

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

August 12, 2025

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Regents of the Del Mar College District convened on Tuesday, August 12, 2025, at 11:00 a.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.

Dr. Laurie Turner joined the meeting in progress at 11:30 a.m.

From the College:

Dr. Mark Escamilla, President and CEO; Ms. Lenora Keas, Executive Vice President and COO; Mr. Raul Garcia, Vice President and CFO; Mr. Ali Kolahdouz, 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; Dr. Patricia Benavides-Dominguez, Vice President for Student Affairs; Mr. Augustin Rivera, Jr., General Counsel; Mr. John Strybos, Vice President and Chief Physical Facilities Officer; 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).

Ms. Arlene Medrano, Executive Director, Corpus Christi Downtown Management District provided commentary on her role and activities of the District.

Chair Scott, with no objection, changed the order of the Agenda.

At 11:04 a.m., Chair Scott announced that the Board was going into Closed Session pursuant to:

10. 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/or 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; including, 1.) Evaluation of College President and College President's Contract, with possible discussion and action in open session.

The Board of Regents reconvened in Open Session at 1:33 p.m. with action to be taken later in the meeting.

RECOGNITIONS:

- Del Mar College receives Government Finance Officers Association's (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement for the 15th Consecutive Year.....Mr. Raul Garcia
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Dr. Garcia recognized his team for receiving the Government Financial Officers Association Award for Outstanding Financial Reporting for fiscal year 2024 for the last 15 years. The Association's mission is to promote excellence in public finance by supporting institutions like Del Mar College and the development, and implementation of sound financial policies and best practices through education, training, and professional networking. Dr. Cathy West provided words of appreciation for the department's teamwork. Chair Scott congratulated the team.

- Dr. Kristy Urbick, Chair, Kinesiology and Education, was chosen to participate in this year's Leadership Corpus Christi, Class 54.....Dr. Jonda Halcomb
(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College and III: Cultivate, Goal 1: Nurture our faculty and staff to achieve their full potential)

Dr. Halcomb announced that Associate Professor of Kinesiology and Education, Dr. Kristy Urbick, was selected for Leadership Corpus Christi Class 54 by the United Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce. The 10-month intensive program was designed to cultivate both emerging and established leaders, by building the skills, knowledge, motivation and vision necessary to strengthen our community. Dr. Urbick has demonstrated strong instructional leadership since joining Del Mar College as an instructor and Intermural Director in 2016 and was recently promoted to Associate Professor this fall of 2025. Chair Scott congratulated Dr. Urbick. Dr. Urbick provided words of thanks and appreciation.

- Tania Shumaker, Graphic Design Specialist, College Relations, honored as outstanding young leader at the Young Professionals of Coastal Bend, Corpus Christi Under 40 awards held on June 11, 2025..... Mr. Jeff Olsen
(III: Cultivate, Goal 1: Nurture our faculty and staff to achieve their full potential)

Mr. Olsen announced Ms. Tania Shumaker was being recognized by the Young Business Professionals of the Coastal Bend as part of the new Corpus Christi Under-40 Class. Ms. Shumaker is a Graphic Designer for the College and has created incredible work seen throughout the College campuses from the View Book; students are viewing and window clings. Chair Scott congratulated Ms. Shumaker on behalf of the Board and Ms. Shumaker provided words of appreciation and gratitude.

COLLEGE PRESIDENT’S REPORT.....Dr. Mark Escamilla

- July 16-18, 2025: TACC Summer Meeting, Austin
(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

Dr. Escamilla attended the TACC Summer Meeting that included many Vice Presidents. Dr. Natalie Villarreal and Augustin Rivera, Jr. were also in attendance, and part of presentation panels.

- July 23, 2025: THECB Sounding Board Meeting (Virtual)
(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

Dr. Escamilla continues his membership with Sounding Board and looks forward to building a relationship with Dr. Wynn Rosser.

- August 7, 2025: London Business Association Presentation
(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

Dr. Escamilla stated that he and Chair Scott were both presenters at the London Business Association meeting.

STAFF REPORTS:

- Viking Way/Caring Campus.....Mr. Jeff Olsen
(III: Cultivate, Goal 1: Nurture our faculty and staff to achieve their full potential)

Mr. Olsen stated as preparations were beginning for The Viking Way, it became really clear the community was seeking a connection. The Viking Way intends to make a commitment to students achieved by codifying and reinforcing the behaviors and practices that have made the College successful for 90 years. This initiative involves creating a guidebook and training programs (The Viking Academy) to instill these values in both new and existing employees. The goal is to create a more welcoming and supportive environment for students, ultimately improving retention rates. The Viking Academy includes training for staff and faculty to learn and practice the values and

behaviors that make the College special like wearing name badges, smiling and greeting students, and personally guiding students who need directions.

A call from Texas A&M University – Kingsville (TAMU-K) resulted in a collaborative effort to align "The Viking Way" with TAMU-K's "Caring Campus" initiative and creating a transfer initiative. Dedicated transfer counselors within the College's Admissions Team will identify students interested in transferring to TAMUK (or other institutions) and provide personalized support, coordinating with partner institutions to ensure a smooth transition and alignment with HBA and outcomes.

The Viking Way Guidebook will be completed by the start of the school semester, and the Viking Academy training will begin soon after, starting with staff and then extending to faculty. The Regents were encouraged to be one of the first cohorts. Participants will receive a helmet pin to promote the initiative. While starting with local universities like TAMUK, the goal is to expand transfer opportunities to other institutions, including universities, taking advantage of legislative changes and HB8 initiatives.

Mr. Olsen and Dr. Escamilla responded to questions from the Board of Regents.

- Legislative Update.....Dr. Natalie Villarreal
(I: *Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College*)

Dr. Villarreal provided a legislative update regarding the 89th Legislative session regarding Bills affecting Community Colleges including the following information:

SB9: Special entities (including community colleges) have been removed from this Bill, so it doesn't currently directly affect them. However, tax relief remains a key focus, suggesting potential future changes.

SB12: This bill could significantly affect the Texas Association of Community Colleges (TACC) and require changes to advocacy strategies at the state level. TACC is working to provide practical guidance on the wording of the Bill.

House Bill 4 (Congressional Redistricting): President Trump requested Texas to redistrict. Corpus Christi is divided in different districts which leads to concerns.

Dr. Villarreal provided information regarding the Appropriations Budget Cycle 2026-2027 which includes increased overall funding for community colleges, over \$2.4 billion. There was an \$89.5 million supplemental ask to recoup funding to stay true to the new numbering system. FAST funding doubled from the previous biennium to \$165 million across the state. Texas Educational Opportunity Grant (TEOG) was increased significantly, but with more restrictions on student eligibility, limiting the number of students who can receive it.

The state is prioritizing Dual Credit programs. Other certifications and credentials have changing rules year-to-year, requiring careful planning. The "credentials of value" will

be revisited annually, which makes budgeting difficult. There are some concerns about changes that could hinder some student populations.

Dr. Villarreal discussed credentials of value. The Texas Coordinating Board, not the Legislature, revisits credentials of value yearly in April/May and releases new numbers in June. There are concerns about the methodology used to determine credentials of value, with concerns that rapid changes could negatively impact students, since students will be in programs for more than a year. Advocacy continues with the Coordinating Board, TACC, and faculty members to ensure that student needs are considered.

There are new rules regarding powers and duties of Faculty in Council/Senate that go into effect on September 1st. The College is working to comply with these rules and ensure that faculty and staff are still represented while following the new law. A resolution will be presented to the Board of Regents for approval at the end of the month.

Dr. Villarreal discussed the Federal Legislative update and stated there are major changes that are occurring in Pell Grants, student loans, and accountability/regulatory measures. Pell Grant updates include changes in how foreign income is factored in and a rule that students receiving non-federal grant aid covering the entire cost of attendance are ineligible for Pell. Changes are also happening in graduate federal aid, including the termination of the Graduate Plus Loan Program and changes to loan limits. The Federal Trio Grant Program has been extended for five years. Adult Education & Literacy (AEL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs are also being extended. They received their money in July for the current year. There are currently 370 students in AEL and 286 students in ESL.

Dr. Villarreal and Dr. Escamilla responded to questions from the Board of Regents.

- Budget Update.....Mr. Raul Garcia
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Mr. Garcia provided the Board an update regarding the budget plan for Fiscal Year 2026. He also reviewed the upcoming deadlines to the Texas Coordinating Boards for the 2025-2026 Budget Plan which is September 30th for the Tax Rate Submissions.

Dr. Patricia Benavides-Dominguez provided a summary regarding the fall 2025 enrollment as of August 11, 2025. The breakdown of enrollment and percentages were provided by student type, regular, dual credit and Freedom to Dream. The College has a little over 1,400 students in Freedom to Dream, and that number is anticipated to go as high as 2,000. Every day the College has students in the the Enrollment Center, and academic offices to process enrollment. Late registration will take place on Saturday, August 23, 2025. The enrollment is currently up 22%.

Ms. Jackie Landrum provided information regarding the revenue challenges and assumptions. She stated the enrollment levels were evaluated, and they had not changed the tuition and fee budget since the last meeting. For property tax revenue, the net valuation decrease is a -0.15%. The property tax rates are 6.25% above the M&O no-new-revenue rate. With the decrease in valuations, it pushed the M&O no-new-revenue rate over the current M&O rate, and still have that \$593 million in new construction, and with those percentages, we are proposing an overall tax rate of .75903, which will increase our overall tax rate by .014163. The College's debt rate is decreasing, and the M&O rate is increasing to support the operational needs of the College. Based on this information, the average taxable homestead value of \$259,872, a homeowner could potentially pay around \$717 a year in property taxes due to the College. She also reviewed the FAST appropriations and provided salary and benefit increase scenarios with 2%, 3% and 4% increase examples.

Mr. Garcia provided information regarding the College's debt service and stated the 2025-2026 debt service budget is projected to remain relatively flat on a year-over-year basis at \$20.6 million. The College anticipates a decline to the following years, 2026-2027 budget plan year to a new low of \$16.8 million due to the maturity of the 2013 refunding bonds.

Dr. Benavides-Dominguez, Ms. Landrum, Dr. Halcomb, Dr. Leonard Rivera, Mr. Garcia, and Dr. Escamilla responded to questions from the Board of Regents.

- Proposal to Create a Combined Fund.....Mr. Raul Garcia
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Dr. Escamilla provided introductory remarks. Mr. Garcia stated it is being recommended to combine the Risk and the Plant Funds into the Innovation Fund. The Innovation Fund would embody the principles of resilience, agility and strategic alignment, providing the College with the financial resources for long-term sustainability. The Risk Fund and the Plant Fund have historically provided the College the financial resilience of flexibility necessary for supporting long-term financial planning. In response to ongoing changes, the College is considering consolidating these two, and the proposed fund will ensure that Del Mar College is well-positioned to respond to emerging challenges and opportunities. The new fund will be reported under the general category of the Plant Fund in our award winning annual comprehensive financial report.

- Facilities Master Plan Update.....Mr. John Strybos
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Mr. John Strybos introduced Mr. Doug Lowe and Molly Cundari with Facility Programming and Consulting who were invited to assess the College's future needs and how to best position the College for growth during changing educational and economic times.

For foundational principles, Mr. Lowe discussed how the College needs to move beyond the status quo and become more adaptable to change by providing flexible options for students to access education, by becoming a college that students actively choose. The College needs to update the curriculum to be innovative and responsive to student and community needs, providing flexible teaching environments, and aligning education with employer and industry needs.

Mr. Lowe stated the service areas face an aging population with limited overall growth, although certain zip codes show growth, and the Port's growth signifies the need for investment. Excess capacity exists at Heritage and Oso Creek campuses, where the Windward campus is limited by the specialized nature of its programs. He also states enrollment is projected to remain relatively flat if no changes are made, presenting an opportunity to take aggressive steps to drive up enrollment.

Del Mar has two primary focuses, general academic/core curriculum and workforce training. Del Mar College should differentiate itself from other community colleges and improve its relevance with focus on academic offerings, extracurricular activities, amenities, and a sense of community. Also, making it easier for students to attend by strengthening existing partnerships and forming new ones. Continued targeting of architectural and infrastructural improvements are recommended as well as leveraging the large online learning component to create interactive and immersive experiences.

In depth conversation was held among the Board of Regents and the presenter discussing local students choosing the College first, increasing market share, and better utilization of Oso Creek Campus. Actions suggested the College include making Del Mar College a place students want to be, removing excuses for failure, and meeting tech expectations of students.

Additional feedback and discussion included sports and intramurals, exploring offsite facilities for welding, potential housing to create campus culture, considering "Del Mar Tech" for the Windward campus, and partnership with local police department for police training facilities at our Oso Creek campus.

Mr. Strybos stated that the Master Plan is a living, breathing document that changes every day.

Mr. Strybos, Mr. Olsen, and Dr. Escamilla responded to questions from the Board of Regents.

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:
Workshop, June 10, 2025
Regular Board Meeting, June 10, 2025
(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)
2. Acceptance of 3rd Quarterly Investment Report, Nine Month Ending May 2025
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)
3. Acceptance of Investments for June and July 2025
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)
4. Acceptance of 3rd Quarterly Financial Report, Nine Month Ending May 2025
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)
5. Acceptance of Financials for June 2025
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Regent Crull made a motion to adopt the Consent Agenda. Regent Babbili seconded the motion. There was no further discussion from the Board. There were no public comments. A vote was taken by show of hands, and the motion carried unanimously 9-0, amongst Regents present, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, Loeb, and Turner in favor.

REGULAR AGENDA

6. Discussion and possible action related to the Order of the Board of Regents of the Del Mar College District: 2025-2026 Maintenance and Operations Budget and the 2025-2026 Debt Service Budget.....Mr. Raul Garcia
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Mr. Garcia stated the College is mandated by the Texas Code 26 to hold a public hearing on the proposed fiscal year 2025-2026 budgets. Administration is asking for the Board to hold a public hearing on August 26, 2025, at 11:30 a.m. on the proposed M&O, and the debt service budgets. Following Board action, the College will make the August 26, 2025, Public Hearing in this weekend's Caller Times newspapers.

Regent Adame made a motion to adopt the Order to conduct a public hearing on August 26, 2025, at 11:30 a.m. as stated. Regent Babbili seconded the motion. There was no further discussion from the Board. There were no public comments. A vote was taken by show of hands, and the motion carried unanimously 9-0, amongst Regents present, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, Loeb, and Turner in favor.

7. Discussion and possible action related to the adoption of the Order to Conduct Public Hearings on the 2025-2026 Tax Rates.....Mr. Raul Garcia
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Mr. Garcia stated per the Tax Code, the College is required to conduct a public hearing on the proposed College tax rate and to provide notice to the general public at least seven days prior to the scheduled hearing. The College is proposing to conduct the Public Hearing on the tax rates on Tuesday, August 26, 2025, at 12:00 p.m. The current combined adopted tax rate for FY 2024-2025 is \$0.261740. The College staff recommends that the overall tax rate for 2025-2026 be increased to \$0.275903, which represents a 4.08% increase over the total no-new revenue rate.

Regent Babbili made a motion to adopt the Order to conduct a public hearing regarding the M&O debt services and combined tax rate on August 26, 2025, at 12 p.m., as stated. Regent Crull seconded the motion. There was no further discussion from the Board. There were no public comments. A vote was taken by show of hands, and the motion carried unanimously 9-0, amongst Regents present, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, Loeb, and Turner in favor.

8. Discussion and possible action related to a Resolution Adopting Investment Policy and Investment Strategy.....Mr. Raul Garcia
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Mr. Garcia stated the College in accordance with the Board’s Investment Policy adoption, the Texas Public Investment Act, and the Public Funds Collateral Act, the College is required to have a written investment policy that describes our investment strategies, investment objectives, preservations and safety, principal liquidity diversification and investment yields. The College is also required to review and update the investment policy on an annual basis. Dr. Cathy West stated the College conducted the annual review as required and recommended no change for this year.

Regent Loeb made a motion to adopt the Investment Policy as presented. Regent Babbili seconded the motion. There was no further discussion from the Board. There were no public comments. A vote was taken by show of hands, and the motion carried unanimously 9-0, amongst Regents present, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, Loeb, and Turner in favor.

9. Discussion and possible action related to a Resolution adopting the authorized Broker/Dealer list.....Mr. Raul Garcia
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Mr. Garcia stated the College in accordance with the Board’s Investment Policy adoption, the Texas Public Investment Act, and the Public Funds Collateral Act, the College is required to review, revise and adopt a list of qualified brokers that are authorized to engage in investment activity for the College on an annual basis. Dr. Cathy West stated they have added two broker dealers to the list, Alamo Capital and James Street.

Dr. West responded to questions from the Board of Regents.

Regent Kelly made a motion to adopt the authorized broker dealer list as presented. Regent Babbili seconded the motion. There was no further discussion from the Board. There were no public comments. A vote was taken by show of hands, and the motion carried unanimously 9-0, amongst Regents present, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, Loeb, and Turner in favor.

From CLOSED SESSION the following motion was made:

Based on the Board's evaluation of Dr. Escamilla and the Board's deliberation, Regent Garza made a motion to amend the College President's employment contract as follows: increase the annual salary-based salary to \$420,000 and add additional five days of personal leave. All other terms and conditions remain unchanged, and the amendments will take effect on September 1, 2025. General Counsel is directed to prepare the appropriate documentation for signature. Regent Averyt seconded the motion. Regent Kelly asked for a clarification regarding five days per annum. There were no public comments. A vote was taken by show of hands, and the motion carried unanimously 9-0, amongst Regents present, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, Loeb, and Turner in favor.

Dr. Escamilla provided words of gratitude and had a video played of the registration held on Saturday, August 9, 2025.

CALENDAR: Discussion and possible action related to calendaring dates.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 4:08 p.m.