



Mark W. Price
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MINUTES OF MEETING
15 October 2020
BRAZOS CENTRAL APPRAISAL DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1. Declaration of Quorum and Call to Order

Bill Lero as Chairman, having determined that a quorum was present, called the meeting to order at 8:46 a.m. on Thursday 15 October 2020 at 4051 Pendleton Dr., Bryan, Texas. A verbal roll call was taken to establish the following:

Members Present: Bill Lero (Chairman), Kyle DeWitt, Kristy Roe; *Ron Kaiser, *John Flynn, *Jason Bienski and J.J. Ruffino (upon swearing in).

Members Absent: Tim Jones

BCAD Staff: Mark Price, *Dana Horton, Debbie Lockledge

BCAD Staff Absent: n/a

Guests: *Jon Miller as BCAD legal counsel; Dennis Hastings, Chair of the current BCAD ARB; David Schuelke, Chair-elect for the next BCAD ARB.

* = present via videoconference or teleconference call.

2. Affirmation of Board Membership Eligibility for J. J. Ruffino as Brazos County's replacement for Russ Ford.

Mr. Ruffino affirmed his eligibility to serve by signing the Statement of Elected/Appointed Officers, pursuant to Texas Constitution Art. XVI, Sect. 1(d), amended 2001. He then recited the statement for the record and signed this statement before Ms. Lockledge as a Notary Public.

3. Issuance of the Oath of Office.

The issuance of Oaths of Office was administered to Mr. Ruffino to affirm his appointment as a member of the Brazos Central Appraisal District Board of Directors, representing Brazos County, for 2020. Mr. Ruffino stated the Oath of Office for the record and signed his Oath of Office before Ms. Lockledge as a Notary Public, thereby confirming his 2020 appointment.

4. Acknowledgement of Visitors and Hear Citizen Comments. Per instructions on the agenda, comments were to be sent to Ms. Lockledge by e-mail; no comments were received for this meeting. Mr. Lero acknowledged everyone who was in attendance, as noted above.

5. **Recognition of affidavits (if any) filed in response to State law on disclosure of conflict of interest.**

None.

6. **Consent Agenda.**

The following items, being on the consent agenda, were considered:

- a. **Approval of cash disbursements for September 2020.**
- b. **BCAD financial account review.**
- c. **Board of Director minutes for previous meeting(s).**

Mr. DeWitt moved to approve the consent agenda; Dr. Kaiser seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

7. **2020 Appraisal Review Board Report as presented by Dennis Hastings, ARB Chair and David Schuelke, ARB Chair-elect.**

Mr. Hastings thanked the Board for allowing his six years on the ARB, with two years as ARB Chair, this year being his final year, and thanked Mr. Price for his support of the ARB and the process whereby citizens are allowed to come before the ARB and be heard. He introduced David Schuelke, next year's ARB Chair-elect, and turned the presentation over to him.

Mr. Schuelke thanked Mr. Hastings for his service and opened the floor to any questions. Mr. Price thanked Mr. Hastings for his service, noting that there had been nights when the ARB was still at BCAD holding hearings until 7:00 p.m. Having two panels has helped move hearings along in spite of the last minute changes that had to be made to increase safety as BCAD navigated the frequent and often last minute changes in procedures resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Lero noted a record number of cases went before the ARB this year, and thanks were expressed to Mr. Hastings for his service, commitment and efficiency particularly in the frequently modified procedures.

Question was asked how frequently the Board would like the ARB to be on the Board's agenda going forward to present an update. It was agreed that a 10-15 minute update each Board meeting beginning in January 2021 would be appropriate.

8. **Executive Session**

The Brazos Central Appraisal District determined it necessary to go into Executive Session, pursuant to Sect. 551.071 of the Texas Government Code, consultation with an attorney regarding pending or contemplated litigation, settlement offers. At 9:10 a.m., the Board took a brief recess; at 9:11 a.m. the Board went into Executive Session, pursuant to Sec. 551.071 of the Texas Government Code as noted above. Following discussions, the Board came out of Executive Session at 9:32 a.m. for a brief recess.

Following a brief recess, the Board returned to Regular Session at 9:34 a.m.

9. **Discussion, consideration and possible action on:**

- a. **Proposed Settlement of Pending Litigation.**

Ms. Horton presented the following proposed settlements:

1. **Cause No. 18-002398-CV-272.**

Tax Year 2018 PID 117787 \$759,000

After further discussion, motion was made by Dr. Kaiser to approve and seconded by Mr. DeWitt. The motion passed unanimously.

2. **Cause No. 17-002262-CV-361.**

Tax Year 2017 PID 403761 \$31,000,000

After further discussion, Dr. Kaiser moved to approve this settlement as presented; Mr. DeWitt seconded the motion. There were no votes against either of the settlement proposals; the motion to approve this settlement offer passed unanimously.

b. **Contract with Blakeman & Associates as BCAD's personnel consultants.**

Mr. Price gave an overview of their services related to personnel issues. He noted that BCAD has increased our use of their services, particularly in lieu of the regular changes in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. He commended them for doing an excellent job of keeping BCAD up to date as these changes as they are imposed on businesses. He recommended increased HR training for the directors on hiring procedures. The addition of quarterly presentations from their HR people on various workforce issues would increase the monthly fee from \$100 to \$375/month and asked the Board to approve this contract change and price. Mr. DeWitt made the motion to approve; Mr. Ruffino seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

c. **Data license agreement with TransUnion, LLC for purchasing sales data.**

Mr. Price presented, explaining that TransUnion is a data mining company and gave an overview of the services they offer. This is a DIR contract, meaning the state has approved it so BCAD does not have to go out for bids. BCAD's primary interest is having them verify homestead exemptions. If they do an initial check going five years back, the estimate they provided is a \$12,000 one-time charge, and then a monthly charge of \$350-\$450/month going forward from there. Question was asked if BCAD had a used a service like this in the past; response was we have not; BCAD was a member of the MLS for some time until they made changes and we lost our membership. Mr. Price noted the ARB will not support BCAD values if data is not available to back us up.

After further discussion about first possibly renegotiating with MLS, question was raised where TransUnion is getting their data from, the Board asked for more information. No vote was taken at this time.

d. **Proposed 2021 BCAD Holiday schedule.**

The proposed BCAD holiday schedule for 2021 was presented to the Board for approval. Ms. Lockledge noted that it is the schedule holiday schedule as Brazos County has approved. Motion to approve the holiday schedule as presented was made by Dr. Kaiser and seconded by Mr. DeWitt. The motion passed unanimously.

e. **Acknowledge of the Taxpayer Liaison Officer's Quarterly Report.**

So acknowledged.

10. Chief Appraiser's Update.

Mr. Price noted BCAD is finishing up hearings for the prior year, and appraisers are out in the field getting information on new improvements. He will be doing a presentation with Kristy Roe for the City of College Station, and the Habitat for Humanity class BCAD offers ever year to explain property taxes to them.

Mr. Price noted that there have been a couple of COVID exposure cases but no BCAD employee has been diagnosed with the disease. BCAD is still closed to the public, but he has not received any complaints from the public. Business continues as usual by phone, the internet, the drop box available by the front door, and mail. ARB hearings are scheduled next week and expects a couple more sessions.

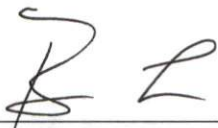
11. Other Business & Future Agenda Items.

Mr. Lero noted that the next meeting is scheduled for 19 November 2020. Mr. Price noted that he is researching VOIP phone systems. It would be an item in the next year budget. Mr. Ruffino noted the advantages he has seen since making that change, and encouraged checking for local options but Mr. Price reminded him that he supports using local resources where available but reminded him that as a government entity BCAD is required to go out for bids for any expense over \$50,000.

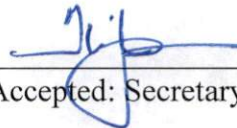
12. Adjournment.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:06 a.m.

Examined and approved as of this 21 day of JANUARY 2021.



Accepted: Chairman



Accepted: Secretary

Accepted: Vice-Chairman