

# **Williamson Central Appraisal District**

## **Board of Directors Meeting**

### **Minutes of May 15, 2025**

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Jon Lux, Chair, called the regular meeting of the Williamson Central Appraisal District Board of Directors to order Thursday, May 15, 2025, at 9:01 a.m. Board members present; Jon Lux, Lora Weber, Hope Hisle-Piper, Lisa Birkman, Harry Gibbs, and Larry Gaddes. Mike Sanders attended virtually. Mason Moses and Michael Wei were absent. Quorum declared.

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

Pledges of Allegiance

Receipt of Public Comments

Property owner, David Legere, who had addressed the Board at the April meeting was present. He indicated that he was in attendance to provide the Board with an update since the last meeting.

Property owner, Paul Johnson, was also in attendance. Johnson expressed his concern regarding some of the District's appraisal policies.

Taxpayer Liaison Officer's Report

Report on Property Owner Contacts

Glenda Williams, the District's Taxpayer Liaison Officer (TLO), was present to report on the status of her contact with property owners.

Williams discussed a meeting that had taken place with Paul Johnson, the property owner who had addressed the Board earlier in the meeting. After review of the information provided, although the issue remains unresolved, Williams indicated that she had found no violation by the District and had no recommendation for change.

Texas County & District Retirement Systems Presentation

Tim Krause with Texas County and District Retirement Systems (TCDRS) was present to address the Board members.

Krause highlighted how the District's savings-based retirement plan works. The plan rates for 2026 were discussed. Krause discussed the Board's responsibility regarding the District's retirement.

Consent / Possible Action Items

*The consent agenda includes non-controversial and routine items that the Board may act on with one single vote. Any Board member may pull any item from the consent agenda in order that the Board discuss and act upon it individually as part of the regular agenda.*

Consent Agenda Items:

Approval of Minutes of the Board of Directors for the regular meeting – April 10, 2025

Monthly Financials

## Quarterly Investment Report

## Quarterly Taxing Unit Payments

Birkman moved for approval of items A-D on the consent agenda. Weber seconded. The motion carried.

## Texas County & District Retirement System

Lankford informed the Board that a decision regarding the District's retirement could be made today but was not required until the approval of the final budget at the Board's September meeting. Lux mentioned that the Board generally holds off on the decision and he recommend they wait in order to factor in all of the District's expenses.

No motion was made.

## Subcommittee Report: General Meeting Guidelines *(Subcommittee: Birkman, Hisle-Piper, and Gibbs)*

Lankford discussed the proposed guidelines which were distributed to the Board. Birkman, who had taken part in drafting these guidelines, explained the process that was used and indicated that she and Hisle-Piper had met initially to discuss. The efficiency of meetings and the duties of the officers of the Board were discussed.

The Board also discussed the role of the presiding officer and the fact that the Board should observe Robert's Rules of Order for their decorum. Birkman mentioned extending this decorum, not only to Board members, but also to District staff. It was mentioned that the Board Chair should have the ability to limit the conversations. The number of questions the Board could ask would not be limited. Birkman also mentioned that this would not silence members but asks them to be reasonable. Discussion followed.

No motion was made. The Board was asked to provide any feedback to Hisle-Piper, as the Committee Chair. This item will be added to the Board's next agenda. Gaddes and Gibbs expressed their appreciation to the Committee.

## Additional Appraisal Review Board Members for Ownwell Appeals

Mary Bonnette, the Appraisal Review Board (ARB) Chair and Nicole Giannelli, the District's Appeal Coordinator, were in attendance.

Lankford distributed a report to the Board summarizing issues regarding property tax agent, Ownwell, Inc. (Ownwell). Board discussion followed.

In order to meet the anticipated additional workload resulting from the issues discussed in the report, Lankford indicated that 15 additional Appraisal Review Board (ARB) members and five additional District appraisers would be needed. The hiring of additional ARB members was discussed, and Bonnette asked that she be included in the hiring process. Lux asked the Board to consider hiring additional personnel as a new requirement that needs to be met. The Board urged that the ARB Selection Subcommittee (made up of Moses, Hisle-Piper, and Sanders) start interviews as soon as possible.

Weber made a motion to approve hiring five District appraisers and 15 ARB members. Hisle-Piper seconded the motion. Discussion followed. The motion carried.

Since this issue affects many other districts in the state, the Board asked Lankford to discuss this issue and the possibility of deceptive trade practices with the Texas Association of Appraisal Districts Legislative Committee for the next legislative session.

Lux asked the ARB Selection Subcommittee to notify him if they needed assistance in getting enough candidates for interviews.

The Board recessed from 11:08 a.m. to 11:21 a.m. when they returned to open session.

#### Public Hearing and Discussion on Amendment to 2025-2026 Reappraisal Plan

Lankford discussed the District's MAP (Methods and Assistance Program) Review. He reminded the Board that the Texas Comptroller regularly reviews each appraisal district's procedures. In the opposite year, the Property Value Study (PVS) is conducted reviewing the District's values.

Lankford explained an issue with this year's MAP Review mentioning a two-part question pertaining to the Reappraisal Plan (Plan). The first question was regarding notification to the taxing units of a public hearing ten days in advance of the hearing. The second question inquired about sending the Plan to the Comptroller's office within 60 days of approval by the Board.

Lankford explained that the District had received an initial failing score on each of these questions. He explained that the process for completing these tasks changes between even- and odd- numbered years. Unfortunately, the incorrect year's information had been used in the submission. He discussed the remedy recommended by the Comptroller's Office to submit a minor amendment to the Plan changing the dates on the cover page.

Lux opened the public hearing on the Reappraisal Plan. The public hearing was closed.

#### Approval of Amendment to 2025-2026 Reappraisal Plan (Resolution #2025-02)

Gibbs moved for approval of resolution #2025-02 approving the District's amended Reappraisal Plan as submitted. Birkman seconded. The motion carried.

#### 2026 Budget Workshop

Lankford reviewed the District's 2026 budget. He reminded the Board that a salary study had been conducted three years prior. He also mentioned that, by the Board's July meeting, the District should have a better idea on the budget numbers for insurance.

Sanders expressed his thoughts that the Taxpayer Liaison Officer, Glenda Williams, provides a very valuable service and has a high level of knowledge. He felt Williams should receive a pay increase. Lux asked that members bring their budget binders back to the Board meetings in coming months as the budget is reviewed.

Weber left the meeting at 12:03 p.m.

#### Entity Budget Overview Meetings

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

#### Chief Appraiser's Report

##### Appraisal Review Board Appointments

Lankford provided an update to the Board concerning the ARB appointments that were discussed at the prior meeting. He reminded the Board that two ARB members were needing to defer their first year of service. He indicated that after speaking with the District's attorney, the Board is not required to take action on this item at this time.

## Protest Season Update

Lankford displayed the current protest levels and explained the protest process. He announced that the District's numbers would be very high this year due to the Ownwell protests, which were discussed earlier in the meeting.

## Reimbursement Contract for Public Finance Corporation Expenses

Lankford discussed a lawsuit that had been filed due to the District's denial of an exemption. He explained that the property was owned by a Public Finance Corporation. He discussed some of the expenses associated with this lawsuit. Lankford mentioned that he was in the process of contracting with the City of Round Rock and Williamson County for reimbursement of these expenses.

## Legislative Updates

Lankford provided updates on some legislative bills. He mentioned that May 12, 2025 would be the last day for the House Committee to report bills out of the House and that May 24, 2025 was the last day for the Senate. Lankford announced that the main session would end on June 2, 2025.

## WCAD Presentations

Lankford discussed a general overview presentation he had done in Hutto at the Hutto Power Breakfast regarding the operations of the District.

## WCAD Awarded Comptroller's Finance Transparency Star

Lankford expressed how proud he was for the District to receive its first Transparency Star from the Texas Comptroller. He indicated that achieving this star, showing our transparency, was one of the District's goals for the year. Lankford displayed the documents located on the website and thanked Kimberly Gamboa, the District's Finance HR Manager, for her efforts in gathering this information.

## Property Owner Surveys

Lankford mentioned the District's Property Owner Surveys and the high satisfaction rating by owners. He indicated that around 200 surveys had been submitted thus far and the satisfaction rating was hovering around 99% across the board.

## Lawsuit, Arbitration and SOAH Reports

Lankford reviewed the lawsuit, arbitration, limited binding arbitration and State Offices of Administrative Hearings (SOAH) reports.

## 2025 WCAD Christmas Party

Lankford asked the members to mark their calendars for the District's 2025 Christmas Party. He indicated that this event would be taking place on Saturday, December 13<sup>th</sup> at the Oasis in Austin.

## Board Agenda Additions for Future Meeting

- Lux asked that the Board decorum item be added to the Board's next agenda.

## Board Announcements

- Lankford mentioned a Community Care fundraiser.

The Board had previously set the following meeting dates:

- Thursday, June 12, 2025 at 9 a.m.
- Thursday, July 10, 2025 at 9 a.m.
- Thursday, September 11, 2025 at 9 a.m.
- Thursday, October 9, 2025 at 9 a.m.
- Thursday, November 13, 2025 at 9 a.m.

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully,

  
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Jon Lux, Chair  
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Lora Weber, Vice Chair