

Williamson Central Appraisal District

Board of Directors Meeting

Minutes of April 8, 2021

Charles Chadwell, Chairman, called the regular meeting of the Williamson Central Appraisal District Board of Directors to order Thursday, April 8, 2021 at 9:02 a.m. Board members present; Charles Chadwell, Harry Gibbs, Donald Hisle, Jon Lux, Lora Weber, and Larry Gaddes. Quorum declared.

This meeting was conducted via a combination of a RingCentral videoconference as well as in person. Some of the District's management staff attended the meeting.

Pledges of Allegiance

Receipt of Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Taxpayer Liaison Officer's Report

Report on Property Owner Contacts

Charley Rouse, the District's Taxpayer Liaison Officer, was present to report on the status of his contact with property owners. Rouse indicated that he had received a large variety of calls since the Board's last meeting and that his volume of calls had been increasing. He expressed his appreciation to District staff members who are able to resolve issues quickly.

Update on Appointment of Appraisal Review Board by Administrative Law Judge

Rouse provided an update on the Appraisal Review Board (ARB) appointments by the Administrative Law Judge. He announced that the judge had made the final appointments and that Rae Wilhite, the District's Records Manager, had been of great assistance in this process.

Lankford announced that one auxiliary ARB member would no longer be able to serve, and one full time member would have a limited schedule. He indicated that this could cause more of a challenge to certifying timely, but that the District would monitor for any additional needs in the coming weeks.

Consider approval of minutes of the Board of Directors for the regular meeting – March 11, 2021.

Hisle made a motion to approve the March 11, 2021 minutes as presented. Weber seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Consideration of Monthly Financials

The February 2021 financials and expenditures were reviewed and filed for audit.

Appraisal Review Board Attendance & Discipline Policy

Lankford announced that the ARB Chair, Carol Frey, was present to discuss the ARB Attendance and Discipline Policy. Frey indicated that she had been drafting a policy to send to both the ARB and the District's attorney to review. It was mentioned that some ARB members were still in need of taking the required training. Frey reviewed the number of ARB members indicating that there were eight new members, three that were not eligible and ten that had not yet gone through the training.

It was mentioned that this item would need to be tabled since no final document was ready for the Board's review. Chadwell suggested tabling this item until the Board meets in May.

No motion was made.

Reserve Purchase for Appraisal Review Board Panel Rooms

Lankford discussed a possible reserve purchase for the Appraisal Review Board panel rooms. He reminded the members that other options had been discussed previously but were found to be very costly. Lankford also reminded the Board that the decision had been made to install temporary walls to accommodate these panel rooms. He mentioned a sound transference issue and discussed a temporary solution. Lankford discussed much higher pricing received from an additional vendor. The possibility of further reimbursement from the Cares Act Funds was discussed.

Hisle moved to approve the reserve purchase for the Appraisal Review Board panel rooms in the amount of \$11,351 for Painting with Purpose. These funds will be taken from the Contingency Reserve account. Chadwell seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

2022 Budget

Budget Board Meeting Calendar

Lankford announced that the District had begun drafting the budget for the coming year. He reviewed some important deadline dates.

Lankford mentioned May 13th, which would be the Board's first budget workshop where a line-item review of changes to the budget are discussed. He also mentioned June 14th when the District's proposed budget would be delivered to the taxing units and September 14th, which is the deadline to adopt the final budget and mail to the taxing units.

Lankford announced that the Board would need to approve the proposed budget as of June 14th. He indicated the importance of the Board having a quorum for these meetings.

Virtual Town Hall Meeting

Gaddes addressed the other Board members regarding previous discussions pertaining to a Town Hall meeting. He expressed his thoughts that conducting a virtual meeting could be an issue and suggested that he and Lankford do a prerecorded session to include the same information that was presented previously. Gaddes felt that the meeting would be more successful being prerecorded as opposed to live. He mentioned that at the end of the video, contact information could be provided to direct property owners with questions.

Gaddes discussed the possibility of utilizing this recording throughout the year. Lux thought it would be beneficial for participants to be able to watch the recording at any time. Chadwell reiterated that he would like to be as transparent as possible to get information out to the public. Discussion followed.

Update on Coronavirus Vaccine for Staff

Lankford reminded the Board that at their last meeting a one-time stipend of \$100 or four hours of paid time off, per the employee's choice, had been approved by the Board for District employees who chose to be vaccinated for the COVID-19 virus. He announced that, at this point, four employees had been fully vaccinated. He indicated that several had received their first vaccination and were awaiting their second. The stipend or time off is not granted until the employee is fully vaccinated.

Quantanite Contract

Lankford mentioned the District's wishes to hire the phone service company, Quantanite USA Inc. (Quantanite) He indicated that the District had received more phone calls this year than ever before; reporting receiving 1,500 calls the first business day after appraisal notices were received. Lankford informed the Board that the District was only able to answer around 800 of these calls. He indicated that typically temporary employees are utilized during this time; however, this year obtaining temporary employees had proven to be difficult.

Lankford indicated that the District's solution was to hire Quantanite to answer phone calls. He informed the Board that a script is provided to answer general questions and any information needed beyond that script is routed to District staff. Lankford reviewed the pricing and mentioned that this contract had been approved by the District's attorney.

Hisle made a motion to approve the Quantanite contract as presented at a monthly rate of \$10,664. This contract will continue as necessary through the end of the protest season. Weber seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Chief Appraiser's Report

New Tax Rate Website & Postcard

Lankford discussed the new tax rate website and property owner postcard advertising the tax rate website that had been created from previous legislation. He felt this postcard would be a much greater success this year. He reminded the Board that the tax estimate had been removed from the appraisal notice this year.

Lankford mentioned a piece of legislation being proposed that would remove the need for the postcard.

WCAD Website Updates

Lankford displayed the WCAD website and discussed recent updates. He informed the Board that property owner phone calls are addressed by adding additional items to the website, which will hopefully reduce the number of calls.

Legislative Updates

Lankford discussed a legislative bill concerning limits on terms for Board members. This bill would limit Board of Director members to serving only three consecutive terms, or a total of six years.

Lankford expressed the importance of having long standing Board members. He asked that Chadwell and Gibbs, the District's longest-term members, contact their local legislators.

2021 Entity Meeting

Lankford announced that the District's annual Entity Meeting had gone over very well. He indicated that this year's meeting had the highest attendance numbers seen thus far. Lankford announced that there had been some shock at the increase in values. The market had taken an unexpected turn upwards in 2020 amid a global pandemic.

Update on Property Value Study

Lankford provided an update on the Comptroller's Property Value Study. He reminded the Board that the District had five of its Eastern rural school districts fall below the requirement. He announced that a protest had been filed on each of these school districts. Lankford indicated that, although the District knew when sending conservative values last year, this could be the case, there should be no impact to schools in the first year and by year three these issues will be resolved.

Lawsuit, Arbitration and SOAH Reports

Lankford reviewed the lawsuit and arbitration reports. There were not any State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH) on which to report.

Timing Change for Board/Investment & Budget Policies

Lankford reviewed some changes in the timing for certain Board agenda items throughout the year.

Board Agenda Additions for Future Meeting

- Chadwell announced that if any member would like to request an addition to the Board agenda to contact himself or Lankford.
- Lux requested that the Chief Appraiser Evaluation & Compensation Process be included on the Board's next meeting agenda.

Board Announcements

There were no Board announcements.

The Board set the following meeting dates:

Thursday, May 13, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.
Thursday, June 10, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.
Thursday, July 8, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.
Thursday, September 9, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

The meeting adjourned at 10:33 a.m.

Respectfully,


Charles Chadwell, Chairman


Donald L. Hisle, Secretary