



**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS
LEE COLLEGE DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
April 17, 2025**

The Board of Regents of the Lee College District met on April 17, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at John B. Tucker Lecture Hall. Chairman Fontenot called the meeting to order stating that the meeting was duly posted and a quorum was present.

PRESENT: Daryl Fontenot, Chairman; Susan Moore-Fontenot, Vice Chair; Mark Himself, Secretary; Mark Hall, Assistant Secretary; Weston Cotten; Gina Guillory; Judy Jirrels; Gilbert Santana; Pam Warford

Dr. Lynda Villanueva, President

ABSENT: None

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

Regent Judy Jirrels said the Invocation, and led the Pledge to United States flag and Texas flag.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Evan Richards, physics instructor, presented on STEM Day, hosted this spring. One of Lee College's largest annual outreach events, STEM Day brings high school students from Baytown, Highlands and throughout the service area for science, technology, engineering and math sessions led by Lee College faculty members. Dr. Richards said the hope is to motivate students to learn more about STEM fields, perhaps to major in a STEM field, and perhaps to attend Lee College.

Sessions have included artificial intelligence, physics, process technology, computer science, astronomy, engineering, chemistry, biology, geology, environmental science, cybersecurity, microbiology, kinesiology, math, instrumentation, anatomy & physiology, drafting, welding, and computer networking. School districts feedback is overwhelmingly positive, Dr. Richards said.

STEM Day began in 2012 with Goose Creek CISD, drawing about 200 students. It increased to as many as 600 students from eight school districts by 2020, until halted by COVID. Dr. Richards said the relaunch this spring involved about 200 students from Goose Creek CISD, and planning already is underway for 2026. Dr. Richards lauded Daisy Aramburo for management of event logistics, and Regina Barrera for preparation of science labs and ensuring all needed supplies are on hand.

28.25

DISPOSITION OF MINUTES

Regent Cotten made a motion, seconded by Regent Jirrels, that the Board approve the minutes for Special Board Meeting – Tour, March 5, 2025; Building Committee Meeting, March 26, 2025; Special Board Meeting - Tour, March 27, 2025; Board Meeting, March 27, 2025.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN

Chairman Fontenot noted the wonderful, impressive Honors Day program yesterday, the recent Cheer Team Banquet, the Student Recognition Ceremony, and the ribbon cutting to reopen Tucker Hall. He thanked Faculty Assembly for hosting a debate last night for Board of Regents candidates.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Building Committee** – Committee Chair Santana said committee members and other Regents on Thursday, April 3, toured several technical-vocational instruction buildings, as well as Bonner Hall. At a meeting Tuesday, April 15, the committee reviewed five agenda items to be considered during the Board meeting tonight. Approval of those items is recommended, he said. The April 15 meeting also included committee members' feedback from the April 3 buildings tour, a facilities master plan update, a site utilities survey update, a status report on 660 W. Texas Ave. renovation, and a brief update on the ExxonMobil Baytown events center project. Also discussed were possible uses of property for sale at 1301 Memorial Drive, and upcoming tours of Lee College buildings, he said. Current project updates included cosmetology construction, and ADA Phase 2 and Life Safety projects. He reported the facility master plan visioning meeting with PBK was held earlier today, and the facilities master plan preliminary assessment by PBK is scheduled for April 24.
- **Policy Committee** – Committee Chair Gina Guillory reported the committee is scheduled to meet next Tuesday. Also, one item on the meeting agenda tonight – annual review of investment policies and investment strategies – is recommended for approval, she said.
- **Audit and Investment Committee** – Committee Chair Judy Jirrels reported the committee met April 10 and heard the college's quarterly investment report, as well as a report by Greg Goings, internal auditor, on two completed audits. Reporting her takeaways from the recent ACCT Governance Leadership Institute, Regent Jirrels mentioned a college providing laundry facilities on campus, and a college offering a session on role/duties/limitations of governing board members that is presented at the time candidates register to run for office. She also recalled learning about strategic planning and cultural innovation as implemented by Amazon – beginning with customers and working backward, and including consideration of what higher education and innovation will look like in 2075.

Building and Facilities – Serving on the Building Committee are Gilbert Santana, Chair; Mark Hall, Pam Warford, and Daryl Fontenot

Policy Committee – Serving on the Policy Committee are Gina Guillory, Chair; Susan Moore-Fontenot, and Weston Cotten

Audit and Investment Committee – Serving on the Audit and Investment Committee are Judy Jirrels, Chair; Gina Guillory, and Mark Himsel

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

- **Marketing Awards** – Dr. Villanueva congratulated winners of Paragon awards from AACC National Council for Marketing & Public Relations: Gold, Photography – Estefany Sanchez, for movie theme posters for Barbers Hill Fall Fest; Silver, Videography – Chris Coats, for First Time Free at Lee video ad series; and Silver, Digital Marketing – Sebastian Troitino, for a campaign for manufacturing and industrial technology programs at McNair Center.

- **Transfer Tour** – The Puente, TRiO and Honors Programs took 33 students to tour Texas State University, where students received transfer information and learned about scholarship opportunities. Leadership of Dr. Javier Martinez and support of Dr. Janena Norris, Kelli Forde Spiers, Dr. Leonor Calderon and Brianne Dayley made the trip possible. According to Dr. Villanueva, Dr. Martinez credits encouragement of transfer tours and enrichment opportunities by Jo Greathouse with greatly improving the ability of the Puente program to serve students. Also, Dr. Villanueva lauded Maria Sierra, Reo Cummings and Alyssa Hernandez for ensuring students were engaged and safe as they traveled.
- **Regent Appointed** – Regent Gina Guillory was appointed by Harris County Commissioners Court to serve on the county's Tax Reinvestment Zone Committee.
- **Kiwanis Club Presentations** – Kelli Forde Spiers presented on Lee College student services, focusing in particular on the Student Resource and Advocacy Center. Regent Mark Hall presented personal reflections from his Board of Regents service, and covered the evolution, growth and accomplishments of the college, and future needs and possibilities.
- **Student Perspectives to Foundation Board** – Nicole Tunmire and Karen Guthmiller presented findings from student focus groups to the Lee College Foundation board.
- **Honors Day** – Dr. Villanueva thanked Brianne Dayley, Honors Program Coordinator, and her administrative support for all arrangements and details to make Honors Day special.
- **Funding in Support of Nursing** – Lee College has received funding from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for the Nursing Reduction Shortage Program, to enroll, retain and graduate more nursing students. The grant to Lee College of \$443,262 is third highest in the state among community colleges, Dr. Villanueva said. She congratulated Dr. Janena Norris, Dr. Helen Manibusan, all nursing faculty, and everyone who worked on this.
- **Awards to Student Government** – At the Texas Junior College Student Government Association conference in Galveston, Layla Leeah of Lee College was awarded first place for the Region V t-shirt design she submitted, and Lee College's region was awarded the state level Spirit Stick for most community service and leadership demonstrated. Also, Lee College received the Outstanding Delegation award for leadership, collaboration and overall support of the conference. In addition to meeting with student leaders from other colleges, SGA members heard from keynote speaker U.S. Rep. Sylvia Garcia. Dr. Villanueva thanked SGA advisor Jo Greathouse, and the Board of Regents, for their support of SGA.
- **New Named Scholarships** – At the Lee College Foundation annual Scholarship Breakfast, 29 new named scholarships were celebrated. Featured speaker was student Layla Leeah, who shared her inspiring story. Dr. Villanueva thanked the entire Foundation team, under the leadership of Selah Tacconi, for making this event special.

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

Resignations and Retirements – Dr. Lynda Villanueva, President

Graeme Cox, Faculty, Kinesiology – Retirement

Financial Report – Jacob Atkin, Chief Financial Officer and Vice President, Finance

Reporting financial results as of the end of March, seven months and 58% through the fiscal year, Jacob Atkin said operating funds are at about \$40 million, with just over \$30 million in reserve which includes both standard board reserves and insurance reserves. Noting the college budgets

about \$7.4 million in cash outlays per month, he said the college has more than five months of funds on hand for operations, and a little more than four months of funds on hand in reserves. Annette Ferguson has done an amazing job, Mr. Atkin said, in establishing a well-reserved position.

Tuition & fee revenue for fall and spring is essentially all collected, with the majority of summer semester revenue to be collected in April and May – tuition & fee revenue is expected to be on target at the end of the fiscal year, Mr. Atkin said. Two of three state appropriation payments are received; the final state appropriation payment of \$5 million will be received in June.

Tax revenue is almost \$2 million behind budget, Mr. Atkin said, noting the tax rate was cut after the budget was adopted. He said he expects the anticipated year-end tax revenue shortfall to be covered within operations, without any adjustments. Interest income is expected to exceed budget. Board reserves of \$5 million that are invested in mutual funds and government pools will be moved to longer term investments, ahead of anticipated Federal Reserve rate cuts, Mr. Atkin said. Fiscal year-end revenue projections indicate results will exceed budget for tuition & fees, be on budget for state appropriations, short of budget for tax revenue, and close to budget for other revenues, he said.

Projections are for an operating surplus of \$2 million at year end – the administration plans to manage these funds closely in light of the college's many needs, with the desire to get as close as possible to zero net at year end by maximizing services to students, Mr. Atkin said. At year end, salary & benefit costs are expected to be under budget by as much as \$1 million, operating costs are anticipated to come in slightly under budget, and debt service on budget, he said.

In answer to questions by Chairman Fontenot, Mr. Atkin confirmed the anticipated \$2 million year-end operating surplus does incorporate the projected ad valorem tax collection shortfall, with the revenue in lieu of tax category showing the greatest shortfall in ad valorem tax collection.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ITEMS OF ACTION

A. PERSONNEL

29.25 CONSENT Agenda – Consideration of New Hires

The Administration recommends that the Board approve the new hires as presented:

Dr. Tristan Pace, Faculty, Mathematics

Dr. Jason Jordan, Faculty, Government/Political Science (Dual Credit)

Regent Guillory made a motion, seconded by Regent Cotten, that the Board approve the recommendation.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

B. NEW BUSINESS

30.25 Consideration of Resolution Declaring the Board of Regents has Reviewed the Lee College Investment Policies and Investment Strategies and Reaffirmed Each as Provided in Board Policies CAK (LEGAL and LOCAL)

The Administration recommends that the Board affirm the resolution declaring that the Board of Regents has reviewed the Lee College investment policies and investment strategies.

Regent Guillory made a motion, seconded by Regent Jirrels, that the Board approve the recommendation. Regent Guillory noted the only change is to include Jacob Atkin, new as CFO.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

31.25 Consideration of Joint Election Contract Agreement with Harris County

Chairman Fontenot called on Regent Santana, who read as follows: The Administration recommends that the Board authorize the President to enter a contract with Harris County whereby the county will perform all procedures allowed under state election laws for the Lee College District in connection with the May 3, 2025, Regents election.

Regent Santana made a motion that the Board authorize the President or her designee to negotiate final terms and enter into the proposed joint election agreement with Harris County, and to take related actions. Regent Hall seconded. Brief discussion ensued regarding how the county calculates the amount to be charged for election services provided.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

32.25 Consideration of Interlocal Agreement with the City of Baytown for Collaboration to Offer Summer Camps for Kids via the Humane Heroes Program

The Administration recommends that the Board authorize the President or her designee to negotiate final terms and approve the agreement with the City of Baytown.

Regent Warford made a motion, seconded by Regent Moore-Fontenot, that the Board approve the recommendation.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

33.25 Consideration of the Tuition Rate for Dual Credit Courses

The Administration recommends that the Board authorize the President to set the tuition rate for dual credit courses to \$58.52 per semester credit hour for FY26.

Regent Moore-Fontenot made a motion, seconded by Regent Santana, that the Board approve the recommendation. Brief discussion ensued regarding the rate increase, as compared to the previous year, and to clarify that the rate is adopted locally but only after being established at the state level.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

34.25 Consideration of Course Fees for the Logistical Operations Management Program at Huntsville Center

The Administration recommends that the Board authorize new course fees to cover the cost of certification testing.

Regent Cotten made a motion, seconded by Regent Warford, that the Board approve the recommendation. In response to a question by Chairman Fontenot, Dr. Douglas Walcerz explained these fees represent the cost for students to take industry certification exams upon completion of college course work. By making them student fees, Pell Grant funds may be used for payment of these costs, Dr. Walcerz said.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

35.25 Consideration of Contract with Centegix for Employee Safety Platform with a 5-Year Agreement

The Administration recommends that the Board authorize the President or her designee to negotiate final terms and approve the Centegix agreement for installation and implementation of the Safety Platform at \$72,675 and the annual service cost in the amount of \$81,800 for the current year, with renewal up to 4 additional years at an annual cost of \$81,800, for a total of \$481,675 for the 5-year agreement. This contract is through the TIPS Co-op, Contract # 230105.

Regent Moore-Fontenot made a motion, seconded by Regent Warford, that the Board approve the recommendation. During Q&A that ensued, Thomas Quinn of Lee College and Justin Masek of Centegix explained plans to provide to every full-time and part-time employee at every Lee College location a wearable panic alarm badge that notifies security with three pushes of a button, and that extends notification to Baytown Police after eight or more button pushes. Explanation included additional emergency response measures that are activated when the button is pushed eight times.

Also discussed was information about reliability of the signal, the private network by which it is transmitted, and redundancies that are in place. Mr. Quinn said Lee College officials have had discussions with La Porte ISD, which uses the system. Mr. Masek said Centegix provides a supply overage of badges, meaning there is no additional fee for a lost badge.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

36.25 Consideration of RFS Sports to Replace Broken Seating at the Arena and Wellness Center

The Administration recommends that the Board authorize the President or her designee to negotiate final terms and approve RFS Sports to replace broken seating at the Arena and Wellness Center for the sum of \$117,394.

Regent Cotten made a motion, seconded by Regent Hall, that the Board approve the recommendation.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

37.25 Consideration of Furniture Marketing Group Hallways Furniture Updates

The Administration recommends that the Board authorize the President or her designee to negotiate final terms and approve Furniture Marketing Group (FMG) for furniture updates at various facilities for hallways for the sum of \$148,632.27.

Regent Moore-Fontenot made a motion, seconded by Regent Guillory, that the Board approve the recommendation.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

38.25 Consideration of Award to Construction Masters of Houston for Gym Restrooms Remodel

The Administration recommends that the Board authorize the President or her designee to negotiate final terms and approve Construction Masters of Houston for Gym Restrooms Remodel for \$287,863.16.

Regent Warford made a motion, seconded by Regent Jirrels, that the Board approve the recommendation.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

39.25 Consideration of the HVAC Presentative Maintenance Agreement Renewable Option for Year 4 (FY 2025-2026) and Additions

The Administration recommends that the Board authorize the President or her designee to negotiate final terms and approve the renewable option for Year 4 of the agreement plus additions with Johnson Controls, Inc., for \$361,015.00.

Regent Santana made a motion, seconded by Regent Cotten, that the Board approve the recommendation.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

40.25 Consideration of Monument Roofing Systems to Install Roofing Systems at the North Central Plant and the Performing Arts Center

The Administration recommends that the Board authorize the President or her designee to negotiate final terms and approve Monument Roofing Systems to install Duro-Last Roofing Systems at the North Central Plant and the Performing Arts Center for the sum of \$425,287.00.

Regent Warford made a motion, seconded by Regent Cotten, that the Board approve the recommendation. During Q&A that ensued, Philip Handley provided information about the age of the Performing Arts Center, roof condition, leaks and water damage, and costs to the college to make repairs. The new roof for each building will have a 20-year repair warranty.

Prioritization for roof replacement is for buildings for which the roof is not under warranty, meaning the college must pay each time repairs are needed, Mr. Handley said. Work on the North Central Plant roof will involve stripping away two to three layers of existing roof prior to new roof installation, he said.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

41.25 Consideration to Reaffirm or Modify Board of Regents Budget Priorities for FY26

The Administration recommends that the Board reaffirm or modify budget priorities for use in developing the FY26 operating budget.

Regent Santana made a motion, seconded by Regent Moore-Fontenot, that the Board approve the recommendation. Regent Moore-Fontenot said she appreciates the opportunity to identify parameters at the beginning of the budget development process.

Regent Hall said reserves have improved to the point that the Administration may consider modifying the extent to which reserves are prioritized. Regent Santana noted that, as the budget grows each year, the amount required in reserve to maintain 4-6 months of operating funds also increases. In answer to a question by Regent Hall, Mr. Atkin identified funds currently being categorized as reserves. Mr. Atkin said the Board will have the opportunity during the upcoming budget process to review and consider revenues and expenses by account code.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board of Regents closed the Open Session at 7:17 p.m. and convened into Executive Session at 7:25 p.m. in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act regarding:

1. Consult with Board Attorney regarding legal advice on any item on the agenda. [TX Gov't Code § 551.071]

2. Discussion of Lee College President's duties and responsibilities. [TX Gov't Code § 551.071]

No action is taken while the Board is recessed into Executive Session.

The Board ended Executive Session at 8:15 p.m. and reconvened into Open Session at 8:17 p.m.

ITEM OF ACTION

A. NEW BUSINESS

42.25 Consideration of Student Representative on the Lee College Board of Regents

Chairman Fontenot stated this item is suspended.

MATTERS OF CONCERN FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Fontenot declared the meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Chairman, Board of Regents

Secretary, Board of Regents