

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
DEL MAR COLLEGE DISTRICT**

March 3, 2026

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Regents of the Del Mar College District convened on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at 1:00 p.m., at the Center for Economic Development, 3209 S. Staples, Room 106, Corpus Christi, Texas with the following present:

From the Board:

Present:

Ms. Carol Scott, Ms. Libby Averyt, Dr. Nicholas Adame, Dr. Anantha Babbili, Mr. Carl Crull, Mr. Rudy Garza, Jr., Mr. Bill Kelly, and Mr. David Loeb.

Not present: Dr. Laurie Turner

From the College:

Dr. Mark Escamilla, President and CEO; Mr. Augustin Rivera, Jr., General Counsel; Mr. Raul Garcia, Vice President and CFO; Mr. Ali Kolaoudou, Vice President and Chief Information Officer; Dr. Jonda Halcomb, Vice President and Chief Academic Officer; Ms. Tammy McDonald, Vice President of Administration and Human Resources; Ms. Patricia Benavides-Dominguez, Vice President for Student Affairs; Mr. Matthew Busby, Vice President of Development and Donor Advising; Mr. Jeff Olsen, Chief of Staff and Vice President of Communication and Marketing; Ms. Delia Perez, Director of CEO Office and Board Relations; Mr. Conrado Garcia, Superintendent in Residence; and other staff and faculty.

CALL TO ORDER / QUORUM CALL

Chair Scott called the meeting to order with a quorum present. She requested a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Del Mar College Vision Statement.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS - The public was given the opportunity to provide public comments (both general and specific to any agenda item).

There were no public comments.

RECOGNITIONS:

- The Stone Writing Center (SWC) celebrates 50 years of providing instruction to DMC students.

Presented by: Dr. Jonda Halcomb

(II: Elevate, Goal 1: Increase completion for all students)

Dr. Halcomb provided historical information regarding the Stone Writing Center.

The Stone Writing Center at Del Mar College is celebrating its 50th anniversary, marking a half century of supporting student writing. Founded in 1976 as the English Learning Lab, it was one of the first writing centers in the Southwest and among the oldest in the

nation. Renamed in honor of Dr. Virginia Stone, the center has evolved alongside educational technology and relocated several times, most recently moving in December 2025 to its permanent home on the second floor of the renovated White Library. Today, the Stone Writing Center serves students across all disciplines and all three campuses, offering one-on-one and small group tutoring, online support through Canvas, faculty-requested workshops, and collaborative study spaces, continuing its long-standing mission of helping students become lifelong learners.

Dr. Halcomb introduced Mr. Cody Gregg, Dean of Learning Resources, who continued with the Stone Writing Center recognition and stated he was appreciative for overseeing the Stone Writing Center for 8.5 years and thanked the Board of Regents for recognizing its 50th anniversary and longstanding support of Del Mar students. He announced a Golden Anniversary celebration will take place on April 15, 2026, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the White Library. He also introduced the Stone Writing staff present. Ms. Linda Eubank also provided words of thanks and gratitude.

COLLEGE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Presenter: Dr. Mark Escamilla

- February 4, 2026: TACC/CEO Sounding Board Meeting
(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)
Dr. Escamilla continues to participate in the Texas Association of Community Colleges with fellow CEOs working with leadership.
- February 5, 2026: THECB CCF (Community College Finance) Standing Advisory Meeting.
(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect by the College)
Dr. Escamilla attended the Community College Finance Advisory meeting and continues to review performance-based funding.
- February 17, 2026: TALAS (Texas Association of Latino Administrators & Superintendents) Keynote
(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect by the College)
Dr. Escamilla was honored to be the keynote speaker for the Texas Association of Latino Administrators & Superintendents.
- February 6-11, 2026: ACCT National Legislative Summit. Washington, D.C.
(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect by the College)
Dr. Escamilla attended the National Legislative Summit in Washington, D.C. He was excited to represent Del Mar College at the conference.

REGENT'S REPORT:

Presenters: Regents Scott and Babbili

- February 6-11, 2026: ACCT National Legislative Summit. Washington, D.C.
(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect by the College)

Chair Scott provided information on committee meetings attendance, as well as revenue and expenses information. Dr. Babbili stated he was amazed at the depth and care that this special place in higher education that community colleges occupy. We have closeness to the community, and we connect to our students and their families at a deeper level. They met with Representatives Cloud and Gonzalez who were very receptive. Chair Scott reviewed the meetings attended.

STAFF REPORTS:

- Legislative Update

Presenter: Dr. Natalie Villarreal

(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

Dr. Villarreal provided information regarding the State interim charges and Governor Abbott's 5-point plan for empowering Texas taxpayers and overhaul the property tax system.

Dr. Villarreal discussed several higher education policy issues at the Texas and federal levels and explained the H-1B visa program, which allows employers to hire highly skilled foreign workers. In Texas, MD Anderson and Texas A&M University are the most affected by this program.

Dr. Villarreal highlighted the creation of a new Texas Senate Committee focused solely on higher education, following the departure of Senator Brandon Creighton, who previously oversaw both K–12 and higher education. Leadership for this committee will be determined after the next election cycle.

Dr. Villarreal stated the Texas Association of Community Colleges (TACC) interim legislative priorities, including formula funding and outcomes, dual credit incentives, workforce education grants, and Workforce Pell. Workforce Pell is still in development at the State level, and because it is federally driven, its implementation will vary by state.

Dr. Villarreal focused on federal higher education issues, particularly the Fiscal Year 2026 budget and future advocacy efforts. Community colleges received level funding for FY 2026. While there were prior concerns that the U.S. Department of Education might close, it remains open; however, programs are being shifted to other agencies. For example, the TRIO grant program is moving to the Department of Labor, which is taking on significantly more education funding and responsibilities. Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) were expected to face cuts but instead received continued, and even increased funding for FY 2026, though the reasons are unclear. Advocacy priorities highlighted include protecting and expanding the Pell Grant, especially due to increased FAFSA applications and the anticipated rollout of Workforce Pell, as well as continued support for adult basic education programs such as GED and ESL.

The House Community College Caucus is being reestablished. Advocates encouraged local members of Congress, including Representatives Gonzales and Cloud, to join. Congressman Gonzales, a Del Mar College alumnus, expressed openness to participating, with his community college background viewed as a positive influence on federal advocacy efforts.

Dr. Villarreal, Mr. Raul Garcia, and Dr. Escamilla responded to questions from the Board of Regents.

- TIRZ Task Force Update

Presenter: Ms. Jessica Alaniz Perez

(III: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Ms. Perez stated following the last Board meeting, a task force was formed to review and strengthen the College's policies and procedures related to TIRZ (Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone) projects. The task force, which first met on February 5, includes several Board members and administrative staff. Its primary objectives are to review the current TIRZ policy, ensure continued compliance with Chapter 311 of the Texas Tax Code, and clarify and standardize guidelines for submitting TIRZ proposals to the Board. The group plans to propose revisions to Policy B4.37, create a clear checklist to guide applicants, and improve communication and consistency in how TIRZ proposals are presented for Board.

Dr. Villarreal, Regent Loeb, and Dr. Escamilla responded to questions by the Board of Regents.

- Property Tax Collection Assessment

Presenter: Mr. Raul Garcia

(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Mr. Garcia explained the key factors affecting the College's property tax revenue as part of preparing the 2025–2026 budget. He outlines how Texas community colleges are funded through a mix of property taxes, tuition and fees, and state funding, noting that Del Mar College is among those that rely more heavily on local property taxes, which make up about 62% of its M&O funding. He also reviewed the changes in the district's tax base over the past five years, highlighting that single-family homes remain the strongest and most stable source of growth, with valuations increasing significantly from 2021 to 2025. Industrial property values declined due to appraisal adjustments implemented in 2024. Overall, the District experienced its highest year-over-year growth in 2023, and taxable values have since stabilized in the \$51–\$52 billion range, indicating a strong and balanced tax base primarily supported by residential properties.

Mr. Garcia stated the region has experienced strong growth in total property values, but taxable values have increased more slowly due to a growing share of exemptions and adjustments. Over the past decade, taxable values grew at an annual rate of 4.5%, compared to 5.4% for total assessed values. Exemptions and adjustments rose from about 25% of total value in 2016 to roughly 31% in 2025, largely driven by multiple property tax relief measures, including homestead exemption increases in 2022, 2023, and 2025. The most significant impact occurred in 2023, when exemptions rose sharply. Proposed state-level property tax reforms could further limit taxable value growth if enacted, creating long-term financial planning challenges for the college. At the same time, the single-family housing market has stabilized after several years of interest-rate-

driven adjustment. Sales activity declined from 2021 levels but has settled into a stable range since 2023, with dollar volumes also leveling off. Increases in new listings and residential permits in 2024 suggest continued engagement by homeowners and builders. Overall, notwithstanding legislative uncertainty around property taxes, these trends indicate relative stability in single-family property valuations moving into the next valuation cycle.

Ms. Jackie Landrum provided information regarding property tax collections. A five-year history of collection rates shows variability, with performance ranging from the mid-60% to mid-70% based on budget expectations. The lower collection rate observed this year was primarily due to the county's transition to a new credit card processing vendor, which delayed receipt of payments, which has been resolved. As of February, the collection rate reached 97.6%, compared to 98.2% during the same period last year, indicating that collections are stabilizing. For the College's tax levy collections, as of the end of January, fiscal year FY 2025 had collected \$68.2 million, while FY 2026 had collected \$63.1 million. By the end of February, FY 2025 collections increased to \$94 million, and FY 2026 collections reached \$99.4 million. Approximately \$2.4 million remains to be collected over the next six months to meet the FY 2026 budget. Between tax years 2022 and 2023, property valuations increased by 21%, accompanied by a 37.5% increase in appeals filed. From 2024 to 2025, valuations saw a modest 1% increase, while appeals rose by 6.9% compared to the prior year. Overall, the data demonstrates a correlation between changes in property valuations and the number of appeals filed.

Ms. Landrum stated that as of December 31, district court litigation activity shows a notable decline in lawsuits filed despite an increase in valuation appeals for tax year 2025. By year-end, 248 cases had been resolved, while 154 lawsuits remained pending and an increase from 43 pending cases in the prior year, indicating continued litigation activity but improved early dispute resolution.

Ms. Landrum, Mr. Garcia and Dr. Escamilla responded to questions from the Board of Regents.

BOARD NOTIFICATIONS:

Presenters: Ms. Tammy McDonald

DMC Police Department Submission of Racial Profiling Report

(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect by the College)

Ms. McDonald stated TCOLE requires law enforcement agencies to report on racial profiling. Although Del Mar College Police do not conduct routine traffic stops and are exempt from the requirement, they must still file a certifying report. The Police Chief has filed this exempt status report, and the governing body has been notified and provided a copy.

PENDING BUSINESS:

Status Report on Requested Information

CONSENT AGENDA

Notice to the Public

The following items are of a routine or administrative nature. The Board of Regents has been furnished with background and support material on each item, and/or it has been discussed at a previous meeting. All items will be acted upon by one vote without being discussed separately unless requested by a Board member or a citizen, in which event the item(s) will immediately be withdrawn for individual consideration in their normal sequence after the items not requiring separate discussion have been acted upon. The remaining items will be adopted by one vote.

CONSENT MOTIONS: (At this point the Board will vote on all motions not removed for individual consideration.)

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:

1. Approval of Minutes:

Called Meeting, January 15, 2026

Regular Board Meeting, February 3, 2026

(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

2. Acceptance of Investments for January 2026

(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

3. Acceptance of Financials for January 2026

(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Motion: Approve the Consent Agenda.

Moved by: Regent Kelly | Seconded by: Regent Crull

There were no public comments.

Vote: Carried unanimously, 8–0 by show of hands

In favor: Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, and Loeb.

REGULAR AGENDA

4. Discussion and Possible Action Related to proposed License Agreement between Nueces County, Texas, the Nueces County Tax Assessor-Collector and Del Mar College allowing for on-site vehicle registration.

Presenter: Mr. Augustin Rivera, Jr.

(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

Mr. Rivera discussed how Del Mar College currently must send an employee to the courthouse to renew registrations for about 100 fleet vehicles. The County Tax-Assessor, Kevin Kieschnick, has identified provisions in Texas law that allow him to grant limited on-site authority to handle registrations. A proposed license agreement would let the College process registrations on

campus, improving efficiency and saving time. Mr. Rivera stated that while the authority carries legal responsibilities and requires additional administrative planning, all parties involved believe the agreement is beneficial and workable.

Ms. Tammy McDonald and Mr. Rivera responded to questions from the Board of Regents.

Motion: Accept the proposed License Agreement between Nueces County, Texas, the Nueces County Tax Assessor-Collector and Del Mar College allowing for on-site motor vehicle registration.

Moved by: Regent Crull | Seconded by: Regent Loeb

There were no public comments.

Vote: Carried unanimously, 8–0 by show of hands

In favor: Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, and Loeb.

At 2:21 p.m., the Chair announced that the Board was going into Closed Session.

5. CLOSED SESSION pursuant to:

a. TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.071: (Consultation with legal counsel), regarding pending or contemplated litigation, or a settlement offer, with possible discussion and action in open session; and the seeking of legal advice from counsel on pending legal or contemplated matters or claims, with possible discussion and action in open session; and

b. TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.074(a)(1): (Personnel matters), regarding the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee.

The Board of Regents reconvened in Open Session at 2:44 p.m. with no action taken and the meeting continued.

CALENDAR:

Discussion and possible action related to calendaring dates.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 2:44 p.m.

MINUTES REVIEWED BY GC: /s/ARjr