

**Cottonwood Union School District  
20512 W. First Street  
Cottonwood, CA 96022**

**MINUTES for Tuesday, NOVEMBER 15, 2011, 6:30 P.M.**  
Regular Board Meeting, West Cottonwood Library

Members Present: Mr. Lucero, Mr. McCarley, Mr. Seale, Mr. Walther, Mr. Vazquez  
Members Absent: None  
Others Present: Superintendent, Robert Lowden  
Principals: Doug Geren, Don Ray  
Laura Merrick, Business Manager  
Staff: There were approximately 8 staff members present along with 4 community members (including Mrs. Hern and Ms. Chambless).

- 1.0 Call Regular Meeting to Order** – Mr. Vazquez called the regular meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
- 2.0 Pledge of Allegiance** – Mr. Vazquez led the flag salute.
- 3.0 Approval of Agenda**  
**ACTION:** Mr. Walther moved, seconded by Mr. Lucero to approve the agenda as presented.  
**VOTE:** Unanimous in favor.
- 4.0 Recognition (Students, Staff, Curriculum Review** – None at this time.
- 5.0 Public Forum/Hearing of Persons Wishing to Address the Board** – Mrs. Shumate shared her concern over the loss of aide time with the board.
- 6.0 Consent Agenda**
- 6.1 Review of Consent Agenda
- 6.1.1 Approval of Board Meeting Minutes for:  
Regular Board Meeting held on October 18, 2011;
- 6.1.2 Approval to hire the following personnel for the 2011/2012 school year:  
**James Calderon – RSP Teacher**
- 6.1.3 Second Reading – Board Policies/Administrative Regulations  
BB 9110 – Bylaws of the Board
- 6.1.4 Consider approvals of consent to teach outside of current credential authorization.
- 6.2 Approval of Consent Agenda  
**ACTION:** Mr. Lucero moved, seconded by Mr. Walther to approve the consent agenda.  
**VOTE:** Unanimous in favor.
- 7.0 Approval of Commercial Warrants**
- ACTION:** Mr. Seale moved, seconded by Mr. McCarley, to approve the commercial warrants.  
**VOTE:** Unanimous in favor.

**8.0 Discussion/Action Items:****8.1 Presentation of Budget Review by Ann Hern, Director, Management Consulting Services (School Services of California Inc.).**

Mrs. Hern shared with the board that this was not an audit of the district's financials but rather a second set of eyes to review them. The report showed that 84% of the unrestricted General Fund monies are used for staff related expenses (salaries/benefits). She reported on the triggers that are set up to occur in January if the state revenues do not increase. This would mean a 50% cut in Transportation funding and an additional \$250/ADA cut. The main message she stressed was that budget problems make a district qualified; cash problems make a district negative. Cash has become very critical in managing the district's financials. She made several recommendations throughout the presentation including: provide a cash flow report at every board meeting, create attendance incentives to encourage students to be in class, review CSR calculations to be as accurate as possible, budget for retirement incentives, make sure the cafeteria fund is self-sustaining and regularly analyze contracted services. She encouraged the board to pick a few goals and then set up timelines to put those goals into place. A discussion followed the presentation on the following topics: triggers, staffing, and the TRANS.

**8.2 Presentation on potential utility savings to the district by Bennett Consulting.**

Mr. & Mrs. Bennett, Xoom Energy, commended the board on the fact that they are already contracted with a third party for the district's natural gas (Tiger). She said the price we are currently paying is the same as what they have to offer. This has saved the district quite a bit over past few years compared to the PG&E rates. She did share that electricity will also become available soon for third party suppliers. They would like to be considered as a supplier for electricity when that becomes available.

**8.3 Consider approval of the Facilities Use Agreement between the Cottonwood Creek Charter School and the Cottonwood School District beginning in 2011/2012 for a four year term.**

Mr. Lowden explained that this is the agreement the board asked him to negotiate between the Charter School and the district for use of facilities. It has been signed by the charter and Mr. Lowden, for the district, and was being presented for the board's approval as well. A discussion occurred and questions were asked by the audience about the rates being charged compared to average county rental costs.

**ACTION:** Mr. Seale moved, seconded by Mr. McCarley, to approve the Facilities Use Agreement between the Cottonwood Creek Charter School and the Cottonwood School District for a four year term.

**VOTE:** Unanimous in favor.

**9.0 Informational Items:**

**9.1 CTA Report:** Mrs. White reported on two topics for the board, 1) new contract (employee notification form) that employees were asked to review, sign and return to the district office, and 2) the CTA bargaining unit is exploring other options for their health benefits.

**9.2 Superintendent's Report:** Mr. Lowden addressed the following topics in his report: 1) Math Grant, 2) Gear Up grant is funded again, 3) Transitional Kindergarten, 4) Pool resurfacing, and 5) Roof repairs needed at West Cottonwood.

**9.3 Principal's Report:**

Mr. Lowden reported on enrollment (343), kindergarten is up 15 students since the beginning of the year, and he reported on Mrs. Miller's project with the town library which makes it easier for students to get accelerated reader points and use local library books.

Mr. Ray reported on Math Night (200 in attendance), Science Night in the spring, Veteran's Day celebrations, Star party, fundraising, million word readers' statistics, Turkey Trot and fence improvements at North.

Mr. Geren reported on Gear Up participation, Red Ribbon Week, Renaissance movie reward party, Anti-Bullying training, 8<sup>th</sup> grade parent/student meetings regarding graduation, Veteran's Day lunch, fundraising, math task force, awards assembly, progress reports, Turkey Trot, Spaghetti Feed fundraiser, Wreaths Across America, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade basketball tournament.

**10.0 Information/Communication Items:** There was one item for information in the packets.

**11.0 Governing Board Discussion Items:** None at this time.

**12.0 Future Meetings:**

**12.1** Regular Board meeting, **Tuesday, December 13, 2011, 6:30 p.m.** in the West Cottonwood School Library, 20512 W. First Street, Cottonwood, CA 96022.

**13.0 Closed Session: Adjournment to Closed Session at 8:18 p.m. to consider and/or take action upon the following items:**

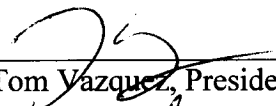
**13.1 Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957, Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release**

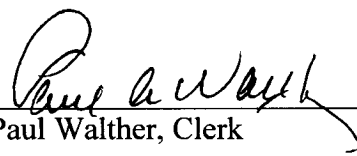
**Public Notice of Action Taken in Closed Session**

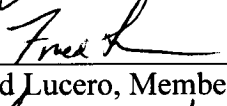
Mr. Vazquez announced that no action had been taken during Closed Session.

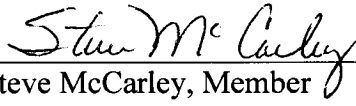
**14.0 Adjournment** – the meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Approved: December 13, 2011

  
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Tom Vazquez, President

  
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Paul Walther, Clerk

  
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Fred Lucero, Member

  
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Steve McCarley, Member

  
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James Seale, Member