



**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS
LEE COLLEGE DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
May 14, 2025**

The Board of Regents of the Lee College District met on May 14, 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 Weston Cotten said the Invocation and led the Pledge to United States Flag and Texas Flag.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT – International Education & Travel

English & Humanities instructor Melanie Verner, who for two years has chaired the International Education program, noted such a program is unique to a college the size of Lee College. Trips not only outside Baytown but also outside the United States grow students' sense of identity, place, community, responsibility, critical thinking, and perspective, she said. Hurdles/challenges overcome by students include passports and visas, customs lines and airports, foreign foods and sometimes sicknesses, rain forests, mountains, foreign currencies, languages, and more, she said.

A packet distributed to each Regent featured comments by students about the impact on them of travel experiences. A host of data emphasizes the impact of international travel on students' college and career outcomes, Ms. Verner said. She encouraged continued funding and support of the program, to be led by instructor Francisca Castillo, who is now traveling with students in Brazil.

Students Irais Torres, Ruben Capetillo and Dan Creek Thomas shared travel destinations they experienced, along with the resulting impact on them, noting that they otherwise wouldn't have imagined taking such trips on their own and gaining the opportunity for such experiences.

The presentation ended with slides from trips to Caddo Mounds State Historic Site in east Texas, London, Paris, Costa Rica, Peru, Brazil, south France, and Italy.

ITEMS OF ACTION

A. NEW BUSINESS

45.25 Consideration to Canvass the Votes, Precinct by Precinct, and Declare Official the Returns for the May 3, 2025, Lee College District General Election Held in Chambers and Harris Counties

In accordance with the Texas Election Code, the Administration recommends that the Board conduct the local canvass of the May 3, 2025, Board of Regents Election, and upon completion, note for the record the time of completion of the canvass.

After reading precinct by precinct results, Chairman Fontenot announced vote totals as follows:

Position 4

Pam Warford 1,431

Position 5

Susan Moore-Fontenot 925

Heron Thomas 957

Position 6

David Isaac 496

Daryl Fontenot 1,303

Chairman Fontenot reported overall total votes of 5,112, and completion of canvass at 6:29 p.m.

Regent Hall made a motion, seconded by Regent Himsel, to declare official the returns for the May 3, 2025, Board of Regents election as canvassed.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

46.25 Consideration of Adoption of Order Declaring Results of May 3, 2025, Lee College District General Election

The Administration recommends that the Board adopt the order setting forth official results of the May 3, 2025, Board of Regents Election as read during the canvass on May 14, 2025.

Regent Santana made a motion, seconded by Regent Cotten, the Board approve the Administration's recommendation.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES OF ELECTION TO ELECTED REGENTS

Chairman Fontenot read aloud and presented a Certificate of Election to Pam Warford, and then a Certificate of Election to Heron Thomas. Vice Chair Moore-Fontenot read aloud and presented a Certificate of Election to Daryl Fontenot.

SWEARING IN OF REGENTS

Don Coffey administered the Oath of Office to Pam Warford. Kausha Thomas administered the Oath of Office to Heron Thomas. Don Coffey administered the Oath of Office to Daryl Fontenot.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Mr. Fontenot deferred to Dr. Villanueva, who thanked Regent Moore-Fontenot for leading the Presidential search that led to Dr. Villanueva's hiring, and for her leadership at state and national levels for the benefit not only of Lee College but also of all community colleges in Texas and the nation. She credited Regent Moore-Fontenot for keeping College's best interest as her highest priority, and for keeping students at the center of everything Lee College does. And she thanked

Regent Moore-Fontenot for their personal relationship and for her support, adding that Regent Moore-Fontenot always will be a member of Lee College family and will never be forgotten.

Each Regent in turn thanked Regent Moore-Fontenot for being a friend, colleague, leader, mentor, and for her service – all done gracefully, reliably, and with class.

Thanking Dr. Villanueva and her colleagues for their comments, Regent Moore-Fontenot reflected on her 36½ years as a Regent, which included service with remarkable Presidents, administrators, faculty, staff and community members – all united by a shared belief in the power of education to change lives. Lee College has evolved, but has never changed its commitment to access, excellence and opportunity, she said, especially for first-generation students, working adults and underserved communities. She thanked fellow Regents past and present for their wisdom, collaboration, friendships; and thanked faculty, staff and Dr. Villanueva for their commitment to student success. She thanked past, present, and future students for providing inspiration by their determination and dreams. Saying Lee College always will be in her heart, she expressed thanks for the privilege of serving and for the memories she will carry.

REORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD

After inviting Regent Heron Thomas to come forward and be seated at the board table, Chairman Fontenot announced nominations received in response to a request he sent to Regents prior to this meeting. Gilbert Santana received multiple nominations for Chair; Pam Warford received multiple nominations for Vice Chair, Mark Himsel received multiple nominations for Secretary; and Gina Guillory was nominated for Assistant Secretary. No nominations were made from the floor.

Gilbert Santana was elected Chair with no dissenting votes.

Pam Warford for Vice Chair, Mark Himsel for Secretary, and Gina Guillory for Assistant Secretary were elected together to those respective positions with no dissenting votes.

Regent Santana presided over the remainder of the meeting as Board Chair.

47.25

DISPOSITION OF MINUTES

Regent Warford made a motion, seconded by Regent Guillory, that the Board approve the minutes for Special Board Meeting – Tour, April 3, 2025; Audit & Investment Committee Meeting, April 10, 2025; Building Committee Meeting, April 15, 2025; Special Board Facilities Visioning Meeting, April 17, 2025; Board Meeting, April 17, 2025; Special Board Meeting, April 21, 2025; and Policy Committee Meeting, April 22, 2025.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN

Chairman Santana said he has no report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Building Committee – Committee Chair Gilbert Santana reported the committee and other board members met May 1 and toured several campus buildings, including the gymnasium, pool, Arena, Wellness Center, greenhouse and Gray Science Building. Also, the committee

met just prior to this board meeting, and heard a presentation on procedures for managing surplus and salvage inventory, reviewed three items for which the committee recommends approval later during this board meeting, discussed feedback from recent tours, heard an update on facilities master plan progress, heard a report on the site utility survey, discussed next buildings tour set for May 29, and reviewed current projects including cosmetology, ADA Phase 2 and Life Safety.

- Policy Committee – Committee Chair Gina Guillory reported the committee met April 22, and said approval is requested for items later in this meeting. Noting it has been reviewed by the executive team and is recommended by legal counsel, she elaborated briefly on updates in one of the items, Policy DMAA (Local).
- Audit & Investment Committee – Committee Chair Judy Jirrels said the committee reviewed completed audits yesterday, and that Mr. Goings will present later tonight to the board.

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 Himself

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

- **New Regent Welcomed** – Dr. Villanueva congratulated Regent Heron Thomas on his election, welcomed him to the Board of Regents, said she looks forward to serving with him, and wished him a belated happy birthday.
- **Commencement** – Expressing appreciation to Regents able to attend, Dr. Villanueva reported 476 graduates participated this year in commencement, compared to 370 last year. Expectation is officially to graduate 740 students this year, compared to 702 last year, she said. Expressing appreciation for everyone who helped ensure ceremonies went smoothly, she specifically noted Dr. Carl Husband and his team. It was an honor to celebrate the lives of three students who are no longer with us, by awarding posthumous degrees, she said.
- **Huntsville Center Featured** – Achieving the Dream featured LCHC in a national publication that focuses on serving justice-impacted students, Dr. Villanueva reported. She extended kudos to Donna Zuniga, Dr. Douglas Walcerz, Paul Allen and Tracy Williams.
- **Student Basic Needs Support** – Lee College has participated for the last year in a technical assistance cohort for the SNAP Employment and Training Program, which connects SNAP recipients with education, training and support services, Dr. Villanueva said. Participating institutions may be reimbursed for 50% of staffing, materials, and indirect costs of services such as those provided at the Student Resource and Advocacy Center, she said, adding that Lee College has applied and expects to be the first community college in Texas to gain this recognition and approval. She thanked Kelli Forde Spiers for leading this effort, which helps students come to Lee College, remain enrolled, and complete their studies.
- **Congratulations** – Dr. Janena Norris has been selected to the American Association for Women in Community Colleges 2025 Leaders Institute, a workshop which helps women develop additional leadership skills to prepare for career advancement.
- **Scholarship Recipients** – Four Rotaract Club members each received a \$3,000 scholarship, Dr. Villanueva reported, expressing thanks to the Rotary Club of Baytown.

- **Influentials Under 40 Selection** – Coach Nicholas Wade was featured by The Baytown Sun among Influentials Under 40, Dr. Villanueva reported.

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

Resignations and Retirements – Dr. Lynda Villanueva, President

Dr. Gregg Lattier, Business Administration/Management Instructor – Retirement
Melanie Verner, English & Humanities Instructor – Resignation

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

Mr. Atkin welcomed Regent Heron Thomas to Lee College, noting he has worked only six weeks at the college but that it is a special place that is poised to do great things. The Lee College Board is the most committed and the most engaged that he has ever worked for, he said.

Mr. Atkin said cash position consists of three categories: (1) college operations account – ad valorem taxes, tuition & fees, and state appropriations; (2) restricted account – board reserves and insurance reserves; (3) funds for specific purposes – lost revenue reimbursement (CARES Act), and funds for particular construction projects. At the end of April, total cash position is \$75 million, a 13% increase compared to a year ago. Projected low point for cash flow is expected in August.

Reporting as of the end of April – 66% of the fiscal year – most of the district's tax revenue and most tuition & fees are received for the year, Mr. Atkin said. After collection of summer semester tuition & fees, this category is expected to exceed budget at year end. Final state appropriation payment this year will come in June. Other local income – primarily interest income, and operations from auxiliaries and other revenue-generating activities – is on pace to exceed budget. Taxes collected this year will be less than last year, reflecting the reduced tax rate adopted last October.

At this time, all expense categories are trending under budget, Mr. Atkin said. Salary & benefits tend to come in under budget as the result of position vacancies during the year. Operating expenses are up from last year – the college is striving to be aggressive in moving forward the initiatives of the college as reflected in budgeted operating expenses for the year, he said. Debt expense will trend below budget until August, when principal payments on general obligation bonds will be made.

As of the end of April, projections to fiscal year end indicate a budget surplus as high as \$3.4 million, Mr. Atkin reported. However, college officials will strive to use those funds to move strategic priorities forward, so the actual surplus is not expected to be that high, he said. A capital projects summary showed status of surplus funds, as earmarked following prior fiscal years.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT – Additional Item

Dr. Marissa Moreno, Associate Vice President of Transfer and Educational Partnerships, introduced and congratulated two administrators in the Transfer and Educational Partnership division, for recently completing a doctorate. Dr. Sarah Tidwell earned a Ph.D. in Higher Education and Policy Studies from University of Houston. Dr. Priscilla Sanchez, who joined Lee College last November, earned an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership from Spalding University.

STATUS REPORT – Greg Goings, Internal Auditor

Mr. Goings began by recalling risk rating standards he presented last fall, noting that a “high” risk rating would result in a report to the full board – which has not happened.

On the basis of six projects that have been completed, Mr. Goings made three points: (1) for “high engagement, high transparency, high helpfulness and high patience,” he expressed appreciation to fellow employees with whom he has worked; (2) the college’s main Enterprise Resource Planning system throughout its history here has not been fully exploited – some elements of college processes are not part of the system; they are embedded in other software, which affects efficiencies; (3) “a lot of paper” is still involved in processes, which creates challenges.

Opportunities for improvement are being identified, Mr. Goings said, ranging from increasing efficiency to implementing a new control. In the six completed projects, roughly 30 risk issues were identified, ranging from “low” ratings (housekeeping, or slight improvement), to “moderate” (increase control), to “elevated” (implement a new control). For the risk issues, 30+ corresponding action plans are in place, each with an assigned owner and target date, he said. Progress of these plans is being tracked, and he has no concerns from a risk and control standpoint, he said. He reported good meetings with the Audit & Investment Committee, with good Q&A and discussion.

A cybersecurity audit has been added as the result of a requirement that came out in February, Mr. Goings said. Fieldwork is underway for three audits – Workforce, ERP Replacement, and Data Center Co-location. Instrumental Grants audit has kicked off. Athletics audit will begin Monday. Inventory audit is targeted to begin next week.

The annual audit plan for next fiscal year will be built in July, with the goal to present the plan to the Audit & Investment Committee and full board in August, Mr. Goings said. Compilation of the annual audit report for the current fiscal year is planned for August, with presentation to the committee and the board in September.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ITEMS OF ACTION

A. PERSONNEL

48.25 CONSENT Agenda – Consideration of New Hires

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

- Mr. John Elliott, Drafting Instructor
- Mr. Isaac Monts, English & Humanities Instructor
- Ms. Melanie Santos, English & Humanities Instructor
- Ms. Hunter Smith, English & Humanities Instructor
- Mr. Garrett Bonnin, Speech Communication (Dual Credit) Instructor
- Mr. Duane Gundrum, Speech Communication Instructor
- Ms. Crystal George, Learning Frameworks Instructor
- Ms. Anna Wallack, Completion Coach

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

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

B. NEW BUSINESS

49.25 Consideration of Adoption of Board Policy Revisions for Local Policies

The Administration and Board Policy Committee recommend that the Board approve and adopt the revisions to Local Board Policies.

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

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

50.25 Consideration for the Award of the Bank Depository Contract

The Administration recommends that the Board authorize the President or her designee to negotiate final terms and approve the depository agreement with JP Morgan Chase.

Regent Guillory made a motion, seconded by Regent Jirrels, that the Board approve the Administration's recommendation.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

51.25 Consideration of Outside Auditor Engagement

The Administration recommends that the Board engage Whitley Penn, LLP, for \$64,250 to complete the annual audit.

Regent Fontenot made a motion, seconded by Regent Warford, that the Board approve the Administration's recommendation. In response to questions, the Administration confirmed that Whitley Penn has performed the college's annual audit since 2018, that the college is in the midst of a multiyear agreement with Whitley Penn for annual audit work, and that approval is requested at this time to authorize the current year of that multiyear agreement.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

52.25 Consideration of Micro Integration to Complete Remaining External DNA Doors at Main Campus

The Administration recommends that the Board authorize the President or her designee to negotiate final terms and approve Micro Integration to complete remaining external DNA doors at Main Campus for the sum of \$203,359.00.

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

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

53.25 Consideration of Covenant Communications to Upgrade Stage Lighting at the Performing Arts Center

The Administration recommends that the Board authorize the President or her designee to negotiate final terms and approve Covenant Communications to upgrade the Performing Arts Center stage lighting for the sum of \$206,181.63.

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

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

54.25 Consideration of Generocity Services, Inc., to Update the Barney Gray Science Building

The Administration recommends that the Board authorize the President or her designee to negotiate final terms and approve Generocity Services, Inc., to provide updates to the Barney Gray Science Building for the sum of \$208,098.58.

Regent Fontenot made a motion, seconded by Regent Guillory, that the Board approve the Administration's recommendation.

The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board of Regents closed the Open Session at 7:37 p.m. and convened into Executive Session at 7:42 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 7:51 p.m. and reconvened into Open Session at 7:52 p.m.

MATTERS OF CONCERN FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Regent Hall asked for temperature to be raised in the meeting space. Regent Himsel asked for a study or proposal on the feasibility of video of board meetings, beyond just audio recording. Also, Regent Himsel thanked Regent Fontenot for an excellent job as Board Chair the last two years.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Santana declared the meeting adjourned at 7:53 pm.

Chairman, Board of Regents

Secretary, Board of Regents