

# Spring Independent School District

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## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR BOARD MEETING 7:00 PM, JUNE 9, 2020 VIDEO CONFERENCE**

### **MINUTES**

#### **I. Call to Order (7:02 PM)**

President Rhonda Newhouse called the video conference Regular Board Meeting of the Spring Independent School District Board of Trustees to order at 7:02 PM on June 9, 2020, in accordance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code.

#### **Members Present:**

Rhonda Newhouse, President  
Dr. Deborah Jensen, Vice President  
Winford Adams, Jr., Assistant Secretary  
Justine Durant  
Jana Gonzales  
Kelly P. Hodges

#### **Members Absent:**

Donald Davis, Secretary

#### **Others Present:**

Rodney Watson, Superintendent of Schools  
Ken Culbreath, Chief of Police  
Julie Hill, Chief of Human Resources and Human Accountability  
Lupita Hinojosa, Chief Innovation and Equity Officer  
Khechara Bradford, Chief of Curriculum and Instruction  
Mark Miranda, Executive Chief of District Operations  
Ann Westbrooks, Chief Financial Officer  
Tiffany Dunne-Oldfield, Chief Communications Officer  
Jeremy Binkley, General Counsel  
Jason Sheffer, Director of Board Services

#### **II. Opening Remarks (7:03 PM)**

##### **A. Superintendent of Schools (7:03 PM)**

Dr. Rodney Watson highlighted work that was done at the Board Work Session on June 4, 2020 in terms of teacher compensation, in which Trustees discussed how to make educator salaries more competitive for recruitment and retention. He noted that the salary item would be coming up later during the meeting for a Board vote.

He also previewed a special presentation on the agenda later in the meeting involving the awarding of scholarships from the Mexican American School Boards Association, of which the Spring ISD Board of Trustees is a member. "Based on your leadership, we're going to be extremely excited to award some scholarships that you all have played a

very instrumental role in joining the organization for us to achieve," he said. "We definitely thank you for your sacrifice of volunteerism but more importantly making sure you represent all segments of our student population and demographics so we appreciate that."

In addition, Dr. Watson reported that the District had a very successful first-ever virtual graduation on Saturday, June 6, with five ceremonies from all of the District's high schools. "We knew it would be somewhat different but as I saw one of the previews and watched them on Saturday it was amazing to see how it turned out," he said. "The feedback I received from parents was they were pleased."

He noted that this weekend on June 12 - 14, the District will be hosting in-person graduation ceremonies at Planet Ford stadium and urged everyone to stay hydrated throughout the events because of the weather. "I know it's going to be pretty hot out there so we're going to have to make sure we take care of ourselves."

Dr. Watson also thanked the office of Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner for hosting a Class of 2020 Celebration for seniors across the Houston region, including Spring ISD, on Friday, June 5. "It was so nice seeing all of our students and to receive the support of our Mayor last Friday night," he said. "If any of you had the opportunity to see it on the news, Channel 2 did a really good job of showcasing our District and our students, and more importantly, the work the Mayor has done to celebrate the graduates this year."

Below is the schedule of the In-person Graduation Schedule at Planet Ford Stadium, which will be livestreamed on the District's website at [www.springisd.org](http://www.springisd.org).

- Friday, June 12 at 7 PM - Spring High School
- Saturday, June 13 at 8 AM - Carl Wunsche Sr. High School
- Saturday, June 13 at 7 PM - Dekaney High School
- Sunday, June 14 at 8 AM - Spring Early College Academy
- Sunday, June 14 at 7 PM - Westfield High School

**B. Board of Trustees (7:05 PM)**

President Newhouse invited the Trustees to make remarks.

Trustee Jensen began her remarks by thanking President Newhouse for her dedicated presence at so many of the virtual and in-person events being held to mark the end of the 2019-2020 school year. She went on to commend the 2020 virtual graduation ceremonies presented online the previous weekend. "I was surprised at how much I enjoyed the virtual graduation," Jensen said. "It's really hard to hear people's speeches in that auditorium at the Berry Center, and I got to hear, in detail, the principals', Dr. Watson's, the valedictorians' and salutatorians', and it was just really nice. I'm just hoping that in future years we retain this as an addition to the in-person graduation."

Trustee Gonzales thanked everyone involved in putting on the Smart Kid Cool Car event on June 7, which had to be re-imagined in light of COVID-19 social distancing requirements. "It was exciting to see as many students come out and experience that," Gonzales said. "The young lady that won was so excited, and just really deserving of that honor." Trustee Gonzales also made a point of thanking the program's sponsor, Honda of Spring, for their commitment to the event despite the unusual circumstances.



"Spring ISD did a great job of recognizing those students, and we want to thank Honda of Spring for putting that together," she said. "They're a great business partner and we truly appreciate it."

Trustee Durant discussed how much she had enjoyed Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner's Class of 2020 Celebration, a multimedia collaboration among area school districts, for which Spring ISD seniors gathered at the District's Planet Ford Stadium to take part. "It was a fantastic event, and one of the things that I enjoyed was watching the kids having an opportunity to interact with their friends that they haven't had a chance to see," Durant said. "It was really fun to see them doing the line dancing together on the football field, and just watching them enjoy themselves." She thanked staff members who helped coordinate the event and help make it safe for participating seniors. "Despite the challenges that we're facing in our country today," she said, "I'm very proud of how Spring ISD is moving forward and still meeting the needs of our students. So kudos to everyone. Thank you."

President Newhouse echoed other Trustees in offering her appreciation for the recent events held to help celebrate the end of the school year, adding that the event at the stadium had offered the District a helpful trial run leading up to the following weekend's in-person graduation ceremonies, where similar social distancing and sanitation rules will also be in place. She also commented on how well the Smart Kid Cool Car event had gone. "I know it took a lot of effort and organization and work there," Newhouse said, "but you guys did a great job, and it was just nice to see our District celebrating our Class of 2020, so thank you."

Trustee Adams took the opportunity to thank the faculty and staff of Roberson Middle School, where his own daughter just completed eighth grade. "I had the opportunity, with my daughter, to create a float out of our car and drive through the line with hundreds of other parents – proud parents – for her to graduate from eighth grade," Adams said. "I just want to give kudos to the creativity and the commitment to the students that I saw from Principal Walker and her staff. It was very well done." He said the Roberson event was a good example of the way schools around Spring ISD were working to support students despite the challenges posed by current events. "I just want to put that out there and echo what you're saying about the great job we're doing of keeping things as normal as possible under very difficult circumstances," he said.

### **III. Special Recognition (7:10 PM)**

#### **A. Mexican American School Boards Association Scholarship Presentation (7:10 PM)**

In a special presentation, three Spring ISD students were honored for earning a scholarship from the Mexican American School Boards Association (MASBA), of which the District's Board of Trustees is a member.

Each year, MASBA recognizes outstanding students with scholarships to help fund their postsecondary education. This year, Spring ISD had three students selected for the awards: Nataly Benitez of Westfield High School, and Olger Carcache and Kayla Oregon of Spring High School.

The presentations were done live during the Board Meeting through Zoom with the counselors of each of the students making a personal trip to their homes to present

them with a certificate, scholarship check and distinctive graduation cords in red, green and white from MASBA.

The first recipient, Olger Carcache from Spring High School, ranked number three in his class and is headed to the University of Chicago this fall on a full scholarship, where he hopes to study languages, international/global studies and public policy.

The second recipient, Kayla Oregon from Spring High School, is planning to attend the University of Texas at San Antonio, where she hopes to specialize in neurology or neuroscience to eventually become a nurse and then a doctor.

The third recipient, Nataly Benitez from Westfield High School, plans to attend Houston Baptist University to study nursing.

#### **IV. Executive Chief of District Operations (7:24 PM)**

##### **A. Missed School Day Waiver (7:24 PM)**

The Board approved the submission of a Missed School Day Waiver for days missed due to COVID-19.

On May 5, 2020, the Commissioner announced, that districts and charter schools that closed due to COVID-19 are eligible to apply for a Missed School Day waiver for any scheduled instructional days missed from March 16, 2020 until the end of the school district's last day of school. Each school district must request a Missed School Day Waiver for all days that the district was closed, closed preparing, and closed instructing. The Missed School Day Waiver must provide the days by listing the first day and the last consecutive day and the total of missed instructional minutes.

Spring ISD closed from March 16, 2020 through April 9, 2020; from April 13, 2020 through May 22, 2020 and again from May 26 through June 2, 2020 for a total of 55 missed school days. Each Missed School Day waiver is worth 440 waiver minutes per day for a total of 24,200 missed minutes.

Trustee Jensen moved that the Board of Trustees approve the Missed School Day Waiver for days missed due to COVID-19. Trustee Durant seconded the motion and the motion carried with 6 in favor and 1 absent (Trustee Davis).

#### **V. Chief of Human Resources and Human Capital Accountability (7:29 PM)**

##### **A. Spring ISD Local Innovation Plan (7:29 PM)**

Chief Julie Hill provided the Board with an update regarding the District's Local Innovation Plan and COVID-19.

#### **VI. Chief Financial Officer (7:40 PM)**

##### **A. Teacher Pay Increase (7:40 PM)**

The Board approved an increase in Teacher Pay for the 2020-2021 school year. The increase includes a 2.5 percent raise for the District's teachers as part of an effort to ensure their salaries are competitive with other districts in the Houston region.

Earlier this year, the District commissioned a study to look at how Spring ISD compares to other districts in the area with regard to teacher pay. That analysis confirmed that the District lost ground last year after many nearby districts issued significant salary increases as a result of House Bill 3, passed by the Texas Legislature in 2019.



The 2.5 percent salary increase offers a big step forward for Spring ISD teachers, and also includes additional one-time equity pay increases for those with up to 11 years of experience. The plan's goals include improving consistency between steps on the pay scale and closing the salary gap for teachers with more years of experience. For example, under the plan, a teacher with five years of experience will receive a pay raise of 2.5 percent (about \$1,700) plus an equity increase of \$1,047, for an overall salary of \$57,700, up from \$54,953 this year. A new teacher will receive \$56,500, up from last year's starting hiring salary of \$54,000.

Trustee Adams moved that the Board of Trustees approve the increase in teacher pay for the 2020-2021 school year as presented by the administration. Trustee Hodges seconded the motion and the motion carried with 6 in favor and 1 absent (Trustee Davis).

#### **VII. Consent Agenda (7:44 PM)**

The Board approved the Consent Agenda items that were discussed in detail at the June 4, 2020 Board Work Session.

Trustee Durant moved that the Board of Trustees approve and adopt all of the items listed on the Consent Agenda. Trustee Hodges seconded the motion and the motion with 6 in favor and 1 absent (Trustee Davis).

##### **A. Review and Approval of Minutes from the Following Meetings:**

1. May 7, 2020 Board Work Session
2. May 12, 2020 Regular Meeting
3. May 28, 2020 Special Called Session

##### **B. 2020-2021 Work Calendar**

The Board will consider approving the 2020-2021 Work Calendar.

##### **C. Summer 2020 Projects, Second Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP)**

The Board will consider approving the Summer 2020 Projects, Second Guaranteed Maximum Price in the amount of \$359,271.

##### **D. Camelot-Education-Texas, LLC-Amendment #6**

The Board will consider approving the contract between Camelot-Education-Texas, LLC and Spring Independent School District.

##### **E. Financial Update – Actual Expenditures – April 2020**

The Board will ratify the actual expenditures presented.

##### **F. Taxpayer Refunds**

The Board will consider ratifying taxpayer refunds.

##### **G. Request for Proposal (RFP) # 20-011 – Before and After School Child Care**

The Board will consider awarding the contract for Before and After School Child Care and Enrichment Services to the provider recommended by the administration.

##### **H. Request for Proposal (RFP) # 20-015 – School Health and Related Services (SHARS) Medicaid Reimbursement Services**

The Board will consider awarding the contract for SHARS Medicaid Reimbursement Services to the provider recommended by the administration.

##### **I. Request for Proposal (RFP) # 20-018 – Mental Health Support and Intervention**

The Board will consider awarding the contracts for Mental Health Support and Intervention to the providers recommended by the administration

**VIII. Closed Session (7:47 PM)**

President Newhouse recessed the open session at 7:47 PM for the purpose of entering into closed session pursuant to the following provisions 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
  - 1. The Board will deliberate on an Easement to Harris County for Sidewalks along Ella Blvd.
- 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 regarding the Superintendent's evaluation and goals
  - 2. The Board will deliberate on employees nominated for special recognition
  - 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, recommendations for the proposed nonrenewal of employees on term contracts, recommendations for termination at the end of the year for employees on probationary contracts, and final orders for employees on term and probationary contracts previously proposed for termination and/or nonrenewal
- D. Under Section 551.076 - To consider the deployment, or specific occasions for implementation, of security personnel or devices

**IX. Action on Closed Session Items (8:30 PM)**

President Newhouse reconvened the open session at 8:30 PM.

- A. Trustee Adams moved that the Board of Trustees render a final order to terminate the contract of Nina Haydon as presented in closed session and to authorize the Superintendent to provide notice of the Board's action to the impacted employee pursuant to Chapter 21 of the Texas Education Code. Trustee Hodges seconded the motion and the motion carried with 6 in favor and 1 absent (Trustee Davis).

**X. Adjournment (8:33 PM)**

On a motion by Trustee Jensen, seconded by Trustee Hodges, the Board adjourned the meeting at 8:33 PM. The motion carried with 6 in favor and 1 absent (Trustee Davis).

  
Rhonda R. Newhouse, President

  
Donald Davis, Secretary