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Doug Cargo

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August 15, 2000

Doug Cargo

Dr. Anthony: Tell me how you got involved initially. You played a pretty active role in those early years.

I was quite active. The initial contact was through Jerry Hoagland and it was the late spring of '84. He said I'm putting together a committee an organizing committee to try and get a community college in Collin County and would you be interested in working? Sure. Jerry and I have become friends over many years in various political campaigns and city and county campaigns and I said sure. And so a meeting was called and we met at the board room at the Plano Savings and Loan which is now Geo Marine. Upstairs David McCall, that was his organization, the Savings and Loan. My memory serves me, I think we were about 12 people, Jerry, Jim Edwards, Ron Harris, David McCall and I can't remember everybody else. There was a core group of people. And Jerry basically laid out a game plan, oh, the consultant was there too, Ed Simonson. Laid out what was necessary, time-frame works that we were working under because there was a critical time works that we had to submit by in order to get on the ballot. All these materials had to be developed between that time frame to get it submitted on time and pulling the larger committee together and breaking them into sub-sets, and getting the work completed. I don't think there was anybody in the room except the consultant who had ever done anything like that before, created a new institution of higher education from scratch. Se we were all pretty well, maybe Jim Edwards had had some experience in that but not total from scratch. It's one thing to grow an existing organization or add a department/division, but it's a different thing to start from ground zero and not have anything in go. And my area of – Jerry assigned it to me – I was chairman of the curriculum and services subcommittees.

Dr. Anthony: Were you at UTD at the time?

No I was not. At that time in 1984 I was with an engineering firm called Hunter Assoc. and they were city engineers for small cities that didn't have efficient staff to have their own efficient staff. so I did planning and zoning work for Frisco, Carrollton and other communities. Of course at that time Frisco was very small. There weren't any ground rules that were given to us really in terms of what we could or could not come up with in terms of a curriculum. Obviously you're not going to be extremely detailed because you don't know what directions things are going to go. I worked pretty closely with Jim Edwards because curriculum services and facilities... he was chairman of the facilities and those two tied together pretty closely in terms of what was going to be offered and where you could offer it. So we had, after some initial meetings of this core group the announcements and invitations had been sent out to a larger group of people, then we met up in McKinney and started the sub-committee work. There was 150 or something like that. Pretty large number of people throughout the county and I guess there were 20-25 names on each subcommittees' roster and as typical was the case with all committees you have a roster, working group boils down to a smaller sub-set. Then again getting lots of direction lots of guidance by the consultant because nobody had ever done anything like that before.

Dr. Anthony: You issued a report, I think I have that. Did things go pretty well the way you thought they would from your point of view? The process and what came out of the committee itself.

The process went fairly smoothly I thought. I always had a gut feeling that what my committee was putting together was too generic. I guess I wanted more detail in curriculum. I mean it was a very broad brush approach. But we were constantly told you need to keep it generic so you have flexibility, change in direction and so forth. So I had an uneasiness about that having 6 – 8 years beforehand written about detailed curriculum where UTD both in environmental science program, the social science program, the interdisciplinary program, and science program at UTD. I was looking at real detailed

curriculum discussions and descriptions and of course we couldn't do that. We had to be very, very generic. So I had an uneasiness but I understood what the consultant was saying.

Dr. Anthony: Did he work with you closely?

Pretty closely. You know he was one person that was working with several committees. If you had a question, he was right handy.

Dr. Anthony: Anybody else on that curriculum committee that stood out as having some strong feeling one way or the other?

Ever since I got the phone call that you were doing the history on it I tried to find my files and I cannot even remember the name of the other members of the committee. That's pretty bad to say. So, no I can't.

Dr. Anthony: Doug, you were an original candidate for the board... how did that come about?

Once the committee had done their work we brought our applications together and was forwarded. The next thing that had to be forwarded to the state was a list of candidates for the board of directors, because that was also going to be placed in the ballot to the voters at the same time. The creation of the district and then once you voted for that you voted for the board of directors. and so everybody was encouraged to participate in that regard, so I submitted my name as one of the candidates. At the same time there went out an announcement indicating anybody else in the district or in Collin County could also have their name placed on the ballot. Minimal requirements to have that done and I believe at that time that Joy had her name placed and so it was maybe one or two other positions on the board that had more than one candidate. But the end result was that I was not elected.

Dr. Anthony: Now you ran as part of a slate, do you recall that, six or seven others?

Yes, and some of those were the initial committee members and I think there were a couple others outside the community. It all had to be done very, very quickly submitting all the applications, submitting all the names as possible candidates for the board positions.

Dr. Anthony: As you recall, was it much of a campaign not for the college itself, but for the board positions or was that kind of a routine part of the process?

I don't think that it was really a campaign as it was more of an information series of meetings. Various locations through out the county trying to inform the voters what was being attempted because they were going to be voting on a couple of things the creation of the district and what that meant in terms of taxing and so forth but then also, the board of directors. I think there was probably some suspicion on the part of some voters that here's a group of people, they put together this community college application, they are also on the list of possible board of directors and they're going to tax me at the same time. I think there was suspicion on the part of the voters in that regard. And so maybe that's why some others on the list of possible candidates got elected as opposed to some that didn't want to work on the committee.

Dr. Anthony: do you, as you reflect back run into any opposition yourself regarding the college – anything organized out there?

No, I'm sure that there was. I can vaguely remember that there was a, as is always the case with anything, any bond proposal and major voting activity, there's always a group out there that has some concern about it. But I can't recall an overwhelming outcry or a big advertising campaign or anything like that.

Dr. Anthony: As I write this, anything you want to make sure that I don't leave out – the history, in the early years, anything significant you feel ought to be included in there?

I think it's very interesting to note that the campus locations that were initially decided upon are the exact locations where there are the facilities.

Dr. Anthony: The planners did a phenomenal job on that and I don't know how they were selected that early master plan that they did pinpointing those 3 campuses.

Well, I think a lot of that, Jim Edwards was head of that sub-committee, Jim and I worked very closely together. A lot of that as it related to my city planning activities in the county as well as in Frisco and Plano and these planners are forward-looking thinkers 2- to 25 years and I kept telling Jim growth is up this quarter and we need to think about Frisco and he concurred, Jim was then mayor of Plano and involved in planning and zoning and George Bush Freeway right away, set aside and he understood. So that was one thing. Then the other thing was realizing the companies that would come into this area and their requirements in terms of certification programs and that sort of come under the service and curriculum as well. So we sort of looked at the high tech needs and I think we put down lot of what's being done today. I mean it still amazes me every once in a while to think, didn't we recommend that in the plan, in the application and so you all are following it very nicely.

Dr. Anthony: We can go back and look at the plan while in some cases we might be directly in some cases accidentally, best as I reflect, the facilities, the location, the programs, the services are almost directly aligned to what these original....

And I apologize for not being able to remember other people in my committees and other committees. There were a lot of good people who worked on those committees and had been actively involved in their county and their community and so forth, and understood the kinds of things that Dallas County Community College was offering and what was needed to be offering up here as well. So I think there was a lot of good insight in what we put down was not so much high in the sky as it was reality of what we saw already happening in Dallas County and the needs that existed in Collin County. It is amazing today to see that we are listed as the second largest attended college in North Texas, UNT

first, then the Alliance between UNT and Collin County. Nobody could have anticipated that. I guess that's one of the downsides is that we didn't anticipate. We knew there was a demand and a need but probably not to the degree that we're seeing today in terms of the number of attendees.

Dr. Anthony: It's almost a self-fulfilling prophecy – you pull programs, companies come in and you provide their needs, more companies come in, it just keeps building on itself. Anybody else you think I ought to be interviewing? Is Jim Edwards still around?

He is around, he'll be back at the end of August and he lives in Plano. Probably the easiest way to get a hold of him is through Keller-Williams Real Estate. He's doing real estate now.

(discussion about Jean's illness)

Once the business was created I taught some of the first classes. I was at the high school and I was teaching physical geography and then once the Spring Creek Campus opened I taught there for a couple years.

Dr. Anthony: Still have a little teaching in your blood?

Rest of tape conversation is about all the places and classes he taught at.