

VERNONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT 47J
1201 TEXAS AVENUE
VERNONIA OR 97064

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

June 8, 2017

- 1.0 CALL TO ORDER:** A Regular Meeting of the Directors of Vernonia Administrative School District 47J, Columbia County, Oregon was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Brett Costley. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER
- Board Present:** Brittanie Roberts, Brett Costley, Ernie Smith, Susan Wagner, Greg Kintz. Katie Cook arrived at 6:03 p.m. Cari Levenseller arrived at 6:26 pm. BOARD PRESENT
- Board Absent:** None BOARD ABSENT
- Staff Present:** Aaron Miller, Superintendent; Nate Underwood, MS/HS Principal; Marie Knight, Business Manager; Barb Carr, Administrative Assistant; Joanie Jones, Licensed staff; and Juliet Safier, VEA President. STAFF PRESENT
- Visitors Present:** Scott Laird, Tobie Finzel, Aggie Naeve, Alison Dinger, Johnathon Levenseller, Rebecca Levenseller, Robin Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Taylor Smith, Paige Smith, Jeana Gump, Kellie Murray, Susan Ely, Thomas Jones, Stacey Pelster, and Melissa Zavales. VISITORS PRESENT
- 1.1 Flag Salute:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- 1.2 Agenda Review:** Brittanie Roberts requested that a discussion regarding a letter of support asking the City to make all City parks smoke free be added. Ernie Smith moved to approve the agenda as amended. Susan Wagner seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously with those in attendance. AGENDA REVIEW
- 2.0 Recessed to Budget Hearing at 6:05 p.m.** RECESSED TO BUDGET HEARING
- Aaron Miller shared that the Budget Committee held two meetings. They have reviewed the budget, asked questions, and were in agreement to approve the budget. Once the committee approves the budget it comes to the Board for final adoption. This is on the meeting agenda tonight. A question was asked if the recently passed bond funds are included in the budget. According to Miller, yes. Both options, if the bond passed or didn't pass, are within the budget document.
- Mr. Miller opened the floor to the audience for any public comment. There were no comments from the audience.
- Budget Hearing concluded at 6:07 p.m. FLOOR OPENED FOR AUDIENCE COMMENTS
- 3.0 Reconvened to Regular Session at 6:08 p.m.** RECONVENED TO REGULAR SESSION
- 4.0 PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS:** None PUBLIC COMMENT
- 5.0 CONSENT AGENDA:**
- 5.1 Minutes of 05/11/17 Regular Meeting** MINUTES
- Ernie Smith moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Katie Cook seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously with those in attendance. CONSENT AGENDA APPROVED
- 6.0 REPORTS & DISCUSSION**
- 6.1 Building Reports:** BUILDING REPORTS
- Nate Underwood shared and highlighted his MS/HS report:
- Project Based Learning class: more funding received for 2017-18 allowing for two sections – one for Freshman/Sophomore and the other for Junior/Senior.
 - AVID - interviews this week for next year's freshman class. The HS is excited to continue the research based strategies to prepare students for college.
 - 8th Grade Promotion – Monday, June 12th at 7pm.

- Salmon Auction – 9th annual Jr. Salmon Auction raised \$2945 to benefit the VHS art program and Hands on Art activities.
- YTP – grant again received for the next two years. Beth Kintz is the YTP specialist.
- Social Studies – 8th grade students recently finished a unit on the Civil War. The Louisiana Fighting Tigers, an organization that comes dressed in period costumes and tells information stories will be on the grounds on June 12th. They will discuss weaponry, medicine, illness, living condition, etc.

Katie Cook asked for an explanation of YTP. Mr. Underwood explained it stands for Youth Transition Program and help students not college bound transition into the work force.

Aaron Miller shared and highlighted his Elementary report:

- The 1st Annual VES Family STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math) Night was a huge success with over 180 parents and student attending.
- New Elementary Teachers – Two new strong candidates will be joining us next year. Justin Benassi as 3rd grade and Kendra Berryman as 2nd grade.
- Artist in Residence – Edna Vazquez, a singer of Mexican folk songs, performed on May 30th.
- Field Day – June 13th from 12:30 – 3pm VES and Mist will hold their annual Field Day. Students look forward to this event each year. Contact the school office if you are available to volunteer.
- Student of the Month Assemblies – the final one will be held June 14th. Students are selected who have shown exemplified positive behavior, or strong academic progress or improvement.

6.1.1 Student Reports: none

STUDENTS REPORTS

6.2 Financial Report: Marie Knight reported that the ending fund balance still a little above \$300,000 which is good.

FINANCIAL REPORT

6.2.1 Resolution #1617-08 and #1617-09 – Marie Knight explained that resolution #1617-08 is required because during the current year's budget (2016-17) the district went over and above what was budgeted. Two specific areas are addressed in the resolution; more money was spent on instruction due to increased and unforeseen staffing than what was initially budgeted and the District ended up receiving grant money for AVID and OFAST which at the time the budget was developed was not known. The resolution references the increased expenditure as well as the increased revenue.

RESOLUTION #1617-08 and #1617-09 REVIEWED

Resolution #1617-09 is required to adopt the 2017-18 budget.

6.3 Maintenance Report: The report was reviewed. There were no comments from the Board.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

6.4 Board Committee Reports:

Susan Wager shared that she recently attended a Safety Committee meeting. The meetings are informative and the Committee is very thorough in their discussions. She was pleased to see less staff accident reports at this meeting.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

SAFETY COMMITTEE

Greg Kintz reported on activity of the Vernonia Education Foundation (VEF) Board. At their last meeting they decided to shift the bond focus to other areas of focus. They continue to work on the sports initiative (sports fields funding support) but the focus on the school building will now be directed elsewhere. Discussion on how this looks will continue but they seem to be going forward in a positive way.

VERNONIA EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Brett Costley reported that the District Negotiation Committee is still meeting and negotiations are still in progress with the licensed and classified union.

NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE

Brittanie Roberts shared that the Policy Committee is working and will be bringing some policy updates to the Board next month. POLICY COMMITTEE

7.0 INFORMATION & DISCUSSION

- 7.1 **New Hires:** Aaron Miller shared that two teachers retired at the elementary level creating two vacancies. Kendra Berryman will be joining us next Fall as a 2nd grade teacher. Justin Benassi will be joining us as a 3rd grade teacher. At the high school level we had a vacancy in Science. Kelli Corey will join us in the Fall and also Deb Stahlnecker (former Title I Reading Specialist) has been hired as our middle school Special Education teacher. NEW HIRES SHARED

Stacy Adams has been hired to fill the vacancy at the elementary secretary position. Stacy is in training for some end of year procedures and will have some back to school procedure training as well. She officially starts the new position at the end of September.

Cari Levenseller arrived at 6:26 p.m.

Aaron Miller took a moment to recognize two school board members, Cari Levenseller and Ernie Smith, who are attending their very last school board meeting as a member of the Board. Cari has served on the Board since November 2000 and Ernie since July 2006. Both were presented with a plaque in recognition of their service to the students and staff of Vernonia School District. Rebecca Levenseller thanked her mom for all her service to the District.

- 7.2 **Election Results / Acceptance of Abstract:** Aaron Miller shared the Columbia and Washington County election abstracts showing the results of the May 16, 2017 election. Three of the four vacant board positions had one candidate run for each position. Congratulations to Brett Costley, Susan Wagner and Melissa Zavales. The fourth position had no one file however the write-in campaign results show Stacey Pelster as the winner. The reelected and newly elected Board members will be sworn in at the July business meeting. ELECTION ABSTRACT REVIEWED

- 7.3 **Authorization to Sell Bonds:** Resolution #1617-07 authorizes the District Bond Counsel and everyone involved to sell the bonds approved by voters in the May 16, 2017 election. The actual sale of the bonds is scheduled on July 12, 2017. It will take until October or November before the funds arrive at the District. There are additional steps in this process due to the fact that we aren't solely dealing with a new bond but actually extending the length of our current bond. Mr. Miller explained that the resolution being reviewed authorizes the District to start this process. RESOLUTION GRANTING THE AUTHORIZATION TO SELL BONDS REVIEWED

- 7.4 **Bond Expenditure Process:** Aaron Miller shared that there were several capital projects listed in the bond measure to be completed with bond funds. As a discussion starting place Mr. Miller shared a rough draft of a priority list for the projects. He reiterated that no project priority decisions have been made by the District at this point with the exception that the top priority is to payoff construction debt. Before beginning discussion with the community need to occur. The District is required to spend 5% of the bond funds within six months of the bond sale. Within three years 85% of the funds must be spent. BOND EXPENDITURE PROCESS
- COMMUNITY INPUT TO DEVELOP THE PRIORITY LIST

The District is planning on completing all projects on the list however with inflation and cost overruns there is no guarantee. Because of this, establishing a priority list with the community is very important. Discussion with the Board and the community will develop the list. Only the projects on the bond election ballot can be completed. Nothing additional can be added to the list.

The Oregon School Construction Improvement Matching (OSCIM) money will be released to the District as soon as the bonds are sold. These funds will arrive before the bond money is received next Fall. The spending requirement timeline starts at the sale of the bonds.

A question from the Board as to whether or not the District will be looking at Grants was asked. Specifically solar energy. Mr. Miller stated that the hardest part of applying for grants is sifting through them all. If anyone on the Board has interest in researching different grants

and determining how they might be able to dovetail to our projects please let Mr. Miller know. He welcomes the assistance. It was noted that any electrical contractor should come forward with any energy savings rebates.

The board discussed when they would like to begin holding meetings to solicit community input. Chair Costley indicated that he would like to have a formal process; hold meetings to gather input and to schedule them soon. After further discussion the dates of Thursday, June 22nd and Saturday June 24th was finalized to hold community meetings.

- 7.5 **2017-18 Calendar Adjustment:** Aaron Miller shared that the money budgeted for 2017-18 to cover the debt payment in the case the bond measure failed can now be used towards school days. The adjusted calendar provides two additional instructional days and one day of professional development for classified and licensed staff. This will give all employees three full additional days of work. It was noted that the licensed staff have given considerable concessions to keep us standard with student contact days by giving up their professional development time. The two student contacts days being proposed are February 16th and April 27th. The staff professional development day will be added to the in-service week prior to school starting. This calendar proposal was made with input from staff according to Juliet Safier.

2017-18
INSTRUCTIONAL
CALENDAR
ADJUSTMENT
DISCUSSED

A question from the audience was raised as to why we stagger the afternoon release time between elementary and middle/high school. Mr. Miller shared that it provides time to get your youngest students out of the building and on the busses before the older students are released.

- 7.6 **District Auditor Contract:** Aaron Miller and Marie Knight explained that each year the District hires auditors. This year our auditors Grove Mueller and Swank notified us mid-year that they were no longer able to serve us. The NWRESD went through a Request For Proposal (RFP) process and received one proposal from Pauly, Rogers & Co. P.C. Their bid was several thousand dollars less than what was currently being paid to Grove Mueller and Swank.

DISTRICT REQUIRED
TO CHANGE AUDITOR
SERVICES

- 7.7 **Letter of Support for Smoke Free Parks:** Brittanie Roberts presented a rough draft letter of support addressed to the City of Vernonia asking that all City parks be smoke free. As a citizen she is taking a letter to the City Council and is asking the Board to perhaps offer a letter as well. It was explained that the Parks Committee will bring forth a plan to the City Council with designated smoking areas within the parks. Brittanie, as a citizen, will bring forth policy for a complete smoking ban in all City parks.

BOARD DISCUSSED
AND WAS NOT IN
FAVOR OF SUPPORTING
A SMOKE FREE PARKS
LETTER TO CITY

Susan Wagner declared a conflict of interest in discussing the topic as she also serves as a City Council member.

Aaron Miller was asked if it was appropriate and legal for the Board to do this. According to Mr. Miller, he did research and yes the Board is able to do this if they choose.

Discussion was held. Brett Costley feels the letter is well written, however he is concerned that it is a highly controversial topic and he's not sure the Board wants to get involved with the issue. Katie Cook, Cari Levenseller and Ernie Smith were in unison about having hesitation and were unsure if putting the Board's stamp of approval on this was appropriate for the Board to do.

After discussion the Board felt it would not be in the best interest of the Board to submit a letter but felt it was admirable of Brittanie to push for a cause.

8.0 ACTION ITEMS

- 8.1 **New Hires:** Ernie Smith moved to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to hire Kelli Corey, HS Science Teacher; Deb Stahlnecker, MS Special Education Teacher; Justin Benassi and Kendra Berryman, Elementary Teachers, and Stacy Adams, Elem Secretary. Katie Cook seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

SUPERINTENDENT
RECOMMENDATIONS
TO HIRE COREY,
STAHLNECKER,

BERRYMAN, BENASSI
and ADAMS APPROVED

- 8.2 **Election Results Acceptance:** Cari Levenseller to accept the Columbia County Election Abstract from the May 16, 2017 election as presented and declare Stacey Pelster the winner of Board Position #4. Ernie Smith seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. Motion passed unanimously. ELECTION ABSTRACT ACCEPTED
- 8.3 **Authorization to Sell Bonds:** Ernie Smith moved to approve Resolution #1617-07 authorizing the issuance, sale and delivery of general obligation bonds. Cari Levenseller seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. Motion passed unanimously. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING DISTRICT TO SELL BONDS APPROVED
- 8.4 **2017-18 Calendar Adjustment:** Brittanie Roberts moved to approve the adjustment to the 2017-18 instructional calendar as presented. Katie Cook seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. Motion passed unanimously. 2017-18 INSTRUCTIONAL CALENDAR AMENDED
- 8.5 **District Auditor Contract:** Ernie Smith moved to award a contract for auditing services to Pauly, Rogers, and Co., P.C. for 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19 school years. Brittanie Roberts seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. Motion passed unanimously. AUDITING SERVICES CONTRACT AWARDED TO PAULY ROGERS & CO.
- 8.6 **Budget Resolution #1617-08:** Cari Levenseller moved to approve Resolution #1617-08 transferring appropriations within funds in the 2016-17 budget as presented. Ernie Smith seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. Motion passed unanimously. BUDGET RESOLUTION #1617-08 APPROVED
- 8.6 **Budget Resolution #1617-09:** Ernie Smith moved to approve Resolution #1617-09 adopting the 2017-18 budget, making appropriations, and imposing and categorizing the tax as presented. Cari Levenseller seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. Motion passed unanimously. BUDGET RESOLUTION #1617-09 APPROVED
- 9.0 **SUPERINTENDENT REPORT:** Aaron Miller updated the board on the following: SUPERINTENDENT REPORT
- Supt./Board Chair meeting this next month will also have Greg Kintz.
 - Insurance Deductible review was shared.
 - District Budget was based on \$8.01 billion. The State came in at \$8.2 billion. This equates to a \$95k increase for us.
 - Wetland project is going well. A lot of work has been completed by students and staff. Good wildlife is appearing, tree frogs, no bull frogs, and lots of bird species.
- 10.0 **Other Issues:** None OTHER ISSUES
- 11.0 **RECESS TO EXECUTIVE SESSION:** The Board recessed to executive session under O.R.S. 192.660 (2) (i) at 8:06 p.m. The Board discussed the Superintendent contract. RECESS TO EXECUTIVE SESSION
- 11.0 **RECOVENE TO REGULAR SESSION:** The Board reconvened to regular session at 8:29 p.m. RECONVENE TO REGULAR SESSION
- 12.0 **ACTION ITEM: SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACT:** Britanite Roberts moved to approve the Superintendent contract as amended (per the calendar adjustment 3 additional days were added). Greg Kintz seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. Motion passed unanimously. SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACT RENEWED
- One final thank you was noted to outgoing Board members Cari Levenseller and Ernie Smith. THANKS AGAIN CARI & ERNIE
- 13.0 **MEETING ADJOURNED** at 8:30 p.m. ADJOURNED

Submitted by Barb Carr, Administrative Assistant

Board Chair

District Clerk