraisal districts in Texas are shifting their budget timeframe due to the new Board election cycle. He indicated that currently the initial review of the budget is done in April, then by June 15th the Board approves the proposed budget and then the final budget is approved by September 15th.

The new proposed timeframe would have the initial budget full review still in April but approve the proposed budget in May and have final budget approval at the June Board Meeting.

No other agenda additions were discussed.

Board Announcements

The Board welcomed Michael Wei again.

The Board set the following meeting dates:


- Thursday, February 8, 2024 at 9 a.m.
- Thursday, March 14, 2024 at 9 a.m.
- Thursday, April 11, 2024 at 9 a.m.
- Thursday, May 23, 2024 at 9 a.m.
- Thursday, June 13, 2024 at 9 a.m.

The regular meeting adjourned at 10:59 a.m.

Respectfully,



Lora Weber, Vice Chairman



Hope Hisle-Piper, Secretary