

# TRAVIS CENTRAL APPRAISAL DISTRICT

**BOARD OFFICERS**  
RICHARD LAVINE  
CHAIRPERSON  
KRISTOFFER S. LANDS  
VICE CHAIRPERSON  
ED KELLER  
SECRETARY/TREASURER



**BOARD MEMBERS**  
TOM BUCKLE  
BRUCE ELFANT  
SHELLDA D. GRANT  
DENNY HAMILL  
ELEANOR POWELL  
RICO REYES  
BLANCA ZAMORA-GARCIA

## MINUTES OF THE JANUARY, 13 2015 MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE TRAVIS CENTRAL APPRAISAL DISTRICT

The Board of Directors of the Travis Central Appraisal District held a public meeting on January 13, 2015 at 6:00pm in the Board Meeting Room, 200A on the second floor of the Travis Central Appraisal District, located at 8314 Cross Park Drive, Austin, Texas.

Mr. Lavine recognized a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 6:03pm. Board members present were Richard Lavine, Chair; Ed Keller, Secretary; Tom Buckle; Bruce Elfant; Shellda Grant; Denny Hamill; Eleanor Powell; Rico Reyes and Blanca Zamora-Garcia. Kristoffer Lands, Vice-Chair was absent from the meeting. Also present were Marya Crigler, Chief Appraiser; Sharon Baxter, Legal Counsel; and Leana Mann, Finance & Facilities Officer.

Item No. 3 – Oath of office for newly appointed Board Members Tom Buckle, Shellda Grant, Ed Keller, Eleanor Powell and Blanca Zamora-Garcia.

Item No. 4 – Election of Officers for the Board of Directors: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary/ Treasurer: Richard Lavine was nominated and elected as Chair; Kristoffer Lands was nominated and elected as Vice-Chair; and Ed Keller was nominated and elected as Secretary.

Item No. 5 – Citizen's Communication: there being no citizen's communication the Board moved onto item #6.

Item No. 6 – Approval of the minutes of the December 9, 2014 meeting: **DR. DENNY HAMILL MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR THE DECEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup> MEETING AS PRESENTED. MS. SHELLDA GRANT SECONDED THE MOTION AND THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Item No. 7 – Taxpayer Liaison's Report: Mr. Henry Johnson briefed the Board regarding a Complaints' report the Comptroller requests yearly. Mr. Johnson made the Board aware of issues taxpayers' are having when requesting late hearings or trying to contact the ARB Chairperson and they are not getting a direct response from the ARB Chairperson. The ARB has processed some of these request and we have mailed the taxpayers grant/deny letters. He let them know that Judge Livingston filled all open positions on the ARB, four new members and two additional auxiliary members were appointed. Mr. Johnson updated the Board regarding an ongoing taxpayer complaint by Vera Patton. Ms. Crigler and Ms. Baxter clarified to the Board that Mr. Rives, our former Taxpayer Liaison, recommended that since the properties she refers to in her complaints are still in litigation, that they should take no action at this time. The Board concluded there is no action they could take at this time.

Item No. 8 – Discussion & Action on appointment and compensation of Taxpayer Liaison: Ms. Crigler would like to change Mr. Henry Johnson's appointment from Interim Taxpayer Liaison to a permanent position. She would also like to increase the pay for the position to \$38.50 per hour, since Mr. Johnson is making himself available four days a week. He has also made a commitment

to be here every day of the week during protest season for the majority of the workday. **MR. RICO REYES MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF MR. HENRY JOHNSON AS TAXPAYER LIAISON AND THE PAY RATE AS PRESENTED. MR. ED KELLER SECONDED AND THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Item No. 9 – Appraisal Review Board Chairperson’s report: there being no ARB Chairperson’s report the Board moved onto item #10.

The Board skipped Items# 10 & 11, since they will go into executive session to go over those two items.

Item No. 12 – Chief Appraiser report to include: Potential 2015 taxing unit challenge, 2015 field work progress, homestead audits, training opportunities, review of accounting statements, and personnel status updates: Marya updated the Board regarding the taxing unit challenge; City of Austin has hired The Aegis Group to conduct the study on the Appraisal District. Both The Aegis Group and the COA have requested data from us for the study. Marya is scheduled to speak in front of the Commissioner’s Court on January 27. She informed the Board we are ahead of schedule on residential fieldwork this year, compared to last year, which she greatly attributes to the use of the field devices. She also updated them regarding homestead audits: 14,000 HS survey letters and/or applications have been mailed to taxpayers. Ms. Crigler also spoke to the Board about the classes we have available, her speaking engagements, and the TAAD conference. As for personnel status report, we have had one resignation, one new hire and currently have four open positions: one customer service clerk, one appraisal support clerk, one residential appraiser and one commercial appraiser position. Leana Mann went over the accounting statements that are included in the packet.

Item No. 13 – Presentation of the distinguished Budget Award to our Financial Officer, Leana Mann.

Item No. 14 – Discussion and action on appointment of the AG Advisory Board: The following AG Appraisal Advisory Board members are up for reappointment Dan Dierschke, Cliff Kessler, Lamar Weiss and Tommy Miertschin. This Board meets 3 times a year, they meet with our AG contact about the crop rates, appropriate productivity levels, and lease rates. They can answer any questions regarding AG policies. **MS. ELEANOR POWELL MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE REAPPOINTMENTS AS PRESENTED. MR. ED KELLER SECONDED AND THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Item No. 15 – Discussion and action on contract for legal services: Ms. Crigler would like to hire outside legal services to assist with the increase in lawsuits as we continue to be vigorous with our defense. Marya presented the Board with four law office agreements: Perdue, Brandon, Fielder, Collins & Mott, L.L.P.; McCreary, Veselka, Bragg & Allen PC; Olson & Olson LLP; and Evertson & Sanchez, PC. **MR. RICO REYES MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE ALL FOUR CONTRACTS FOR LEGAL SERVICES AS PRESENTED. MS. BLANCA ZAMORA-GARCIA SECONDED AND THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Item No. 16 – Discussion and action on contract for review of commercial values: Marya presented the Board with a proposal to review 2015 Commercial values from Almy, GlouDEMans, Jacobs & Denne. **MR. TOM BUCKLE MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONTRACT FOR ALMY, GLOUDEMANS, JACOBS & DENNE AS PRESENTED. DR. DENNY HAMILL SECONDED AND THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Item No. 17 – Discussion and action on the Chief Appraiser’s annual performance review and employee contract: Ms. Grant presented the Board with the results from the survey emailed to all

employees regarding the Chief Appraiser. The Board asked Ms. Crigler questions based on the survey results and comments. Included in the packet was a Chief Appraiser Salary Survey from the big five other Appraisal Districts. **MR. TOM BUCKLE MADE A MOTION TO EXTEND THE CONTRACT OF THE DISTRICT'S CURRENT CHIEF APPRAISER, MARYA CRIGLER, AS PRESENTED. MS. ELEANOR POWELL SECONDED AND THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Item No. 18– Discussion and action on appeals report and litigation: There being no action taken, the Board moved onto the next item.

At 7:33pm the Board moved to executive session for Items No. 10 and Items No. 11 **TO DELIBERATE ANY MATTER AUTHORIZED BY TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE SEC. 551.001 *et sec* [THE TEXAS OPEN MEETING ACT] INCLUDING:**

SEC. 551.071; Consultation with attorney regarding pending or contemplated litigation, settlement offers, and matters on which the attorney has a duty to advise the Board under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas.

SEC. 551.072; Deliberations regarding real property

SEC. 551.074; Personnel matters; to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee; or to hear a complaint or charge against an officer or employee

SEC. 551.076; Deliberations regarding security devices

At 8:23pm, the Board returned to public session and returned to Item No. 10.

Item No. 10 – Discussion & Action on selection of Appraisal Review Board Chairperson & Secretary to Include interviews of applicants: **MR. ED KELLER MADE A MOTION TO TABLE THE APPOINTMENT OF ARB CHAIR & SECRETARY TO A LATER MEETING. MR. TOM BUCKLE SECONDED AND THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**MS. BLANCA ZAMORA-GARCIA TO INTERVIEW STEPHEN CORNELIUS, DANIEL SMITH, MARTIN WILBANKS & JOYCE WILLIAMS FOR THE POSITION OF ARB CHAIR AND MARY STARR WILL ALSO INTERVIEW FOR SECRETARY. DR. DENNY HAMILL SECONDED AND THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**MR. TOM BUCKLE MADE A MOTION TO APPOINT SHELLDA GRANT, ED KELLER & BRUCE ELFANT TO A SUBCOMMITTEE TO PUT TOGETHER QUESTIONS FOR THE INTERVIEWS. MR. RICHARD LAVINE SECONDED AND THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Item No. 11 – Discussion & Action on ARB compensation; including benchmarking, daily rates, half day rates, hourly rates, after hours pay, officer compensation, and per diem: **DR. DENNY HAMILL MADE A MOTION TO ADOPT THE CURRENT SALARY SCHEDULE. MR. TOM BUCKLE SECONDED AND THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

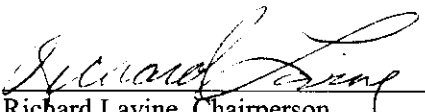
Item No. 19 – Discussion and actions on future agenda items: The next meeting is scheduled for January 27th at 6:00pm and the following items will be discussed: discussion & action on the selection of Appraisal Review Board Chairperson & Secretary to include interviews of applicants. Ms. Grant also suggested that the Chief Appraiser's annual performance review and employee contract be moved up to September.

Item No. 20 – Adjournment. **MR. TOM BUCKLE MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. DR. DENNY HAMILL SECONDED AND THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ed Keller, Secretary

APPROVED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Richard Lavine, Chairperson