BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
7:00 PM, NOVEMBER 14, 2017
BOARD ROOM
GORDON M. ANDERSON LEADERSHIP CENTER
16717 ELLA BOULEVARD, HOUSTON, TEXAS 77090

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

President Deborah Jensen called the Regular Board Meeting of the Spring Independent School District Board of Trustees to order at 7:02 PM on November 14, 2017, in the Board Room of the Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center, 16717 Ella Boulevard, Houston, Texas, in accordance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code.

Members Present:

Dr. Deborah Jensen, President
Chris Bell, Vice President
Rhonda Newhouse, Secretary
Justine Durant, Assistant Secretary
Donald Davis
Jana Gonzales

Members Absent:

Rhonda Faust

Others Present:

Rodney Watson, Superintendent of Schools
Victor Mitchell, Chief of Police
Julie Hill, Chief of Staff
Lupita Hinojosa, Chief of School Leadership and Student Support Services
Lauren Topek, Chief of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
Mark Miranda, Chief Operations Officer
Decone McKeithan, Chief Human Resources Officer
Ann Westbrooks, Chief Financial Officer
Tiffany Dunne-Oldfield, Chief Communications Officer
Jeremy Binkley, Legal Officer
Jason Sheffer, Director of Board Services

II. Flag Pledges

The Presentation of the Colors was led by the Dekaney Wildcat NJROTC Battalion led by Lieutenant Scott Thrasher, Chief Victor Adams and Chief Robert Dunn. The United States and Texas Pledge of Allegiance was led by Cadet Commander Master Chief Cameron Smith. The Color Guard Commander carrying the American Flag was Cadet Lieutenant Commander Carl Koulovongs. Carrying the Texas Flag was Cadet Commander Arionna
The Right Rifleman was Cadet Ensign Tanisha Stewart. The Left Rifleman was Cadet Ensign Taisha Stewart.

III. Moment of Silence
President Jensen asked the audience to join in a moment of silence.

IV. Opening Remarks

A. Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Rodney Watson began his remarks by acknowledging the halfway point since the launch of the District’s strategic plan, EVERY CHILD 2020, in May 2015. While much work has been accomplished, he said there is still more to be done and he and his team are taking a deep dive into all the actions and outcomes to date in order to develop a more detailed assessment. He also praised the progress so far this year on improving student attendance, a key priority of the Trustees. In particular, he noted Cooper Elementary, which has the highest attendance rate of all campuses in the District this year. As part of the District’s attendance initiative, he also noted the full-time bus drivers and attendants who received a $300 bonus for not missing any days in the period between August and October. Dr. Watson also discussed progress in the District’s bond program. All of the new laptops and Chromebooks have been rolled out and delivered into the hands of teachers and students, who are now using them in the District’s classrooms.

B. Board of Trustees
President Jensen invited the Board of Trustees to make remarks.

Trustee Durant thanked the Family and Community Engagement department for its support of a public forum on November 2, 2017 at Spring High School. The forum addressed the literacy crisis facing the nation and area school districts. Trustee Durant said she was pleased with all the support received and noted that the event was hosted by the Omicron Tau Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. The group is planning to host another event in March.

Trustee Chris Bell reminded the audience of another literacy event on December 8, 2017, the District’s Winter Wonderland Celebration for students in elementary and middle school. He also thanked the Cub Scouts in the audience for attending the meeting.

Trustee Gorzales praised the recent coverage of Veterans Day on the District’s website and Twitter feed. She was pleased to see all of the activities at the campuses in recognition of the contributions made by veterans.

Trustee Davis noted that all three of the District’s comprehensive high schools are in the football playoffs and will have games this weekend.

Trustee Newhouse recognized all three high school marching bands, which she praised for their recent performances.

President Jensen concluded the Trustee remarks by talking about her visit to Anderson Elementary School, where she saw the Leader in Me program at work. She said she was especially impressed at how the students were tracking attendance, as those skills tie into both meth and leadership skills.

V. Board Governance Committee

A. Board Governance Manual
Trustee Durant presented information regarding the Board Governance Manual. She explained that the Board Governance and Operations Manual is an administrative manual that formally documents the District’s policies, practices, and procedures used to govern the work of the Spring ISD Board of Trustees. The manual was developed from a cooperative effort from District staff and the Board Governance Committee consisting of Trustee Durant, Trustee Davis, and President Jensen.

Trustee Durant moved that the Board of Trustees approve the Spring ISD Board of Trustees Board Governance and Operations Manual. Trustee Davis seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

VI. Chief Financial Officer


Celina Cereceres Miller, CPA, an Audit Partner with Whitley Penn, LLP, presented the Independent Auditor’s Report. The presentation included the results of the FY 2017 Financial Statement Audit and Federal Single Audit. She explained the firm’s process for conducting the audit, including on-site visits to review internal controls. Miller reported that the District received the highest level of assurance that can be given on a set of financial statements. Specifically, the audit found no material weaknesses, no significant deficiencies and no instances of noncompliance. In addition, the audit found that the District’s unassigned fund balance was in line with the state target of 60 days.

Chief Westbrooks presented information regarding the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the Year Ended June 30, 2017. The presentation included a walk-through of the document, explaining the different sections and offering a rundown of revenue, expenditures, and the district’s fund balance, as well as debt service obligations.

Trustee Newhouse moved that the Board of Trustees approve the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the Year Ended June 30, 2017 and the Independent Auditor’s Report, as presented by the administration. Trustee Durant seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report is available at: https://www.springisd.org/transparency

President Jensen recessed the meeting at 8:10 PM for a short break. President Jensen reconvened the meeting at 8:28 PM.


Chief Hinojosa presented information regarding the 2017-2018 District Targeted Improvement Plan for Spring Independent School District. During her presentation she said the plan is required by the Texas Education Agency after the District scored low in two areas, specifically students in the CTE program that also are identified as Special Education and/or Limited English Proficient; and Special Education students in grades 3-8 who failed to meet the state’s passing standard in reading. Chief Hinojosa said the improvement plan is very detailed, with the goal of moving the District from the lowest score to the highest score. She said the plan relies on strategies that include extensive data monitoring every quarter, with the goal of providing targeted assistance to those students who are struggling. Trustees requested that administration provide periodic updates on how the District is doing in meeting its quarterly goals.
Members of the public did not register to speak on this item.

Trustee Davis moved that the Board of Trustees approve the 2017-2018 District Targeted Improvement Plan for Spring Independent School District, as presented by the administration. Trustee Gonzales seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

VIII. Consent Agenda
Trustee Gonzales moved that the Board of Trustees approve and adopt all of the items listed on the Consent Agenda. Trustee Newhouse seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

A. Review and Approval of Minutes from the Following Meetings:
   1. October 12, 2017 Board Work Session
   2. October 17, 2017 Regular Board Meeting
B. Change to the 2017-2018 Compensation Plan
C. 2017-18 First Budget Review
D. Taxpayer Refunds
E. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Research
F. First Amendment to the Agreement between UTeach Engineering at the University of Texas at Austin

IX. Public Participation
Members of the public did not register to speak to the Board.

X. Closed Session
President Jensen recessed the open session at 8:44 PM for the purpose of entering into closed session pursuant to the following provision of the Texas Open Meetings Act:

A. Under Section 551.071 - For the purpose of a private consultation with the Board's attorney on any or all subjects or matters authorized, including any item posted on this agenda
B. Under Section 551.072 - For the purpose of discussing the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property
C. Under Section 551.074 - For the purpose of considering the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee or to hear complaints or charges against a public officer or employee
   1. The Board will deliberate on employees nominated for special recognition
   2. The Board will deliberate regarding the Superintendent's evaluation
   3. The Board will deliberate on a recommendation for the termination and finding of no good cause for an employee's abandonment of contract
   4. The Board will deliberate on the issuance of school district teaching permits for noncore career and technology courses
   5. The Board will deliberate on employee resignations, recommendations to withdraw prior actions taken, recommendations to void employee contracts, recommendations for the proposed termination of employees on probationary and/or term contracts, and final orders for employees on term contracts previously proposed for nonrenewal
D. Under Section 551.076 - To consider the deployment, or specific occasions for implementation, of security personnel or devices
   1. The Board will receive information regarding the 2017 state mandated safety and
security audit.

XI. Action on Closed Session Items
    President Jensen reconvened the open meeting at 9:55 PM.

XII. Adjournment
    On a motion by Trustee Gonzales, seconded by Trustee Durant, the Board unanimously adjourned the meeting at 9:56 PM.

Jana Gonzales
Vice President

Donald Davis, Secretary