

Texas Space Commission Board of Directors Meeting

Minutes

Monday, October 7, 2024

10:00 AM

TxDOT Greer Building
125 East 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

Board of Directors Members in Attendance In-Person:

Gwen Griffin

Board of Directors Members in Attendance Virtually:

Dr. Nancy Currie-Gregg

Evan Loomis

Kathryn Lueders

Brad Morrison

John Shannon

Kirk Shireman

Board of Directors Members Not in Attendance:

Sassie Duggleby

Dr. Heather Wilson

Texas Aerospace Research and Space Economy Consortium (TARSEC) Executive Committee in Attendance:

Stephanie Murphy

Staff in Attendance:

Joseph Behnke

Blake Calvert

Erin Chancellor

Norman Garza

Andres Ramos

Call to Order

a) **Roll call of meeting attendees**

At 10:01 AM Chair Gwen Griffin called the meeting to order and directed staff to read the roll call. A quorum was confirmed to be present.

Welcome Remarks (Chair)

Chair Gwen Griffin welcomed the board members, staff, and members of the public for attending the meeting. She gave a summary of her testimony at an interim hearing of the House Appropriations Committee on September 24th, 2024 where she provided an update on the work of the Texas Space Commission (TSC). Her testimony also included an

update on the TARSEC Executive Committee activities through bullet points provided by TARSEC chair Stephanie Murphy.

Gwen thanked the TSC Board of Directors (Board) for their quick recommendations on the SEARF Grant applications and noted that applications are already being received. She also thanked the Board for participating in ad hoc work groups to provide feedback on the draft strategic plan, which is on track for public feedback.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

b) August 30, 2024 meeting (*Action Item*)

Kirk Shireman made a motion to approve the minutes as written for August 30, 2024 meeting of the Texas Space Commission Board of Directors and was seconded by Evan Loomis. The Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the August 30, 2024 meeting of the Texas Space Commission Board of Directors.

Acknowledgement of Gifts (*Action Item*)

Chair Gwen Griffin acknowledged that Chapter 575 of the Government Code requires the Board to acknowledge the acceptance of all gifts of money or property with a value of \$500 or more in an open meeting no later than the 90th day after the date the gift is accepted. She declared this to be a standing item for all future meetings. She then recognized that there were no gifts or donations over \$500 to be acknowledged.

Executive Director Remarks

Executive Director Norman Garza introduced new staff hired to the Texas Space Commission: Program Specialist Richard Iverson. He also provided an update on team growth, citing nine positions posted with 99 applications received for those positions to date.

Executive Director Garza made the Board and public aware of the submission of the first annual financial report on behalf of the Texas Space Commission to the Comptroller's Office. He thanked incoming Chief Financial Officer for the Office of the Governor, Warren Collier, for attending this meeting as well as for his help with current Chief Financial Officer Terrie Boland in getting that report submitted on time.

Executive Director Garza then shared how he has been traveling around the state, meeting with people on behalf of the Space Commission. He joined TSC Board members and TARSEC Executive Committee members at various events in locations including Laredo, Dallas / Fort Worth, Midland, Austin, and San Antonio. He noted the positive response from people around the Capitol after the House Appropriations Committee

hearing and thanked Chair Gwen Griffith and other the panelists, including Dr. Nancy Currie-Gregg.

Executive Director Garza discussed the activities with the TARSEC Executive Committee as the different institutions of higher education around the state submit names for their liaisons. There were no questions from the Board on Executive Director Garza's update.

Proposal of Administrative Rules (Action Item)

Chair Gwen Griffin cited that as required by statute, TSC staff drafted proposed administrative rules establishing the Board's procedures regarding the Space Exploration and Aeronautics Research Fund (SEARF). These proposed rules set forth guidelines for both Texas Space Commission Staff and the Board on how SEARF applications will be processed from the time received until the Board makes a decision on funds awarded. The proposed rules also give further definition to terms used in House Bill 3447 to provide clarity on how the SEARF program will be administered.

Chair Gwen Griffin called for questions on the proposed rules as received in the Board Book prior to the meeting. Executive Director Garza then mentioned the opportunities for public access to the proposed rules over the next 30 days, including the Secretary of State's Office as well as the Texas Register.

Kirk Shireman asked for clarification on the process of review and formal approval of the rules. Executive Director Garza defined both the team that created the proposed rules and the window for public comment, also reiterating that these are the rules for how an application can be submitted – not how an application is deemed eligible or scored.

He noted that there is a Funding Process Subcommittee which is continuing to provide input and guidance on the metrics that the applications ultimately will be scored on, but that those conversations can't take place until these rules have been issued and the comment period has concluded.

Mr. Shireman then asked if an additional vote would be required to adopt the rules should there be no public comments. Executive Director Garza clarified there would not need to be an additional vote.

Mr. Shireman asked if there were additional public comments, if then another vote and public comment period would be necessary. Executive Director Garza answered in the affirmative.

General Counsel Joseph Behnke further specified that the resolution today will encompass the rule proposal and if there are no significant changes then the adoption as well, but that if there are substantive changes in response to public comment that could necessitate further measures around adoption.

Mr. Shireman asked if that would include another period of time for public comment, and General Counsel Joseph Behnke stated that it would depend – usually not, but if there were for all intents and purposes new rules, then yes.

Dr. Nancy Currie-Gregg then asked where universities fit in, specifically around private universities. Executive Director Garza responded that all institutions of higher education are defined in the application as eligible to use the governmental entity application.

Chair Gwen Griffin then asked to have a motion to approve the proposed rules for posting the Texas register in accordance with state law and to authorize staff to adopt the rules if no substantive changes are required after the conclusion of the public comment period and to authorize the executive director to approve any ministerial changes required by the secretary of state. Brad Morrison made the motion and Kathryn Lueders seconded. The Board unanimously voted to approve.

Texas Aerospace Research and Space Economy Consortium (TARSEC) Updates

c) Liaison report

Chair Gwen Griffin welcomed Stephanie Murphy, TARSEC Chair and Liaison to the Texas Space Commission. Ms. Murphy noted the many activities of TARSEC, their first in-person strategic planning meeting of the TARSEC Executive Committee on September 26 in Houston, with more to follow.

At that meeting, the TARSEC Executive Committee approved a set of documents related to the funding for TARSEC that they recommend the Space Commission approve. They also went through their strategic vision, mission, and strategic plan.

The TARSEC Executive Committee has also met with Executive Director Garza and Texas House Rep. Bonnen to ensure that strategic alignment with the Texas Space Commission and the intent of the original legislation.

The TARSEC Executive Committee intends for the future workshops to be held across the state, focusing on different categories that align directly to the legislation including Emerging Technologies, Research, Infrastructure, Workforce Development, and Curation. There will also be an overlay for each in-person workshop around supply chain planning, with breakout sessions to help map out resources across the state as well.

The TARSEC Executive Committee is also progressing on a process and a procedure for membership to the Consortium for the current list of universities and institutions interested in joining.

Chair Gwen Griffin thanked Stephanie Murphy for the work The TARSEC Executive Committee has done.

d) Board consideration of TARSEC recommendation for funding (Action Item)

Chair Gwen Griffin raised the action item of funding an initial Texas Space Commission Grant to TARSEC in the amount of \$705,000 to undertake activities related to TARSEC's purpose and duties, established in Chapter 482, Subchapter G, Texas Government Code. She then asked General Counsel Joseph Behnke and Texas Space Commission Chief Compliance Officer Erin Chancellor to explain how the grant funding for TARSEC would be arranged.

General Counsel Joseph Behnke explained that this would be in the category of a grant to an intergovernmental or governmental entity, as this would be an agreement between the Texas Space Commission and Texas A&M University System, who is directed by statute to provide staff support services for TARSEC.

He continued that this agreement serves as a Master Services Agreement and as a subpart to that there are task orders, so if TARSEC has additional tasks to accomplish, each task would come to the Texas Space Commission for approval. Today's action item is the initial agreement between the Texas Space Commission and Texas A&M University System, to be signed by Executive Director Garza.

Chief Compliance Officer Erin Chancellor confirmed that this is a complete explanation.

Chair Gwen Griffin then opened the floor for questions or discussion on the request for \$705,000. After it was determined there were no questions or discussion items, Chair Gwen Griffin then asked to have a motion to approve a grant to TARSEC in the amount of \$705,000 to undertake activities related to its purpose and duties established in Chapter 482, Subchapter G, Texas Government Code and to direct staff to take all necessary steps to provide the grant including entering into the intergovernmental agreement with Texas A&M on behalf of TARSEC and approving the first task order.

Brad Morrison then made the motion and Kirk Shireman seconded. The Board unanimously voted to approve.

Chair Gwen Griffin then directed Executive Director Garza and Texas Space Commission staff to please take all steps necessary to provide the approved grant award to TARSEC.

Establish Future Meeting Dates/Locations

Chair Gwen Griffin raised the item of establishing future meeting dates. The date December 10th was determined to be a good option for most, but as Sassie Duggleby and Dr. Heather Wilson were not in attendance, it was decided to circle back with them before filing the date and agenda with the Texas Register.

Closed Meeting

Chair Gwen Griffin stated that the Board would not recess into executive session. There were no public comments, but Chair Gwen Griffin and Executive Director Garza reiterated that public comments can be sent at any time to the contact form on the Texas Space Commission website <https://space.texas.gov/>.

Adjournment

At 10:28 AM, Chair Gwen Griffin moved to adjourn the meeting. There were no objections, and the meeting was adjourned.


Chair or Designee

1-7-2025
Date