

TEXAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
February 18, 2022

Call to Order

Julie Prause called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Finance Committee to order at 8:04 a.m. on February 18, 2022, in Room 102 of Building 600, 1100 West 45th Street, Austin, Texas and via a Zoom videoconference.

In addition to Mrs. Prause, Board members Ernest Worthington and Dan Brown were present.

TSBVI staff members present were: Dan Hampton, Director of Information Resources; Cyrenna Villegas, Director of Procurement; Pamela Darden; Chief Financial Officer; and Gemma Cooper-Langdale, Budget Analyst. Brian McDonald, Director of School Support Services and Brian Hudson, Safety and Security Officer joined after the call to order.

Consideration of Approval of Minutes of the November 19, 2021 Meeting

A motion to accept the minutes of the November 19, 2021 Finance Committee meeting as presented was made by Dan Brown. Mr. Worthington seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Consideration of Adoption of a Resolution Regarding the Review of the Investment Policy and Strategies of TSBVI

Committee members reviewed the resolution. Mr. Brown made a motion to approval the investment policy and strategies of TSBVI as presented. Mr. Worthington seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Consideration of Approval of Investment Report

Pamela Darden reviewed the investment report for the first four months of fiscal year 2022, ending December 31, 2021. The total market value/book value was \$1,723,061. Earnings for the period were \$3,164. She mentioned that two Certificates of Deposit would mature in March, and Director of Accounting, Josh Splinter, was researching rates. She also said some of the funds in the money market account would be pulled out and invested in a Certificate of Deposit or in the TEXASCLASS investment pool. Mr. Worthington made a motion to approve the Investment Report as presented. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Review of Donations Report

Pamela Darden reviewed the Donations Report for the first four months of fiscal year 2022, ending December 31, 2021. Total donations received since September 1st, 2021 were \$6,897.72. Julie Prause asked for more information about a previously reported donation from Janaki Ramanathan. Ms. Darden replied it was an annual donation that gets deposited into a restaurant training program. She went on that the Family Lynx donation went into a specific account for the Family Lynx organization, and the donations that are

undesigned get put into a general account until a request is made near the end of the year to expend the funds.

Consideration of Approval of Receipt of Gifts and Donations of Over \$500

One donation over \$500 was made by the Delta Gamma Foundation for \$6,295.72. Dan Brown made a motion to approve the receipt of the donation. Ernest Worthington asked for clarification about the donation. Pamela Darden said that the Delta Gamma Sorority has been volunteering for TSBVI for years and makes an annual donation, which is undesigned. Mr. Worthington then seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Consideration of Approval of Request for Expenditure of Gifts and Donations

There were no requests to expend any gifts or donations.

Review of Budget Reports

Pamela Darden reviewed the Appropriated Funds Operating Expenditure Report for the first four months of fiscal year 2022, ending December 31, 2021. The target for expenditures was 33%, and the agency total was 33%. The percentages expended by strategy were Classroom Instruction - 38%, Residential Programs - 35%, Short-Term Programs and Summer School – 20%, Related and School Support Services – 37%, Outreach – 31%, Teacher Preparation – 4%, Central Administration – 31%, and Other Support Services – 28%.

Review of the Legacy Revenue Report

For the first four months of fiscal year 2022, ending December 31, 2021, TSBVI had collected \$309,459. The projected revenues target was 33%, and TSBVI was at 25% of projected collections.

Review of the Legacy Expenditure Report

For the first four months of fiscal year 2022, ending December 31, 2021, TSBVI had expended \$194,114. The benchmark was 33%, and 14% had been expended. Mrs. Prause asked what happens to surplus funding in the Legacy account. Ms. Darden replied that the Legacy account is a cash account and the funds will roll forward into the next school year.

Report from the Chief Financial Officer

Ms. Darden updated the Committee on the GEER grant. She said TSBVI would be reaching out to the Governor's Office to request an extension of the grant period as well as reallocation of some of the funds. The grant was based on the Exceptional Items Request from last biennium, and needs have changed. Mr. Brown asked how long the extension would be. Ms. Darden replied through September 30th, 2022, an additional three months after the original June 30th date.

Report from Director of Accounting

Ms. Darden presented the report to the Committee. Regarding the report of the cotton crop damage at the prior meeting, we'll be receiving an additional payment for the part of the crop that wasn't damaged. The drilling for the wells will begin this month, and Mr. Fullwood will be paying the upfront cost and will invoice TSBVI the amount we are responsible for.

Report from Information Resources Director

Dan Hampton updated the Committee on the GEER-funded IR projects. Regarding the public address/emergency notification system, the original estimated cost was \$935,000. However, the actual cost was lower, about \$420,000, thanks to work being done by TFC on our fire alarm systems. The savings from this will be moved to the technology refresh and replace project. The equipment replacement project is caught up, but more equipment will be purchased next fiscal year since it will fall within the grant period and is more easily accessible than switches right now. In addition to the switches, IR is also purchasing five years of services and support for these switches. Other IR projects include replacing the firewall, replacing microphones and projectors for the Outreach building conference center, battery backups for switches, and another round of laptops and other tech. Smaller projects like these are being identified in case the grant period runs out before IR can purchase higher ticket items. The Procurement team has secured a letter from the vendor stipulating TSBVI won't paying for anything that arrives after the August 31st grant period end, putting the onus on the vendor to prioritize TSBVI as a customer. Finally, with regard to the website redesign project, Monkee-Boy is doing a fantastic job. Allison Kemp is the liaison with Monkee-Boy, and she is working with content owners across campus to get it migrated. Monkee-Boy is also designing a Wildcat logo for TSBVI.

Report from the Human Resource Director

Pam Darden presented the report to the Committee. The first topic is that recruitment continues to be a significant issue. Competitive wages, limited applicants, and significant increases in housing costs in the area are all contributing factors. Superintendent Emily Coleman and Pam Darden will be meeting with the Governor's Office in March to report the issues TSBVI is experiencing and in preparation for the Legislative Appropriations Request to be prepared Summer 2022. The next item to report on was the Employee Engagement Survey. The agency received the results in January, and overall the results were positive. Areas of strength include workplace, internal communication, and strategic. Areas of concern were pay, benefits, and workgroup. Management team is presenting the results to their teams this month and determining the top three priorities to work on this year, with another survey to be conducted in the fall. Mr. Worthington commented that, to him, it seemed a substantial amount of employees did not take the survey and asked if Ms. Darden had any insight into why an employee might not have taken the survey. Ms. Darden replied that, in her opinion, part of it was because there are a lot of staff working directly with students and aren't at a computer for very long throughout the day but that Cheryl Williams may have more thoughts about this. 73% of employees took the survey. Dan Brown commented that, in his experience, 73% was actually a very good number as compared to corporate engagement surveys which are typically much lower than this. Regarding COVID, following up on screening results and sending close-contact notifications has been a significant amount of work since students returned from winter break, but it's begun to decrease in the last two weeks. Finally, HR is prepping for next school year with recruitment for teachers and residential instructors and working on teacher contracts. Mr. Brown asked, with regard to the meeting Mrs. Coleman and Ms. Darden are having with the Governor's Office, if they had a strategy or solution to propose or if it was more to present the challenges TSBVI is facing with recruitment. Ms. Darden replied that, as a state agency, TSBVI cannot lobby, so the meeting would be informational only.

Report from School Support Services

Safety and Security Officer, Brian Hudson, updated the Committee on the projects he's been working on including RAPTOR, Drill Management, Critical Response Group mapping, and the updated "Quick Reference" Emergency Response Guide. RAPTOR is the badging and visitor management system TSBVI uses, and we've purchased the emergency management suite. Drill Management has been launched internally. Data is being populated into the system, and staff will have access to it after they are trained in about six weeks. He went on that the accountability and alert modules are in the planning stages. The accountability module allows headcounts during emergencies to be much quicker in disparate locations. The alert function will allow staff members to report situations to everyone on campus. Mr. Hudson moved onto the Critical Response Group, CRG, which is a mapping program. They create digital mapping systems that provide physical and digital outputs and will be uploaded to the Computer Assisted Dispatch system that 911 uses, so first responders have detailed information about the campus in an emergency. Both micro and macro maps will be provided. If we make camera upgrades, they can be imported to the maps, which increases TSBVI's security capabilities. Finally, Mr. Hudson gave an overview of the "Quick Reference" Emergency Response Guide to the Committee, which empowers staff to make on-site decisions without leadership present. Mr. McDonald began his report with the GEER grant projects. The removal, extraction, and replacement of campus perimeter fence is set to start April 4th. The security camera and badge reader upgrade is ongoing, and TSBVI is working with Texas Facilities Commission on this. In addition to these GEER grant projects, Support Services is working on the repair and preventative maintenance of our rooftop units. After this is complete, all hot water systems will be upgraded and enhanced. To limit contractor-student contact, there is discussion of moving this project to the summer and moving up a different project. Finally, he mentioned that the upgrade of the fire controls network is being worked on by Beckwith.

Adjournment

Julie Prause entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Brown made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Worthington seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 a.m.

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