

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING DEL MAR COLLEGE DISTRICT

April 8, 2025

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Regents of the Del Mar College District convened on Tuesday, April 8, 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:

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

Not present:

Dr. Laurie Turner.

From the College:

Dr. Mark Escamilla, President and CEO; Ms. Lenora Keas, Executive Vice President and COO; Mr. Jeff Olsen, Chief of Staff and Vice President of Communication and Marketing; 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; Ms. Cheryl Sanders, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs; Mr. Augustin Rivera, Jr., General Counsel; Mr. John Strybos, Vice President and Chief Physical Facilities Officer; Mr. Matthew Busby, Vice President of Development and Donor Advising; Ms. Delia Perez, Director of CEO Office and Board Relations, and other staff and faculty.

CALL TO ORDER/QUORUM CALL

Chair Scott called the meeting to order with a quorum present. She recognized and congratulated Regent Averyt for being inducted to the Daily Texan Hall of Fame. Regent Averyt was a reporter with the Daily Texan when she attended the University of Texas at Austin.

Chair Scott 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.

Chair Scott announced changes in the order of the agenda; the agenda was as follows:

10. Closed Session, Recognitions, Agenda Item 5, President's Report, Staff Reports, Pending Business, Consent Items 1-4, Agenda Items 7-9, and Agenda Item 6.

At 1:03 a.m., the Chair announced that the Board was going into Closed Session pursuant to:

10. CLOSED SESSION pursuant to:

- A. **TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.071**: (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, including, 1.) possible designation of litigation counsel in a pending contract matter, with possible discussion and action in open session; and,
- B. **TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.074(a)(1)**: (Personnel matters), regarding the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee; including, 1.) Evaluation of College President, and 2.) Board Self-Evaluation, with possible discussion and action in open session.

The Board of Regents reconvened in Open Session at 1:34 p.m. with the following action:

Regent Babbili made a motion to affirm the designation and engagement of Polsinelli as litigation counsel in the pending contract matter as outlined by General Counsel in closed session. Regent Garza 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 8-0, amongst Regents present, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, and Loeb in favor.

RECOGNITIONS:

- Isaiah Herrero, student, selected by NISOD as one of the Student Essay Contest winners (*III Cultivate, Goal 2: Optimize the Viking Student Experience*).....Dr. Jonda Halcomb

Dr. Halcomb recognized Isaiah Herrero as one of the student essay contest winners selected by the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD). The contest is annual and asks students to describe faculty, staff, or administrator who has encouraged them to persevere in their studies. Isaiah's essay was selected out of 160 students and described Dr. Leonard Rivera's encouragement and mentorship. He provided words of gratitude and spoke eloquently of his journey. He also thanked Dr. Leonard Rivera, his professors, and Del Mar College for this incredible honor.

- Introduction of DMC Police Department Captain, Nathan Garcia.....Ms. Tammy McDonald (*III: Cultivate, Goal 1: Nurture our faculty and staff to achieve their full potential*)

Ms. McDonald and Chief White introduced Captain Nathan Garcia as the new Del Mar College Police Department Captain. Ms. McDonald provided Captain Garcia's academic, employment, military history and qualifications to the Board. Captain Garcia thanked the Board of Regents for this opportunity.

COLLEGE PRESIDENT'S REPORT Dr. Mark Escamilla

- March 6, 2025: TACC/CCATT Legislative Committee (Virtual)
(1: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)
- March 11, 2025: TACC Legislative Special Called CEO Meeting (Virtual)
(1: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)
- March 26, 2025: TACC/CEO Monthly Call
(1: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

Dr. Escamilla joined these three meetings virtually and engaged with Texas community college leaders.

- March 31, 2025: Testimony at House Committee on Ways & Means in Support of HB 3093
(1: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

Dr. Escamilla testified before the House Committee on Ways & Means in support of HB 3093. HB 3093 is legislation that pertains to appraisal district language that will be correcting an anomaly.

STAFF REPORTS:

- Corpus Christi ISD Gates Foundation Grant (Contigo).....Dr. Leonard Rivera
(1: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

Dr. Rivera provided background information regarding the Corpus Christi ISD Gates Foundation Grant (Contigo) and its purpose to increase the percentage of students successfully transitioning from high school to an institution of higher education to earn a credential of value of at least 15 credit hours. Dr. Rivera discussed the key outcomes which include early college coursework access and attainment, post-secondary enrollment, and staying on the college track. Dr. Rivera also reported this grant lines up with House Bill 8 requirements.

Dr. Rivera and Dr. Escamilla responded to questions from the Board of Regents.

- Communities in Schools Partnership.....Dr. Leonard Rivera
(1: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

Dr. Rivera presented information regarding Communities in Schools (CIS) and their mission to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in

school and achieve in life. Communities in Schools has served the Coastal Bend for over 38 years and provided over 17,000 hours of intervention services in one of the following services: academic support, supportive guidance and counseling, health and human services, parent and family engagement, enrichment activities, and college and career readiness. Evidence-based approach to meet each community's unique needs is the basis of their success. The CIS model places case managers inside the school building to strategically align, coordinate and deliver direct services and needed resources so that students can focus on learning and actualize their goals in life. Chair Devan Salter, Chief Executive Officer Gloria Taylor, Chief Programs Officer Christa Creek, and Board member Dr. Larry Lee were introduced. CEO Taylor provided words of gratitude and excitement.

Dr. Escamilla provided additional commentary and thanked the CIS Board for their perseverance and hard work.

Dr. Rivera responded to questions from the Board of Regents.

- Enrollment Update
.....Dr. Patricia Benavides-Dominguez, Dr. Jonda Halcomb, and Dr. Leonard Rivera
(II Elevate, Goal 1: Increase completion for all students)

Dr. Benavides-Dominguez presented an overview and provided student headcount information indicating that it is trending upward – credit headcount increase of 6.2% (spring 2025 to spring 2025-preliminary); dual credit headcount is trending upward (1-year: 10.2% increase, 5-year: 29.6% increase, and 10-year: 106.2% increase); and continuing education headcount had an increase of 41.8% (spring 2023 to spring 2025-preliminary). The student composition continues to be predominantly female with some increases for males.

Dr. Halcomb discussed enrollment in credit programs. The top programs by 2023-2024 awards show Nurse Education – 17 BSN, 102 AA, 153 AAS, and 9 Certificates; Liberal Arts – 120 AA degrees; Air Conditioning Applied Technology – 11 AAS, 76 Certificates; Welding – 23 AAS, 214 Certificates; and Business Administration – 71 AA. She reviewed the top fall 2024 declared majors – Liberal Arts – 2,184 AA; Nurse Education – 33 BSN; 1,058 AA, 294 AAS, 11 Certificates; Pre-Medical Technology – 828 AS majors; Welding – 76 AAS, 746 Certificates; Business Administration – 461 AA; and Management – 214 BAS, 52 AAS, 48 certificates, and 5 OSA. The dual credit courses, which do not include continuing education, show 106% increase over a 10-year period. Credit contact hours from spring to spring show a 7.3% increase. Peer college comparisons were discussed which showed the College's Spring 2025 numbers curving up.

Dr. Rivera reported on enrollment for continuing education. The top programs for continuing education include healthcare programs – 1,488; Texas Workforce Commission Adult Education Literacy Grant 2024 – 222; and Home Repair and

Construction – 88. Total enrollments in continuing education courses for the 2023-2024 academic year show a 1.0% decrease but completion rates are tracking very well.

Dr. Benavides-Dominguez followed up with a historical perspective on credit and continuing education from 2019 to the current academic year. The contact hours have steadily increased, and students are coming back. From the 2023-2024 academic year, a 4% one-year increase is shown and for the 2024-2025 academic year, the College is trending upward with a one-year increase of 11.3%.

Dr. Benavides-Dominguez, Dr. Halcomb, Dr. Rivera, and Dr. Escamilla responded to questions from the Board of Regents.

- Legislative Update Dr. Natalie Villarreal
(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

Dr. Villarreal presented a legislative update regarding the current 89th Texas Legislative Session and the 119th United States Congress. Her presentation focused on three major areas at the state level: appropriations/funding, governance/taxes (specifically ad valorem taxes), and water resources. On the national level, changes were discussed, particularly in the Department of Education and accrediting bodies.

State Level Legislation:

General Appropriations Bill (Senate Bill 1 and House Bill 1): Securing more funding is a top priority for Del Mar College and community colleges statewide. The work done by Del Mar College has provided a platform to secure more funding for students, faculty, staff, and communities. The College's yearly budget includes 17-20% from appropriations. It is noted that a difference between the House and Senate versions in how financial aid appropriations are handled, and efforts are being made to advocate for maximizing financial aid.

House Bill 2110 (Follow-up to House Bill 8): This bill is moving quickly and aims to extend the benefits of House Bill 8 (which creates a catalyst for the College and the State) to include students transferring to private institutions (ICUT - Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas), such as Baylor. Currently, House Bill 8 doesn't specify this inclusion.

Senate Bill 37 (Curriculum Oversight and Academic Governance): This bill is of significant concern as it restructures the duties of faculty and senate councils regarding curriculum oversight and impacts the authority of the Board of Regents. It places more responsibility on the Regents to oversee academic policies, curriculum, and administrative positions. Groups advocating for academic freedom and shared governance are expressing concerns about the bill's restrictions and fundamental shift in how the College conducts its business. Faculty Council is creating a one-pager to summarize the pros and cons of the bill. TACC and CCATT will also work with Senator Creighton's office on the bill. The bill will require the Board to review core curriculum annually, ensure courses are foundational, prepare students for civic life and work, make

recommendations regarding maintaining or eliminating courses, and approve or deny recommendations from a State-appointed committee. The bill's requirements are applicable to all higher education entities in Texas, including community colleges.

Ad Valorem Tax Bills (Senate Bill 1052 and House Bill 3093): These bills, authored by local delegation members, aim to protect community colleges when property owners appeal their tax assessments. The bills allow the College to use the previous year's numbers for budgeting and planning during the appeals process. The initial versions focus on coastal communities with taxing entities under 500,000, but other statewide bills are also being monitored.

Board of Regents Election Bill (House Bill 4403 and Senate Bill 2504): This gives the Board the option to allow the highest vote earner to win an election without requiring a runoff. This bill is moving quickly through the committees.

Tuition Freeze: There is discussion of advocating against the tuition freeze imposed by the governor's office, as it presents budget challenges for the College.

There are about 20 tax bills that TACC and CCATT are monitoring.

Board of Regents Attendance Bill: There is a bill filed requiring a certain level of attendance by Regents at meetings.

Water Resources (Senate Bill 7): This bill seeks to allocate up to \$1 billion a year for funding new water resource projects in Texas. Del Mar College, due to its infrastructure, location, and faculty expertise, is positioned to be a leader in water resource education and is monitoring the legislation. The Coastal Bend is being considered a leader in this area. Technical expertise for water treatment processes such as desal is higher than for conventional treatment.

Dean Merrell provided commentary regarding the different technology processes.

National Level Legislation:

Department of Education Leadership Change: Linda McMahon is now in charge of education for the United States.

Executive Orders: Several executive orders are being issued, particularly affecting financial aid, which may be moving into the small business arena.

Accrediting Bodies: An executive order regarding accrediting bodies is expected. There are laws being constructed around having the ability to choose which accrediting body to apply to. While colleges may have the option to leave one accrediting body (Del Mar is currently accredited by SACSCOC), they still need to apply and be accepted by another.

The College and administration continue to actively monitor developments and advocate for the College's best interests.

Dr. Villarreal and Dr. Escamilla 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:
Regular Board Meeting, February 4, 2025
Workshop, March 4, 2025
Regular Board Meeting, March 4, 2025
(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)
2. Acceptance of Quarterly Investment Report for February 2025
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)
3. Acceptance of Investment Report for February and March 2025
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)
4. Acceptance of Quarterly Financial Report for February 2025
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Regent Babbili made a motion to adopt the Consent Agenda.
Regent Crull 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 7-0, amongst Regents present, with Regents Scott, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, and Loeb in favor. Regent Adame was not present for this vote.

REGULAR AGENDA

5. Discussion and possible action related to Award of Contract for Request for Competitive Sealed Proposals, RCSP #2025-04, Del Mar College Workforce Development Center, Aransas County.....Mr. John Strybos
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Mr. Strybos provided background information regarding an award of contract for Request for Proposals #2025-04 regarding the Del Mar College Workforce Development Center – Aransas County. Mr. Strybos reviewed the evaluation criteria with the Board of Regents. The funding for the project is from the Economic Development Administration Grant, donations to the Del Mar College Foundation, and a commitment from the Del Mar College Foundation. Mr. John Jackson was in attendance representing Aransas County and thanked the College and the Foundation for their hard work.

Regent Adame made a motion to award the contract to SpawGlass in the amount of \$1,520,493 as presented. Regent Loeb 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 8-0, amongst Regents present, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, and Loeb in favor.

6. Discussion and possible action related to faculty recommended for tenure and promotion for 2025-2026 in accordance with College Policy B6.7.7.....Dr. Mark Escamilla
(III Cultivate, Goal 1: Nurture our faculty and staff to achieve their full potential)

Dr. Escamilla stated that this item was in conjunction with the supporting memo from the College's Chief Academic Officer and Vice President of Instruction, Dr. Jonda Halcomb, as well as recommendations of faculty applications for conferral of tenure 2025-26, and the current policies. He provided information regarding the College's policies amended per the legislature B6.7.2.1.1 and B6.7.7 granting tenure. He recommended that in accordance with the amended policies per the 88th Texas Legislature, that tenure be conferred to faculty members listed on Dr. Halcomb's memo dated April 1, 2025. The qualifications of the individuals listed were thoroughly reviewed and are ready for consideration by the Board.

Dr. Escamilla responded to questions from the Board of Regents.

Regent Loeb made a motion to approve the granting of tenure to the faculty members identified in Dr. Halcomb's April 1, 2025, memorandum as presented and to add future tenure motions to the Consent Agenda. Regent Averyt 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 8-0, amongst Regents present, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, and Loeb in favor.

7. Discussion and possible action related to dual enrollment tuition and fees for private and home school tuition.....Dr. Patricia-Benavides Dominguez and Mr. Raul Garcia (*II Elevate, Goal 1: Increase completion for all students*)

Dr. Benavides-Dominguez stated that today's report will focus on dual-enrollment students that attend private schools and students home-schooled in the Coastal Bend. Private schools and home-schooled students have always participated in dual enrollment. This academic year, we have approximately 94 students enrolled at Del Mar College and these students enroll in a mix of online courses or come to our campus and participate with the regular college population.

Ms. Landrum provided revenue and cost information. The College collected \$40,649 for FY 2024 and as of February 28, 2025, the College collected \$35,471 and should be at \$40,000 from home school and private students by the end of the fiscal year. After the implementation of FAST program for fiscal year 2021 and 2022, the College received a little over a million dollars for basic tuition and fees for those dual enrollment courses. Fiscal year 2023, the College collected a little over 1.1 million. Fiscal year 2024, was the first year that the College received that reimbursement from the state for the FAST program, and received a little over \$1.7 million.

Dr. Benavides-Dominguez and Ms. Landrum responded to questions from the Board of Regents.

Regent Loeb made a motion to approve a tuition waiver for Dual Enrollment students attending private and home school beginning fall 2025 as presented. Regent Crull 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 8-0, amongst Regents present, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, and Loeb in favor.

8. Discussion and possible action related to Annexation Adopted by the City of Corpus Christi – Texas Lone StarMr. John Strybos
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Mr. Strybos explained that Texas Education Code, Section 130.066, Automatic Annexation of Certain Territory, allows Del Mar College to annex property as the City of Corpus Christi annexes new property. On March 18, 2025, the City of Corpus Christi approved an ordinance to annex and rezone a two-acre tract of land owned by Texas Lone Star Abstract and Title Investments Group LLC. located at the southeast corner of Farm to Market FM 43 and County Road 47. The property annexation of approximately 300 linear feet of County Road 47 right of way, budding the property's western boundary, and annexation of an approximately 2,490 linear feet of section of FM 43 right of way located between the property's eastern boundary and the London Pirate Road.

Regent Adame made a motion to annex the property as presented. 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 7-0, amongst Regents present, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, and Kelly in favor. Regent Loeb was not present during this vote.

9. Discussion and possible action related to property insurance coverage
.....Ms. Tammy McDonald
(II Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Ms. McDonald presented material regarding the College's procurement of property and windstorm insurance. Current coverage with Higginbotham (formerly Borden Insurance) expires May 1, 2025. Ms. Jessica Alaniz provided a brief synopsis of current market conditions. Ms. Alaniz stated Robert V. Reim was engaged as a consultant to manage the Request for Proposal process. Ms. McDonald provided information regarding property total insurable value and reported that over five years, the College's total insurable value has increased approximately 30%.

After the required bid invitation letters were sent to agencies/companies that had expressed interest, four proposals were received by the submission deadline. Ms. McDonald reviewed the proposed coverage and stated the College is recommending moving forward with Higginbotham.

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

Regent Babbili made a motion to approve recommendation of Higginbotham 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 8-0, amongst Regents present, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, and Loeb in favor.

CALENDAR: Discussion and possible action related to calendaring dates.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 3:34 p.m.

MINUTES REVIEWED BY GC: /s/ARjr