RIO HONDO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
Citizens Oversight Committee

Tuesday, December 16, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.
Rio Hondo Community College Board Room
Dinner and Meeting

Minutes

I. Call To Order

a. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

b. Pledge of Allegiance – Chair Verna de los Reyes led the Pledge of Allegiance.

c. Roll Call – Citizens’ Oversight Committee (COC) Members present: Chair Verna de los Reyes, Vice Chair Fernando Centeno, Jr., Dr. Joseph Rivera, Dr. Francisco Hidalgo, Amber Salazar, Christian Díaz, Debra Pacheco, and Andrew Moraga. (Committee Members absent: Almeda Rodriguez, Alejandro Izarraraz, and Leslie Gutierrez).

d. Welcome and Introductions – Each present member of the committee introduced his or herself along with staff, guest, and consultant from Del Terra.

e. Open Communication for Public Comment – There were no public comments.

f. Approval of Minutes – September 23, 2014 – The COC voted to approve the minutes after there was discussion about the COC’s role in the accreditation process. Member Dr. Rivera and Vice Chair Centeno, Jr. shared that they participated during the most recent accreditation team visit. Superintendent/President Dreyfuss explained that the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) team chair and members are the ones who solicit who to interview on campus, in addition to holding public forums for all to participate, including the COC members who she invited to attend. During the accreditation team visit to the College, the team interviewed more than 100 faculty, staff, and managers as part of its accreditation review process.

II. Reports/Presentations

a. President’s Update: Superintendent/President Dreyfuss reported the positive results from the accreditation visit that occurred from Sept. 29 to Oct. 2. The verbal outcome from the chair, which was an initial report, was
a glowing one with 10 commendations and 8 recommendations. Standard III: Resources had no recommendations, only commendations (with the exception of Human Resources that had a minor recommendation). Under Physical Resources, the accreditation team noted that the College maintains a beautiful campus, which supports quality student learning programs and services. They also reported that the designs and constructs of the new facilities support student success. Superintendent/President Dreyfuss thanked the College's Facilities Services Department and Construction Consultant Del Terra for their superb work.

The accreditation team also reported that the College's financial resources are well managed with funds being solvent even though the state budget was in a state of crisis. Under Technology Resources, the team noted that the College is very innovative and effective as seen in different software programs.

Overall, it was noted that the College works well together as a group, family and community. They took notice that the report was well written with transparency and honesty. The outreach to the community was also given high marks. The College received very minor recommendations. All five Board of Trustees were very happy with the initial report and were pleased with the outcome.

The ACCJC will send their official report in January 2015.

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss reported on the status of the College’s enrollment. She reminded the members that the College needs more students to enroll and take classes. Rio Hondo needs everyone’s support in recruiting students as enrollment is still flat. Although the College’s recruitment efforts have been strong, including the student trustee and student body president recruiting their own friends to come to Rio Hondo, this is the first year the Chancellor’s Office will not be giving the College growth money.

The College submitted its Letter of Intent to the Chancellor’s Office to offer a four-year Bachelor of Science degree in Automotive Technology. The criterion is that nearby CSUs and UCs are not currently offering a similar program. Rio Hondo is one of 36 community colleges who are applying to host one of the degree programs, which would launch by 2017-18 and sunset by July 2023. The California Community Colleges Board of Governors is expected to select 15 community colleges by Jan. 21, 2015. The College is hopeful to be one of these schools selected to offer a four-year degree.

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss recently attended the Southern California Leadership Forum at CSULB where the focus was on the new Community College Baccalaureate (CCB) degree. Dr. Beth Hagan,
Executive Director of the CCB Association, gave an informative presentation stating that there isn't one community college in the entire nation that offers a four-year degree in this area.

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss distributed the Save the Date flyers for A Taste of Rio, the annual Foundation’s event that raises funds for student scholarships and programs. Last year, 18 local vendors participated. This coming year, the event will take place on Friday, May 1 in the mid quad of the campus. All COC members are invited to attend.

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss distributed the Community Educational Forums flyers that will take place from Jan. through April in each of the five District areas. The goals of the forums are for the College to build connections in the different communities that it serves and to present the College's top-notch programs and services to the families and youth of the communities. The College will also take the opportunity to ask the communities for their input on what they'd like Rio Hondo to offer.

In addition to the forum flyers, College pennants were also distributed to the COC members. It was explained that these pennants, which are really popular in elementary and middle schools, will be one of the marketing materials that will be given to the families and children who attend the five forums.

Member Pacheco raised the concern that the middle schools listed on the flyer do not represent the South Whittier School District of which she serves as a board member. She expressed concern that Graves Middle School seems to be continually excluded from the Rio Hondo Community College District outreach.

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss and Director Retana shared the news of the “Adopt-A-School” pilot program that will be launched next year, specifically targeting middle schools, and a couple of elementary schools, throughout the District with two schools per district each year. The “Adopt-A-School” program will rotate schools every year. This outreach is distinct from the outreach conducted to the high schools.

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss gave an update that she has met twice with Los Nietos School District and with Little Lake School District.

Member Dr. Hidalgo commended the College and its leadership for reaching out to middle schools.

b. Annual Report: Director Retana shared that more than 126,000 households in the District received a copy of the 2013 Annual Report. She highlighted page 10 that has the picture of the COC members from last year, as many of this year's members are new. This page on Fiscal
Solvency reports to the community that the COC members ensure that the College bond funds are expensed properly and effectively.

As members perused the report, Member Dr. Hidalgo shared that his mother wanted last year’s copy due to his picture as a COC member in this section of the Annual Report.

c. Building Program Progress Report: Jerome Quemada of Del Terra provided a report on the Building Program, which includes the following summer 2014 projects:

- **PE Complex Replacement of Retaining Wall:** during the construction of the new wall, the contractor encountered a few unforeseen conditions, which has changed the completion date to the end of December 2014.
- **PE Complex & Softball Field Retaining Wall/Guardrails:** the installation of the new guardrails was required for the completion of this project. This installation of the new guardrails is now complete. The contractor is currently working on punch list items to close out the documents.
- **Existing Fitness Center Mechanical Upgrades:** the installation of a new heating and air conditioning system is due to be completed by December 2014. The facility will be used by the wrestling team and for dance classes.

Mr. Quemada also gave a report on the upcoming projects:

- **Soccer Field Renovation:** the project is currently in the bidding process with the anticipated start date of February 2015 and the anticipated completion date of November 2015. The soccer field will have a six-lane synthetic track for fitness walking, bleachers, and restroom facilities for men and women.
- **Bookstore & Print Shop Renovation:** SVA Architects is currently working with the bookstore designer and print shop staff to finalize the designs. Del Terra is currently working with DSA on the required documents for the certification of prior projects that will affect this project’s certification.
- **Flag Pole & Veterans Memorial:** the design for the memorial plaque has been approved by the Veterans Memorial Committee as well as the layout for this project. Quatro Design Group has completed the construction drawings. The bidding documents are currently being prepared to start the bidding process. The anticipated start date of construction is March 2015 with the completion finish date of April 2015.
- **Rio Plaza:** this project is currently in the conceptual design stage. The design team for this project approved by the Board of Trustees is Westberg & White, Inc. The Rio Plaza location is at the entrance of the campus on the corner of Workman Mill Road and College Drive. Restrooms for men and women will be built and small vending facilities for students to use will be installed.
Member Dr. Hidalgo asked if the Rio Plaza location is off Workman Mill Rd. as it seems very hilly.

Quemada responded that the hill will be used as part of the design.

Vice Chair Centeno, Jr. asked about the capacity of the soccer field.

Quemada responded 132.

Member Dr. Hidalgo asked to what extent will the soccer field track be designed for community access.

Quemada answered that the track will be opened to the community just like the new fitness center in the PE Complex is open to all members of the community.

Chair De Los Reyes shared that in terms of the upcoming Veterans Memorial that it would be great to outreach to Veterans.

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss assured the COC that the College will outreach to Veterans.

Member Pacheco asked how is it decided what project comes next?

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss shared that there is a committee represented by all the College constituent groups that discuss all factors involved such as location, timing, the sequencing of projects, etc. The board also discusses these factors.

d. Bond Audit Financial & Performance Reports:

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss referred the committee members to the copy of the performance audit by the independent auditors. One set is the performance audit; the other set is the financial audit. For the performance audit, there were no findings or recommendations for the year that ended on June 20, 3014.

Member Dr. Hidalgo asked why there were no findings and recommendations on page 8?

President Dreyfuss explained that the results from the audit indicated that in all material aspects, Rio Hondo College District has properly accounted for expenditures of the funds.

Member Dr. Rivera shared that it is great news to read that everything is positive.
e. **Bond Quarterly Expenditure Report:** Superintendent/President Dreyfuss referred the committee members to the following financial handouts:

Projects Expenditure Summary as of September 30, 2014. The last page of the first set of documents titled Projects Expenditure Summary shows the College has spent $158 million total to date and $189 million quarter to date. The other set of documents delineate the expenditures in greater detail including how much the College spends on each vendor.

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss encouraged that if anyone wanted to know more details, especially the new committee members to please set up a time to meet.

Member Pacheco suggested that perhaps instead of an appointment, to save Superintendent/President Dreyfuss’ time and the COC members’ time, the COC members’ could be provided with the financial statements in advance before the meeting. This would give the members more time to go through the information.

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss shared that the College usually does distribute the handouts before the meeting. Since the Board recently approved the documents during the last Board meeting on Dec. 10, the College did not send the documents ahead of time for this meeting.

Andrew Moraga affirmed Superintendent/President Dreyfuss’ statement by sharing that in the past the College has sent out the materials in advance.

Member Dr. Rivera asked if Superintendent/President Dreyfuss could give the COC an idea on what the money is spent for with regards to legal fees?

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss explained that the College uses a legal counsel that is very good. The most recent example is when legal counsel advised the College about the PE Complex, which experienced a lengthy delay time. The general contractor did not pay the sub-contractor and went bankrupt. The surety company took over the construction. Superintendent/President Dreyfuss recommended to legal counsel to go through mediation and to get the reimbursement for the additional costs from the project delay. Two weeks ago the College finally settled. Superintendent/President Dreyfuss recommended the outcome from mediation to the Board and they approved. The College received $629,000 back, which will then be placed back into the College bond fund. This was a big victory for the College. Another victory is that the College under budgeted $1.5 million from the bid amount to the actual cost, which will also be redirected to another bond project.
Member Dr. Hidalgo noted that these types of problems probably happen more often than we think. He gave the example of LAUSD.

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss shared that the El Monte Educational Center also experienced complication due to the sub-contractors. There have been quite a few legal challenges.

Member Moraga asked about the $6 million landscape project in the Project Details: is there consideration being given to native flora, trees, planting, etc.?

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss responded that the College considers the Environmental Impact Report (EIR), consults with groups that are active in preserving nature, and has working committees.

Quemada added that Del Terra looks at what the College has around the campus in terms of native flora when designing projects, and what could be preserved within the project. The native trees are used as part of the design and trees are sometimes added by replanting.

f. Future Meeting Date and Place: The next meeting will take place on Wed., March 18 at 6pm in the Board Room.

III. Comments from Committee Members

Member Dr. Rivera thanked the College for the different reports, which are all really positive. Happy Holidays!

Member Dr. Hidalgo also wished everyone Happy Holidays. He suggested for the College to consider offering certificate programs to help with the recruitment of more students. He is happy with the way the projects are going and acknowledged the great work of both Del Terra and the College.

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss noted that the College does have certificate programs.

Member Salazar had no comment.

Member Diaz thanked everyone for their warm welcome as a new member.

Member Centeno, Jr. praised the College for an excellent job and the direction it has taken.

Member Pacheco thanked everyone for bearing with her. She looks forward to seeing the direction the College is going including the outreach efforts to the middle schools. She wished everyone Season’s Blessings and a wonderful new year.
Member Moraga had no comment.

Chair de los Reyes reminded everyone about the 11th Annual Tamalada on Thursday, Dec. 18 in the City of El Monte. The event has sold out to 350 guests. She also commended the College’s great work on its social media presence and success.

IV. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.