



# West Ada

## SCHOOL DISTRICT

### SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

August 11, 2015

**Date, Place & Time**

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees, West Ada School District, convened on Tuesday, August 11, 2015, 5:30 p.m., at the District Service Center, 1303 E. Central Drive, Meridian, Idaho

**Trustees in Attendance**

Chairman Tina Dean, Dr. Russell Joki, Dr. Julie Madsen, Carol Sayles, Mike Vuittonet

**Staff in Attendance**

Dr. Linda Clark, Barbara Leeds, Dr. Jerry Reininger, Trish Duncan, Eric Exline, Troy Stephens, Joe Yochum, Alex Simpson, Tammie Shappee, Teresa Urvina, Staci Low, David Moser, Karel Olsen, Cindee Powell, Gloria Rolland, Olivia Tate, Teri Powell, Bernadette Sexton, Dave Harrison, Missy Nida, Dennis Hahs, Cindy Sisson, Dr. Bruce Gestrin

**Guests**

Amy White, James Buschine, Val Tidwell, Misty Johnson, Kendra Wisenbaker, Connee Bentley, Joshua Aydelotte, Susan Aydelotte, JD Sexton, Grant Joki, Greg Felton, Marcus Myers, Althea Dillon, Lil Folkner, Jennifer Fletcher, Christian Housel, Loraine Hand, Sheryl Henley, Scott Curtis, Brooke Webb, Ken Gallegos, Glen Potter, Jared Christensen, Tammy Bevel, Kelly Davies, Charlene Haggard, Mary Ellen Judy, Ester Montgomery, Marjorie Jackson, Mary Ollie, Bob Lundgren, Sondra Chandler, Doni Davis, Devin Leishman, Lisa Austin, Sue Darden, Bret Heller, Sarah Suggs, Bill Suggs, Sarah Holt, Kathleen Joki, Ed Daniels, Toby Norseberg, Neil Russell, Greg Brown, Scott Kerns

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Dean

**Amended Agenda Approved**

Trustee Joki moved, Trustee Sayles seconded and the vote was unanimous to move consent items #1 – payment of bills dated July 1-31, 2015; #2 – minutes of the July 28, 2015 regular board meeting; and #9b – recommendation to award bid for surplus real property located west of Stoddard Road in Meridian, Idaho. These items will be number 7, 8, and 9 on the Discussion/Action portion of the agenda.

**Consent Agenda**

Trustee Vuittonet moved, Trustee Madsen seconded and the vote was unanimous to approve the consent agenda. Approved items are as follows:

Employment recommendations;

Requests for professional leave for:

- Jeff Dodds and David Shumway, five (5) days to attend the Data Warehouse Institute's Workshop in Seattle, Washington;

**Consent Agenda - cont.**

- Kyra Mauney and Sally Mitchell, off contract to attend the ISU New Instructor ECP Workshop in Pocatello, Idaho;

Request from Rocky Mountain High School to install dividers in the front roadway to control traffic patterns and increase safety. The total cost of installation, \$3,451 will be paid for by the school;

Request from Rocky Mountain High School to install a recognition board on the back of their stadium press box. The project will be paid for through advertising funds generated by the athletic department;

An agreement between West Ada School District and LCA Architects, P.A., for architectural services related to the construction of Star Middle School;

Bids awarded to the following for construction of Hillsdale Elementary:

- Site improvement to Granite Excavation in the amount of \$1,084,578.60;
- Concrete - staff recommended rejection of all bids and recommendation to rebid;
- Metal to Mountain Steel in the amount of \$894,629.00;
- Masonry to Genther Masonry in the amount of \$136,432.00

Recommendation to dispose of surplus property:

- Five surplus ballot cans;
- Televisions, monitors, VCR/DVD units and television brackets
- Aluminum irrigation pipe

**Discussion/Action**

**Staff and Patron Survey Review**

Dr. Steven Knobloch, the Executive Vice President of K-12 Insight was introduced to the board. Dr. Knobloch, who works with the design, validity and analysis of the survey, provided trustees a high level overview of the results of the employee survey. Trustees discussed reasons for the decline in participation, comparison with other districts our size, and non-confidential vs. confidential staff comments.

Dr. Clark commented the district would be utilizing a product designed by K-12 called "Let's Talk", which will give staff, students, parents and patrons a means to communicate with the district office staff and board members. Training for this component will take place the week of August 17<sup>th</sup>. Implementation of the product at the school level is scheduled to be completed by mid-year.

Chairman Dean opened the floor to public comment regarding the survey.

Sue Darden - a teacher at Galileo STEM Academy, participated in the survey and felt the reason for lower participation was due to the time of year the survey was administered. She now realizes the comments will not be seen by the board but continues to have issues with

communication with teachers. Chairman Dean asked what time frame would be better for the survey to be administered and Ms. Darden indicated late April or early May.

Eric Exline shared the methodology used to administer the parent climate survey which was done at the end of the 2014-15 school year. An invitation, which is designed to work only one time and reminder were sent to every parents email address. Participation in the survey was the highest Mr. Exline has seen in four years. The data has remained fairly consistent over the four year period, but there are no indications of why this year's participation is higher than previous years.

Dr. Joki made a motion to rewrite the themed statement to reflect a quantitative value as opposed to use of the words "many" and "a lot". The motion was seconded by Trustee Madsen and the vote was unanimous to approve.

The surveys will be posted on the district web site with the requested modifications.

Chairman Dean thanked the scout troop for their attendance at the meeting.

At the board's request, the "Let's Talk" application will be presented at the next board meeting.

#### Overview of the Construction Process and Hillsdale Elementary

Dr. Bruce Gestrin introduced Ed Daniels and Toby Norseberg, representing Hummel Architects; construction manager Neil Russell (owner) and Greg Brown from Russell Corporation, and Scott Kerns, the vice President of the YMCA. Dr. Gestrin explained the partnership with the YMCA, the City of Meridian, the Meridian Library and an unnamed health professionals group. Hillsdale Elementary is located at the Amity and Eagle Road on land donated by Brighton Corporation and Marty and Dixie Hill.

The planning and construction process began on August 27, 2014 with the selection of a construction manager through the RFP process which occurs every three to five years. All groups connected with the project will use the same construction manager and architect for continuity through the process

Ed Daniels, principal at Hummel Architects, walked trustees through the process they have been through during the design process for the two story elementary, which is a unique design to this area. Elementary schools with the two story design was toured in Seattle, Washington and Twin Falls, Idaho to determine what does and does not work with the design. The Paramount Elementary design was used to compare components with Hillsdale and meetings have been held with the maintenance department, teachers, school administrators and district staff. Dr. Clark explained the schools small footprint is due to the location of the building next to a city park.

In response to Dr. Joki's question regarding outside access from each classroom, Mr. Daniels explained there were no outside doors due to maintenance and security issues.

Trustees discussed safety issues with the shared space, safety and access into the building from the playground, the topography of the building and how the entrances of the partners will look.

Dr. Gestrin reviewed the contingency plan for P.E., and library use after the school is completed and the phases for the YMCA and library are still under construction.

Dr. Clark informed trustees that another partner has joined the group, the Western Ada Recreation District, who will go out for a bond in November to finance the construction of the aquatics center, which will be part of the YMCA.

Greg Brown from Russell Construction reviewed the role of the construction manager in relation to the project, stating their company has been involved with both the pre-construction and construction process. They look at three areas in the process: 1- constructability, looking at systems and details of connections; 2- value engineering, what makes sense and how to get the best bang for the buck; and 3- working from the budgetary side to make sure updates in the design evolution are within the existing budget. Mr. Brown does not see any difficulties in building the school lower and the YMCA and library higher due to the topography of the building site. A contingency fund is in place to manage change orders on the project.

Trustee Vuittonet expressed his appreciation for the years he has worked with Hummel and is looking forward to this collaboration.

The board recessed at 7:58 p.m. and reconvened at 8:09 p.m.

**Director of Assessment Job Description and Approval for Hiring Denied**

Dr. Clark provided updated information regarding the Director of Assessment job description at the request of the chairman and included a testing calendar for trustees. She explained this position has been in place for eleven years and was approved as part of the budget in June.

Trustee Sayles stated she had reviewed the information regarding the job, but knowing the district is seventy teachers under the allotment, could not support hiring this position. The teachers are needed to make a difference in K-3 class sizes and the additional duties can be redistributed to other district administrative staff.

Trustee Vuittonet understands the steep hill the district has to climb to get the allotment of teachers back from the recession, but the administration is carrying the burden with more work than most. He disagreed with Trustee Sayles and stated school staff needs the supervision the Director of Assessment provides. This is a critical job which was already budgeted for and at some point and time the

administration needs relief so they can focus on the tasks they were hired to do.

Chairman Dean suggested the information could be decided in two separate motions, one for the job description and one for hiring the position.

Trustee Sayles understood the job description of the positon of the person who was doing this job last year had been redefined and she was hesitant to approve it and hire from the narrow job description when it had been a multi-tasked position in the past.

Dr. Clark explained the Chief Academic Officer would be doing work the assistant superintendent had done in the past. The position would oversee title programs, federal programs, special education and curriculum. The only piece retained from the Director of Assessment is acting as the chief accountability officer. The position provides support to buildings, teachers and principals. If the position is not approved, the current responsibilities will have to be parceled out to other staff. The board took a strong positon to remove extra responsibilities from directors, now we would be going back to what we did to them before. Any questions the board has can be answered by principals.

Dr. Joki referred to the organizational chart shared by Dr. Clark at a previous meeting that indicated there were 6.5 positions in testing. He has heard the superintendent plea for this position, the difficulty he has is the district is at a time where they need to exercise restraint. Patrons are asking what we are doing to keep costs down and this is an opportunity for the board to make a statement to moms, dads, and patrons that they are going back out. Dr. Joki continued with a comment on the supplemental levy, at which time Chairman Dean indicated this wasn't the agenda topic and stopped him. Dr. Joki stated his topic was clearly related to the job description.

Trustee Vuittonet called for a point of order, stating the board needed to keep its focus on the subject they were speaking to.

Chairman Dean asked for any additional comments.

Trustee Vuittonet spoke to the stresses faced by administrators with their work load. The position is critical to support principals, teachers, and suggested they ask principals what they thought.

Dr. Joki called for a point of order. Testimony from the principals was not part of the agenda.

Dr. Madsen stated she was not philosophically opposed to hiring the position, but patrons want less emphasis on high stakes testing. The wrong message would be coming from this board.

Chairman Dean opened the floor to comment.

Lisa Austin, Meridian Middle School principal, agreed with Dr. Madsen, like the parents, staff would like to see less focus on high stakes testing. The testing calendar is reflective of federal and state requirements; she relies on the Director of Assessment throughout the year.

Jennifer Fletcher, Ustick Elementary principal, listed the ways she relies on this position to support the Title I program at her school. This position has assisted with data analysis, help and support, explanation of assessments, requirements they have for the state and how to explain results to parents.

Dr. Jerry Reininger, IT Director, has worked with testing for years and he fully understands the time it takes for the testing staff to get ready, the volunteers and techs that work with that department. Not having this position filled would create stress in the buildings, this position is needed in the district.

Geri Gillespy, administrator of digital integration, was a former principal at Peregrine Elementary, which is also a title school. The position connected them with the state and government and helped them understand. Colleagues are trying to stress how this position touched staff. This is a vital position to the district.

Lori Gash, curriculum coordinator, works closely with assessment, end of course tests and federal and state requirements. The position gave their department a clear view of the 33% that is now part of the evaluation system. If this position is not hired, there is the possibility of non-compliance.

Dr. Madsen asked Ms. Gash to describe the benefits of the Chief Academic Officer.

Ms. Gash responded this position is critical on how we can better communicate all of this information.

Bernadette Sexton, parent, explained her personal connection with this job and the help she received for her son. The tests were explained and she feels the district needs someone at a high level to show how testing affects their children.

Dr. Joki called for a point of order. The board is hearing a litany of testimony of principals who did not sign up to speak, they need to get to the point.

Chairman Dean stated her desire to continue hearing testimony.

Kevin Leishman, principal of Sawtooth Middle School, stated the loss of the job would affect students. The data collected is explained and helps buildings identify struggling students so intervention plans can be developed.

Val Tidwell, a parent, has had children in the district for eight years. The district has done a great job making a huge group of children successful. Parents sometimes look at the dollars and don't know where those funds go, the money has gone to testing which they can't get away from. The position was already budgeted for, is appreciated by teachers and needs to be approved.

Sue Darden, Galileo teacher, has not worked one on one with the person in this job, but the job is important. Evaluations are tied to data and they need someone who has their back.

Trustee Vuittonet stated his appreciation of the comments, it is clear they are in support and see the need for this job. The district is tightly run and doesn't hire enough administrators. He understood the comment about making a statement, but who are they making it to? What about teachers and administrators and the statement being sent to them?

Trustee Vuittonet made a motion to table the discussion regarding approval of the job description and hiring, and to instruct administration to send out a survey to building administrators asking for their input. The motion died for lack of a second.

Dr. Joki apologized for his sharpness to the chairman and Trustee Vuittonet. He explained he had an ill child at home and had not had a lot of sleep.

Dr. Joki made a motion to reject the job description and the position of Director of Assessment. The motion was seconded by Trustee Sayles. Dr. Joki voted yes, Trustee Sayles voted yes, Dr. Madsen voted yes, Trustee Vuittonet voted no and Chairman Dean voted no. The motion passed with a 3-2 vote.

Chairman Dean stated she would entertain a motion to roll the other items on the agenda to the next meeting.

Dr. Joki stated the three items moved from consent to discussion/action were time sensitive.

Chairman Dean explained the normal bills are paid in advance and might not be time sensitive. Dr. Clark explained the bills up for approval were paid during the month of July and are part of the budget. The minutes are not time sensitive and there is nowhere in code they have to be approved.

Dr. Joki objected to moving the payment of bills and the approval of the minutes. The procedure in place to have the board rubber stamp accounts payable is not how a board should operate and that is what he would like to discuss.

Trustee Vuittonet expressed his concern the board would be micromanaging, and called for the question.

Chairman Dean asked for a motion to roll the payment of bills and approve of minutes to the next meeting and will allow discussion of the sale of surplus property tonight.

Trustee Vuittonet made a motion to roll the payment of bills and approval of the July 28, 2015 minutes to the next board meeting. Dr. Madsen seconded the motion. Trustee Vuittonet voted yes, Dr. Madsen voted yes, Trustee Sayles voted no, Dr. Joki voted no and the chair voted yes. The motion passed with a 3-2 vote.

Bid Awarded to Coleman Homes, LLC for Surplus Property Located Near Stoddard Road

Joe Yochum, Chief Operations Officer, answered questions from Dr. Joki regarding the type of appraisal done on the property and the company who performed the appraisal. Mr. Yochum reminded trustees they had approved the appraisal during the July 7<sup>th</sup> board meeting. The property in question was purchased by the district in 2004 for under \$1.95 million. Mr. Yochum pointed out the location of the property and Dr. Clark explained the practice of the district had been to purchase 40 acres for a middle school site, but now they know everything can be built on less property. The excess property causes extra watering and mowing for the maintenance department.

Dr. Joki stated his concern on declaring the property surplus and essentially contributing to a development right against the school and asked for the plan to budget the money from the sale.

Dr. Clark explained the board has the option to put the funds in the general fund for future land purchase. This money is not part of the approved budget.

Dr. Joki questioned whether the board should declare the property surplus and contribute to rapid growth, he felt they should look carefully at putting the funds into the general fund. He would like the board to be thinking downstream, it would be better served than in the sinking plant facility account.

Trustee Vuittonet spoke to the district building on smaller sites which helps with lower maintenance and watering costs. The impact of a thirteen acre plot is about 30-40 homes. The district cannot hold land just because we don't want homes to be built, having the money available in the general fund would be better.

Chairman Dean clarified the issue before the board was whether or not to approve the sale of the property.

Dr. Clark stated the administration would support the proceeds going into the general fund to hire teachers and purchase content. There was never any intention to recommend any other account.

Dr. Joki made a motion to decline the sale of the surplus property. The motion died for lack of a second.

Trustee Vuittonet made a motion to approve the sale of surplus property near Stoddard Road. The motion was seconded by Dr. Madsen. Trustee Vuittonet voted yes, Dr. Madsen voted yes, Trustee Sayles voted yes, Dr. Joki voted no and the chair voted yes. The motion passed on a 4-1 vote.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Chairman Dean called for a motion to move into executive session to communicate with legal counsel for the school district to discuss the legal ramification of and legal options for pending litigation or controversies not yet being litigated but imminently likely to be litigated per Idaho Code 74-206 (1) (f).

Trustee Vuittonet moved, Dr. Madsen seconded and a roll call of the board was unanimous to adjourn from regular session and reconvene in executive session at 9:10 p.m.

The board recessed from executive session at 10:40 p.m. and continued in regular session.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Trustee Sayles moved, Dr. Madsen seconded and the vote was unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 10:41 p.m.

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Chairman

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Clerk