WESLACO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
THE RIGHT CHOICE

Board of Trustees
Armando Cuellar, Jr., President
Dr. Jaime Rodriguez, Vice President
Jesse Trevino, Secretary
Marcos De Los Santos
Andrew Gonzalez
Isidoro Nieto
Jaclyn Sustaita

Dr. Priscilla Canales
Superintendent of Schools

319 W. Fourth Street / P.O. Box 266, Weslaco, TX 78599-0266 • 956-969-6503

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Meeting:	Special Board Meeting
Place:	Board Room/Virtual
Location:	319 W. Fourth Street
Date:	June 30, 2021
Time:	5:30 P.M.

THIS MEETING WAS POSTED ONLINE FOR AT LEAST 72 HOURS AS PERMITTED BY THE SUSPENDED PORTIONS OF THE TEXAS OPEN MEETINGS ACT AS APPROVED BY GOVERNOR ABBOTT. THE MEETING WAS LIVESTREAMED AT THE FOLLOWING WEB LINK: ***https://youtu.be/mf_t-d9JRLA***

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Armando Cuellar, Board President.

II. Establishment of a Quorum

The following board members were present.

Armando Cuellar, President
Dr. Jaime Rodriguez, Vice President
Jesse Trevino, Secretary
Marcos De Los Santos, Trustee
Isidoro Nieto, Trustee
Jaclyn Sustaita, Trustee

Andrew Gonzalez was absent.

III. Public Comments

The public had the opportunity to participate in public comments by registering no later than 5:15 p.m. at the following web link: ***https://www.wisd.us/superintendentboard/new-page***.

There were no public comments.

IV. Discussion and Possible Action for the Board to Consider the Selection of One or More Engineering Firm(s) for Each of the Following Three Engineering Disciplines, for Future Projects of the District:

- Civil Engineering
- Mechanical-Electrical-Plumbing (MEP) Engineering
- Structural Engineering

The Board heard presentations from engineering firms during a workshop held prior to this meeting. Dr. Canales informed the Board that the District will need to hire engineering firms for the following projects listed below, as well as other projects throughout the fiscal year. The Administration recommended that the Board select one or more Engineering Firm(s) for each of the following three engineering disciplines: Civil, Mechanical-Electrical-Plumbing (MEP), and Structural Engineering as part of RFQ #21-06-31, for future projects of the District.

Project	Engineering Services Needed
Wi-Fi Towers – ESSER Funding Cat-Walk Improvements on Billboard at Bobby Lackey Stadium – Local Construction Funds	Structural Engineering
HVAC Projects (HVAC Units and Controls) at Several Schools- ESSER Funding Access Controls for Middle Schools – TEA Grant and Local Funds Smaller HVAC or Electrical Projects that May Arise During the Fiscal year	Mechanical-Electrical-Plumbing (MEP)
Parking Lot Paving, Drainage Projects	Civil Engineering

Mr. Andres Sanchez recommended that the Board hire one (1) civil engineer, four (4) Mechanical-Electrical-Plumbing, and one (1) structural engineer. A ranking sheet was provided to the Board for ranking purposes.

Mr. Americo Garza informed the Board that the district needs to take advantage of ESSER funding to complete these projects and expend the money by 2024 as required by the provisions. He explained that the selection of these firms is at the discretion of the Board. In past years, the Board selected several architect firms and then designated the projects to each of the firms in order to be fair and to balance the workload among the firms.

Board President Cuellar said that it was important to take into account that some of these firms have worked for WISD and know the district. They need to keep the best interest of the district in mind and make sure the firms provide good quality work to avoid having to come back with costly repairs.

The board members agreed that it was a good idea to have a pool of firms available because it would be beneficial for the district.

Questions from the Board:

- Dr. Jaime Rodriquez questioned the number of firms being recommended for the different services required by the district.
  - As per Mr. Garza, the MEP firms provide mechanical, electrical, and plumbing services and, if necessary, they could hire their own structural engineer to do assessments for air conditioning projects. The district would like to have a structural engineer available to address projects for the district as needed.

  Mr. Marcos De Los Santos preferred to have more options because if they limit the projects to only one (1) firm, that firm could be consumed with other projects and not have staff available to address the district's needs.

  Mr. Garza pointed out that the school districts in the valley would be hiring firms as a result of receiving ESSER funds. He wants to make sure the firms are not overwhelmed with anticipated projects throughout the valley.

- Mrs. Sustaita wanted to know if the Board could select all of the firms listed under each category as presented by Administration. This would allow for a bigger pool of engineering firms.

  Mr. Garza replied that the district would have to identify and assign the project beforehand because the engineer would assist with the budget and help develop the project. District staff would then present the budget estimates to the Board and the Board would need to select a method of construction. All the contracts will be reviewed by legal counsel.

  Mrs. Jaclyn Sustaita made the motion to recommend all the engineering firms that made a presentation at tonight's meeting. The following firms provided presentations to the Board.

Structural Engineers	MEP Engineers	Civil Engineers
1. Chanin Engineering 2. Green, Rubiano & Associates, Inc. 3. Raba Kistner, Inc 4. Halff Associates, Inc.	1. DBR Engineering Consultants, Inc. 2. Ethos Engineering 3. Halff Associates, Inc. 4. Trinity MEP Engineering, LLC	1. M Garcia Engineering, LLC 2. Guzman & Munoz Engineering & Surveying Inc. 3. SAMES, Inc. (Sam Engineering & Surveying) 4. SWG Engineering, LLC 5. Halff Associates, Inc.

Mr. Isidoro Nieto seconded the motion.

- Dr. Rodriguez wanted to know if the Board would delegate Administration to select the engineers from the pool.

  Since the district cannot ask for prices because the firms cannot competitively bid against each other, Mrs. Sustaita suggested that all firms be assigned a project on a rotation schedule. Mr. Nieto added that if a firm is not able to take on a project at the time they are called upon, the Board needs to move on to the next firm.

  Mr. Garza shared that district staff already have estimates on the MEP projects, which would allow them to divide the projects equally among those firms. Mr. Garza does not foresee any problems with the ESSER funds for the MEP because they already have an established set of projects identified in the budget. However, since district does not have a lot of work for the other disciplines (civil and structural), they will have to delegate projects as they come up to the firm who is next in line.

The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion made by Mrs. Jaclyn Sustaita and seconded by Mr. Isidoro Nieto to approve all the engineering firms that made a presentation at tonight's meeting.

V. Discussion and Possible Action for the Board to Clarify Whether the 2020-2021 One-Time Employee Incentive Payment Contingent on Increased Average Daily Attendance (ADA) and the Texas Education Agency Hold Harmless Provision, Should Be Prorated for Thirty-Six (36) Employees That Started Their Employment with the District During the 2020-2021 School Year

Dr. Canales informed the Board that thirty-six employees started employment with the district during the 2020-2021 school year. Administration asked for clarification from the Board on whether the 2020-2021 one-time employee incentive payment which was contingent on increased ADA and the Texas Education Agency Hold Harmless Provision should be: 1) prorated in a similar way as the incentive payment was prorated for employees that terminated their employment early in the 2020-2021 school year, and be paid at one-ninth or $111.11 per month of employment during 2020-2021; or 2) be paid in full ($1,000.00).

Mr. Andres Sanchez explained that during the June 14, 2021 board meeting, the Board approved to pay a $1,000 incentive payment to all staff that worked for the district during the 2020-2021 school year, prorated by the period of time employees were hired by the district for those employees that terminated their employment early: 1) December 2020 retirement or resignation (received one-half); 2) prorated monthly for those employees that left the district after any month, i.e, November 2020, March 2021, etc. (one-ninth for every month worked).

The table below reflects the thirty-six employees hired September 2020 through May 2021, the month they began employment, and the prorated amount:

Starting Month of Employment	No. of Employees Hired	Prorated Amount
September 2020	1	$1,000.00
October 2020	2	$ 888.88
November 2020	3	$ 777.77
January 2021	8	$ 555.55
March 2021	4	$ 333.33
April 2021	15	$ 222.22
May 2021	3	$ 111.11
Total Employees Hired	**36**	

Mr. Isidoro Nieto made the motion to use the prorated incentive payments for the thirty-six employees who started their employment late in the 2020-2021 school year. Dr. Jaime Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Mrs. Jaclyn Sustaita commented that teachers were asked to report to campus physically and teach face-to-face the fourth through sixth six-weeks in order to be eligible for Hold Harmless. She did some research and according to information from TEA, school districts received funds based on the fourth to sixth six-weeks' for Hold Harmless eligibility; the funds were not based for the months of September through December. Therefore, she felt that the teachers who were at work for the fourth to sixth six-weeks should receive the $1,000.00 incentive payment since they were on campus in person and contributed to the attendance needed. She did not agree with prorating the incentive payment for these employees.

Mr. Isidoro Nieto mentioned that staff was going to prorate the amount for only 36 employees who worked only two or four months of the year, vs. the teachers/staff members who worked for the entire year.

Mr. Andres Sanchez explained that for Hold Harmless eligibility, the district had to wait to see what the attendance figures would be on the sixth six-weeks to cover the fourth, fifth, and sixth six weeks. After the Hold Harmless ended for the first and second six-weeks, the district had to submit waivers to TEA in order to qualify for the third six-weeks. According to Mr. Sanchez, the Hold Harmless addressed the entire year.

Mr. Nieto commented that it would be awesome for the staff members who did not work the entire year to receive the $1,000.00 incentive. However, he questioned whether it was fair to those employees who have been working since September, which was approximately 95% of the staff, regardless if they worked face-to-face or remote versus the employees who began work in May and would receive the same amount.

Mrs. Sustaita pointed out that the employees who were here the first part of the year already received a $1,000.00 incentive in December and would also receive another $1,000.00 incentive in June.

Mr. Trevino mentioned that employees who started work in March, April, and May were part of the district and should receive the same amount. He was under the understanding that these funds were to be used for the second semester.

Mr. Andres Sanchez clarified that the agenda item presented to the Board on June 14 addressed a prorated amount to be paid to employees who left early in the year. Staff wanted clarification on whether the Board wants to provide a prorated amount to employees who started late in the year as well.

In fairness to all employees and consistency purposes, Dr. Jaime Rodriguez suggested that the district also provide the full amount to those employees who left early since they received a prorated amount.

Mr. Marcos De Los Santos concurred with Dr. Rodriguez in being consistent. If the Board decides to pay the full amount to employees who started late in the year, then the district should go back and pay the full amount to employees who left early in the year.

Mrs. Sustaita reiterated that the Hold Harmless funds addressed the fourth through sixth six-weeks and therefore employees who were working during this time until the end of the year should get the full incentive pay. She asked Mr. Sanchez to follow up on the information provided by TEA on which six-weeks were the funds from the Hold Harmless provision based on.

Mr. Sanchez explained that the funds under the Hold Harmless provision were for the entire year. TEA based the ADA on a 3-year average prior to the pandemic (2018-2019, 2016-2017, 2015-2016), and gave school districts an adjustment based on that 3-year average. The Hold Harmless was extended for the entire year. He explained that the $1000.00 incentive payment paid to staff in December 2020 had been approved by the Board in August 2020 from the fund balance, as an incentive payment to all employees since the District did not have the funds to give employees a pay raise. This incentive was not part of the Hold Harmless provision.

Board President Armando Cuellar pointed out that because this information was provided after the fact, he did not think it was fair to tell the employees that they were not going to get the full amount because of the date they were hired or the number of days they actually worked.

Mr. De Los Santos asked for clarification:

- In August 2020, the Board approved an incentive to be paid in December to all employees because the district was not going to be able to give a pay raise.
- The Board also discussed a second incentive of $1,000.00 to be paid at the end of the year based on the district meeting the ADA.

He pointed out that 15 employees started employment in April and 3 employees in May, according to the information provided by administration; yet, these employees could have started employment at the end of the April or May, so it would not be fair to pay the full amount when the other staff members have been working the entire year. Since the Board approved to prorate the incentive amount back in August to employees who left early, he felt that they should also prorate the amount for employees who started late. He stated, "You already set a standard, let's keep it consistent."

Voting in favor of the motion made by Mr. Isidoro Nieto and seconded by Dr. Jaime Rodriguez to use the prorated incentive payments for the thirty-six employees who started their employment late in the 2020-2021 school year were Dr. Jaime Rodriguez, Isidoro Nieto, Marcos De Los Santos, and Board President Armando Cuellar. Voting against the motion were Jacklyn Sustaita and Jesse Trevino. Motion carried with a 4 to 2 vote.

VI. Closed Meeting to Discuss:

The Board convened in closed meeting at 8:00 p.m. to discuss the following items:

A. Personnel Matters (Tex. Gov't Code 551.074)

1. Employment of Personnel – Certified Professional & Non-Contractual Personnel
2. Resignations
3. Deliberation Regarding the Appointment, Employment, Evaluation, Reassignment, Duties, Discipline, or Dismissal of a Public Officer or Employee (Tex. Gov't Code 551.074 and 551.071)

B. Deliberation Regarding Acquisition of Real Property (Tx. Gov't Code 55.072)

C. Consultation with Attorney Regarding: a) Pending or Contemplated Litigation: b) a Settlement Offer: or c) a Matter in Which the Duty of the Attorney to the Weslaco ISD under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas Clearly Conflicts with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code (Tex. Gov't. Code 551.071)

VII. Reconvene in Open Meeting:

The Board returned to open meeting at 9:51 p.m. to take action on the following items:

A. Possible Action, If Necessary, on Items Discussed in Closed Meeting

1. Discussion and Possible Action on New Employment - Certified Professional & Non-Contractual Personnel

The Superintendent recommended that the Board approve the recommendation of certified professional and non-contractual personnel as discussed in closed meeting.

CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL		
Name	**Position**	**Location**
1. Cynthia Balderas	Librarian	Weslaco High School
2. Julian Cortez, IV	8th Grade Social Studies Teacher	Cuellar Middle School
3. Laura E. Duque-Garcia	Counselor	Weslaco High School
4. Arlene Garza	Special Education Teacher	North Bridge Elementary School
5. Liset Garza	3rd Grade Teacher	Cleckler-Heald Elementary
6. Elizabeth J. Gilliam Douglas	English I Teacher	Weslaco East High School
7. Cecilia Izaguirre	8th Grade Teacher	B. Garza Middle School
8. Diana Montelongo	1st Grade Teacher	Memorial Elementary School
9. Angelica M. Morales	Elementary Teacher	Airport Elementary School
10. Andres Reyna	Pre-K Teacher	Memorial Elementary School

11. Jacqueline M. Saldana	Special Education Inclusion Teacher	B. Garza Middle School
12. Berenice Trevino	Elementary Teacher	Airport Elementary School
13. Eric Zamora	BIM Teacher	Weslaco High School

ADDENDUM		
1. Vanessa Cavazos	Elementary Teacher	North Bridge Elementary School
2. Gerardo Guerra	Career Investigations Teacher	B. Garza Middle School
3. Arnoldo Olivarez	Spanish Teacher	Central Middle School
4. Raul Rene Ramos	8th Grade English Language Arts Teacher	B. Garza Middle School

REASSIGNMENT OF CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL - ADDENDUM		
Name	**From:**	**To:**
1. Dina Davila	Elementary Counselor Sam Houston Elementary	Middle School Counselor Central Middle School
2. Samantha De La Garza	Social Studies Teacher Weslaco East High School	Campus Instructional Facilitator Weslaco East High School
3. Omar Quintero	Technology Instructional Coach Weslaco East High School	Campus Instructional Facilitator Weslaco East High School
4. Noemi Valdez	Special Education Teacher Weslaco East High School	Campus Instructional Facilitator Weslaco East High School

NON-CONTRACTUAL PERSONNEL		
Name	**Position**	**Location**
1. Vanessa Marie Villarreal	Attendance/At-Risk Clerk	B. Garza Middle School

REASSIGNMENT OF NON-CONTRACTUAL PERSONNEL		
Name	**From:**	**To:**
1. Julissa Mendoza	Attendance/At-Risk Clerk Silva Elementary School	Attendance/At-Risk Clerk Horton AEP
2. Angelita Ramos	Campus Secretary Rico Elementary	Secretary Special Education

Dr. Jaime Rodriguez made the motion to approve certified professional and non-contractual personnel as recommended by the Superintendent. Dr. Jaime Rodriguez seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

5. Discussion and Possible Action on Resignations

The Superintendent recommended that the Board approve the resignation/retirements of certified professional personnel.

Name	**Position/Location**	**Reason/Effective Date**
1. Audrey Almaraz	Social Studies Teacher B.Garza Middle School	Audrey Almaraz is resigning for personal reasons. Her resignation is effective May 28, 2021.

2. Blandina Elizondo	Family Consumer Sciences Weslaco High School	Blandina Elizondo is resigning for personal reasons. Her resignation is effective June 21, 2021.
3. Claudia Perez-Maldonado	Math Teacher Mary Hoge Middle School	Claudia Perez-Maldonado is relocating to Denver, Colorado. Her resignation is effective May 28, 2021.
4. Clarissa Salinas	Band Teacher Weslaco High School	Clarissa Salinas is resigning for personal reasons. Her resignation is effective May 28, 2021.
ADDENDUM		
1. Armando E. Celedon	Physical Education Teacher Weslaco East High School	Armando E. Celedon, Jr. is resigning to accept a position with Edinburg CISD. His resignation is effective June 30, 2021.

Dr. Jaime Rodriguez made the motion to approve the resignation/retirements of certified professional personnel as recommended by the Superintendent. Mr. Marcos De Los Santos seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

6. Discussion and Possible Action on Acquisition of Real Property (Tx. Gov't Code 55.072)

   Non-action item.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:53 p.m.