

**MEETING OF THE
SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

June 27, 2015

Minutes

The Chancellor Evaluation Committee of the Board of Trustees of Houston Community College held a meeting on Saturday, June 27, 2015, at the HCC Administration Building, Second Floor Auditorium, 3100 Main, Houston, Texas.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Zeph Capo, *Chair*
Robert Glaser, *Vice Chair*
Adriana Tamez, *Secretary*
Carolyn Evans-Shabazz
Eva Loreda
Sandie Mullins
Christopher W. Oliver
David Wilson

ADMINISTRATION

Cesar Maldonado, Chancellor

OTHERS PRESENT

Jarvis Hollingsworth, Board Counsel, Bracewell & Giuliani
Narcisa Polonio, Facilitator, ACCT

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Zeph Capo, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:42 a.m. and declared the Board convened to consider matters pertaining to Houston Community College as listed on the duly posted Meeting Notice.

(The following Trustees were present: Capo, Evans-Shabazz, Glaser, Loreda, Tamez and Wilson)

Mr. Capo introduced Dr. Narcisa Polonio with Association of Community College of Trustees (ACCT) as the facilitator for the meeting.

(Dr. Tamez stepped out at 9:43 a.m. and returned at 9:44 a.m.)

UPDATE ON CHANCELLOR'S PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL AND RELATED MATTERS

Motion – Mr. Glaser motioned and Dr. Tamez seconded.

Mr. Capo noted that the discussion from the Evaluation Committee was to revise the calendar

Vote – The motion passed with vote of 6-0.

BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT

Motion – Ms. Loreda moved and Dr. Tamez seconded.

Dr. Polonio provided ACCT's background and upcoming events and reviewed the meeting agenda.

Mr. Capo informed he would like to address transparency and public confidence to reach a collective definition so that there is a common understanding moving forward.

Dr. Evans-Shabazz apprised that as a new Trustee, she is unfamiliar with the self-assessment procedure and her role in the process. Dr. Polonio noted that the question relates to voting, for example, if a Trustee is not familiar with a topic, do they abstain or participate. She informed that elected officials have a responsibility to cast a vote and only to abstain when there is a conflict of interest.

Mr. Wilson apprised that he abstains when he feels he does not have enough information to approve. Dr. Polonio noted that the Trustee's responsibility is to seek the information needed and to ensure that college operations are ongoing.

Mr. Capo noted that an abstention is the same as a no vote as it takes five affirmatives for an item to pass.

Dr. Polonio informed that the goals of the retreat are to review the following:

- Value of Board Self-Assessment
 - National standards
 - Accreditation expectations
 - Transparency and public confidence
 - Building trust and strengthening relationships
 - Define priorities and goals
 - Commitment to continuous improvement and efficiencies
- Process and Design
 - Findings and recommendations
 - Establishing Board goals and priorities
 - Aligning Board and Chancellor goals
- Developing an Action Plan and Next Steps
- Setting Benchmarks

Review the Value of Board Self-Assessment

Dr. Polonio apprised that the following are the big-ticket items across the country:

- Student Success and Completion
- Greater Workforce Focus
- Significant Reductions in Public Funding

Dr. Polonio noted the following community college trends:

- Baccalaureate degrees (technical/workforce)
- Dormitories
- Performance Based Funding
- Technical Community College Systems

Dr. Polonio informed that Technical Colleges advise and track students from the beginning. Mr. Capo inquired if direct advising adds a technical model approach to a comprehensive college model. Dr. Maldonado noted that a new model is emerging where students do not declare a major upon entrance to college, but rather they declare a discipline.

- Dropping “Community” from the Name
- Corporate College Model

Dr. Polonio informed that the Board should review and determine which, if any, of the trends are good fit for the institution. She apprised that part of the responsibility of the Board is to be future thinking and help the college seek those priorities.

(Mr. Oliver joined the meeting at 10:23 a.m.)

Dr. Polonio noted that assessment is tied to the mission of the institution and helps the Board monitor itself. She informed that accrediting bodies apply standards based on the institutions' mission. She apprised that the Board assessment is valued and a part of the accreditation expectations:

- The governing board of the institution is responsible for the selection and the periodic evaluation of the chief executive officer.
- The legal authority and operating control of the institution are clearly defined for the following areas within the institution's governance structure: institution's mission; fiscal stability of the institution; and institutional policy.
- The Governing Board has a policy addressing conflict of interest for its members.

- The governing board is free from undue influence from political, religious or other external bodies and protects the institution from such influence.
- The governing board has a policy whereby members can be dismissed only for appropriate reasons and by a fair process.
- There is a clear and appropriate distinction, in writing and practice, between the policy-making functions of the governing board and the responsibility of the administration and faculty to administer and implement policy.

Dr. Polonio continued with an overview of the value of the self-assessment to include the following:

- Transparency and Public Confidence
- Building Trust and Strengthening Relationships
- Procedures and Practices
 - Discipline
 - Guidelines
- Commitment to Continuous Improvement and Efficiencies

Review Process and Design

Dr. Polonio asked the Board to review the Board Self Assessment report; she informed that eight of the Trustees completed the self-evaluation.

(Dr. Evans-Shabazz stepped out at 10:40 a.m.)

Mr. Oliver inquired as to how prior assessments compared to the current one as a reference point. He also inquired if one Trustee not participating skewed the numbers. Dr. Polonio noted that a Trustee not participating means that one Trustee's perspective is not included.

Dr. Polonio provided an overview of the evaluation process and a summary report to include findings and recommendations:

- **Board Chancellor Relations**
Mr. Capo inquired if the number is a true representation of the Board Chancellor relationship or if it is skewed by other factors. Dr. Polonio informed that three Trustees did not respond to this question.
- **Policy Role & Direction**
Dr. Polonio summarized policy and direction to include putting things in place to allow focus on the big-ticket items and did they work, for example, is the consent agenda used correctly. She apprised that the Board has to have discipline to avoid sabotaging itself.

Dr. Polonio posed the question is the Board a managing board or a governing board. She noted that each Trustee was elected to serve as part of a group, not individually to make decisions. She informed that it is important to find a balance between the individual Trustee voice and the business of the College.

- **Community Relations**

Mr. Oliver inquired if the Chancellor has a visible presence in the community; does he represent the Board's goals.

(Mr. Wilson stepped out at 11:15 a.m.)

Mr. Oliver inquired of the reason Trustees attend events outside of their district. Ms. Loreda informed that Trustees come to the events to show support as it takes more than one Trustee to approve an item.

(Mr. Wilson returned at 11:18 a.m.)

(Dr. Evans-Shabazz stepped out at 11:21 a.m.)

Dr. Polonio apprised that only two areas were highly graded and noted that she was surprised that the Board rated themselves very highly, but not each other.

(Mr. Oliver stepped out at 11:22 a.m.)

- **Board Organization**

Dr. Polonio summarized Board Organization to include how the Board receives information, organizes itself, follows procedures and executive session confidentiality.

Dr. Tamez inquired of the consequences for disclosing confidential information. Dr. Polonio noted that legally a case could be made that the information was leaked intentionally.

Mr. Jarvis Hollingsworth informed that it is a violation of the Trustee's fiduciary duty and the client -attorney privilege could be waived. Dr. Polonio apprised that the Trustee could be individually sued for slander.

(Mr. Oliver returned 11:30 a.m. and stepped out at 11:31 a.m.)

Dr. Polonio provided an example to emphasize the seriousness of releasing confidential information. Dr. Tamez recommended utilizing Dr. Polonio's suggestion for the Board signing that they will not disclose confidential information.

(Dr. Evans-Shabazz returned at 11:34 a.m.)

(Ms. Mullins joined the meeting at 11:34 a.m.)

Dr. Polonio noted that there has to be a certain level of trust as it relates to confidential matters. Mr. Hollingsworth informed that the Trustees took an oath and are expected to honor that commitment.

Mr. Hollingsworth apprised that the challenge is that in the State of Texas, the laws is established that a Trustee within their official duties of the institution is entitled to any and every document.

(Ms. Tamez stepped out at 11:48 a.m. and returned at 11:49)

Ms. Mullins requested the Oath of Office be provided to the Board for review.

(Mr. Capo stepped out at 11:50 a.m. and returned at 11:52 a.m.)

(Mr. Oliver returned at 11:56 a.m.)

(Ms. Loreda stepped out 12:08 p.m.)

- **Standards for College Operations**

Mr. Capo inquired of the responses for questions #15 and #16. Dr. Polonio noted that question #15 showed no consistency and the rating of 3.0 does not represent the difference or conflicts regarding the item. She informed the ratings for question #16 were almost identical to #15 except two fours went down to three, indicating that the Board has different points of view in this area.

- **Board Leadership**

Dr. Polonio provided the breakdown of the responses to question #22 regarding mutual trust between Board members.

Mr. Oliver apprised that the Board treats each other with respect; however, they do not trust each other.

(Ms. Loreda returned at 12:14 p.m.)

- **Advocating for the College**

Dr. Polonio noted the overall rating was in the mid-range. Ms. Mullins informed that it contradicts with the high rating for community relations. Mr. Capo apprised that the responses that lowered the average are directly related to specific areas and not overall.

- **Board Education**

Dr. Polonio noted that the 4.14 rating for question #29 regarding orientation is above the national average.

Mr. Oliver informed that the Board is educated on what it needs to do, but is not necessarily doing it as it relates to placing undue burden on staff. He also noted that if sufficient information were provided, it would reduce the requests.

Mr. Capo recommended reviewing the information request to figure out what is being requested. Dr. Polonio advised to define “undue burden” and inquired if it is the amount of requests for information or are Trustees having conversations with staff. She also inquired if the staff is being treated with respect and is there a perception that the staff works for the Board, and staff is here to serve the Board. Dr. Polonio apprised that the staff works for the Chancellor.

Mr. Wilson noted that the 2.0 is a self-evaluation, and inquired if staff concurs that information requests places an undue burden.

Mr. Wilson requested a recap of the requests he has made. Ms. Mullins recommended printing out a list of request for documentation and to notify all Trustees when information is requested.

Dr. Maldonado suggested adding items requested to the Weekly Administrative Briefing. Mr. Hollingsworth noted that the current policy states that the Trustees are informed of the request and each Trustee can request to receive the information as well.

(Mr. Glaser stepped out at 12:41 p.m.)

Mr. Wilson apprised that the current policy gives the Board Chair the authority to withhold information. Dr. Maldonado clarified that determination is limited to releasing privileged information.

(Mr. Glaser returned at 12:43 p.m.)

Mr. Oliver stated that requests could be minimized by providing the information ahead of time.

- **Institutional Readiness for Student Success**

Dr. Polonio noted that this is an area to be reviewed for improvement next year. She informed that part of the equation is that the Board was waiting on the data. Mr. Capo apprised that Dr. Kimberly Beatty has since provided the aggregated data.

- **Individual Trustee Self-Assessment**

Dr. Polonio noted that this rating was most fascinating as it reflects that there are confident Trustees that feel good about their contribution, but there is not opportunity to include input from all.

Establishing Board Goals and Priorities

Dr. Polonio informed that the next step is to review the assessment and put all the responses together to improve as a Board.

(Ms. Loredo stepped out at 12:57 p.m. and returned at 12:59 p.m.)

Dr. Polonio asked the Trustees to pick their top two priorities from the following:

- What are the major accomplishments of the Board of the past year?
- What are the Board's greatest strengths?
- What are the areas do you think the Board could improve?

The Board participated in the exercise presented by Dr. Polonio.

(Dr. Tamez stepped out at 1:00 p.m. and returned at 1:01 p.m.)

(Dr. Evans-Shabazz stepped out at 1:05 p.m.)

(Ms. Mullins stepped out at 1:06 p.m.)

(Dr. Evans-Shabazz returned at 1:07 p.m.)

(Ms. Mullins returned at 1:08 p.m.)

Dr. Polonio reviewed the Trustees' priority selections and noted that there was very little agreement as it relates to the Board's greatest accomplishments.

(Ms. Loredo stepped out at 1:09 p.m. and returned at 1:11 p.m.)

Dr. Polonio noted that the commonality with greatest strengths was the Board's diversity. She concluded that the Board is passionate, opinionated and diverse.

(Dr. Evans-Shabazz stepped out at 1:18 p.m.)

Dr. Polonio informed that the Board responses were all over the place as it relates to areas for improvement.

Dr. Polonio summarized that part of the priority is going to have to be working on trust and building the team.

(Dr. Evans-Shabazz returned at 1:21 p.m.)

Ms. Mullins inquired if there is commonality with what areas need to be improved. Mr. Capo recommended revisiting the question and select the priorities to begin improvement.

Aligning Board & Chancellor Goals

Dr. Polonio stated that the Board might now be at a point to work on the priorities that go hand in hand with the Chancellor's priorities.

ADJOURNED TO CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Capo adjourned the meeting to Executive Session at 1:32 p.m. notice having previously been given and reiterated in accordance with Sections 551.071, 551.072, and/or 551.074 of the Open Meetings Law. Mr. Capo stated that any final action, vote or decision on any item discussed in Executive Session would be taken up in Open Session or in a subsequent Public Meeting.

Mr. Capo reconvened the meeting in Open Session at 4:20 p.m. and entertained any motions on pending matters.

(The following Trustees were present: Capo, Evans-Shabazz, Loreda, Mullins and Wilson)

Vote – The Board voted 5-0 to accept that the annual self-assessment was completed.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business coming before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 4:21 p.m.

Minutes recorded, transcribed & submitted by:
Sharon Wright, Manager, Board Services

Minutes Approved as Submitted: August 20, 2015