MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING DEL MAR COLLEGE DISTRICT

October 14, 2025

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Regents of the Del Mar College District convened on Tuesday, October 14, 2025, at 1:00 p.m., at the Center for Economic Development, 3209 S. Staples, Room 106, Corpus Christi, Texas with the following present:

From the Board:

Present:

Chair Carol Scott, Ms. Libby Averyt, Dr. Nicholas Adame, Dr. Anantha Babbili, Mr. Carl Crull, Mr. Rudy Garza, Jr., Mr. Bill Kelly, Mr. David Loeb, and Dr. Laurie Turner.

From the College:

Dr. Mark Escamilla, President and CEO; Ms. Lenora Keas, Executive Vice President and COO; Mr. Raul Garcia, Vice President and CFO; Mr. Ali Kolahdouz, Vice President and Chief Information Officer; Dr. Jonda Halcomb, Vice President and Chief Academic Officer; Ms. Tammy McDonald, Vice President of Administration and Human Resources; Dr. Patricia Benavides-Dominguez, Vice President for Student Affairs; Mr. Augustin Rivera, Jr., General Counsel; Mr. Matthew Busby, Vice President of Development and Donor Advising; Mr. Jeff Olsen, Chief of Staff and Vice President of Communication and Marketing; Ms. Delia Perez, Director of CEO Office and Board Relations, Mr. Conrado Garcia, Superintendent in Residence, and other staff and faculty.

CALL TO ORDER/QUORUM CALL

Chair Scott called the meeting to order with a quorum present. She requested a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Del Mar College Vision Statement.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS – The public was given the opportunity to provide public comments (both general and specific to any agenda item).

There were no public comments.

RECOGNITIONS:

Ms. Hernandez recognized the Veteran Services team who were honored for their outstanding support from student veterans and military-connected students. Their efforts led to the College receiving the 2025 Gold Veteran Education Excellence Recognition Award from the Texas Veterans Commission, announced by Governor Greg Abbott. This marks the College's second award, having previously received bronze in 2022.

Mr. Scott Bauer, District Director for Congressman Michael Cloud, presented a special congressional recognition to the College, commending the team's dedication and the impact of their services on over 2,000 veteran-related students in the past year.

Chair Scott expressed heartfelt appreciation for the team's work, emphasizing that their motivation stems from genuine care for veterans.

With no objection, for scheduling convenience, Chair Scott changed the order of the agenda:

Ms. Tammy McDonald introduced Mr. Dan Graves of Weaver, he presented the internal audit update. The discussion covered the completion of the FY25 internal audits, the status of ongoing audits, and the proposed FY26 audit plan. The Financial Aid Audit had a Satisfactory rating and the following findings: limited communication of established policies; minor compliance issues with federal standards; and some users had system access misaligned with job roles. Management has timely and appropriately addressed these issues. The Maintenance Audit is ongoing and expected to be completed by the end of November.

Mr. Graves provided an overall review of the Fiscal Year 2026 Audit Plan which includes continued audits for Maintenance and Senate Bill 17 compliance. New audits to be conducted include Grant compliance and Institutional Research and Reporting. Financial Aid, Bursar's Office and Accounts Payable & Disbursements departments will have a follow-up audit.

Regent Loeb made a motion to accept the Internal Audit Report that includes the proposed FY 2026 and FY 2025 Annual Audit Report. Regent Adame seconded the motion. There was no further discussion from the Board. There were no public comments. A vote was taken by show of hands, and the motion carried unanimously 9-0, amongst Regents present, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, Loeb, and Turner in favor.

CEO Annual Report -Title IX/SB212

(I: Communicate, Goal I: Collaborate across the College and Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

In compliance with the requirements under Texas Education Code Section 51.253(c) concerning the reporting of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking, Dr. Escamilla provided a report to the Board that included all the required information for the period

September 1, 2024, through August 31, 2025. The report will also be posted on the College's website as required and a Chief Executive Officer annual certification will be submitted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to certify compliance.

• September 10, 2025: TAMUCC State of the University (I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

Dr. Escamilla attended the Texas A&M-CC State of the University. This was especially celebratory due to the combined partnership of the Architecture Program which will soon be certified by the Coordinating Board.

• September 17, 2025: American GI Forum (AGIF) Dr. Hector P. Garcia Day Luncheon (I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

Dr. Escamilla attended the American GI Forum – Dr. Hector P. Garcia's Day luncheon at Oso Creek Campus.

REGENT'S REPORTS

Chair Scott advised the Board of Regents that the election process has begun for the San Patricio County Appraisal District Board of Directors. The Nueces County Appraisal District election process has also begun. Both elections will be discussed and voted on during the November Board of Regents meeting.

Chair Scott provided the Regents with an opportunity to share highlights from the 2025 CCATT Annual Conference in Austin, Texas. Regents Scott, Adame, Kelly and Babbili reported on their experiences and interactions with other conference participants.

Chair Scott and Dr. Natalie Villarreal represented the College by attending the Coastal Bend Legislative Day that was sponsored by the United Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce. They participated in a robust conversation with Ms. Isabel Soto, Professional Staff Member for the Chair of the House Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. Chair Scott and Dr. Villarreal met with Representative Vicente Gonzalez who will be moving into our congressional district. They also spoke with Senators Cruz and Cornyn and Representative Cloud and thanked them for the funding from the House Reconciliation Bill for workforce-related Pell Grant and were also able to speak with them about additional issues specific to the College.

STAFF REPORTS:

Chair Scott provided introductory remarks and both Chair Scott and Dr. Villarreal provided follow up on the Coastal Bend Legislative Day in DC.

Dr. Villarreal reported on changes in leadership at the national association level. The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) has a new leader, Dr. DeRionne Pollard, who is succeeding Dr. Walter Bumphus. Dr. Pollard is seen as a key contact for trustees at the federal level. In the Department of Education, Secretary Linda McMahon has decreased the size of the department. Mr. Nicholas Kent has been appointed to oversee all post-secondary education, including career, technical, and adult education, as well as federal student financial aid. This appointment is deemed significant for the College. Mr. Kent's focus is on fraudulent enrollment, low-value credentials, ROI for federal spending, and financial aid fraud.

For federal priorities, the President has called for Congress to raise the debt ceiling, which has resulted in a government shutdown. Dr. Villarreal emphasized the importance of Pell Grants and the need to advocate for their continued funding. Programs like TRIO and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act are under scrutiny regarding return on investment. She also discussed new Workforce Pell Grants, set to come into effect in July 2026, and the upcoming rulemaking process by the Department of Education.

The federal government's focus on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives and how grant applications are being reviewed, was discussed. Continued discussion regarding advocacy work in D.C. includes the focus on increasing the Pell Award amount to help students keep up with rising costs. About 1.6 million community college students receive Pell Grants which costs the federal government \$6 billion annually. Current administration is considering dissolving Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) and as part of the advocacy work is to focus on economic disadvantage instead of race and ethnicity. Texas's approach to funding based on economically and academically disadvantaged students and adult learners was presented as a potential model.

Chair Scott, Dr. Villarreal and Dr. Escamilla responded to questions and commentary from the Board of Regents.

Mr. Garcia provided a brief summary for this update and introduced Ms. DeeAnna Heavilin, a member of the Nueces County Appraisal District Board (NCAD) who was appointed by the Del Mar College Board of Regents.

Ms. Heavilin stated NCAD recently adopted their 2025-2026 operating budget which included significant cuts to the operating budget. Given the retirement of the Chief Appraiser at the end

of the fiscal year, the Board's top priority is finding a new chief appraiser who must be a registered professional appraiser and obtain the certified chief appraiser designation.

The appraisal district needs assistance in filling upcoming Appraisal Review Board (ARB) openings. The ARB is an independent citizen panel that hears and resolves taxpayer protests, ensuring fair and impartial consideration. The ARB reports to the tax liaison officer and is independent of the appraisal district and its board. Applications are currently being accepted for winter and spring appointments.

The appraisal district staff and Del Mar staff stay in contact regarding legislative updates impacting the College's budget. The Board recognizes that significant appraisal changes, valuation shifts, or litigation are important information for the College's budget planning, and the board members are committed to maintain regular communication.

Ms. Heavilin responded to questions from the Board of Regents.

Ms. Sanders provided details regarding the federal TRIO programs and how these grants are designed to help students from disadvantaged backgrounds succeed in college. Del Mar College's achievement is that it has been awarded two student support services grants this year. The Traditional TRIO SSS Grant represents the continuation of the College's TRIO SSS program for the fifth consecutive five-year cycle. The grant totals \$1,361,820 and will serve 160 students per year. Since 2020, the program has assisted over 825 students. The TRIO SSS STEM Grant was awarded for the first time to the College. This grant also totals \$1,361,820 over five years and will serve 120 students. This grant is particularly focused on students in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, or health-related fields.

Ms. Sanders reviewed the eligibility requirements and reported that for the STEM SSS program, students must be majoring in a STEM or health-related field. Traditional TRIO SSS participants can major in any field. She also provided information regarding the services offered for the programs which include coaching and tutoring, FAFSA guidance, financial planning assistance, grant aid, career planning, transfer to four-year institution support, and numerous workshops.

Ms. Sanders introduced Mr. Valton Stinson, Director, for both grants and staff members which included Tanya Berkstrom (TRIO Student Support Service Coordinator), Valerie Sufuentes (Administrative Assistant for both programs), and Isabella Choppa (Coordinator for TRIO Student Support Service).

Ms. Sanders responded to questions from the Board of Regents who congratulated her and the team as well.

Mr. Olsen reported that a recent brand health survey was conducted by MDR Advertising, led by Jessie Chrobocinski, Executive Director of Communications.

Ms. Chrobocinski provided the breakdown of the contents of the survey. The purpose was to understand how different audiences perceive Del Mar College compared to other regional colleges. The survey aimed to identify areas where the College can strengthen awareness, preference, and connection with potential students. The goal was to understand perceptions, identify competitive advantages, pinpoint deterrents to enrollment, and uncover resonant messaging for targeted audiences.

The methodology and demographics were reviewed which included 4,100 people in the Del Mar College service area. The demographic breakdown of respondents was 23% adults not enrolled and not working; 21% working adults not looking to switch careers; 21% working adults looking to switch careers; 16% college/university students; 12% parents of high school students or recent graduates; and 7% high school students.

The survey included life priorities of different audience segments, regional college awareness and consideration, and college rankings and perceptions. Del Mar College ranks highest in regional cost affordability and performs competitively in quality of education and reputation, though slightly behind four-year universities due to the perceived prestige of those institutions. Two-thirds of respondents are familiar with Del Mar College, demonstrating strong regional awareness. The overall opinion of Del Mar College is overwhelmingly 87% positive. The intent to attend Del Mar College is strong overall at 72% likely or very likely to attend.

The overall strategy is to strengthen Del Mar College's perception among high school students by focusing on affordability, belonging, and success stories. The enrollment and outreach marketing teams will use the insights to create targeted strategies in the coming months.

Ms. Chrobocinski, Mr. Olsen, and Dr. Escamilla responded to questions from the Board of Regents.

Ms. McDonald reported and acknowledged the significant effort involved in the compilation of the annual report and thanked the committee members. She introduced Chief Lauren White who provided information on the requirements, stating that colleges must report crime data, support victims of violence, and publicly outline safety policies and procedures. Chief White confirmed the College's compliance with the Clery Act and its notification to the Department of Education. She also expressed gratitude to the committee, College Relations, and the College's Print Shop for their contributions to the report's production.

 College)

Ms. McDonald provided information regarding the College's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and its submission to the Texas School Safety Center. She acknowledged Chief Lauren White, Captain Nathan Garcia, Ms. Jessica Alaniz - Executive Director of Risk Management, Mr. Chris Tweddle - Director of Environmental Health and Safety, and Mr. Alex Cahill - Environmental Health and Safety Manager.

Ms. McDonald stated the requirement for the EOP is mandated under Texas Education Code section 37.2071 which states school districts and junior colleges must develop and submit an EOP to the Texas School Safety Center annually. Del Mar College has consistently developed and revised its EOP and annexes to meet the criteria each year and has received satisfactory results for the past three submissions. The current submission cycle included a review of the College's basic plan and the active threat annex. The submission was made on October 1, 2025.

Ms. McDonald introduced Mr. Tweddle and Chief White who provided information regarding the College's EOP which is based on the five phases of emergency management: prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. Ms. Jessica Alaniz provided information regarding how the full EOP also addresses potential incidents like severe weather, hazardous materials incidents, medical emergencies, cyber security threats, and train derailments. A new quick reference guide for emergency and incident procedures has been developed for employees and students. This guide is designed to provide key information and instructions in a concise format. It will be distributed to new employees and students during orientation and will be available on platforms like Canvas.

Ms. McDonald responded to questions from the Board of Regents.

PENDING BUSINESS:

Status Report on Requested Information

(Goal 5: Workforce Development, Community Partnerships, and Advocacy)

CONSENT AGENDA

Notice to the Public

The following items are of a routine or administrative nature. The Board of Regents has been furnished with background and support material on each item, and/or it has been discussed at a previous meeting. All items will be acted upon by one vote without being discussed separately unless requested by a Board member or a citizen, in which event the item(s) will immediately be withdrawn for individual consideration in their normal sequence after the items not requiring separate discussion have been acted upon. The remaining items will be adopted by one vote.

CONSENT MOTIONS:

(At this point the Board will vote on all motions not removed for individual consideration.)

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:

1. Approval of Minutes:

Called Meeting, Adoption of Budget, August 26, 2025 Called Meeting, Adoption of Tax Rate, August 26, 2025 Called Meeting, August 26, 2025 Regular Board Meeting, September 9, 2025 (I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

2. Acceptance of Investments for September 2025
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Regent Babbili made a motion to adopt the Consent Agenda. Regent Kelly seconded the motion. There was no further discussion from the Board. There were no public comments. A vote was taken by show of hands, and the motion carried unanimously 9-0, amongst Regents present, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, Loeb, and Turner in favor.

REGULAR AGENDA

Mr. Garcia provided introductory remarks and introduced Mr. Barry Boyer from Meeder Investment Company. Mr. Boyer provided the Board with an overview of the quarterly investment report as August 31, 2025, for the College.

Mr. Boyer stated the College's portfolio's performance from May 31, 2025, to August 31, 2025, was reviewed and the book value decreased from \$113 million to \$78 million during this period. Investment income for the three months was just over \$1.1 million. The overall yield of the portfolio is 4.35%, with a weighted average maturity of 0.23 years.

The portfolio's yield of 4.35% is slightly above the 4.15% benchmark of the six-month treasury bill. The weighted average maturity is shorter than the maximum limit of 365 days, at about 83 days. The portfolio boasts a very high credit rating.

The portfolio is diversified across Local Government Investment Pools at approximately \$46 million, money market funds at about \$4 million, commercial paper is short-term, AAA rated, and US Treasuries is about \$15 million. The total earnings for the quarter are reported as a little over \$1.1 million. The funds are categorized into local maintenance, plant, revenue bond interest and sinking, and tax bond interest and sinking. The portfolio meets diversification requirements by spreading investments across the yield curve, different maturities, and sector types.

Regular Board Meeting October 14, 2025 Mr. Boyer anticipates interest rates to decrease over the next year, potentially with several rate cuts by the end of 2026. This will primarily impact the overnight rates, but the laddered portfolio of commercial paper and treasuries should help lock in yield certainty. The presentation projects the investment pool rate to remain around 3% by the end of the next year, which is considered a good yield for public funds in Texas.

Regent Babbili made a motion to approve the College's quarterly investment report for the period ending August 31, 2025, as presented. Regent Adame seconded the motion. There was no further discussion from the Board. There were no public comments. A vote was taken by show of hands, and the motion carried unanimously 9-0, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, Loeb, and Turner in favor.

Mr. Garcia advised the Board that the College is in its final stages of closing out the books for the fiscal year, which will be followed by the audit of our financial statements. He also stated the College remains financially sound, with revenues exceeding expenses by \$12.5 million.

Mr. Garcia provided an overview of the income and expense statement which includes revenue trending above expenses, primarily due to investment performance exceeding expectations, resulting in an additional \$3.1 million in revenue; property tax revenues exceeded projections by \$2.8 million; and Financial Aid for Swift Transfer (FAST) appropriations exceeded projected expectations by \$1.2 million due to outreach initiatives focused on dual credit students.

Mr. Garcia discussed expenses for salary and benefit which are under budget by \$2.1 million due to lower spending on faculty and non-exempt salaries and benefits. Total non-salary expenses remained relatively flat compared to the planned budget; equipment expense increased by \$1.5 million due to investments in classroom equipment, particularly for dental and welding programs and a computer replacement initiative; contract labor and consults increased by \$1.2 million due to unanticipated emergency repairs (pipework and HVAC) and \$1.6 million was reallocated from the general maintenance repair budget to address these repairs; insurance expense decreased by \$1 million because of lower than expected insurance premium costs; and the College did not need to draw from the planned contingency reserve of \$1.9 million.

Mr. Garcia reviewed the Balance Sheet which has total assets increasing by \$2.2 million due to FAST appropriations receivables increasing by \$1.2 million due to payment delays from the State. Cash and investment increased due to strategic gains in student performance and investment strategies; liabilities decreased by \$3.5 million due to accounts payable decreasing by \$1.2 million due to improved efficiency in settling payments; deferred tuition state

appropriations declined by nearly \$1 million because of state payment delays; pension and OPEB liabilities experienced a year-over-year change of \$1 million due to strong financial performance of the funds; the College's net position increased by \$5.8 million due to strong operating performance and pension and OPEB funds adding another \$1 million.

Ms. Jackie Landrum and Mr. Garcia responded to questions by the Board of Regents.

Regent Adame made a motion to approve the College's quarterly financial statement for the period ending August 31, 2025, as presented. Regent Kelly seconded the motion. There was no further discussion from the Board. There were no public comments. A vote was taken by show of hands, and the motion carried unanimously 9-0, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, Loeb, and Turner in favor.

Ms. McDonald stated the College began an initial renovation work on the referenced project which will be called the Welding Lab Project. Due to the Welding Program demands related to enrollment growth, the scope of work needed to be aligned with the needs of our program and students. The project involved renovating approximately 6,000 square feet of space into a welding lab that will include 50 additional welding booths. The original work order for this project is being transitioned into a job order contract because the project estimate now exceeds \$500,000. This transition is being facilitated through a competitively awarded job order contract obtained through TIPS, which includes the contractor SpawGlass.

Dr. Escamilla provided commentary regarding the incredible scale of the welding program.

Dean Davis Merrell provided a detailed overview of the welding program at DMC, highlighting its impressive growth and scale. He reported that the renovated metal tech building will house 167 operational booths upon completion in January. The program currently serves 2,326 students, including dual credit, dual enrollment, and traditional students. In Spring 2025, the program awarded 48 Cert. 1 industry welding graduates, 144 Cert. 1 intermediate welding graduates, 43 advanced Cert. 2 graduates, and 14 AAS degrees. The program works closely with 20 independent school districts (ISD), with 11 sending students to the College for training and college instructors teaching at 10 ISD campuses. The program has 8 full-time instructors, 15 term instructors, and requires 5 more, in addition to two adjuncts and four skills trainers. Administrative support is critically needed.

Dean Merrell explained the infrastructure challenges with over 100 students arriving on campus three times daily. The program faces challenges related to changing rooms, bathrooms, and general space and similar challenges are anticipated with the HVAC and building trades programs due to their growth. The welding faculty has proposed expanding

the program to adding pipe fitting and welding art to the curriculum, already developing a degree plan and coordinating with the art department.

Dean Merrell presented data and compared the College's welding program to those at other colleges, including Midland College, Kilgore College, and Houston Community College (HCC). While HCC has a much larger total enrollment and operates on multiple campuses, the College's welding program enrollment and output are comparatively strong, particularly relative to its single location. HCC by comparison, has Welding programs at 5 of their 7 campuses, with 162 booths spread out across the 5 campuses. DMC has 167 booths at Windward campus.

Ms. McDonald, Dean Merrell and Dr. Escamilla responded to questions from the Board of Regents.

Regent Babbili made a motion to approve transitioning the Welding Shop Project Windward Campus to a job order contract as presented. Regent Turner seconded the motion. Responses were provided to questions raised by some of the Board of Regents. There were no public comments. A vote was taken by show of hands, and the motion carried unanimously 9-0, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, Loeb, and Turner in favor.

Chair Scott asked the Board to confirm Regent David Loeb to continue to serve on the TIRZ #4 Board (North Beach) since his term has expired and Regent Loeb is interested in continuing his representation of the College.

Chair Scott made a motion to reappoint Mr. Loeb. Regent Babbili seconded the motion. There was no further discussion from the Board. There were no public comments. A vote was taken by show of hands, and the motion carried unanimously 9-0, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, Loeb, and Turner in favor.

At 3:29 p.m., the Chair announced that the Board was going into Closed Session pursuant to:

8. CLOSED SESSION pursuant to:

- a. <u>TEX. GOV'T CODE§ 551.071</u>: (Consultation with legal counsel), regarding pending or contemplated litigation, or a settlement offer, with possible discussion and action in open session; and the seeking of legal advice from counsel on pending legal or contemplated matters or claims, with possible discussion and action in open session; and,
- b. <u>TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.087</u>: (Deliberation Regarding Economic Development), regarding discussion or deliberation of information received from a business prospect with which the College is conducting economic development negotiations and/or the deliberation of an offer of a financial or other incentive to a business prospect, with possible discussion and action in open session; and,
- c. <u>TEX. GOV'T CODE§ 551.074(a)(l)</u>: (Personnel matters), regarding the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee.

The Board of Regents reconvened Open Session at 4:50 p.m. with no action taken.

CALENDAR: Discussion and possible action related to calendaring dates.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 4:51 p.m.

MINUTES REVIEWED BY GC: /s/ARjr