

# MINUTES

## GALVESTON CENTRAL APPRAISAL DISTRICT

### Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors

October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024

The regular meeting of the Galveston Central Appraisal District Board of Directors was held Wednesday, October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 9850 Emmett F. Lowry Expressway, Suite A, Texas City, Texas.

Members present: Donald Gartman  
Chad Tressler  
Matt Doyle  
Scott Brast  
Cheryl Johnson  
Kathy Preston  
Warren Clark  
Will Pate

Members Absent: Tom Farmer

Others present: Chief Appraiser Krystal L. McKinney, Executive Assistant Lauren Frame-Finney, Deputy Chief of Appraiser Chris Scarbrough, Deputy Chief of Operations Katharine McGee, Chief Financial Officer Bertha Curry, General Counsel Marc Young and Paralegal Michelle Follis

#### 1. OPEN SESSION

With a quorum present, Chairman, Donald Gartman called the meeting to order at 4:00PM. He stated that the meeting had been duly called and the public meeting notice was properly posted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code; Chapter 551. He asked the attendees to join in the Pledge to the Flag of the United States, followed by the Pledge to the Texas Flag.

#### 2. Welcome Guests and Comments from the Public.

There were no comments at this time.

#### 3. Employee of the Month

Mrs. McGee stated first up is Dianna Wakefield, she is the Director of Operations and joined GCAD January 2022, she is responsible for assuring the property owners have a positive experience in the ARB hearings. She has an infectious smile and a bubbly personality and has done well to keep the ARB organized during the stressful protest seasons and for this reason she is our Director of the Quarter. We also have our employees of the month; Kevin is our employee of the month for September. Kevin joined GCAD in 2023 and has been integral to our protest hearings this season as he stepped up and has been an appraiser in our hearings this year, and Amanda Santos is our October employee of the month, Amanda has been with the CAD for 6 years and has always been willing to go the extra mile to ensure each property owner receives the service they need. Mrs. McGee stated she has also noticed that on the comments section in the liaisons report she often hears Amanda's name repeatedly, the CAD appreciates both Kevin and Amanda.

#### 4. Director of the Quarter

Mrs. McGee addressed this during item 3, the Chairman moved on to the next item.

### **5. Review and Discuss the 2023 School District Property Value Study Invalid Findings**

Mrs. McKinney stated in 2023 we had two invalid findings on the property value study, the Galveston ISD finding was flipped and now we only have the High Island ISD invalid finding, the reason for the invalid findings was our land values were too low. We did a mass reappraisal for both areas and went parcel by parcel, I believe we will be just fine when they recheck it this year. Mrs. McGee stated they, the Comptroller's office, already gave the list of High Island accounts that they are going to do the appraisal inspection on and about 80-85% of those are sales and when I calculated our values to the sales price we were around the same number. Mr. Tressler asked if that information is historically given to the district, to which Chief McKinney stated that they do not give them to the CADs first we have to give them all our sales and then they randomly pick their sample for each stratum. Mrs. Johnson stated she asked the Comptroller's office why they can use the sales right up to when they are conducting the property study and the appraisal districts are stuck with January 1<sup>st</sup>, and the Comptroller's office stated the district is not stuck with January 1<sup>st</sup>, the district could use sales up until when the notices go out, I wanted to get them on record so it is on tape now. Mrs. McKinney stated the problem is that the cut-off for the districts appraisals is January 1<sup>st</sup> so when the sales start to continue to creep up for the next 6 months, there is nothing that we can do about it. We can use them, but we are always going to be 6 months behind.

**Mr. Tressler MOVED to suspend the rules and move item 13 ahead of item 6.**

### **13. Review and Consider the Staff Attorney Pending Litigation Report for the months of August and September 2024.**

Mr. Gartman welcomed Marc and stated it was his first official meeting. Mr. Young thanked the board, stating that he was happy to be here and that he just wanted to give a weekly snapshot of where we are devoting our energies. The report you have in front of you was effective as it went out last week but that he has been looking at the docket and the district, just between October 2<sup>nd</sup> to now, is well over 260 lawsuits, not all have been served yet but that is what is on the docket for this coming year, almost all of those are commercial properties and the most significant one I saw in terms of value, was a 52 million dollar apartment complex in Galveston. I have implemented a numbering system and some new tracking systems to hopefully provide a report that you can ascertain as to whether it's a commercial, residential property and so forth. As you know Nick Perez left April of 2024 and we had about 299 suits still open and pending, those were outsourced to three firms; Doyle law firm, Greer Herz and Adams and MAPA. I requested a report from each firm as to where we were on the 2023 cases, they have informed me that they have closed 92% of those cases and we think most will settle but they require more resources. Our objective is to focus on where we can maximize our resources and get the lawsuits resolved as quickly as possible prior to February 01 but balancing that with protecting the values. Chairman Gartman stated the board likes to have the cases settled without going to litigation or arbitration if possible.

### **6. CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At **4:10PM**, Chairman Gartman announce the Board's adjournment into a closed executive session called in accordance with Chapter 551.074 of the Texas Government Code.

- ◆ 551.074 – Personnel Matters
- Board Policy Updates

### **7.RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION**

At **4:46PM**, Chairman Gartman announce the Board reconvened.

Mr. Tressler **MOVED** to direct the districts attorney to reach out to the City of Friendswood to request that they reconsider their nominations prior to the 28<sup>th</sup> of October, based on our analysis that the Tax -

assessor collector cannot occupy two seats on the board, and we don't want to create a situation where the votes are lost, should they fail to meet before then or refuse to modify their nominations then I move that the ballots be sent out without the tax-assessor collector included in the list of potential appointed members of the board. Mr. Pate **SECONDED** the motion. Mrs. Johnson **ABSTAINED**. The Motion **PASSED**.

Chairman Gartman stated the board policy has not been updated in 6 years, and with some of the legislature changes made we need to address this. Mr. Pate stated as a newly elected director he was reading through the policy and thought that there were some areas that needed updating and that some of the new legislation changes should be called out in the policy. Mrs. McKinney stated that there are changes that need to be made and asked that the board email her any ideas privately and not in a quorum and she will make sure that they are all incorporated and we will have it on the next agenda to vote on.

**8. Review and Consider Approval of the Board Workshop/Public Hearing Minutes from the August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, meeting.**

Mrs. Johnson **MOVED** to approve the August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, board workshop and public hearing minutes, minutes as is. Mr. Pate **SECONDED** the motion. The Motion **PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

**9. Review and Consider Approval of the Minutes from the August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, regular meeting.**

Mrs. Johnson **MOVED** to approve the August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024; Regular Meeting minutes as is. Mr. Brast **SECONDED** the motion. The Motion **PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

**10. Review and Consider Approval of the Financial Report for the periods ending August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, and September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024.**

Mr. Brast **MOVED** to approve the Financial Reports for the periods ending August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, and September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, as is. Mr. Doyle **SECONDED** the motion. The Motion **PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

**11. Review and Consider Report of the Appraisal Review Board for the months of August and September 2024.**

Chairman Gartman stated the board had their reports and no action is needed to be made.

**12. Review and Consider Report of the Taxpayer Liaison Officer for the months of August and September 2024.**

Chairman Gartman stated the board had their reports and no action is needed to be made.

**14. Review and Consider the Deputy Chief of Appraisal Staff Report for the months of August and September 2024.**

Mr. Scarbrough stated the appraisers are back in the field, currently training two new hires on the operations, and have revamped some of the protocols to increase efficiency and allow us to tackle a lot of the reconstruction going up in the County. We have also supplied our staff with uniforms that will increase higher visibility and indicate to the public that we are operating in an official capacity. Our land department is updating the neighborhoods with the sales data we have come across. Mr. Clark asked where the market value number comes from, Mr. Scarbrough stated the market value is the total value of the land and improvement value together. Chief McKinney stated she wants to be careful of us talking about value here in the board meetings, because we're not supposed to be discussing value. The way that our policy is, when homeowners come into protest and come in saying they have damage to the home, we are taking the value off the improvement, typically it is taken from the improvement value and not the land because they are coming in telling the district about the house is not worth what it is. Chief McKinney stated that it specifically states in the ARB manual that the district decides how the value is split, when you protest you protest the market value, so in the end there isn't one person that

can change that unless they legislatively change it. The district will change value where value needs changed but that is our determination not the property owner or ARB.

**15. Review and Consider the Assistant Chief of Operations Report for the months of August and September 2024.**

Mrs. McGee stated the district has been going quite a bit for the 2025 layer, in September the district saw about 1256 deed transfers and added two major subdivisions; the Peninsula section 1 is off highway 87 and that is in Galveston ISD, that is going to be 66 accounts added for the 2025 roll and the Westwood section 11 is in league city and will be 67 accounts added. There have been a significant number of temporary disaster exemptions received, as of today we have a total of 351 applications. This is for the declared disasters of Beryl and Alberto, to qualify there must be a minimum of 15% damage to the property and a majority of these are not up to the 15% threshold. We are taking all our old historical files and boxing them up, scanning them and removing them from the office. GCAD has been hosting several educational sessions. We had a USPAP class on September 30<sup>th</sup>, we hosted the TAAD Coastal Chapter meeting on October 10<sup>th</sup>, and we will be hosting the PTEC course 101/102, which is the introduction to appraisal on October 28<sup>th</sup>.

**16. Chief Appraisers Report.**

Chief McKinney passed out a list of the 25.25b's to the board and stated no action needs to be taken, it just is required to be passed out. I do have the 2025 contracts for Capitol that need to be signed if the chairman and secretary don't mind hanging back a bit.

**17. Comments from the Board of Directors.**

Mrs. Preston stated she has a couple requests, that we have a baseline meeting afterwards to set goals at the end of the elected terms to say this is what I hope to accomplish during my terms and that she humbly requests a copy of goals for whomever the board reviews at the end of the next term. Chief McKinney stated the board only reviews the Chief Appraiser. Chairman Gartman asked that Chief McKinney or Marc put together a presentation on what the board responsibilities are. There were no further comments from the board at this time.

**18. Correspondence.**

There was no correspondence at this time.

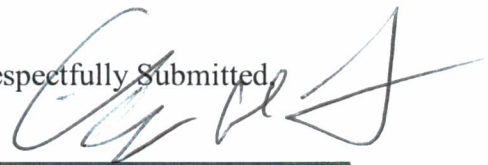
**19. Set Date of Next Regular Meeting.**

*Wednesday: November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 4:00PM.*

**20. Adjournment**

The regular business meeting of the Galveston Central Appraisal District Board of Directors was adjourned Wednesday, October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at **5:23 PM**.

Respectfully Submitted,



**Chad Tressler**

Secretary

Approved:



**Donald Gartman**

Chairman