

# San Jacinto College District Board Workshop

## April 7, 2025

The Board of Trustees of the San Jacinto Community College District met for a Board Workshop at 5:00 p.m., Monday, April 7, 2025, in Room 201 of the Thomas S. Sewell District Administration Building, 4624 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena, Texas.

### MINUTES

	<b>Board Workshop Attendees:</b>	<b>Board Members:</b> Dr. Michelle Cantú-Wilson, Erica Davis Rouse, Dan Mims, John Moon, Jr., Salvador Serrano Jr., Keith Sinor, Larry Wilson <b>Chancellor:</b> Brenda Hellyer <b>Other:</b> Allatia Harris, Carin Hutchins, Lisa Brown (attorney – via conference call), Mandi Reiland, Van Wigginton, Laurel Willimson
	<b>Agenda Item:</b>	<b>Discussion/Information</b>
<b>I.</b>	<b>Call the Meeting to Order</b>	Chair Mims called the workshop to order at 5:06 p.m.
<b>II.</b>	<b>Roll Call of Board Members</b>	Chair Mims conducted a roll call of the Board members:  Dr. Michelle Cantú-Wilson Erica Davis Rouse, Assistant Secretary Dan Mims, Chair John Moon, Jr., Vice Chair Salvado Serrano Jr. Keith Sinor, Secretary Larry Wilson
<b>III.</b>	<b>Adjournment to closed or executive session pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071, 551.074, 551.072, 551.076 of the Texas Open Meetings Act</b>	Chair Mims adjourned to closed session at 5:08 p.m.  The Board members listed above as attending, Brenda Hellyer, Laurel Williamson, Van Wigginton, Carin Hutchins, and Mandi Reiland were present for the closed session. Others present as noted below.  a. Legal Matters - For the purpose of a private consultation with the Board’s attorney on any or all subjects or matters authorized by law. Conference call with attorney Lisa Brown. b. Personnel Matters - For the purpose of considering the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline or dismissal of a public officer or

		<p>employee or to hear complaints or charges against a public officer or employee. It was determined after the time of posting that there were no personnel items to review.</p> <p>c. Real Estate Matters - For the purpose of discussing the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property. It was determined after the time of posting that there were no real estate items to review.</p> <p>d. Security Matters - To consider the deployment, or specific occasions for implementation, of security personnel or devices; or a security audit. It was determined after the time of posting that there were no security matters to review.</p> <p>Laurel Williamson and Van Wigginton left the workshop after the closed session.</p>
IV.	<b>Reconvene in Open Meeting</b>	Chair Mims reconvened to open meeting at 5:54 p.m.
V.	<b>Review Legislative Update and Advocacy Efforts</b>	<p>Brenda Hellyer provided a legislative update and overview of the advocacy efforts. Over spring break, the College hosted Congressman Brian Babin and the staff of the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee at CPET. This was a great opportunity to show them the strength of our industry partnerships and highlight the impact of federal support for regional training initiatives.</p> <p>Also, Christian Bionat, along with Dr. Chris Wild and four students, will be in Washington D.C. this week with the Economic Alliance. Dr. Wild was invited to brief members of the House Science, Space, and Technology subcommittees. She added that on April 16, she will be visiting the White House with Christian and Chris to discuss biomanufacturing and potential federal workforce investments. These efforts are part of building awareness of San Jacinto College’s role as a national leader in this high-demand workforce area.</p> <p>Brenda explained that at the state level, budget night is Thursday, April 10 with significant implications for the College. The College’s appropriations requests are still being considered in the budget, which includes \$30 million for the Biomanufacturing Training Institute at the Texas Medical Center, \$4.5 million for a Cybersecurity Operations Center, and \$10 million for the Center for Biotechnology. The College is in a strong position.</p>

		<p>One bill drawing attention now is SB 724 by Kolkhorst. It would require a physical quorum for governing board meetings at public institutions of higher education and introduces penalties for repeated unexcused absences. While this wouldn't create an immediate challenge for San Jac, it may have implications for how colleges across the state manage board participation policies, especially with regard to remote attendance. It reflects a broader focus this session on board transparency and accountability in public higher education.</p> <p>Brenda explained that HB 2110 by VanDeaver is also being monitored. It would expand access to free dual credit for economically disadvantaged high school students, create a clear, statewide definition for Credentials of Value, and how to determine returning credentials that lead to jobs with real wages and demand.</p> <p>Another significant proposal is SB 37 by Creighton, which is a wide-ranging governance and academic bill. It requires general education curriculum reviews every five years, restricts instruction on identity politics and systemic privilege, and authorizes the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to rate academic programs based on return-on-investment. Programs rated "sunset" would be prohibited from enrolling new students. The bill also expands the oversight role of governing boards in hiring, curriculum, and faculty governance. If it moves forward, the College will need to evaluate potential compliance needs and implications for program design and review processes.</p> <p>Brenda added that there are several property tax bills that are being evaluated for their impact on community colleges. These changes include requiring two-thirds voter approval for tax increases and bond elections, lowering the rate that requires voter approval from 8.0 percent to 3.5 percent, requiring 60 percent of voters versus simple majority for voter approved rate increase, making changes to the tax calculation, and adding additional reporting requirements. TACC has developed a working group to analyze these bills, and San Jacinto College is part of this group.</p> <p>She provided a brief update on a few additional bills, and the Board members have a summary if they are interested</p>
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		<p>in these. Christian is continuing to track these bills and staying engaged with state leadership. She will keep the Board updated as things progress.</p> <p>Allatia Harris joined the workshop.</p>
<b>VI.</b>	<b>Update on Enrollment - Spring 2025, Preliminary Summer 2025</b>	<p>Carin Hutchins provided an overview of enrollment. She explained that currently Spring 2025 headcount is up by 2.6 percent and contact hours by 4.7 percent. She explained that a 3 percent increase was budgeted, so we are in a good position.</p> <p>She reviewed the summer enrollment and explained that compared to last year, headcount is up by 13.4 percent and up 11.5 percent for contact hours.</p>
<b>VII.</b>	<b>Update on Board Election</b>	<p>Carin provided an update on the Board election. She explained that as voting locations are near final, and the College is working to meet the legal requirements and post information in the Houston Chronicle as well as other local newspapers.</p> <p>She reviewed the early voting and election day centers for May 2025 compared to May 2023. There are additional election day locations but there are less early voting locations. This information is directly off of the Harris County website. Carin explained that a request has been made for additional early voting and election day locations to be included. Most of the requests were denied and the County provided an explanation for each request.</p> <p>Carin explained that for the entities that are in the College’s taxing district that are not partnering with Harris County on their elections, or for those that have cancelled their elections, her team is monitoring those polling locations to ensure it is clear where voters can vote in the College’s trustee election. The plan is to post signs when a separate location is the only option for our voters. The goal is to make it as clear as possible where to vote in the College’s election.</p> <p>Some members asked if there are other options to promote this information. Carin explained that the marketing department has a communication plan which includes regular posts to social media and information on the College’s website. She will meet with Amanda Fenwick</p>

		<p>again to see if there are other avenues to utilize, and she will also confirm if there are additional options for signage.</p> <p>Members discussed the materials presented.</p>
<p><b>VIII.</b></p>	<p><b>Overview of Opportunity High School Diploma (OHSD) Program</b></p>	<p>Allatia Harris provided an overview of the Opportunity High School Diploma program. The Opportunity High School Diploma (OHSD) was created as a late addition to House Bill 8. The OHSD is a diploma, not a GED, and it is awarded by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Community College. Students complete the OHSD where they're concurrently enrolled in a program of study for a credential of value.</p> <p>This diploma is competency based, designed for adults and for those that are working and want to come back and improve their skills. Allatia said there's a statewide grid that is used to assess students when they come in to see what competencies they've already demonstrated. This diploma rewards students with credit for what they can demonstrate they already know and for the things they don't know, a specific curriculum will provide that coursework.</p> <p>Allatia stated that five colleges were chosen to offer this diploma: Alamo, Dallas, El Paso, San Jac, and Del Mar joined the program in phase two. She added that colleges are not limited to awarding this degree to students who come to us from our service area. They can come from anywhere in the state, but the idea is that San Jacinto College is the pilot for the Gulf Coast region.</p> <p>Allatia explained that the learning outcomes that apply for each of the five core component areas were developed by a statewide team. She added that tuition across the state for this noncredit enrollment will be standard.</p> <p>Additionally, that many San Jacinto College employees were involved in the development teams and committees. Allatia explained that a portion of the Phase 1 funds received were used to develop marketing materials and develop curriculum pay for the employees who created the content. Also, some of the Phase two funds received will be used to hire a staff member for this program.</p> <p>Allatia said that the hope is that this pilot will grow into a more robust program. Board members expressed that they</p>

		<p>think this is a great program and a great opportunity for the adult population and our students.</p> <p>Salvador Serrano Jr. asked if these students would be able to participate in the College’s commencement. Allatia replied that we have not got that far in the planning. Brenda added that her intent is that they will, but we will update the Board as planning progresses. Allatia added that Lamar McWaine is the lead for San Jacinto College and she herself is on a state advisory committee.</p> <p>Allatia Harris left the workshop.</p>
<b>IX.</b>	<b>Review Allocation of Capital Project Funding</b>	<p>Brenda explained that generally, requests for reallocating capital project funding is taken to the Building Committee and then to a workshop for the Board to review, discuss, and support to move forward with reallocations. A new process is recommended that would provide the Board with an update at either the Building Committee or during a workshop but most likely the Board workshop, which would be followed by a formal Board action request for approval. This will provide clearer documentation for actions and approvals.</p> <p>She explained that there is a formal Board action in tonight's Board book requesting reallocation of funds for specific capital projects period. The list of the projects was provided to the Board, and Brenda explained that the action tonight is to approve these officially now that they have been discussed.</p>
<b>X.</b>	<b>Overview of Request for Payment in Lieu of Taxes and Foreign Trade Zone</b>	<p>Carin provided a brief overview of a request for payment in lieu of taxes and foreign trade zone. Entities in the Houston area desiring to have a property outside of the existing Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) included in the FTZ must file an application to the Port of Houston Authority. She explained that this inclusion will exempt them from import/export fees as well as local property taxes. The applicant must obtain a letter of non-opposition from all affected property tax authorities. Tax letters are sometimes accepted in lieu of the letter of non-opposition. A common practice to gain the required letter is to offer to execute a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreement.</p> <p>She stated that under this agreement, the applicant agrees to voluntarily make payments that would equal the property taxes that would normally be due.</p>

		<p>Carin said that the College has historically agreed to provide letters of non-opposition as long as a PILOT agreement is executed. She reviewed the College history with the FTZ and a current request from Frontier Logistics LP. The Board is being asked to approve this item tonight.</p>
<b>XI.</b>	<b>Discuss Retirement of Danny Snooks and Related Services Provided</b>	<p>Brenda explained that Mr. Snooks met with her and Carin recently to let them know his plan for retirement. The College has worked with Daniel J. Snooks Attorney at Law on various services for many years. Since 2007, Snooks has provided delinquent tax collection services under a contract. The current delinquent tax collection contract expires on June 30, 2025. Snooks also provides general counsel on legal matters, reviews certain affiliation and articulation agreements for multiple departments of the College and supports various Board operations.</p> <p>Mr. Snooks has provided notice that he is retiring and will not be able to provide any services after June 30, 2025. She explained that general counsel on legal matters will be handled by one of the College's current contracted attorneys. Review of affiliation and articulation agreements will likely be contracted independently with the associate within Mr. Snook's firm. This will be on a short-term basis until the situation is assessed.</p> <p>The plan is to issue a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for delinquent tax collection services period. Per the Texas Government Code, Chapter 2254, legal services are exempt from competitive bidding and if the College chooses to solicit for the services, then a new attorney must be selected based on the RFQ procurement method. At the June Board meeting, the administration may request delegation of authority for the Chancellor to approve an award to a new attorney to provide delinquent tax collection services.</p> <p>The group discussed the upcoming retirement and plan for services moving forward.</p>
<b>XII.</b>	<b>Discuss Strategic Planning</b>	<p>Brenda explained that this item is being tabled and will be reviewed with the Board at the next workshop.</p>
<b>XIII.</b>	<b>Review of Calendar</b>	<p>Brenda reviewed the calendar and asked the Board members to let Mandi Reiland know if they would like to attend any events.</p>

<b>XIV.</b>	<b>General Discussion of Meeting Items</b>  <b>a. Additional Purchasing Support Documents</b>	<p>Brenda reviewed the pending delegations of authority provided on the additional purchasing support document.</p> <p>The Board members did not have any questions about items included in the Board book.</p>
<b>XV.</b>	<b>Adjournment</b>	Chair Mims adjourned the meeting at 6:55 p.m.