

Open Meeting
Texas Space Commission, Board of Directors
Minutes, Monday – March 31, 2025
1:00 p.m. CDT

Headquarters: Texas Department of Transportation – Greer State Office Building
125 East 11th Street – Austin, Texas 78701

Members, Board of Directors – Attending in-person:

1. Dr. Nancy Currie-Gregg
2. Ms. Gwen Griffin, chair
3. Mr. John Shannon

Members, Board of Directors – Attending virtually:

1. Ms. Sassie Duggleby
2. Mr. Evan Loomis
3. Ms. Kathryn Lueders, vice chair
4. Mr. Brad Morrison
5. Mr. Kirk Shireman, secretary
6. Dr. Heather Wilson

Member, Texas Aerospace Research & Space Economy Consortium (TARSEC)

Executive Committee – Attending virtually:

1. Ms. Stephanie Murphy, chair

Guests, invited presenters – Attending in-person:

1. Ms. Caroline Mays, Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)
2. Mr. Jim Rabuck, Defense Innovation Unit (DIU) / U.S. Department of Defense (DOD)

Staff, TSC personnel – Attending in-person:

1. Mr. Joseph Behnke, General Counsel
2. Mr. Blake Calvert, Deputy Executive Director
3. Ms. Erin Chancellor, Chief Compliance Officer
4. Mr. Norman Garza Jr., Executive Director

1) Call to Order:

a) Roll call.

At 1:00 p.m. CDT, Chair Gwen Griffin called the meeting to order and directed the Executive Director to call the roll call of TSC board members. A quorum was confirmed to be present.

2) Approval of Meeting Minutes:

a) Action Item.

Board Chair Gwen Griffin noted a correction. The posted Agenda stated the approval of Meeting Minutes for January 24, 2025. However, the Meeting Minutes being considered on March 31, 2025, are for the Open Meeting on February 10, 2025.

Director John Shannon made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes as written for February 10, 2025, of the Texas Space Commission board of directors. Director Nancy Currie-Gregg, Ph.D. seconded the Motion by Mr. Shannon. The board unanimously voted to approve the Minutes for their February 10, 2025, Open Meeting.

3) Acknowledgement of Gifts:

a) Action Item.

Board Chair Gwen Griffin acknowledged that Chapter 575 of the Texas Government Code requires the TSC board of directors to acknowledge acceptance of all gifts of money or property with a value of \$500 or more during an Open Meeting no later than the 90th day after the date when a gift is accepted. Ms. Griffin noted the following gift needed to be acknowledged:

Donations Over \$500

Donor	Detail & Purpose of Donation	Amount
Guillermo Trevino	Helicopter tour of Laredo to see the border, trade movement, new development, and commercial activity.	\$1,000.00

Board Director Kirk Shireman made the motion to acknowledge the donation, seconded by Board Director John Shannon. The board unanimously voted to approve the acknowledgement.

4) Remarks by Board Chairman:

Board Chair Gwen Griffin made remarks that began with a note of thanks to TSC staff and all participants for "Space Day 2025" at the State Capitol on March 25, 2025. Ms. Giffin specifically recognized the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership (BAHEP) for leading the event, as well as NASA's Johnson Space Center (JSC) leadership. She offered highlights from the day, including exhibits, proclamations, and meetings.

Ms. Griffin then gave an update on "Space Exploration & Aerospace Research Fund" (SEARF) grant recipients, noting that all grants are conditioned by each recipient organization passing all risk assessments, administrative background checks, and completion of all the contractual requirements, and that the TSC staff is working with each of the nine awardees to complete the necessary documents as they draft the individual grant agreements. Ms. Griffin offered a refresher on the direct award model – separate from the SEARF grant application process – that can be used if a circumstance arises for the State of Texas to

support a significant priority project under a short deadline for external funding opportunities.

Ms. Griffin then asked if there were any questions, and Board Director Kirk Shireman asked if any official inquiries have been received to date. Executive Director Norman Garza, Jr. noted that inquiries have been received and are being reviewed for eligibility requirements.

5) Remarks by Executive Director:

Executive Director Norman Garza, Jr. gave an update on the activities of TSC board members and staff. Mr. Garza noted Board Director John Shannon appearing earlier in the day for the Texas Senate Committee on Nominations regarding his confirmation hearing, as one of the three gubernatorial appointees named last year.

Then, Mr. Garza provided a summary of participation by several TSC board members as invited speakers at various engagements during South by Southwest (SxSW). Thereafter, he described testimony provided by Chair Gwen Griffin to the Texas House Committee on the Delivery of Government Efficiency (DOGE).

Next, Mr. Garza stated that he and several TSC board members would be attending the annual Space Symposium hosted by Space Foundation in Colorado Springs. He noted that The Honorable Jane Nelson, Texas Secretary of State, will attend and deliver keynote remarks during a luncheon titled, "Pioneering Space in the Lone Star State."

Finally, Mr. Garza remarked that TSC staff continues to process SEARF grant applications and field questions as well as receive input – unrelated to SEARF applications – from many stakeholders.

6) Update from Texas Aerospace Research & Space Economy Consortium (TARSEC):

Board Chair Gwen Griffin turned the floor over to Stephanie Murphy, presiding officer of TARSEC and Liaison to the TSC board of directors. Ms. Murphy began by commenting on TARSEC participation during "Space Day 2025" at the State Capitol. She mentioned five members of the TARSEC executive committee and made a special thanks to Mr. Brian Freedman, president of BAHEP and deputy presiding officer of the TARSEC executive committee.

Then, Ms. Murphy provided an update on recent activities, including strategic planning sessions, a landing page for their website (tarsec.space) that should go live soon and will feature an intake portal for membership.

Next, Ms. Murphy shared information about upcoming TARSEC workshops – on April 16, 2025, in Fort Worth at the Texas A&M University School of Law; on May 21, 2025, in the Rio Grande Valley; on a date to be determined at a location in West Texas.

Thereafter, Ms. Murphy summarized action by the TARSEC executive committee pertaining to a new process for membership inquiries from non-institutions of higher education – per statute via House Bill 3447 (88th Regular Session, Texas Legislature – 2023). Specifically, the TARSEC executive committee has developed a vetting process that they would like to be reviewed by TSC general counsel. It is based on two other consortium membership processes. The executive committee is also working on organizational structures, consortium models, membership engagement, and joint goals.

Finally, Ms. Murphy closed by giving an update on the efforts to deliver all input gathered during past TARSEC workshops during upcoming TSC board Ad hoc Workgroup meetings.

7) Presentation by Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) regarding Space Industry Highway Transportation Needs Assessment:

Board Chair Gwen Griffin introduced Ms. Caroline Mays, TxDOT Director of Planning and Modal Programs, to provide a presentation about the recent study that assesses roadway infrastructure needs pertaining to the aerospace industry in Texas.

Ms. Mays began her presentation on the assessment, created to define potential strategic investments in the Texas highway network that are necessary to ensure continued growth for space-related companies. The report was underpinned by four pillars: (1) challenges of moving freight; (2) the ability of current and planned highway infrastructure to support growing needs; (3) the highway characteristics critical to accommodate the space industry's freight and job access needs; and, (4) the highway investments needed to ensure Texas leads the American space industry and economy.

Then, Ms. Mays provided an explanation about the stakeholder identification process and the input gathering process. Thereafter, she mentioned key highlights and commonalities around that feedback. Ultimately, she provided a summary of the findings for the assessment – including, a definition of space industry corridors (SIC) tiers: (1) critical; (2) primary, and (3) secondary. She also offered a view on the programmatic needs as well as the SIC “hubs” and “corridors” deemed as critical roadways. Next, she outlined the funding gaps for SIC investments through a 15-year implementation program – noting a recommendation to focus on the zero- to five-year timeframe – as well as future considerations for success.

Afterwhich, Board Chair Gwen Griffin thanked Ms. Mays and reasserted this is the data necessary to deliver what commercial companies, government entities and nonprofits need. Then, Ms. Griffin asked if there were any questions from TSC board members.

Board Director John Shannon asked if there is any coordination with other industries facing similar challenges, specifically to ensure that there is no duplication of effort. Ms. Mays responded that information from other industries did inform the findings of this report.

Board Director Brad Morrison asked how TSC can best provide input that might shape and influence this plan. Ms. Mays responded that it could be given through TSC staff, or TxDOT personnel could meet individually with TSC board members.

Then, Mr. Morrison asked if the plan could include utilization of Texas' coastal ports and access to the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. Ms. Mays responded that, for the sake of time, TxDOT did not look at other modes of transportation outside of highways to deliver this report. However, she mentioned that such discussion will be 'next steps' by TxDOT.

Finally, Executive Director Garza asked about the more detailed cost-breakdown pertaining to those 98 miles deemed as "critical" in the full report. Ms. Mays responded that it is available in the full report.

8) Presentation by Defense Innovation Unit (DIU) regarding federal funding programs:

Chair Gwen Griffin introduced Mr. Jim Rabuck, DIU Regional Director for the Southwest United States. Mr. Raybuck provided an overview of the organization, its programs, and recent engagements with TSC leadership. Then, he set the stage of why DIU exists – noting the challenge for nontraditional vendors to get in front of U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), and that DIU accelerate such opportunities for those smaller-size entities to pursue funding opportunities for new emerging technological capabilities.

Then, Board Director John Shannon asked if China has a similar program. Mr. Rabuck responded that they do. Specifically, he referenced their universities as well as a directive for companies to share their data directly with their national government.

Thereafter, Mr. Rabuck continued by explaining that DIU facilitates engagements between DOD partners and domestic commercial companies to prototype, transition, and scale advanced technology. He highlighted a key reason why DIU has deployed so much capital into the state of Texas is because the Texas Legislature created TSC and appropriated \$150 million for grants.

Next, Mr. Rabuck provided a brief history and timeline of DIU's purpose as well as goals. Specifically, he noted that DIU does not only work with companies but also with institutions of higher education. He reviewed the DIU portfolio, specifically noting awards regarding space exploration emerging technology. Additionally, he provided comments pertaining to the U.S. southwestern region. He highlighted that the second largest DIU office is located in Texas and described their proposal process.

Another point highlighted by Mr. Raybuck was about Texas' investment for infrastructure projects related to the space industry. Furthermore, he recommended key areas that the TSC board should prioritize – related to DIU areas of interest – including: (1) how to get sensing capabilities into space on a rapid pace; (2) how to double-down on the successes within Texas; and, (3) how Texas can help deter space-borne threats.

Ms. Griffin thanked Mr. Raybuck for his work and time, and she opened the floor for questions from TSC board members.

Board Director Nancy Currie-Gregg, Ph.D. asked how DIU identifies Technology Readiness Levels (TRL). Mr. Rabuck answered by sharing that such are precisely why DIU exists — to

go beyond just the point of identify a need or capability and instead bringing a full vision about a possible solution to key decision makers inside the DOD leadership.

Then, Dr. Currie-Gregg asked about an average size of funding awards made by DIU. Mr. Rabuck replied that it is a span, and ultimately, it is a dialogue, to negotiate on what the applicant needs for advancing their proposed project.

Afterwhich, Executive Director Garza noted that Mr. Rabuck has shared that DIU is paying attention to TSC board decisions as well as the Texas Legislature.

Finally, Mr. Rabuck referenced the matching grant model and said it is complimentary to DIU having an office in Texas.

9) Adjournment:

At 2:19 p.m. CDT, Board Chair Gwen Griffin moved to adjourn the meeting. There were no objections; the meeting was adjourned.


Chair or Designee

4-16-2025
Date