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NORTHEAST NEWS

MONDAY

AUTUMN BEGINS

SEPT. 23



Serving the Neighborhoods of Aldine, Greenspoint, US59 Eastex, Beltway 8 and North Forest for over 43 Years
VOL. 43, NO. 36 TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2019 HOUSTON, TEXAS www.nenewsroom.com

NEWS NOTES

Community voices concern about Concrete Plant at TCEQ Hearing

North Houston American LL

Sign-Up for Baseball/Softball. Fall Registration going-on, please contact Elizabeth Dollar at 832-731-4518 or for Spanish Alex Aguilar at 832-716-1882 or Vilma Pruneda at 281-536-4062 to register.

Storm Water meeting Little York & Hopper

Community engagement meeting for the Little York and Hopper Stormwater Detention Basins improvements project. Wednesday, September 18, 2019 from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. at North East Community Center, 10918 Bentley St., 77093.

This stormwater detention basin improvement project will be funded with bonds approved by Harris County voters on August 25, 2018.

East Aldine Flooding Futures

Community Event, October 5, 2019. Panel event featuring East Aldine community members, leaders and organizers, Rice University researchers and public officials in a conversation. Environmental Justice and Social Equity in the face of increased flooding. At MacArthur High School, 10 am - 2 pm, lunch is provided. Questions? Please call Jolen Martin- ez at 241-794-8230.

October Art Fest

Art Exhibit, October 10, 2019 from 11:00am - 2:00 pm at North East Community Center, 10918 Bentley St. Houston, Texas 77093.

East Aldine residents turned out in large numbers last Monday night, to voice their concerns over a concrete batch plant that is proposed for a site at 914 Pinafore Lane, near East Hardy frontage road.

The meeting was an official hearing by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, and run by their facilitator, Diana Avalos. The meeting was held at BakerRipley, and lasted over an hour.

Opening comments were made by the facilitator, and State Representative Armando Walle. Walle said that although he



State Representative Armando Walle gave welcoming remarks, and set the tone for a constructive, informative meeting. At left are two representatives of the Rocket Materials LLC company wanting to build the concrete batch plant, at right are two reviewers from the TCEQ, and the TCEQ facilitator Diana Avalos stands beside Walle.

wasn't against small businesses, that a concrete plant emits particulate materials into the air, and has heavy truck traffic on the surrounding roads.

The comments started out with questions and answers, but as the meeting continued the residents became more expressive of their concerns and displeasure that the company wanted to locate in Aldine.

Steve Adame spoke about the dangers of heavy, slow moving trucks

See Concrete Plant, Page 8

METRO \$3.5 Billion Bond on November Ballot

HOUSTON – Moving to the Future, a political action committee formed to pass the METRO Proposition on the November 2019 ballot, launched its campaign today.

Carrin Patman, chair of the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO), said:

“The METRO Proposition is a bold new plan for sustainable transit solutions that will provide more transportation choices for more people, connecting them to jobs, education and healthcare—



METRONext includes a new type of vehicle, a BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) that will drive on dedicated roadways, such as this artist's view of a development on Post Oak Road in the Galleria.

all while improving our economy, environment, quality of life, and competitiveness with other urban areas.”

The METRO Proposition provides funding to implement the METRONext Moving Forward Plan, which increases high-capacity rapid transit services, including:

- Providing more than \$4 billion over 20 years to fix our streets and sidewalks
- Extending existing light rail lines and adding a light rail line to Hobby Airport

-Expanding park & rides and commuter service on most major free-ways

-Improving service on 260 miles of bus routes

-Creating new Metro Rapid high-speed bus lines which have many of the same advantages as rail

The funds would be provided by the sale of up to \$3.5 billion in bonds over 20 years with no new tax-

See Metro Bond, Page 8

Walle appointed to state School safety committee

Speaker Bonnen Appoints 13 Members to House Select Committee on Mass Violence Prevention and Community Safety

AUSTIN, Texas - Speaker Dennis Bonnen today appointed 13 members of the Texas House of Representatives to serve on the newly-formed Select Committee on Mass Violence Prevention and Community Safety. The House Select Committee was formed in response to the recent



tragedies in El Paso, Midland, and Odessa, and will be tasked with studying and recommending effective legislative solutions and other measures to help prevent mass violence and improve community safety in Texas.

“Words alone will not deliver the bold solutions Texas needs in order to defeat the violence that has become far too commonplace in our state,” said Speaker Bonnen. “The Texas House is putting words into action by forming this committee, and

See WALLE on page 8

Castlewood hears plans for flood mitigation

Harris County Flood Control District and the Harris County Engineering Department have partnered to implement some of the flood control projects included in last year's \$2.5 Billion bond program.

As part of the process, they held an informational meeting with the Castlewood Civic Club last Tuesday, September 10th. The meeting at the offices of the East Aldine District were at full capacity, as resi-



A FULL HOUSE of Castlewood Residents attended the Flood District's meeting last Tuesday, held at the offices of the East Aldine District.

See Castlewood Flood Plan, Page 8

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SUNDAY-WEDNESDAY 9/15-9/18

Opens THURSDAY, Sept. 19
* AD ASTRA (PG-13) 7:00p 9:45p
* DOWNTON ABBEY (PG) 7:00p 9:45p
* RAMBO: LAST BLOOD (R) 7:00p 9:10p

The Angry Birds Movie 2 (PG) - 12:30pm, 2:45pm, 5:00pm, 7:15pm, 9:30pm Closed Caption
Dora and the Lost City of Gold (PG) - 12:00pm, 2:30pm, 4:50pm, 7:10pm, 9:30pm
Closed Caption; Spanish Dubbed
Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark (PG-13) - 12:45pm, 3:45pm, 6:45pm, 9:15pm Closed Caption
Fast & Furious Presents: Hobbs & Shaw (PG-13) - 12:00pm, 3:00pm, 6:00pm, 9:00pm
Closed Caption
THE LION KING in RealD 3D (PG) - 12:45pm, 6:15pm
Closed Caption; RealD 3D; Spanish Dubbed
THE LION KING (PG) - 3:30pm, 6:15pm, 9:00pm
Closed Caption
47 Meters Down: Uncaged (PG-13) - 12:30pm, 2:40pm Closed Caption
47 Meters Down: Uncaged (PG-13) - 4:50pm, 7:00pm, 9:15pm
GOOD BOYS (R) - 12:40pm, 2:50pm, 5:00pm, 7:10pm, 9:20pm
Closed Caption

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SCHOOL & COMMUNITY NEWS

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Citizenship Workshops

Bonding Against Adversity will host a citizenship workshop, Saturday, September 28, 2019 at Hosanna Lutheran Church, 16526 Ella Blvd, Houston, TX 77090, 8:00 a.m. Questions? Please call 281-799-9076 or Text 832-906-4214.

Explorer Post at HCEC

The Harris County Emergency Corps will soon be the home of a new Explorer Post! Exploring is an after-school program for young men and women ages 14-20. Learning includes: EMT, paramedic, dispatcher, and more. Be also focusing on leadership, healthcare skills such as CPR and first aid, and will offer fellowship opportunities.

To learn more, please attend an Open House, Tuesday, October 1, 2019 from 7-9 p.m., 2800 Aldine Bender Rd, Houston, TX 77032.

Events at Buckner (formerly Aldine Youth)

•ZUMBA - Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays - 8a-9a - \$1 for members; \$2 for non-members
 •AEROBICS w/toning and stretching - Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays - 9a-10a - \$1 for members; \$2 for non-members
 •Seniors Social Club and Bingo. It meets on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month at 10:30 a.m. until about 12:30 p.m. This event is FREE for Seniors 65 and over.
 For more information, please 281-449-4828.

AISD Schools Celebrate Grandparents Day



By Valonia Walker

Several Aldine ISD schools celebrated Grandparents Day on Friday, Sept. 6. Grandparents were invited to campuses across the district to spend time with their grandchildren, during their special day of recognition. Grandparents Day was originally recognized by President Jimmy Carter in 1978. Grandparents Day is celebrated each year on the Sunday after Labor Day. Aldine ISD would like to recognize grandparents for the strength, love and guidance they provide to our students. National Grandparents Day will be celebrated around the world on Sunday, Sept. 8. Check out some of our campus celebrations in the photo gallery below.



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District Receives \$1.35 Million for School Improvement Initiatives

Funding will increase options for families and students who attend great schools

By Leticia Fehling

Aldine ISD recently received \$1.35 million for school improvement initiatives that will dramatically improve schools, create more options for families, and ensure that more students attend great schools.

School Action Fund (SAF) grants, funded by TEA provide districts, including Aldine ISD, with funds to develop transformative programs that will improve the quality of education for students who attend schools that have historically struggled. TEA and Aldine ISD are committed to relentlessly focusing on improving low-performing schools through the implementation of transformative actions that create more choices and opportunities for students.

"This opportunity from the state means Aldine ISD will have fewer C, D, and F schools and more A and B schools," said Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney. "We want every child in Aldine to be in a great school, and these funds are part of our vision for A New Way Forward at Aldine ISD."

Aldine ISD has already seen significant improvements. Last year, the district had one campus that would have been rated an "A." This year, AISD has



Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney (second from right, standing) visits with students at Goodman Elementary School. Under her leadership, the district moved from a "C" rating to a "B." Goffney's new five-year strategic plan lays the foundation to ensure students have access to high-quality schools.

four "A" schools that received those high marks. Additionally, Aldine ISD now has 4,435 fewer students learning in D and F schools. And that is not all. With the district's 2018-2019 scores, the Aldine ISD moved from a "C" to a "B." These funds are additional supports to help meet Aldine's goals in A New Way Forward.

Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney; and the Office of Transformation, is taking bold action to create opportunities to ensure all students have access to high-quality schools.

The System of Great Schools framework, in the district's new five-year strategic plan, A New Way Forward, is the unifying

theory of action that knits together our priorities with these bold actions. This framework will serve as the district's foundation to increase the number of top-rated schools.

SAF Funds Will Help AISD:

- Dramatically improve student achievement;
- Implement social and emotional learning to maximize student engagement;
- Develop strong leaders throughout Aldine ISD;
- Strategically organize resources to accelerate student outcomes; and
- Build stronger communications and outreach efforts.

To learn more about school actions, please visit the Center for School Action website.

District Sets Dates for Fall 2019 Open House Nights

By Leticia Fehling

School Open House Night helps parents to stay informed about their children's progress. The event also allows parents and teachers to continue to strengthen communication to ensure students have positive school experiences.

Open House Night is also an excellent opportunity to see everything in action. Parents will get an overview of school culture, teachers, curriculum, and unique programs.

Fall Open House Nights by Date

Please call your child's school for specific times or visit the campus website for information aldineisd.org

- September 24: Early Childhood/Prekindergarten/Kindergarten Schools
- September 30: Ninth Grade Schools
- October 1: Elementary Schools
- October 2: High Schools
- October 9: Middle Schools

What Parents Can Do to Prepare for Your Child's School Open House

To make the most of open house night, talk to your children before the event and do a little research. Read any information sent home before the event.

At Open House Night, there is little time for a lengthy conversation. Read school policies and procedures beforehand if you have questions about these. Parents can find them posted online.

Review the state standards for your child's

grade level. This practice will give you an idea of what academics your child's grade level is studying. If you have difficulty finding the standards, call the school or schedule a parent-teacher conference.

View curricula before the event. These are the adopted reading materials, activities, and items used to teach students. Some may be available online to view. If not, contact the campus or your child's teacher to schedule a time to go over the curricula.

Due to limited time at Open House Night, focus on big-picture questions or general issues. Save individual student needs (i.e., academics, behavior) for a parent-teacher conference.

Topics to Discuss at School Open House

- Find out your child's schedule (i.e., lunch, recess).
- Learn how to best contact the teacher.
- Update your contact information.
- Ask about volunteer opportunities at the school.
- Learn about classroom expectations.
- Learn how to support your child's learning at home.
- Find out about homework expectations.
- Ask about special upcoming events.

Questions Not to Ask at Open House

It's important to remember that your child's teacher wants to cover a lot of information with all the parents. The teacher will have a short amount of time while still having a few moments to answer questions. This event is

not a time to discuss your child's individual needs. If you have concerns over your child's academic progress or classroom behavior, write an email to the teacher or send a letter in your child's folder. You can also call to schedule a parent-teacher conference.

To ensure you have a productive parent-teacher conference beforehand, prepare questions. Collect samples of your child's work. Parent-teacher conferences should center on three major topics: the child, the classroom, and the future. Remember to take notes. And do schedule an immediate follow-up meeting if something is unclear.

Parent-teacher conferences should occur as soon as parents notice a student struggling. Parent-teacher conferences can provide useful insight for immediate and clear next steps. Time is crucial for students' learning and progress. Parents should come out of discussions with actions they can do to help their children.

Parents can also try to connect with the school guidance counselor. He or she can provide information about the resources the school offers. Possibilities could include gifted testing as well as resources outside of school. Call the campus to find the correct personnel.

By working together, every child can have a positive educational experience and make more significant learning gains.

We can't wait to see you at School Open House Nights!

NORTHEAST NEWS Pick-up Locations

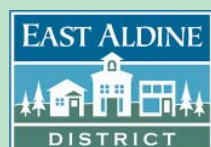
- Jed's Hardware & Paint
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Greenspoint Mall
Greenspoint Drive
Lone Star College - Greenspoint
250 Sam Houston Pkwy E.
- Sheriff's Storefront
5202 Aldine Mail Route
- East Aldine Office
5333 Aldine Mail Route
- RED BOX
5327 Aldine Mail Route
- Dance Town USA Bingo
7214 Airline Drive
- Pan Riko Bakery
Aldine Mail Rt
- MacArthur High School
Aldine Mail Rt
- High Meadows Branch Library
4550 Aldine Mail Rt
- Prosperity Bank Eastex Fwy
3945 Little York
- Prosperity Bank Little York
1615 Little York
- Prosperity Bank Aldine
1906 Aldine Bender
- Mobile Station
9140 Eastex Freeway
- Texaco Food Mart
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- Hartz Chicken
12231 Eastex Freeway
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10767 Eastex Freeway
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Eastex Freeway
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- Aldine ISD Services Office
Aldine Westfield
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- You & I Grocery
8009 Airline
- Airline Grocery
8104 Airline
- Quick Mart
8320 Airline
- H.M.C. Clinic
Aldine Bender

- Harris County Branch Library
11379 Airline
- Medical Clinic
8002 Airline
- Aldine High School
Airline @ West Rd
- Las Banderas Meat Market
11381 Airline
- Food Store
1700 Airline
- Heart's Liquor
3801 Aldine Mail Rt
- Pilgrim Place Apts
4655 Aldine Mail Rt
- Aldine Y.O.U.T.H Comm. Ctr.
4700 Aldine Mail Rt
- Chevron
8400 Irvington
- Harris County Courthouse Annex
Will Clayton Parkway
- Harvest Time Church
Imperial Valley
- World Food Mart
Greens Rd @ Imperial Valley
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COMMUNITY NEWS

Houston Symphony opens the 2019-2020 Classical Season

HOUSTON (Sept. 11, 2019) – Houston Symphony Music Director Andrés Orozco-Estrada launches the 2019–20 Classical Season with an all-Stravinsky program. Stravinsky's Firebird at 8 p.m., Sept. 19 and 21, and 2:30 p.m., Sept. 22 in Jones Hall. The Houston Symphony is livestreaming the Sunday matinee performance of the classical subscription concert—marking its first-ever online video broadcast of a concert.



Houston Symphony Music Director Andrés Orozco-Estrada

Celebrating his sixth season as Music Director, Orozco-Estrada opens the program with Stravinsky's Scherzo fantastique, an inventive work inspired by the buzzing lifecycle of bees. Renowned for his superb musicianship and the integrity of his playing, violin virtuoso Leonidas Kavakos then takes center stage in Stravinsky's playful and invigorating Violin Concerto.

The concert's zenith comes as Orozco-Estrada leads the orchestra in Stravinsky's full ballet score of the vibrant and fiery orchestral masterpiece, The Firebird. "I wanted to perform the whole thing so that we can enjoy the whole story, even without a ballet, through the colors," Orozco-Estrada told the Houston Chronicle. "It's like painting with music."

Stravinsky's Firebird, part of the Frost Bank Gold Classics series with additional support from the General and Mrs. Maurice Hirsh Memorial Concert Fund, takes place at Jones Hall for the Performing Arts, 615 Louisiana Street, in Houston's The-

ater District. For tickets and information, please call 713.224.7575 or visit houstonSymphony.org. Tickets may also be purchased at the Houston Symphony Patron Services Center in Jones Hall (Monday–Saturday, 12–6 p.m.). All programs and artists are subject to change.

About the Houston Symphony

During the 2019–20 season, the Houston Symphony celebrates its sixth season with Music Director Andrés Orozco-Estrada and continues its second century as one of America's leading orchestras with a full complement of concert, community, education, touring, and recording activities. The Houston Symphony, one of the oldest performing arts organizations in Texas, held its inaugural performance at The Majestic Theater in downtown Houston June 21, 1913. Today, with an annual operating budget of \$35.2 million, the full-time ensemble of 88 professional musicians presents nearly 170 concerts annu-

ally, making it the largest performing arts organization in Houston. Additionally, musicians of the orchestra and the Symphony's four Community-Embedded Musicians offer over 1,000 community-based performances each year at various schools, community centers, hospitals, and churches reaching nearly 200,000 people in Greater Houston annually.

The Grammy Award-winning Houston Symphony has recorded under various prestigious labels, including Naxos, Koch International Classics, Telarc, RCA Red Seal, Virgin Classics and, most recently, Dutch recording label Pentatone. In 2017, the Houston Symphony was awarded an ECHO Klassik award for the live recording of Alban Berg's Wozzeck under the direction of former Music Director Hans Graf. The orchestra earned its first Grammy nomination and Grammy Award at the 60th annual ceremony for the same recording in the Best Opera Recording category.

FBI and law enforcement partner to host #ThinkBeforeYouPost PSA contest

By Leticia Fehling

FBI Houston, Crime Stoppers of Houston, and the FBI Houston Citizens Academy Alumni Association have partnered to host a video Public Service Announcement (PSA) contest for Houston-area high school students. The campaign aims at educating the public about the seriousness of issuing hoax threats against a school, or another public place is a serious federal crime. A thoughtless remark on social media can lead to prison. It's not a joke.

Important Dates & Registration Information

A teacher must sponsor high school students who wish to take part. Teams of one to four students must register online by October 2. They must submit a 45-60 second original video by November 15. To register, submit the video, and for more information, visit www.schoolpsa.com.

- Team Registration Opens: September 2, 2019

- Team Registration Deadline: October 2, 2019

- Video Entry and Forms Submission Deadline: November 15, 2019

- Social Media (Likes & Shares) Period: January 6, 2020 – January 31, 2020

- Winners Announced: February 28, 2020

Educating the Public

The FBI's #ThinkBeforeYouPost campaign aims at ending hoax threats by educating students and parents about the consequences of making such threats. Issuing a threat of targeted violence against schools and other public places — through social media, via text message or email — is a crime. The PSA's message should address what students should do if they see or hear about a threat of violence and the consequences, for the public and the perpetrator, of making such threats.

Prizes

The FBI Houston Citizens Academy Alumni Association (CAAA), and the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo are sponsoring the prizes. Three winning teams will receive:

- A monetary award for their school

o 1st Place — \$5,000

o 2nd Place — \$2,500

o 3rd Place — \$1,500

- Astros baseball cap for each team member

- Four tickets to attend an Astros 2020 game for each team member (date TBD)

- Ride in a 2020 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Silver Guest Grand

Entry (date TBD)

- 2020 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Silver Guest Badge for each team member

The first-place team will also receive:

- Recognition in a pre-game ceremony at an Astros 2020 game (date TBD)

- Television or radio appearance on a local station

In 2018, there were over 160 hoax threats in Houston that the FBI and law enforcement partners responded to and investigated to determine if there was a threat to public safety. Each one of those is a massive drain on law enforcement resources. To respond to these hoax threats, agencies have to divert critical resources from important criminal investigations to make sure there is no threat to the public. The FBI hopes that the videos created during this PSA contest will educate students that posting a threat is not a joke.

The FBI reminds the public never to post or send any hoax threats online — period. If you are a target of an online threat, alert your local law enforcement immediately. If you see a threat of violence posted on social media, immediately contact local law enforcement or your local FBI office.

Lone Star College recognized as top school for Hispanics

HOUSTON (Sept. 10, 2019) – Hispanic Outlook on Education Magazine has named Lone Star College as the #1 two-year college in the nation for the number of undergraduate Hispanic students enrolled in 2017.

The monthly publication, which provides education news while maintaining a unique Hispanic perspective, publishes this ranking list each year.

"Lone Star College is proud of the educational opportunities we provide to all students," said Stephen C. Head, Ph.D., LSC chancellor. "We appreciate this recognition and remain committed to student success."

Hispanic Outlook on Education noted LSC welcomed more than 27,000 Hispanic students in 2017, representing 37 percent of the total LSC student population. The rankings were determined by the national Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, a method of surveys conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics. Data for 2017 were the latest available.

In addition to being recognized as a leader in His-



Hispanic Outlook on Education Magazine ranked LSC #1 in the nation for the number of Hispanic students enrolled in two-year colleges in 2017.

panic education by Hispanic Outlook, LSC is designated as an Hispanic Serving Institution by the U.S. Department of Education, a recognition that is given to nonprofit institutions with a full-time undergraduate student enrollment that is at least 25 percent Hispanic.

"I am very proud of the role Lone Star College employees play in helping our diverse community," said Head.

LSC awarded 8,255 associate degrees and certificates to eligible students

who took part in commencement ceremonies in spring 2019 including 3,262 to Hispanic students. They represented the largest ethnic group of students to earn their degrees and certifications this year.

It's not too late to register for fall classes. In addition to the regular 16-week semester courses, there are 4- to 15-week Late Start class options available. Choose from a variety of subjects, courses and start dates. Learn more at LoneStar.edu/LateStart.

Investigation into Fatal Crash at 8800 Mesa Drive

Houston police are investigating a fatal crash that occurred at 8800 Mesa Drive about 6:30 a.m. on Sept. 9.

According to HPD Vehicular Crimes Division Sergeant K. Harris and Senior Police Officer R. Saenz, the driver of a white

Ford Ranger pickup truck was headed north on Mesa when the victim stepped out into the roadway, not in a crosswalk, and was struck by the Ford. The victim was transported to Lyndon B. Johnson Hospital where he was pronounced dead. The driver of the Ford, who remained

at the scene and did not show signs of intoxication, was questioned and released.

The identity of the male victim, 61, is pending notification to family members by the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences.

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Social Security Matters

by AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor Russell Gloor
Association of Mature American Citizens

Ask Rusty – When Will My Earnings Not Hurt My Social Security Benefits?

Dear Rusty: I will turn 66 in June of next year. I do not plan to stop working but I do plan on starting to collect my Social Security. How soon can I start to collect without having to give it back because my income is too high? And after I start collecting will I still have to pay into the program with deductions from my current salary, and if I do, will those payments from me help to increase what I will be able to collect from SSA? Signed: Planning Ahead

Dear Planning Ahead: Social Security's earnings limit goes away when you reach your full retirement age (FRA), which for you is 66. So, if you claim Social Security benefits to start in June of next year you do not need to worry about your earnings causing Social Security to take back benefits - you'll have reached your full retirement age (FRA) and the earnings limit disappears at your FRA. But, whether you can claim any earlier in the year without it affecting your benefits depends on your earnings level.

Starting next year, because that will be the year you reach your FRA, the usual earnings limit (\$17,640 for 2019) will be about 2.5 times greater, or a little more than this year's limit of \$46,920 for those in their FRA year. So, if you claim benefits to start before June when you reach your FRA, you'll be subject to that higher 2020 annual limit and depending on the month you claim - perhaps a monthly limit (the annual limit divided by 12). Exceeding the annual limit will cause Social Security to take back some of your benefits, and if you exceed the monthly limit you won't be entitled to benefits for that month. However, if your income starting next year won't exceed

those limits you can claim earlier in the year without having benefits withheld. And if you don't start your benefits before June of next year you won't be subject to an earnings limit at all next year, nor for any year thereafter. And just to be sure you're aware, you can apply for Social Security about 3 months before you want your benefits to start - but if you want to start benefits at your FRA just be sure to specify June 2020 as your benefit start month. For clarity, you can get benefits for the full month of June, the month you reach your FRA, regardless of the day of the month you were born.

As to your question about continuing to pay into the program, yes, for as long as you continue to work you will need to pay Social Security FICA payroll taxes - everyone who works and earns must pay that tax. But paying Social Security FICA, by itself, doesn't increase your benefit. What may affect your benefit is if your current earnings are more than the inflation-adjusted earnings in any of the 35 years used to compute your benefit when you start Social Security. Each year, Social Security will look at your annual earnings and, if an increase is appropriate because you have more recent higher earnings, they will automatically make that adjustment for you.

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity.



Executive orders address deadly mass shootings

AUSTIN — Gov. Greg Abbott on Sept. 5 issued eight executive orders in hopes of preventing further mass shootings.

Abbott's orders came days after seven people were killed and 25 injured in multiple shootings by a lone gunman along thoroughfares connecting the cities of Odessa and Midland on Aug. 31. The suspect fired at law enforcement officers and civilians, including while driving a hijacked postal van between the two cities. Law enforcement officers brought the rampage to a halt in an exchange of gunfire resulting in the death of the suspect when the van he was driving had come to a stop after ramming a police vehicle. The suspect, a 36-year-old white male armed with an assault rifle, was identified as Seth Aaron Ator of Odessa.

Posted online at gov.texas.gov, Abbott's orders enhance reporting requirements and ensure law enforcement and the public have the training, tools and resources to provide and respond to suspicious activity reports, Abbott said. Ordinary citizens' reports of suspicious activities are accepted via phone call to (512) 424-7981 or (866) 786-5972; by fax to (512) 424-7418; or by email to TXFusionCenter@dpstexas.gov.

"Texas must achieve several objectives to better protect our communities and our residents from mass shootings," Abbott said in a news release containing the executive orders. "One of those objectives is to marshal law enforcement resources to stop violent criminals before they commit mass murders. But more must be done. I will continue to work expeditiously with the legislature on laws to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous criminals, while safeguarding the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding Texans."

The governor's office referred to the executive orders as "a starting point in the process to keep Texas communities safe...to further advance solutions and jumpstart legislative action." In related news, Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick and House Speaker Dennis Bonnen last week named select committees to study issues relating to the recent mass shootings and earlier mass shootings in Santa Fe, Sutherland Springs and Dallas.

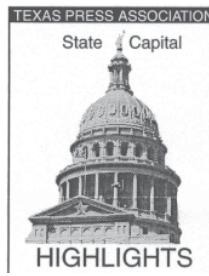
Safety meetings are held

The Lone Star State's first meeting of the newly formed Domestic Terrorism Task Force was held at the Capitol on Aug. 30.

On Aug. 29, the second-ever meeting of the Texas

STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Ed Sterling



Transportation plan OK'd

The Texas Transportation Commission on Aug. 29 approved a 10-year plan produced by the Texas Department of Transportation that includes more than \$77 billion dedicated to improving safety, addressing congestion and connectivity and preserving roadways for Texas drivers.

Funds are earmarked for the widening of roads and the improvement of median barriers, bridges, guardrails and intersections — including upgraded traffic signals and signage — plus safety improvements for bicyclists and pedestrians.

According to the commission, many of the projects in the plan are roadway segments identified on Texas' list of its 100 most congested roadways. The projects will be financed through legislative and voter-approved initiatives that allocate portions of oil and gas taxes, sales taxes and other money to the state highway fund.

Revenue report is posted

The state's fiscal year 2019 ended on Aug. 31 and Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar on Sept. 4 released totals for fiscal 2019 state revenues, saying "all funds" revenue was \$127.94 billion, up 6.5 percent over fiscal 2018.

Hegar broke down the nearly \$128 billion as follows:

- General revenue-related revenue was \$57.87 billion, up 1.2 percent over fiscal 2018;
- Sales tax revenue for fiscal 2019 was \$34.02 billion, up 6.5 percent from fiscal 2018;
- Oil production tax revenue was \$3.89 billion, up 14.6 percent over fiscal 2018;
- Natural gas production tax revenue was \$1.69 billion, up 17.8 percent over fiscal 2018; and
- All funds tax collections were \$59.38 billion, up 6.8 percent over fiscal 2018.

COMMISSIONER ELLIS ON:

Proposal for modest property tax increase for Harris County

(Houston, TX) Facing a revenue cap passed by the State Legislature that goes into effect next year and significantly undermines Harris County's ability to fund essential services and ongoing operations for years to come, Commissioners Court, in a 3-2 vote, approved a proposal for a modest property tax rate increase for Harris County. Following two public hearings, the Court will hold a third and final public hearing and officially vote on whether to adopt the proposed rates during its regular meeting on October 8.

The proposed combined rates are for the overall property tax rate for Harris County residents, which has been 62.998 cents per \$100 taxable valuation since 2007. The vote today approved a proposal that could take the overall county rate to 65.260 cents, with the average homeowner seeing a \$37.65 increase on their property tax bill. This increase will help fund health care, flood control, public safety, infrastructure, libraries, and other vital services essential to the operation of Harris County and help ensure the health, safety and well-being of all residents.

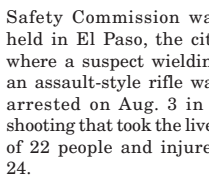
Regarding the vote, Commissioner Ellis released the following statement:

"Sometimes the best policy decisions are the hardest to make. For years now, the State Legislature has steadily chipped away at local control and the revenue cap is just another example of the state undermining our ability to govern and fund county operations. Given our growing population and the major challenges we face, Harris County must be able to fund its operations. This proposal is a protective measure against the revenue cap that will impact our ability to govern for years to come.

We face many challenges in Harris County. We have the highest rate of uninsured people in the state with over 1 million people without health insurance, making the Harris County Hospital District one of the largest health care providers in the county. For years, the Hospital District has been underfunded and overburdened, and we all pay the price for that. Since 2011, the Hospital District has suffered two separate cuts to its tax rate. The decision today works to restore that rate to fund our health care facilities so it can provide the quality of care our growing county deserves.

It's been two weeks since the two-year anniversary of Harvey, and while we are taking on the challenge of flood control with our flood bond program, adequately and equitably protecting every community from flooding remains a major priority for Harris County. The revenue cap will further limit our ability to bring in revenue to support ongoing operations for the Flood Control District that are urgently needed across the county.

Finally, we have to make sure that the county is able to fund the essential services that our residents rely on even in times of disaster or other challenges. Public safety, libraries, and infrastructure are some of our primary responsibilities and we need an economic stability fund to aid the county in meeting those obligations no matter what type of storm we must weather."



Safety Commission was held in El Paso, the city where a suspect wielding an assault-style rifle was arrested on Aug. 3 in a shooting that took the lives of 22 people and injured 24.

In El Paso, Abbott said the purpose of the meeting was "to help the community heal, combat the rise of extremist groups and hateful ideologies, keep guns out of the hands of deranged individuals, and combat domestic terrorism in Texas."

Following the six-hour meeting in El Paso, Lt. Gov. Patrick told victims in attendance: "When one Texan is attacked all Texans are attacked, no matter your political party, no matter if you are black, brown or white, liberal or conservative. Every one of the 28 million Texans matters, and we stand together against hate, racism, white supremacy and evil as one Texas."

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SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Texans face another tough road test against Chargers: Notre Dame travels to Georgia to face No. 3 Bulldogs

The Texans put up a valiant fight in their season opener at New Orleans, but suffered a heart-breaking 30-28 loss to the Saints on a last-second 56-yard field goal by Will Lutz.

This Sunday, the Texans travel to Los Angeles to face a Chargers team that defeated Indianapolis 30-24 in overtime.

Other key games this weekend has the Baltimore Ravens traveling to Kansas City to battle the Chiefs in a matchup of two of the games top young QBs in Baltimore's Lamar Jackson and KC's Patrick Mahomes.

The Cowboys host the Dolphins in what should be an easy win, while the Browns host the Rams on Sunday Night Football with hopes of a better outcome than they had in the season opener.

The Saints hit the road for the second straight week when they face Seattle after playing at Los Angeles in Week 2.

The college schedule has some interesting matchups as Texas begins Big 12 play hosting high-scoring Oklahoma State. Two weeks ago, the UT defense was burned by LSU quarterback Joe Burrow who passed for 471 yards and five touchdowns in the Tigers' 45-38 victory in Austin.

Michigan visits Wisconsin in a big one for both teams in the Big 10, while Texas A&M hosts Auburn in the SEC opener for both teams.

The big game of the weekend will be played in Athens, GA where Notre Dame will take on No. 3-ranked Georgia.

Aldine ISD's five varsity programs all have their bye weeks this weekend as they prepare for their District 16-6A openers Sept. 26-27.

Before we take a look at this week's games, let's review last week's record. After a stellar 9-3 start to the season, I came back to earth with a 5-7 week to bring the season record to 14-10 (58%).

NCAA

Oklahoma State at Texas - Texas hosts Mike Gundy's OSU Cowboys in their Big 12 opener and Herman hopes his defense plays better than it did against LSU because UT will face a pretty fair Cowboys offense on Saturday.

probably licking his chops at the prospects of facing the Texas defense. But then again, they won't be playing Oregon State or McNeese State (OSU's first two opponents) when they step on the Royal-Memorial Stadium.

Michigan at Wisconsin - The Wolverines visit the Badgers in the Big 10 opener for both schools in a key early-season game as well.

Auburn at Texas A&M - The Aggies, especially its defense, made a respectable showing two weeks ago in their loss at Clemson, but Fisher has to hope it was just a bad day for Mond (430 passing yards, 4 TDs) and not a harbinger of things to come.

The Saints hit the road for the second straight week when they face Seattle after playing at Los Angeles in Week 2. Brees and his teammates are already racking up the frequent flyer miles this season.



A&M's speed at the wide receiver position will be the difference maker as Fisher's team opens SEC play in style. My pick, Texas A&M 24, Auburn 16

Notre Dame at Georgia - Notre Dame faces a huge task when it takes on No. 3 Georgia in Athens on Saturday, in what will probably be ABC's Saturday Night Game of the Week.

NFL

Tennessee at Jacksonville

Week 3 of the NFL season begins on Thursday night when the Titans visit the Jaguars on Thursday Night Football.

Titans to get another road win in what should be a tough, defensive battle. My pick, Tennessee 23, Jacksonville 20

Denver at Green Bay - The Packers picked up a huge road win in their opener when they won at Chicago 10-3. It wasn't pretty, but the rebuilt QB defense looked solid and quarterback Aaron Rodgers (203 passing yards, 1 TD) did just enough to secure the win.

Baltimore at Kansas City - A good early-season matchup will feature two of the top young QBs in the game when Jackson and Mahomes go at it in Arrowhead Stadium on Sunday.

Houston at Los Angeles Chargers - The Texans suffered a tough season-opening loss at New Orleans, but a national TV audience

got the chance to see just how special a quarterback Deshaun Watson is. The third-year starter made plays all over the field and should enjoy more success on Sunday when takes on a suspect Chargers defense.

New Orleans at Seattle - The Saints visit Seattle on Sunday after playing the Rams the week before. That's two rough road games, but head coach Sean Payton has a resilient team that proved its mettle with its come-from-behind win over the Texans two weeks ago.

Miami at Dallas - If the season opener is any indication, it's going to be a long year to be a Dolphins fan. Baltimore embarrassed the Fish 59-10 (it was 42-0 at halftime) on their home field and things won't get any easier this week when they face a Dallas team that looked very good on offense in its 35-17 win at home over the Giants.

four touchdowns. Second-year wide receiver Michael Gallup had seven receptions for 158 yards and a touchdown, while Amari Cooper (6 receptions, 106 yards, 1 TD) and newly acquired slot receiver Randall Cobb (4 receptions, 66 yards, 1 TD) also had solid days.

Los Angeles Rams at Cleveland - Cleveland gets its second straight prime time game (they played the Jets on Monday Night Football last week) in two weeks and their fans are hoping for better results than what the team turned in during its 43-13 season-opening loss at home to Tennessee.

Chicago at Washington - Week 3 concludes on Monday night with the Bears visiting the Redskins with both teams looking to gather momentum.

Chicago at Washington - Week 3 concludes on Monday night with the Bears visiting the Redskins with both teams looking to gather momentum. The Chicago offense looked anemic in its 10-3 season-opening loss to the Packers, while the Redskins blew a 20-7 halftime lead at Philadelphia en route to a 32-27 loss.

Posting Date September 16, 2019

Puzzles4Kids by Helene Hovanec. WORD FUN. Study the two words on each line to find the ONE letter in the left column that is NOT in the word in the right column.

Even Exchange by Donna Pettman. Each numbered row contains two clues and two 6-letter answers. The two answers differ from each other by only one letter, which has already been inserted.

HOCUS-FOCUS by Henry Boltinoff. Find at least six differences in details between panels. Includes illustrations of a boy and a girl in a room.

ELBLAYS by The Wordplay Team. THE "YOLK'S" ON YOU! If you miss this one, hidden in the above frame is a famous old saying.

Junior Whirl by Charles Barry Townsend. A MOUNTAIN RESORT POOL PARTY. At left is a crossword puzzle grid. Below are words pertaining to an end-of-summer party that you will need to complete the puzzle.

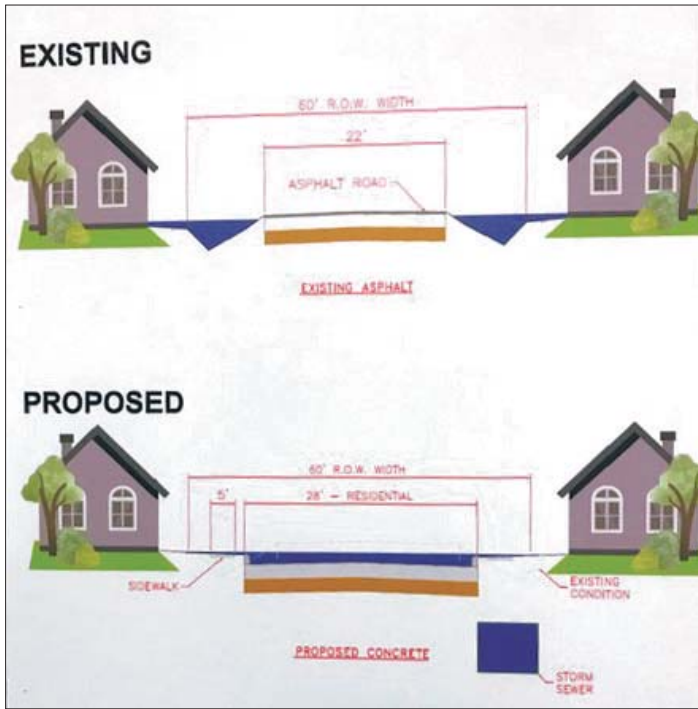
Even Exchange answers. 1. Resort, Report; 2. Wordy, Worry; 3. Bagger, Bigger; 4. Dingo, Dingo; 5. Chair, Chair; 6. Henry, Henry; 7. Galley, Galley; 8. Crane, Crane; 9. Point, Point; 10. Invert, Invert.

Kids' Maze. Includes a maze grid and a 'Kids' Maze Solution' key with 10 numbered paths.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Castlewood Flood plan,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



ENGINEER'S DRAWINGS presented at the Castlewood meeting indicated the existing drainage conditions at the top, with asphalt paved roads and ditches used to remove flood water, and the new proposal at the bottom, of a wider concrete street and a deep concrete box drainage culvert below the surface.

dents are very interested in what these projects might accomplish to reduce future flooding in their area.

The civic club president, Connie Esparza, welcomed the HCFCD and the HCED representatives, including Marcus Baskin the project manager of the HC Engineering Department, and Melvin Spinks, consultant with CivilTech Engineering, Inc.

The program consisted of a presentation of the study, a video of the general overview of the Harris County Engineering

Department, and then an Open House for comments and interaction with the project team and local residents.

Attendees learned about internal drainage systems and related infrastructure that convey stormwater from neighborhoods such as Castlewood, to major drainage channels or bayous maintained by the Flood Control District, such as Halls Bayou and Greens Bayou in this area.

Internal drainage systems include underground storm sewer systems and roadside ditches, and are

typically the responsibility of the underlying utility district and/or Harris County.

The presentation included a colored map, showing streets that would get underground storm sewers, varying from 24" to 48" diameter, and some streets that would be rebuilt with curbs and gutters and water inlets.

Additional information is available at the website: www.eng.hctx.net/recovery-and-resiliency, or call 713-274-3954. This is Bond Project E-09.

Metro Bond,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

es. METRO would also apply for federal matching funds – up to an additional \$3.5 billion – to increase METRO's investment to a potential \$7 billion for transit improvements.

Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner, a proponent of the plan, said:

"There are so many reasons to vote FOR the METRO Proposition. It helps seniors and people with disabilities, provides sustainable transportation options and keeps Houston competitive with other major American cities. And it's the best plan to manage traffic congestion as our region continues to grow."



METRO held public meetings to explain the concepts of METRONext, and to gain public comments on needs. Here East Aldine's Veronica Sanches examines some of the display boards.

Voters can learn more about the campaign at www.VoteForMetro.org

and about the METRONext Moving Forward Plan at www.METRONext.org.



A variety of bus types serving different needs will be part of the METRONext plan, as well as Light Rail and BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) running in dedicated pathways.

Walle appointed,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

it will be well-served by the range of backgrounds, skillsets, and expertise these particular members provide. While the charges before this committee will be no simple undertaking, their importance cannot be overstated. I am grateful for the service of each of these members and know their readiness to take on the challenging work before them will translate into thoughtful, life-saving solutions for the State of Texas."

The following members have been appointed by Speaker Bonnen to the select committee:

- Drew Darby (Chair)
- Poncho Nevarez (Vice-Chair)
- César Blanco
- Giovanni Capriglione
- Charlie Geren
- Barbara Gervins-Hawkins
- Julie Johnson
- Brooks Landgraf
- Mike Lang
- Joe Moody
- Geanie Morrison
- Four Price
- Armando Walle

The House Select Committee has jurisdiction over all matters that ensure the safety of Texas communities by reducing

mass violence, including collaboration between state and local agencies and nongovernmental entities in preventing and responding to mass violence, violence prevention strategies that foster safe climates in schools and local communities, state and local funding for research and program development, access to state and local services for communities impacted by mass violence and persons at risk for harming themselves or others, and technological solutions to better detect, assess, report, and prevent threats.

Specifically, the House Select Committee on Mass Violence Prevention and Community Safety is directed to:

- Evaluate options for strengthening enforcement measures for current laws that prevent the transfer of firearms to felons and other persons prohibited by current law from possessing firearms;
- Assess challenges to the timely reporting of relevant criminal history information and other threat indicators to state and federal databases;
- Examine the role of digital media and technol-

ogy in threat detection, assessment, reporting, and prevention, including the collaboration between digital media and law enforcement;

- Consider the ongoing and long-term workforce needs of the state related to cybersecurity, mental health, law enforcement, and related professionals; and
- Evaluate current protocols and extreme risk indicators used to identify potential threats and consider options for improving the dissemination of information between federal, state, and local entities and timely and appropriate intervention of mental health professionals.

The committee will be required to submit a preliminary assessment to the Speaker within 90 days of the committee's creation, produce periodic progress reports thereafter, and submit a final report. To maximize the opportunity for public input, the committee is required to make every effort to coordinate hearing dates with the Senate Select Committee when scheduling hearings during which public testimony will be heard.

Concrete Plant,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

exiting onto East Hardy, and concrete spills on the roads and overpasses in the area, which no one seems responsible for.

In a surprising revelation that was an answer to Adame's comment, the permit reviewer for TCEQ, Don Nelon, stated that he was only allowed to review the application for air quality, and not for traffic problems or water pollution.

Kenneth Sugg asked if the reviewers took into account emissions from cement trucks and supply trucks with sand and gravel, and Nelon said "no" they were not allowed to. He also said they are not allowed to make judgement on the location and its appropriateness in the community.

Marina Sugg asked if the permit was already approved, and Nelon said no, the first review was only a preliminary approval, and said that as presented the applicant would not give off any air pollution.

The representative from Rocket Materials, Lee Hergenrath, said that they would only be using newer trucks that would not spill on the roads. He admitted

he had no control over trucks from other companies that might be entering his plant.

He also revealed that the plant would be a 24 hour, 365 day operation. The TCEQ has no control over noise emitted from the plant, they said.

TCEQ said there was a phone hot-line for complaint about the plant or concrete spills, 1-888-777-3186.

As the meeting continued, speakers became more outspoken in their complaints about TCEQ and the plant.

Steve Adame said "TCEQ has sold out the Aldine area."

Connie Esparza asked why there are so many concrete plants in the Aldine area (5). She said "My experience with TCEQ is very poor. I'm very disappointed that you chose Aldine." Later she explained that East Aldine, and Aldine ISD are trying to bring up the quality of life in the area, and these types of plants work against that effort.

Others that spoke against the plant were David Lindene, who asked how to get the rules changed on

reviews, and Dorothy Weathers who complained about the condition of roads due to heavy trucks and concrete spills.

Amando Walle spoke in the comment period too, noting that other concrete batch plants in the Aldine area don't follow the rules, making environmental problems, and questioned whether this plant could perform within state rules. He pointed out that these plants are more than just a nuisance, they emit noise that is unbearable to its neighbors. He said he doesn't understand why there are so many concrete plants in the Aldine area. He said "I oppose this application. We don't need any more."

Steve Adame's remarks summarized the other comments in the meeting, "We don't hate your company. We just don't want you here."

And to TCEQ, he said "You are selling us out."

Facilitator Diana Avalos said that if anyone needed more information about the application, they could call 1-800-667-4040 and refer to Proposed Registration No. 157195, Air Quality Standard Permit.

Fiscal Responsibility of HCC to Students and Taxpayers

HOUSTON (September 6, 2019) -Houston Community College's fiscal responsibility to the citizens of Houston continues.

The HCC Board of Trustees assured—by a

unanimous vote at the September 4 board meeting—that for the fourth consecutive year HCC taxpayers will benefit from good fiscal budgetary management resulting in a zero-tax rate increase.

The board also renewed Chancellor Cesar Maldonado's contract, and as HCC looks to celebrate their 50th Anniversary in 2021, the board reflected on the past five years of the Chancellor's leadership. "Chancellor Maldonado has been a visionary leader, and we look forward to working with him on many of the strategic initiatives he has put in place moving forward," HCC Board Chair Carolyn Evans-Shabazz said. "Serving on the HCC board has been an honor and a privilege and working with Dr. Maldonado has been rewarding both to the Board of Trustees and to the College."

and has contributed to the growth and stability of the local economy. "The HCC Board of Trustees are mindful of students as well as taxpayers, as HCC has controlled in-district tuition and fees so that they remain the lowest in the area," Maldonado said. "It is a privilege to serve this College and the people of Houston. I look forward to growing HCC's delivery of 21st century education and broadening services to support student success. We will dare to discover new models, new methods, and new relationships as we reach new heights in serving our constituents."

During the board meeting, newly appointed Trustee Maxine Lane-Seals was sworn in by the Honorable Judge Joe Stephens, Justice of the Peace, Precinct 3, Place 1. Lane-Seals replaced the trustee who moved from District II. She will serve through December 31, 2019.

HCC continues to expand its campus footprint