

**MINUTES OF THE WINDHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**242<sup>nd</sup> MEETING**

The Windham School District Board of Trustees met in session on Thursday, September 13, 2007, at the Marriott Airport South in Austin, Texas.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Christina Melton Crain, Chairman  
Pierce Miller, Vice Chairman  
Adrian Arriaga  
Oliver Bell  
Greg Coleman  
Pastor C. L. Jackson  
Tom Mechler  
Leopoldo (Leo) Vasquez, III

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Patricia A. Day

**WINDHAM STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Debbie Roberts, Superintendent  
David McNutt  
Bob Evans  
Michael Mondville

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL  
JUSTICE (TDCJ) STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Brad Livingston  
Melinda Bozarth

**CONVENED**

Christina Melton Crain, Chairman, called the meeting of the WSD Board of Trustees (Board) to order on Thursday, September 13, 2007, at 12:33 p.m. in accordance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, the Open Meetings Act. A quorum was present and the 242<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Board was declared open.

Chairman Crain reported that the Board was committed to providing the opportunity for public testimony on topics posted on the meeting agenda, as well as public comment on issues within its jurisdiction as provided in Board Rule 300.1. Persons interested in providing testimony or comment at the meeting were required to complete a registration card and submit it at least ten (10) minutes prior to the meeting's posted start time. As no cards were received prior to the required deadline, the Board would not hear public testimony on posted agenda topics or comments on issues within the Board's jurisdiction at this meeting.

**DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING  
CONSENT ITEMS**

Chairman Crain called the Board's attention to the Consent Items on the agenda (Attachment A), which consisted of the minutes of the July 13, 2007, meeting, multiple employment authorizations and approval of excused absences.

Chairman Crain asked if there were any amendments, objections or changes to the Consent Items. Noting there were none, she stated the Consent Items were approved as presented.

**DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING  
AMENDMENTS TO BOARD RULE, TITLE 19, TEXAS ADMINISTRATIVE  
CODE (TAC)**

**1. § 300.1 – Public Testimony and Comments to the Windham School District Board of Trustees (19 TAC § 300.1)**

Michael Mondville, WSD General Counsel, stated that the proposed amendments were published in the June 15, 2007, addition of the Texas Register for public comment and no comments were received. The revision to the rule concerned a clarification of procedures for public presentations and comments. He informed the Board that one change needed to be made to the order printed in the agenda packet. The order references the “Texas Board of Criminal Justice” instead of the “Windham School District Board of Trustees.” Board approval was requested.

Chairman Crain asked if there were any questions or comments. Seeing none, she asked for a motion and a second.

*Pierce Miller moved that the Windham School District Board of Trustees adopt the amendments to Board Rule §300.1 concerning Public Testimony and Comments to the Windham School District Board of Trustees, Title 19 TAC, Part 8, §300.1, as published in the Texas Register and that the Chairman sign the corrected order to this effect.*

*Adrian Arriaga seconded the motion, which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.*

**2. § 300.2 – Windham School District Board of Trustees Operating Procedures (19 TAC § 300.2)**

Mr. Mondville stated that the proposed amendments were published in the July 27, 2007, addition of the Texas Register for public comment and no comments were received. The changes made to the rule clarify the Board’s operating procedures. As with §300.1, the order for §300.2 must also be revised to reflect the “Windham School District Board of Trustees.” Board approval was requested.

Chairman Crain asked if there were any questions or comments. Seeing none, she asked for a motion and a second.

*Oliver Bell moved that the WSD Board of Trustees adopt amendment to Board Rule § 300.2 concerning Windham School District Board of Trustees Operating Procedures, Title 19, Part 8, §300.2, as published in the Texas Register and that the Chairman sign the corrected order to this effect.*

*Mr. Mechler seconded the motion, which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.*

## **OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT RE-INTEGRATION OF OFFENDERS (PROJECT RIO)**

Bob Evans, Continuing Education Director, made a PowerPoint presentation (Attachment A) regarding the Project RIO program. He explained that RIO is a collaborative partnership between three (3) state agencies: TDCJ, the Texas Youth Commission (TYC) and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). He stated that the goal of the program is to provide offenders the opportunity to acquire workforce skills that address the needs of Texas employers and lead Project RIO participants to employment and job retention upon their release, thus reducing recidivism and promoting self-sufficiency and public safety. He explained the program eligibility criteria and orientation. Project RIO staff assist the offenders in developing an Individual Employment Plan and completing the Work-in-Texas Employment Application (TWC's application that is used state-wide). Project RIO participants are also assisted in obtaining employment documents such as: driver's licenses, birth certificates, social security cards, selective service information, military records and program completion certificates. He discussed the work opportunity tax credit, which gives employers a tax credit of up to \$2,400 per person for hiring an ex-offender within one (1) year after release, making it an incentive for a company to hire ex-offenders. Each Project RIO participant is interviewed quarterly and career days and job fairs are conducted on the units a minimum of twice per year. Project RIO is currently available on 84 TDCJ facilities. In FY 2006, 65,182 offenders participated in Project RIO and during that same period, 32,359 offenders were released who had participated in Project RIO. Mr. Evans reviewed data sharing between TDCJ/WSD and the TWC as well as Project RIO recidivism data compiled by TWC.

Mr. Mechler asked if offender participation in the Prison Industry Enhancement (PIE) program is reported to the Project RIO coordinator. Mr. Evans responded that the unit RIO coordinators work with the industry supervisors to make sure data is entered into the offender's individual employment plan.

Debbie Roberts, WSD Superintendent, advised that she is always reluctant to use recidivism studies if she is not sure of how they were conducted. This recidivism study was conducted by TWC and was used in the LBB report, but she was not familiar with how it was done or the characteristics of the comparison groups used. She added she would be careful quoting from the report because WSD did not participate in the study design.

Mr. Bell asked questions regarding the recidivism data and how the population was broken down. He asked if data could be extracted to show what percentage of the releasees fit into the different categories. He stated that it would be interesting to see how the numbers fit together. Mr. Evans responded that he would contact the Workforce Commission and work with them to compile this information.

Mr. Bell noted that if this information is accurate, it should be making headlines. He also added that Windham should also be making headlines for the good job they do to reduce recidivism rates overall.

Chairman Crain thanked Mr. Evans for his report.

Mr. Evans introduced John Ownby of the Texas Workforce Commission, noting Mr. Ownby is the main point of contact for Project RIO.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Ms. Roberts thanked Mr. Evans and Mr. Ownby for the work they do.

Ms. Roberts stated she would not be reporting the accountability data at this meeting. The data should be finalized and ready to report at the November Board meeting.

Ms. Roberts informed the Board that Windham is in the process of gathering data for the annual evaluation of the Career and Technology Education (CTE) programs. This is a requirement of H.B. 2837 with all data to be submitted to the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) by the November 30<sup>th</sup> deadline. The LBB will submit the final report to the Governor and Legislature in January 2008.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chairman Crain stated no comment cards were received and therefore no public comments would be heard.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairman Crain adjourned the 242<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the WSD Board of Trustees at 1:08 p.m.