

**Central Appraisal District of Johnson County Board of Directors Regular Meeting**

Thursday, September 11, 2025 – 6:00 p.m.

Cross Timbers Branch Meeting Room, Cleburne Conference Center  
1501 W. Henderson Street Cleburne, Texas

**In Attendance**

JCAD Board of Directors

Chairperson Peter Svendsen, Chair

Vice Chairperson John Wood, Vice Chair

Mr. Brannon Potts, Secretary

Ms. Amy Lingo

Ms. Tina White

Director Larry Trammell

Mr. Chris Saunders

Ms. Mary Sarver

Mr. Scott Porter, Tax Assessor / Collector

JCAD Staff

Mr. Jeff Law, Interim Chief Appraiser

Ms. Brittany Vereen, Director of Appraisal Operations

Ms. Amy Gill, Director of Support Services

Other Participants

Mr. Matthew Tepper, Attorney

*(Audio Reference: 2509i Regular, 00:00:00 – 00:03:04)*

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

A quorum being present, Chair Svendsen called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

**2. WELCOME**

By Chairperson Peter Svendsen

**5. RECOGNITION OF GUESTS**

Chairperson Peter Svendsen did not call for recognitions at this time, and no recognitions were made

**3. INVOCATION**

By Vice Chairperson John Wood

**4. PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE**

**6. NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS**

*(Audio Reference: 2509i Regular, 00:03:04 - 00:06:00)*

- **Mr. Greg Cooper, a military veteran, thanked the Board for their service and encouraged them to remain focused on their mission despite outside distractions. He referenced the concept of “eliminating the noise,” emphasizing the importance of maintaining transparency, integrity, and public trust in the appraisal process.**

**7. ACTION ITEMS**

**7a. Consent Agenda**

**7ai. Approve minutes of August 14, 2025 regular meeting**

*(Audio Reference: 2509i Regular, 00:06:00 - 00:16:00)*

- Director Larry Trammell requested that the August 14, 2025 minutes be removed from the consent agenda, noting that additional detail should be included. Director Trammell also referenced prior discussion regarding the use of AI-based minute-taking software. He stated that he located several platforms costing under \$20 per month, some offering free trial periods, and had emailed them to Secretary Brannon Potts and will forward the information to Interim Chief Appraiser Jeff Law for review.
- Director Tina White requested amending minutes with the following:
  - Item 5 - Clarify that legal counsel’s travel time is billed from Round Rock at a rate of \$125 per hour with no additional expenses charged, noting that this detail should be documented in the record for transparency since it may not be apparent without reviewing the full contract.
  - Item 11 - Clarify that no action was reported out of Executive Session because the Executive Session pertained to personnel matters.
- Director Larry Trammell requested amending minutes with the following:
  - Item 1a - Reflect that Chairperson Peter Svendsen’s approval to have minutes recorded with basic detail in conjunction with the audio recording, in lieu of more detailed written minutes, was authorized only for the month of July and was not approved as an ongoing practice.
  - Item 6 - Note that the former Taxpayer Liaison Officer had stated she had not spoken directly with the individuals who filed the complaints. He also noted that Mr. Mike Petty later stated during the same meeting that he had spoken with her regarding his complaint. Director Trammell stated that it was concerning that complainants may not have been contacted directly and expressed disappointment in how the matter was handled.
  - Item 12 - Note that Amy Gill, Director of Support Services, worked on computer replacements and upgrades.

- Director Amy Lingo requested amending minutes with the following:
  - Item 7 - The minutes reflect that while Interim Chief Appraiser Jeff Law stated that Category F values appeared low in Burleson and Cleburne, he also stated that because a reappraisal was not conducted this year, he was satisfied with the stratification report. She requested that this clarification be included in the minutes for accuracy.
- **Board Action** - The Consent Agenda included approval of the minutes, the August financial report, and the Taxpayer Liaison Officer's report. However, the Board elected to consider the items separately, as the minutes would only be approved pending the stated corrections.
  - Vice Chairperson John Wood made a motion to approve the minutes with the stated corrections.
  - Director Amy Lingo seconded the motion.
  - The motion carried unanimously.

#### 7.ii. Approve the August 2025 Financial Report

(Audio Reference: 2509i Regular, 00:16:00 - 00:17:45)

- During review of the August Financial Report, Director Larry Trammell noted that a payment was issued to the Taxpayer Liaison Officer on August 1, 2025, and inquired whether this payment was accurate given that the TLO resigned on August 21, 2025, and whether any further payments had been discontinued. Ms. Jessica White confirmed that the payment was correct and that no additional payments will be made.
- **Board Action**
  - Director Amy Lingo made a motion to approve the August 2025 Financial Report.
  - Director Larry Trammell seconded the motion.
  - The motion carried unanimously.

#### 7.iii. Taxpayer Liaison Officers Report

(Audio Reference: 2509i Regular, 00:18:07)

- The Taxpayer Liaison Officer position is currently vacant; therefore, no report was provided.

### **8c. Subcommittee Reports**

(Audio Reference: 2509i Regular, 00:18:07 - 00:23:19)

- Chairperson Peter Svendsen recognized Ms. Kim Jones, to speak regarding Item 8c.
- Ms. Kim Jones addressed the Board and stated that it had been her honor to serve on the Appraisal Review Board (ARB). She spoke regarding the need for specialized ARB training and referenced prior discussions about the possibility of bringing in Ms. Beth Heinlein, a former ARB Chair from Denton County, to evaluate panel performance and provide training. Ms. Jones noted that changes in state law limiting ARB service terms have reduced continuity and institutional knowledge, and stated that outside training is increasingly important. Ms. Jones also commented on the current ARB vacancy, stating that adding a new member late in the protest cycle would not be beneficial, and asked that the Board consult with the ARB when considering membership and training needs. She emphasized that the ARB is independent by statute, and requested support for training and membership decisions that strengthen efficiency, consistency, and taxpayer service.
- Chairperson Peter Svendsen thanked Ms. Jones for her comments and stated that, as discussed at the previous meeting, a Board of Directors ARB Subcommittee has been formed, chaired by Mr. Chris Saunders. He clarified that there are no current plans to appoint new ARB members at this time. He noted that the questions raised will be addressed through the subcommittee.

#### Audit Subcommittee

(Audio Reference: 2509i Regular, 00:23:19 - 00:30:45)

- Mr. Darren George reported that the audit is currently in progress. Interviews have been completed with support staff and customer service, with interviews scheduled for ARB members, appraisers, the Interim Chief Appraiser, and directors in the coming weeks. An anonymous employee survey has been distributed, with approximately 75% participation to date, and additional responses are anticipated.

Mr. George noted that initial observations indicate the district is meeting statutory requirements, and that Interim Chief Appraiser Jeff Law has provided effective leadership during the transition. Staff feedback has been constructive, and staff have expressed commitment to their work. He observed that the district has begun developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to address training gaps.

Mr. George stated that additional training, particularly introductory appraisal training, may be beneficial for certain staff roles. He outlined next steps including completion of interviews, survey analysis, appraisal data review, and follow-up meetings with leadership.

He also noted that some delays in receiving data and scheduling interviews resulted in additional hours beyond the original project scope. The audit remains on track, with a final report expected toward the end of September.

**Chief Appraiser Recruitment Subcommittee**

*(Audio Reference: 2509i Regular, 00:30:45 - 00:47:23)*

- Director Larry Trammell, Chair of the Chief Appraiser Recruitment Subcommittee, requested that Mr. Darren George also provide an update on the status of the Chief Appraiser search.
- Mr. Darren George reported that the recruitment process for the Chief Appraiser position is underway. Approximately 112 potential candidates have been identified and are being contacted, including current Chief Appraisers and Deputy Chief Appraisers. To date, eight applications have been received through the posting, and twelve candidates have expressed interest through outreach efforts. A digital prospectus has been created to provide information about the district and the community.

Mr. George noted that the candidate pool will continue to be developed over the next several weeks, with the goal of assembling a group of qualified finalists. He shared that some candidates have requested clarity regarding operational practices and the Board's role, and those concerns are being addressed during outreach conversations to ensure candidates receive accurate context about the district and its leadership.

He stated that the recruitment process is progressing as planned and will continue to build toward identifying strong candidates for interviews.

- Director Amy Lingo asked whether the district's reappraisal plan might be a concern for prospective Chief Appraiser candidates, and whether the plan has been reviewed or can be explained to applicants during the recruitment process.
- Mr. Darren George replied that candidates he has spoken with have generally indicated they are not concerned about the reappraisal plan itself. He stated that the primary concern expressed by candidates is whether they will have the ability to perform the duties of the Chief Appraiser independently and with the Board's trust and support. He noted that the Board's strategic direction is understood and that candidates are primarily seeking assurance that they will be able to carry out day-to-day operations effectively.
- Interim Chief Appraiser Jeff Law added that prospective Chief Appraiser candidates may be particularly concerned about the ability to meet state Property Value Study requirements under a restrictive reappraisal plan, since failure of the study can result in a mark on the Chief Appraiser's professional record under TDLR regulations. He noted that candidates will want assurance that they will have the professional discretion necessary to appraise at appropriate market levels in order to avoid failing the study. Mr. Law stated that projecting a cooperative working relationship between the Board and the next Chief Appraiser will help provide confidence to qualified candidates considering the position.
- Director Tina White stated that the Board desires strong professional management from the next Chief Appraiser. She noted that many Board members are new to their roles and do not wish to overstep into areas outside their authority. She emphasized that the Board expects the next Chief Appraiser to provide clear leadership and direction and expressed confidence that the audit and recruitment work underway will provide a solid foundation for that leadership transition.

**7b. General Action Items**

**Executive Session**

*(Audio Reference: 2509i Regular, 00:47:23-00:48:13)*

- Chairman Peter Svendsen stated that due to matters requiring discussion among the Board and legal counsel, the Board would recess into Executive Session pursuant to Section 551.071 of the Texas Government Code (Consultation with Attorney). The Board then recessed to Executive Session.
- The Board recessed to Executive Session at 6:47 pm
- The Board reconvened into Regular Session at 7:05 pm

**7bi. Discuss and consider taking action to approve authorizing the Interim Chief Appraiser to sign an agreement with TrueRoll for additional exemption related services.**

*(Audio Reference: 2509i Regular, 00:48:13 – 00:60:00 and, 2509ii Regular, 00:00:00 - 00:01:24)*

- Mr. Billy Kingston of TrueRoll presented information regarding the district's existing contract and proposed additional investigative services. He explained that TrueRoll assists appraisal districts in complying with SB 1801 and HB 2730 by reviewing existing homestead exemptions and identifying both ineligible exemptions and taxpayers who may qualify but have not applied. The proposed additional \$50,000 in services would provide investigative staff support to assist with ongoing exemption reviews and reduce the workload on JCAD staff. Mr. Kingston noted that TrueRoll currently serves a majority of appraisal districts in Texas and has assisted in identifying improper or duplicate exemptions in other jurisdictions.

Mr. Kingston stated that the service is expected to provide a positive return on investment and could reduce the need to hire and train additional staff. He also confirmed that the pricing structure remains flat and predictable, and the proposed agreement includes a 30-day termination provision if the district elects not to continue the service.

- **Board members inquired about:**
  - The scope and cost of services in the previous contract year versus the proposed contract year.
  - How investigative support and reporting would be delivered.
  - The return-on-investment calculation and whether projections were based on JCAD data.

- **Mr. Kingston confirmed that:**
  - The prior year cost was \$77,993, and the proposed cost would increase to \$127,903, reflecting the addition of investigative support.
  - ROI projections were based on JCAD data and comparative data from other Texas appraisal districts.
  - Reports may be provided to staff and/or the Board as requested.
- **Board member discussion:**
  - Budget Considerations - It was noted during the discussion that the additional \$50,000 was not included in the current budget. Interim Chief Appraiser Jeff Law stated that funding may be addressed through 2025 budget adjustments and/or unassigned fund considerations. Mr. Law also noted that legislative changes enacted after the current budget was approved require appraisal districts to review a minimum of 20% of homestead exemptions annually, which will necessitate either additional staffing or contracted support in order to maintain compliance.

Both Interim Chief Appraiser Jeff Law and Director Trammell stated that they would recommend approval of the TrueRoll agreement with the additional investigative services.
- **Board Action**
  - Director Amy Lingo made a motion to approve authorizing the Interim Chief Appraiser to sign an agreement with TrueRoll for additional exemption related services.
  - Vice Chairperson John Wood seconded the motion.
  - The motion carried unanimously.

**7bii. Discuss and consider taking action to commit the 2024 unassigned funds reported in the 2024 financial audit**

*(Audio Reference: 2509ii Regular, 00:01:24 – 00:13:13)*

- The Board discussed the 2024 unassigned fund balance of approximately \$285,445. Interim Chief Appraiser Jeff Law explained that, under state law, any unassigned funds must either be refunded to the taxing entities or obligated through a budget amendment.

Director Larry Trammell noted that retaining the funds is necessary due to ongoing structural and facility concerns at the district's current building, including electrical and plumbing issues, age-related deterioration, and significant work that would be required to bring the facility up to current code standards. He stated that the space is no longer adequate to support staff and public needs. Director Trammell further recommended that the Board transfer the unassigned funds to the assigned building fund to support future facility planning.

Discussion continued regarding whether to refund the unassigned funds to the taxing units or to retain the funds to support future facility needs. The Board also discussed the potential sale of the current facility to supplement the assigned building fund. Director Amy Lingo expressed support for refunding the unassigned funds to the taxing jurisdictions.

- **Board Action:**
  - Director Larry Trammell made a motion to direct the Interim Chief Appraiser to initiate a budget amendment transferring the unassigned fund balance into the next fiscal year's budget and to notify the taxing entities of the budget amendment.
  - Director Tina White seconded the motion.
  - The motion carried, with Director Amy Lingo voting against.

**7biii. Public hearing on CAD budget for 2026**

*(Audio Reference: 2509ii Regular, 00:13:13 - 00:24:45)*

- Chairperson Svendsen opened the public hearing on the 2026 CAD Budget. No members of the public wished to speak.

**7biv. Discuss and consider taking action to adopt the 2026 annual budget**

- As Chair of the 2026 Budget Subcommittee, Director Amy Lingo presented the proposed 2026 Budget totaling \$5,568,703, representing a 6.7% increase over the 2025 Budget. She explained that \$200,000 will be drawn from currently assigned funds and therefore will not be an additional cost to the taxing entities. The amount being requested from the taxing entities for the 2026 budget year is \$5,368,703, which reflects an increase of approximately 2.8%.
- Director Trammell added that the amount being requested from the taxing entities is reasonable, noting that the current Consumer Price Index is approximately 2.8%. He emphasized that the Budget Subcommittee carefully reviewed each line item, with two of the larger items being the new GSA software and the upcoming 2026 Board Member election. He stated that the Johnson County Elections Office was asked to provide an estimated cost for the election but was unable to do so. Therefore, he proposed budgeting \$200,000 for the 2026 Board election, to be carried forward from the prior election cycle in which funds were not used due to all candidates running unopposed.
- Director Lingo addressed a concern raised earlier in the meeting by Ms. Kim Jones regarding the lack of ARB member training and stated that an additional \$29,000 was allocated for ARB member training.
- Director Trammell reiterated that the \$29,000 is in addition to the ARB member training that is already included in the current budget.
- Chairperson Svendsen asked whether any members of the audience wished to speak regarding the proposed 2026 Budget.

- Director Tina White asked about the decrease in health and life insurance costs reflected in the 2026 Budget, noting that she has seen projections indicating a potential 15% increase in those costs. Director Trammell explained that the reduction is due to a lower number of full-time employees, which resulted in decreased benefit expenditures. Director White stated that she simply wants to ensure that adequate funds are budgeted, as health insurance is a significant and essential expense.
- Director Trammell asked Ms. Jessica White to confirm the percentage increase budgeted for health and life insurance in 2026 compared to 2025. Ms. White responded that the amount was increased by approximately 5% in the 2026 Budget, and again noted that the overall cost reflects a reduced full-time employee count.

Ms. Kim Jones requested to address the Board and expressed concern that requiring employees to pay a portion of their health and life insurance costs would negatively affect staff morale. She stated that employees are valuable to the organization and, if the Board wishes to retain a productive and satisfied workforce, other avenues for cost savings should be considered.

- Chairperson Svendsen closed the public hearing on the 2026 CAD Budget.
- **Board Action**
  - Director Larry Trammell moved to adopt the 2026 Budget as proposed
  - Director Tina White seconded the motion
  - The motion passed unanimously

## 8. INFORMATION / DISCUSSION ITEMS

### 8a. Discuss the recent resignation of the Taxpayer Liaison Officer and the steps necessary to appoint a replacement.

(Audio Reference: 2509ii Regular, 00:24:45 -00:27:15)

- Director Trammell recommended that the recruitment of a new TLO be referred to the (Chief Appraiser) Recruitment Subcommittee, to which Chairperson Svendsen agreed that the subcommittee should handle outreach and candidate evaluation.
- Director White asked what is being done in the meantime. Interim Chief Appraiser Jeff Law noted that staff has and will continue to monitor TLO communications in the interim, and that staff will notify the Board if any complaints or inquiries are received.

### 8b. Discuss the recent resignation of an Appraisal Review Board member and consider the steps necessary to appoint a replacement along with the titles of ARB leadership.

(Audio Reference: 2509ii Regular, 00:27:15 – 00:29:15)

- Chairperson Svendsen yielded the floor to the Chair of the ARB Subcommittee, Director Chris Saunders.
- Director Saunders reported that the district's legal counsel advised postponing the appointment of new ARB members until February or March and that a full day of ARB training is planned. The subcommittee will also be reviewing and refining ARB procedures, which will be beneficial to the incoming Taxpayer Liaison Officer once the position is filled.
- Director Trammell reiterated that it would not be beneficial to appoint new ARB members until next year.
- Mr. Jeff Law, Interim Chief Appraiser, asked for clarification regarding whether staff should post notices or accept applications for ARB positions at this time. Director Trammell confirmed that the Board does not wish for any posting or application process to occur at this time.

### 8c. Subcommittee Reports

(Audio Reference: 2509ii Regular, 00:29:15 – 00:29:48)

- Chairperson Svendsen asked Director Amy Lingo whether she had any further items from the Budget/Finance Subcommittee; Director Lingo stated she did not.
- Director Trammell stated that the Recruitment and Audit Subcommittees had no further items to discuss.
- Director Saunders stated that the ARB Subcommittee had no further items to discuss.

### 8d. Staff Reports

(Audio Reference: 2509ii Regular, 00:29:48 - 00:39:22)

- Brittany Vereen, Director of Appraisal Operations, presented the most recent Stratification Report.
- Director Trammell noted an increase in Category F values within the City of Burleson.
- Ms. Vereen emphasized that the current stratification report reflects all sales information collected by JCAD. In contrast, the State PTAD Property Value Report is based on a random subset of sales data obtained by the State, which consistently results in differences between the two reports.
- Director Trammell noted that many categories across several taxing jurisdictions increased, with the exception of Category E in Grandview, which decreased. He added that at this time, the appropriate course of action is simply to continue monitoring the stratification reports.

- Ms. Vereen presented the current 2025 ARB Protest Report. The total number of protests was 28,212. Director Lingo had previously requested the number of “no-shows,” and that information was included in the report. There were 72 accounts that had not yet been scheduled. Ms. Vereen noted that there will be no hearings scheduled in October, and that a limited number of hearings will be scheduled over a couple of weeks in November.
- Director Trammell expressed concern regarding the number of no-shows and stated he would like to explore ways to reduce them, noting that a high number of no-shows is inefficient.
- Interim Chief Appraiser Jeff Law asked Ms. Vereen for the current no-show ratio, to which she responded that it is currently at 3%. Mr. Law stated that in his 25 years as a Chief Appraiser, he has regularly seen no-show rates of 50–60% across the state, and that JCAD’s 3% no-show rate is exceptionally low and essentially unheard of.
- Director Trammell added that he would like to explore productive ways to address the no-show issue.
- Mr. Law explained that many no-shows occur when taxpayers file a protest but, upon reviewing their current values, decide not to continue with the protest process and simply do not submit a withdrawal.
- Director Lingo stated that taxpayers should be given some grace in this area. She shared that when she has attended ARB hearings herself, her blood pressure and heart rate noticeably increase. She noted that it requires considerable research and confidence to appear before a panel and present one’s case, and that the stress involved may understandably discourage some taxpayers from following through.
- Director Lingo went on to note a delay in the communication of settlements and waiver agreements once hearings have been scheduled. She stated that she would like to see improved communication when settlements or waivers are received so that those accounts can be removed from the ARB docket in a timely manner. She added that doing so could reduce unnecessary ARB hearings and associated costs.
- Mr. Law stated that there is always room for improving efficiency. He explained that when settlement waivers are received, staff must process them before the related hearings can be removed from the schedule. He noted that appraisal districts are required to provide taxpayers at least 14 days’ advance notice of a scheduled hearing. Therefore, if a protest is settled within that 14-day window, there is not sufficient time to place another taxpayer into that hearing slot and remain in compliance, unless the taxpayer agrees to sign a waiver of the notice requirement.
- Chairperson Svendsen compared the ARB hearing scheduling process to medical appointment reminders, noting that doctors’ offices commonly send text or email notifications. He stated that a similar reminder system could be helpful. Mr. Law agreed that this is a valid point and noted that the concept has been discussed at the legislative level for some time. However, he explained that implementing such a system would currently constitute an unfunded mandate and would be both costly and complex to establish.

## 9. & 10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- No Executive Session was held at this time.

## 11. CLOSING BUSINESS

(Audio Reference: 2509ii Regular, 00:39:22 -00:40:32)

### Future Agenda Items

- Director Trammell requested that consideration of a reappraisal be placed on the agenda for the next regular meeting.

### Next Meeting Date

- Thursday, October 9, 2025

### Adjourn

- Motion to adjourn made by Director Trammell
- Seconded by Vice Chairman Wood
- Chairperson Svendsen adjourned the meeting.

Approved this 11 day of Dec, 2025.



Peter Svendsen, Chairman



Brannon Potts, Secretary