

President's Report April 2021

Strategic Plan

Our leadership team has continued to work on the development of the strategic objectives in support of the 2021-2026 strategic plan. We will provide a review of the existing strategic plan and submit for Board consideration the objectives for the new plan.

Covid-19

Covid-19 cases continue to trend downward. We have had two active cases post spring break. Vaccines were offered to all employees last month, those that elected to receive them should have full vaccine coverage before our April 26 return to campus date.

Del Rio Roofs

We continue to work with TASB Insurance regarding our claim for the Del Rio Roof damages, but have not been able to resolve in a satisfactory manner. Our next step is to proceed with legal remedies. We have an agenda item that will summarize our steps and seek direction from the board on how to proceed.

OCI

OCI is the company proposing to build a new solar farm south of Knippa. I met with OCI officials last year to discuss their proposed request for a tax abatement. At the time what was presented was not in the best interest of our institution and they did not feel it was worth pursuing because of our low tax rate. However, they have reached out again to reconsider. I have met with their representative and discussed the issues. Their proposed investment in the project is approximately \$160 million which equates to \$260,000 in tax revenue year 1. Followed depreciated values in each subsequent year. In my analysis over a 10-year period with a residual value of 20% the cumulative taxes would be approximately \$1,500,000. They are requesting a Payment In Lieu Of Taxes (PILOT) of about \$18,000 per year or \$250,000 up front. It is my understanding that the project when completed would net 1-2 jobs. It is hard for me to recommend to the Board that accepting this proposal is in our best interest. However, I wanted to present the information before I respond to OCI.

State Appropriations

Both Senate Finance and House Appropriations have voted out of committee the funding recommendations for Article III (Education portion of the budget). I have attached a two-pager that summarizes both bills. I am pleased to report that we are one of few colleges that stands to see an increase in appropriations. This is due to the fact that our contact hours are better when compared to the rest of the colleges in the state and our success points have increased. In either case we should see an 8 percent increase (\$700,000 each year of biennium) in state appropriations in the current bills.

HB2640 & HB2645

Representative King wrote HB2640 to allow us the option to move our elections to November. The bill was heard in committee on March 25th. The discussion was favorable, the current status is still pending in committee. I drove to Austin on April 8th to testify on HB2645, bill that would change the determination of election results from majority to plurality for our board elections of SWTJC and Laredo College, thereby eliminating the need for a runoff election.

Cares Funding

The U.S. Department of Education has published updated guidance on Cares Funding. In essence, the rules are retroactive to March 13, 2020 and allow for lost revenue and indirect cost on the institutional portion of the grant. We have provided a summary of the three different grants in separate document.

1. Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES Act) – HEERF I
2. Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) _ HEERF II
3. American Rescue Plan (ARP) – HEERF III

The document will illustrate the amounts for the institution and students, how those monies were spent and how many students received an award.

Our plan is to repurpose a portion of the lost revenue components to address longstanding deferred maintenance items

Virtual Townhall

Held a virtual town hall on March 9th and discussed the following topics:

- Current Covid Environment
- Vaccinations
- General Outlook
- Daycare/Cafeteria Reopen – April 5th
- Summer/Fall Return to campus for students
- Potential Course format upon return to campus
- Shared HEERF II funding
- Question was raised on in person graduation as opposed to virtual ceremony

Desk Audit

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board performed a routine desk audit of our contact hours. The audit resulted in two findings related to information technology controls. In essence we need to strengthen our student information system audit logs and changes to student/class records (keep an electronic record of who is making changes and when) and strengthen our oversight on student information security.

In response we have contacted Ellusion (our software that manages student information system) to activate audit logs, we scheduled a third-party to review our security protocols, and the reorganization will include an internal audit function that will review processes, protocols

and information technology. We will respond to the report accordingly and will anticipate an additional audit to review student financial aid and account balances.

Reorganization Status

I have begun the first stages of the reorganization with the appointment of Dr. Randa Schell as Chief of Staff. Her duties will include leading our strategic plan forward into the action stage, will provide oversight for our grants and office of Institutional Effectiveness, strengthen our data and reporting procedures, develop and lead an internal audit function.

The second stage is reorganizing our student services departments into three separate groups. Currently they all report up to the VP, our goal is to increase oversight, better align strategic objectives and better serve our students. These include Student Success Services (Student Success Centers, Writing Centers, Disability Support Services, Library and Advising), Enrollment Management Services (Recruiting, Admission/Registrar, Financial aid, and Testing Center, and Instructional Facilities (Crystal City Campus, Hondo Campus, Pearsall Campus, Dilley-Briscoe Unit).

The third stage will involve a redesign on our approach to Dual Credit process and increase oversight for dual credit faculty.

Upcoming Meeting/Events

- 4/5 Daycare & Cafeteria Return to Campus
- 4/15 SWTJC Board of Trustees' Board Meeting
- 4/26 Staff Return to Campus
- 4/26 Legislative Committee Meeting
- 4/28 Middle Rio Grande Development Council Meeting
- 5/10 Legislative Committee Meeting
- 5/20 May Board Meeting
- 6/7 First Day of Class Summer 1 -Dorms return to campus
- 6/12 Virtual Commencement

Attachments

- State Appropriations Recap
- Draft State Appropriations by college
- CARES Funding breakdown
- Virtual Townhall Topics
- Desk Audit