

SOUTH TEXAS WATER AUTHORITY
Regular Board of Directors Meeting
February 25, 2021
Minutes
(This meeting was held remotely by phone and Zoom.)

Board Members Present:

Brandon Barrera
Jose Graveley
Imelda Garza
Hector Castaneda
Rudy Galvan, Jr.
Frances Garcia
Kathleen Lowman
Patsy Rodgers

Board Members Absent:

Sara Zavala

Staff Present:

Carola G. Serrato
Frances De Leon
Jo Ella Wagner

Guests Present:

Katherine Ray, Ray Associates Inc.

1. Call to Order.

Mr. Brandon Barrera, Board President, called the Special Meeting of the STWA Board of Directors to order at 5:30 p.m. A quorum was present.

2. Citizen Comments.

Mr. Barrera opened the floor to citizen's comments. No comments were made.

3. New Board member's oaths of office.

Ms. Wagner administered the Oath of Office to Ms. Frances Garcia who was appointed to Place 1 by the Kleberg County Commissioner's Court after Ms. Lupita Perez resigned. She also administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Hector Castaneda who was appointed to Place 4 by the Nueces County Commissioner's Court.

4. Develop/Confirm the Candidate Profile to include the qualifications, experience and personal traits of a new Executive Director.

Ms. Serrato presented a draft list of items to use on the candidate profile and asked for suggestions on items to be added, removed or modified. The Board suggested comprising a list of questions for the short list candidates. Mr. Galvan made a motion to accept the list as presented. Ms. Garza seconded. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

5. Finalize Job Description for the position.

Ms. Serrato reviewed the previously presented job description which she modified to reflect that initiating and directing the Authority's organization and development related to STWA management positions is performed in coordination with the Management Selection Standing Committee. Mr. Graveley made a motion to approve the job description as modified. Ms. Rodgers seconded. All voted in favor.

6. Review and Discuss the Proposed Search Process – Review Outreach Process to identify qualified candidates, including possible appointment of a committee to narrow candidate lists and perform interviews.

In regards to the search process, Ray Associates recommended narrowing the list to three to five candidates. Ms. Ray stated that these candidates would be involved in day-long interviews including meeting key staff and touring the facilities. Mr. Graveley moved to approve a maximum of four candidates. Mr. Galvan seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Ray additionally suggested asking candidates to submit a video answering three to five questions. She also asked that the Board decide whether the process would include the Board as a whole or as a committee. Mr. Galvan made a motion to accept Ms. Ray's suggestions and conduct the process as a whole Board. Ms. Ray asked about a scoring system and Mr. Galvan responded that it would be best to use a scoring system to narrow down the list of candidates. Ms. Serrato agreed to create a checklist for the Board's review at the next meeting. Ms. Lowman seconded Mr. Galvan's motion. All voted in favor.

7. Approve an Advertising Plan, Final Search and Selection Process.

The Board discussed the plan to advertise and Mr. Graveley made a motion to open the process internally and externally at the same time. Mr. Galvan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board was asked about involving other community leaders in the process. Mr. Galvan suggested having a representative from each of STWA's customers. After further discussion, Mr. Galvan made a motion to ask NWSC and RWSC to each appoint a representative to participate in the selection process. Mr. Graveley seconded. All voted in favor.

Mr. Galvan made a motion to include Ms. Serrato in the process. Ms. Lowman seconded. The motion carried.

8. Review/Discuss/Determine status of items to be provided by current STWA Executive Director and any changes to the provided information.

Ms. Ray presented a list of advertising options and suggested advertising for two to three weeks and keeping the position open until filled. Mr. Graveley made a motion to approve the presented list and keeping the position open until filled. Mr. Galvan seconded. All were in favor.

9. Determine the compensation range and the benefits package that South Texas Water Authority (STWA) will offer to a new Executive Director.

Ms. Ray said she determined that the pay for the position should be in line with a city manager's salary rather than a director of public works. Ms. Serrato said that she feels that an appropriate salary would be at least \$100,000. After review of the information provided by Ms. Ray, Ms. Serrato agreed to contact other systems for salary information. Ms. Ray stated that setting a salary range would be preferable to stating that the salary is negotiable. Ms. Serrato said that this item will be included on the next agenda.

10. Discuss/Determine STWA Needs Assessment to identify 1) future organization direction, 2) ED future challenges, 3) the working style and organizational climate and 4) required core and job specific competencies.

Mr. Galvan stated that the selected candidate needs to be aware of STWA's needs such as future construction of an office building and equipment barn as well as being able to be involved with construction projects along the highway. He added that he would like them to be able to provide a 5, 10 and 15-year plans for annual review. Discussion also included the matter of the tax exempt bonds and the possibility of refunding in a way that they are no longer tax exempt.

11. Review, Discuss and Determine any Organizations and Individuals to contact.

Other than including representatives from the Ricardo and Nueces Water Supply Corporations, the Board did not select any other organizations or individuals to contact.

12. Review, Discuss and Determine Community Information for the Position Profile.

The Board suggested including general information on the community such as school district and university information as well as area outdoor activities such hunting and fishing but did not give specific instruction.

13. Establish the Board of Directors' expectations of Ray Associates, Inc. (RAI).

No specific requests were made by the Board.


14. Establish proper communications between RAI and the STWA Board of Directors and current Executive Director with regards to Initial Candidates List, Narrowed Candidates List and Recommended Short List of Candidates.

Ms. Serrato made it clear that once the names are received and narrowed down, Board members are not allowed to discuss the matter outside of a Board meeting and that walking quorums are prohibited. She also suggested renting a van for Board members and candidates to tour the facilities. Ms. Garcia stated that the Kleberg County Annex should be available if needed. Mr. Graveley commented that the selected candidate should possess qualities very similar to Ms. Serrato's. Ms. Ray suggested keeping Ms. Serrato available for consultation.

15. Adjournment.

With no further business to discuss, Mr. Galvan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m. Mr. Graveley seconded. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,


Frances De Leon
Assistant Secretary