

RIO HONDO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
Citizens Oversight Committee

Thursday, June 18, 2015 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 6:22 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. Francisco Hidalgo, Amber Salazar, Josefina Canchola, Jose Herrera, and Christian Diaz (Committee Members absent: Deborah Pacheco, Dr. Joseph Rivera, and Andrew Moraga).*
- d. **Welcome and Introductions** – *Each present member of the committee introduced his or herself along with staff, guest, and consultants Del Terra.*
- e. **Open Communication for Public Comment** – *There were no public comments.*
- f. **Approval of Minutes – March 18, 2015** – *The COC voted to approve the minutes. Vice Chair Fernando Centeno, Jr. approved, Member Amber Salazar seconded.*

II. Reports/Presentations

- a. **President's Update:** *Superintendent/President Dreyfuss reported on the following three items:*
 - 1) *A Taste of Rio – At the last meeting, Superintendent/President Dreyfuss mentioned that Rio Hondo College held the A Taste of Rio fundraising event on May 1. The turnout was very good with great food and dessert. There were about 300 in attendance who attended this festive event. The Foundation was able to raise funds for scholarships and student programs. The College will hold another A Taste of Rio event next year.*

2) Commencement – Due to the Soccer Field being under construction, the College had to go through a couple of different options before deciding where to hold Commencement this year. The College initially looked at Whittier College, but the limited parking on their campus was a big issue. The College then tried South El Monte High School. It was during this period that Rio Hondo students recommended that Commencement be held on Parking Lot A of the campus. The College received many compliments about Commencement from families, students, faculty, classified staff and Board of Trustees. The ceremony was very grand this year and the program ran very smooth. Commencement Speaker Former LA County Supervisor Gloria Molina motivated graduates and guests with her inspiring keynote message. This year the College graduated more than 1,300 students out of which about half attended Commencement.

Member Canchola asked how many of the graduates will be transferring?

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss said that she will find out. The transfer information provided by Institutional Research & Planning for 2013-14, reports that Rio Hondo College had 799 students transfer to four-year colleges/universities.

3) Four-Year Degree – In January of this year, Rio Hondo College was one of 15 California community colleges that received initial approval from the California Community Colleges Board of Governors to offer a bachelor's degree. In May, the College received final approval. The College will be working on the curriculum with the Chancellor's Office. Rio Hondo College is the only community college that was selected and approved to offer a four-year degree in the San Gabriel Valley region. The next closest college is Cypress College who will be offering a degree in Mortuary Science.

b. Building Program Progress Report: Jerome Quemada of Del Terra provided a report on the Building Program, which includes the following current and upcoming projects:

Current Projects

1) Soccer Field Renovation: the Soccer Field project started on March 30, 2015 with an anticipated date of completion in December 2015. The final grading for the soccer field and track is near completion. Pictures were shown to the committee members of the current status of the project.

2) Flag Poles & Veterans Memorial: the groundbreaking ceremony took place on February 24, 2015 with the start of construction on March 26, 2015. The ribbon cutting ceremony took place on May 20, 2015 just in time before Memorial Day. Quemada showed pictures of the ceremony,

which was a very memorable event. He reported that everyone was excited to see this important and symbolic project completed.

Upcoming Projects:

1) *Bookstore & Print Shop Renovation:* the construction drawings are 75% completed. The fire alarm system for the entire building is being incorporated with the construction drawings. The submittal of the completed drawings to the Division of State Architect is anticipated by mid-July of 2015. The existing bookstore is 4,109 sq. ft. and the new area will be 6,682 sq. ft.

2) *Rio Plaza:* this project is currently in the conceptual design stage. The design team for this project, Westberg & White, Inc., has been approved by the Board of Trustees.

Member Dr. Hidalgo asked how the College is dealing with water conservation and if the College is using recycled water?

Quemada answered that the College has a storm water pollution plan in place and that the water the College uses is reclaimed water.

Member Herrera asked when is the estimated completion date of the book store?

Quemada answered that by fall 2016.

c. Bond Quarterly Expenditure Report:

Vice President of Finance & Business Myeshia Armstrong explained that there are four specific reports in the packet. The first report on top of the packet is the Projects Expenditure Summary that summarizes activities from Jan 1, 2015 through March 31, 2015 during the third quarter of the fiscal year. This report lists the description of all the project activities. The last page shows that between January and March of this year, the College has spent \$449,190 quarter to date (QTD). The total to date (TTD) shows that the College has spent \$159,499,374 from Fiscal Year 2004-2005 through March 31, 2015.

The second report titled Project Details lists the various categories for architect fees and various consultants. As one flips through the pages, one will see all these different charges. Some projects could be multi-year ones like the ones Quemada mentioned, e.g. Soccer Field.

The third report is the Summary of Project Expenditures. Each project is assigned a project number on the left. This report captures all the expenditures for each fiscal year from 2004-05 to 2014-15. On the

second page, there's a Cumulative Total of the amount spent to date of \$159,499,374.

The final report in the packet is an overview of Fund 42 (the bond fund), Fund 41 and Fund 35. This report includes all the details for each project by listing the vendors for each project and how much has been paid to each vendor.

Member Canchola asked if there is a list noting the total amount that has been agreed upon with each vendor?

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss referred to the report that lists all the vendors with each total amount that has been approved by the Board of Trustees. She explained that when reading this report, you can see how much has been spent and the amount that has been budgeted.

Member Diaz asked if Superintendent/President Dreyfuss could remind the COC about the legal services paid.

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss explained that the PE Complex project was delayed, thus the College had additional expenses due to the lengthy delay time caused by the general contractor who did not pay the sub-contractor and went bankrupt. The College tried to recuperate these expenses and as a result received a \$700,000 reimbursement by the insurance company Liberty Mutual.

Member Herrera asked if the College uses employees as vendors.

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss answered "no." The College's use of Del Terra is an example of being consultants (not employees).

Member Herrera asked what is the bonding capacity?

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss answered \$25 per \$100,000.

Member Herrera asked for the amount?

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss answered \$245 million.

d. Other Business

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss asked Director of Marketing and Communications Ruthie Retana to give an update on the Annual Report and marketing efforts to increase enrollment. Director Retana reported that the Report to the Community: Creating Pathways to Student Success was mailed to close to 127,000 residents in the District. She shared that the students pictured in the report are real photos of Rio Hondo College

students on campus and of students from other schools that the College is partnering with like the students on page 7 who participated in the CTE Career Exploration Academy. She also highlighted the Citizens' Oversight Committee update and picture on page 10, where the College informs the community its commitment to maintain fiscal solvency, and that the College has properly and effectively utilized Measure A Bond Funds. She thanked Del Terra and Facilities Services for providing the rendering of the soccer field on page 13, and she highlighted the picture of the Veterans Memorial groundbreaking on page 14, which is now a project that has come to fruition.

Retana also shared the recent College marketing efforts that have been implemented to increase enrollment such as promoting Summer Open Registration with postcards mailed to residents in Bassett, La Puente and parts of West Covina. She passed out the 2015 Summer Session postcard to each committee member. She also shared that a very similar ad mirroring the postcard was placed in various newspapers, including nearby four-year colleges such as CSULA and Cal Poly, and on Cal State Fullerton's website at www.dailytitan.com on their leader banner and eye-level advertising space. She shared that the marketing efforts have been focusing on where the students are at, such as iHeart Radio, KIIS-FM, Power 106 and in movie theaters.

Member Canchola was very impressed with the Annual Report to the Community and its title/theme of Creating Pathways to Student Success. She shared that she took a picture of the cover and emailed it to her Puente colleagues at Berkeley to emphasize that Rio Hondo College is indeed committed to student success. She underscored the importance of this high quality report to the community.

Member Herrera went back to the Building Program agenda item and asked about the total amounts that it will cost to complete the bookstore, the print shop, the soccer field, and Rio Plaza?

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss made reference to these budget amounts included in the March Meeting Minutes on page 4. She reminded the committee that these are estimates, with the exception of the Veterans Memorial project that has already been completed.

Member Herrera asked how does the College plan to spend the rest of the funds?

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss answered that the College has a plan to spend the funds over the next few years with regular study sessions with the Board of Trustees.

Member Herrera asked if there is an annual audit report.

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss answered "yes" there is and that the audit reports are shown to the COC at a meeting after Board approval. The audit reports contain two types of reports: performance and financial.

Member Dr. Hidalgo shared that some of the members attended private schools that boast having 100% college-going graduates. In terms of attendance capacity, this raises opportunities for Rio Hondo College as students in private high schools are looking to earn college credit as they prepare to attend college. This will help both the high schools and Rio Hondo College. There should be a richer articulation between high schools, community colleges, and universities. He shared that he does realize that this is in the works and that over the years there has been great efforts across the state. He emphasized that when there is a shortage of enrollment at a college, this could open up opportunities.

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss shared that Rio Hondo College does offer classes at the high schools within the District such as Whittier Union High School District, El Monte Union High School District, El Rancho Unified School District, and Mountain View School District. In addition, the College is offering classes at high schools outside of the District such as Downey High School, Warren High School, and in Montebello Unified School District. The College is also working with Bassett. The College is also planning to offer classes at the Rio Hondo College/Pico Rivera Educational Center at El Rancho High School on their campus. The College is aggressively offering classes to high school students so they could attain college credit. The College has also been recruited by Hacienda/La Puente to offer classes and by a high school in Alhambra School District, which the College will pursue.

Member Herrera asked the following: since the bond was passed in 2004 and Rio Hondo College has shown 10 years of proven track record of investing dollars for the community's best interest, will the College pursue another bond?

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss answered that the College will not pursue another bond in 2016. She also clarified that not all of the College construction comes from the voter-approved bond. For example, the majority of the money for the PE Complex came from the state bond. She said that it was determined that the District does not want to proceed with a bond in 2016.

Member Hidalgo asked about whether the College has thought about working with the private industry?

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss answered "yes," that although the College has discussed potential opportunities with a few private companies in the past, they have pulled out.

- e. **Future Meeting Date and Place:** The next meeting will take place on day, September 15 at 6pm in the Board Room.

III. Comments from Committee Members

Member Diaz praised the College for moving in a good direction and congratulated the Marketing and Communications team for their creative recruitment strategies in attracting students to Rio Hondo College.

Member Herrera thanked the College for the invitation to serve on the Citizens' Oversight Committee. He mentioned that it is surprising that the District is not pursuing additional resources and asked if it wasn't a possibility for the College to spend down the money at a faster rate?

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss explained that the College still has \$80 million to spend from the Bond Fund.

Member Canchola commended the College for its beautification projects. The Veterans Memorial gives students a great opportunity to connect to the College, especially all the Veteran students who attend Rio Hondo College. She also thanked the College for the opportunity to participate in this committee.

Vice Chair Centeno, Jr. echoed that the Veterans Memorial is beautiful. He congratulated the College on securing the agreement with El Rancho Unified School District for the RHC/Pico Rivera Educational Center. He also congratulated the College for its Pathway to Law School Initiative and shared that he recently attended a meeting at USC where Rio Hondo College's Pathway to Law School program was mentioned. He also applauded the marketing efforts with the creative advertisement of the College including the movie theater ads. When he saw the ad on the big screen at the movie theater with his friends they all got really excited and cheered for Rio Hondo College while the ad played.

Member Hidalgo expressed that perhaps as we look to the future for funding we could move away from the traditional brick and mortar model and move toward digital resources by including the private sector. This would be a great way to position Rio Hondo College as the modern community college that transitions students from high schools to the real modern world. He shared that he was impressed with the relationship between facilities and academics in terms of capacity and outreach to provide a connection to students.

Chair De Los Reyes was really glad to see the completion of the Veterans Memorial and she can't wait to see the completion of the soccer field. She congratulated Del Terra for a job well done. She also welcomed the new members to the committee.

Superintendent/President Dreyfuss shared that the College is creating new technology with Apps for students in our Business Division. As far as construction, the College is adapting each of the projects with modern technology.

IV. Adjournment – *The meeting was adjourned at 7:16 p.m.*