

VERNONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT 47J
1201 TEXAS AVENUE
VERNONIA OR 97064

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

January 14, 2021

- 1.0 CALL TO ORDER:** A Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of Administrative School District 47J, Columbia County, Oregon was called to order virtually at 6:02 p.m. by Greg Kintz. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER
- Board Present:** Greg Kintz, Jeana Gump, Stacey Pelster, Brittanie Roberts, Susan Wagner, and Joanie Jones BOARD PRESENT
- Board Absent:** Vacant position #3. BOARD ABSENT
- Staff Present:** Aaron Miller, Superintendent; Nate Underwood, Middle/High School Principal; Michelle Eagleson, Elementary Principal; Marie Knight, Business Manager; Barb Carr, Administrative Assistant; Kaitlyn Carr-Kiprotich, Sena Wilmoth, Teresa Gore, Olivia Keister, Rachel Brown, Gienah Cheney, Kendra Berryman, Robin Manning, Juliet Safier, Susanne Myers, Claire Youngberg, Andrea Anderson, Geoff Schwartz, and Malin Campbell, Licensed Staff; Sierra Dibble, Dana Hyde, Karen Roberts, Traci Wolf, Stacy Adams, and Jana Titus, Classified Staff. STAFF PRESENT
- Visitors Present:** Makenlee Espinoza, Lorrie Shipley, Scott Laird (98), Amanda Graham, JoLee Graham, Javoss McGuire, Amy Cieloha, Carol Cochran, and attendees by phone – numbers ending in 26 and 60. VISITORS PRESENT
- 1.1** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- 1.2** School Board Recognition Month. Aaron Miller shared that January is School Board recognition month. He thanked the Board for their time, effort, and dedication for VSD students and community. The job of school board member involves an incredible amount of time and is a huge responsibility. Certificates of Appreciation were sent to Board members.
- 2.0 AGENDA REVIEW:** Stacey Pelster moved to approve the agenda as presented. Jeana Gump seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously with those in attendance. AGENDA REVIEW
- 3.0 SHOWCASING OF SCHOOLS:** SHOWCASING OF SCHOOLS
- Student Reports: Mist 4th and 5th grade students JoLee Graham, Lorrie Shipley, and Makenlee Espinoza shared projects they have completed on Native American history and culture. STUDENT REPORTS
- Nate Underwood shared that, although not present at this meeting, high school sophomore Lyness Ota presented a reopening plan with Mr. Underwood. It was a fantastic and well done presentation.
- Michelle Eagleson shared that her K-2 students were not comfortable presenting on a virtual meeting however she wanted to share with the board that they did a unit on story boxes which she included in her written report.
- Principal Reports:** PRINCIPAL REPORTS
- Nate Underwood added to his written report by sharing that students in Ms. Myers' classes are working on a community service project of making fleece blankets for the Oregon Humane Society. The project involves many aspects such as planning, following directions, and math. Students are asked to write a reflection on their experience and are learning about the importance of community service.
- Michelle Eagleson shared that elementary staff are preparing for the return of students to the campus. Hopefully VES K-2 and MES K-5 will return on February 8. A lot of conversations are occurring.
- 4.0 PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS:** PUBLIC COMMENT
- Juliet Safier asked that the mindset be changed regarding students returning to school. Students are not going "back" to school. Teacher

have been working very hard, in fact harder than ever, to continue teaching students. Instead students are “returning” to the building.

5.0 BUSINESS REPORTS:

5.1 Superintendent Report: Aaron Miller updated the Board on the following:

SUPERINTENDENT
REPORT

- SIA Grant – VSD agreement has been approved, all ODE requirements have been met and the funds are now accessible. He is expecting next year’s grant to be fully funded.
- County COVID cases are still above the threshold of 200 / 100,000 people before students can return on site. Last week numbers went up to 298.
- Limited In Person Instruction (LIPI) – the District continues to address the needs of some students onsite through LIPI. Currently there are less than 10 students served in LIPI.
- Technology –Document cameras for each teacher have arrived. These allow teachers to take a picture of any paper being reviewed and share online. The new Chromebooks are scheduled to arrive next week.
- Staff – Mr. Miller continues to have several conversations each week with Heidi Brown, who is in contact with Columbia County Public Health. Discussions are ongoing regarding staff that have had contact with people that have or have been identified or showing symptoms of COVID. There have been a lot of close calls with exposure but no staff have tested positive with COVID. Teachers have continued to work remotely during the two weeks following winter break. Next week staff have the option to continue to work remotely, but the following week, if all goes as planned, staff will be on campus prepping for the return of students to the building.
- Budget: Marie Knight and others at the ESD along with Mr. Miller are beginning the work of putting the budget together. Rollover from this year is where we start.

Bond Update:

BOND PROJECTS
UPDATE

- Art room is done and is now inhabited by Mrs. Carr-Kiprotich and hopefully soon by students. Technology lines are coming in soon – wireless capabilities are available.
- Facilities Grant – whenever new facilities are constructed or sometimes remodeled, a district becomes eligible for an ODE facilities grant. Grant funds can be used towards furniture or other equipment for the newly constructed/remodeled space. Depending on how much construction there is depends on how grant funds are divided up. VSD will be submitting for both the newly constructed metal shop and art room.
- VES Playground Slide still needs to be installed. Also, an additional piece of equipment for the main playground arrived but didn’t work with existing structure.
- Mist playground upgrades have been installed. They are now working to eliminate the water that has pooled around the new playground equipment.
- Security at front entry way is almost complete. Doors are in, locking mechanism is in, camera and buzz in at front door is in. Each exterior door and interior doors, which will be able to be controlled from both window stations at front office and also from the DO office upstairs, still needs to be completed.
- Project Manager Steve Kragrud, Marie Knight and Mr. Miller have reviewed all invoices and outstanding bills. At the next board meeting he hopes to have the final number as to how much is remaining and plans for any remaining funds.

Greg Kintz offered his congratulations to Aaron Miller for good management on the overall bond projects. It is a testament to his oversight to be able to come to the end of all our projects and have any funds remaining.

5.2 Financial Report: Marie Knight shared the financial report. Ending fund balance went up slightly to \$449,500 – a little less than what was budgeted but heading in the right direction.

FINANCIAL REPORT

She is starting to look at the 2021-22 budget. She will be scheduling the interim audit soon. There were no questions from the Board.

5.3 Maintenance Report: Mark Brown’s report was reviewed by the Board. Britannie Roberts asked for clarification on the comment of working on the roof heating unit. Mr. Miller explained there was an issue with the heating unit that supports the District Office. Brittanie also asked for clarification on Mark working on suicide protocols? Mr. Miller explained that Mark is part of the District Social Emotional Learning (SEL) team which has been tasked with these protocols.

MAINTENANCE
REPORT

Water Bottle Filling Station: These were purchased with a grant through the Wellness Committee – students and staff will be able to fill water bottles.

6.0 BOARD REPORTS/ BOARD DEVELOPMENT:

6.1 Board Vacancy Interview / Discussion / Appointment: Greg Kintz shared that in the May election, 6 of the 7 board positions will be on the ballot. Greg further explained the time commitments of being a board member. There is at least one meeting each month. There occasionally are special meetings as needed and budget meetings in the Spring. Workshops are scheduled if needed for board trainings. This year the board has signed up for the DEMSP Scholarship program which requires the board take training on boardsmanship and governance. The next training is scheduled for Saturday, January 30th.

BOARD REPORTS &
BOARD
DEVELOPMENT

For the current vacant position, two applications were received from Javoss McQuire and Amy Cieloha. The board has previously reviewed the applications but the following additional questions were asked of each candidate.

1. What is the reason you are seeking a position on the school board?
2. What expertise or experience would you bring to the board?
3. What is the hardest thing you have had to deal with that will help you make decisions as a school board member?
4. What unique understanding of different paths of education do you have?
5. How would you want the board to proceed with returning students to campus?
6. Where would your focus be on the board in regards to your commitment to a committee?
7. Do you plan to run for election in May regardless if you are appointed to this vacancy or not?
8. Several upcoming board trainings will occur on Saturdays. Are you available?

At the conclusion of the discussion Susan Wagner moved to appoint Javoss McQuire to the vacant position #3 with a term expiration of June 30, 2021. Stacey Pelster seconded the motion.

Discussion: Both Susan and Stacey felt the diverse background of Javoss would be an asset to the board. Jeana Gump stated both candidates are qualified, however she feels strongly about who has attended board meetings in the past. There was no further discussion and the vote was called for.

Yays: Susan Wagner, Stacey Pelster, and Greg Kintz
Nays: Joanie Jones, Brittanie Roberts, and Jeana Gump.
Motion failed due to not having the required 4 votes.

Discussion continued.

CIELOHA
APPOINTED TO
VACANT POSITION
#3 UNTIL JUNE 30,
2021

Brittanie Roberts moved to appoint Amy Cieloha to the vacant position #3 with a term expiration of June 30, 2021. Jeana Gump seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the vote was called for.

Yays: Joanie Jones, Brittanie Roberts, Jeana Gump, Greg Kintz, and Stacey Pelster.
Nays: Susan Wagner

Motion carried.

OATH OF OFFICE: Mr. Miller administered the Oath of Office to Amy Cieloha. At this time Amy became an official member of the Board of Directors and finished the remainder of the meeting as such.

OATH OF OFFICE
ADMINISTERED

7.0 OTHER INFORMATION and DISCUSSION

7.1 Policy Updates – 1st Reading: The following policies updates were presented as a first reading.

POLICY UPDATES

- ACB – All Students Belong
- GCPC/GDPC – Retirement of Staff
- IF – School Counseling Program
- IKFB – Graduation Exercises
- JB – Equal Educational Opportunity
- JFCM – Threats of Violence
- LBE – Public Charter Schools
- LBEA – Resident Student denial for Virtual Public Charter School Attendance

Comments and suggestions for edits will be accepted and next month this group of policies will be on the agenda for approval.

7.2 Curl School Bus Transportation Contract Revision: Aaron Miller shared that Curl School Bus Services / Rob Curl is asked that the language in 2.13B of the current contract be removed. It is causing barriers for Curl. The current language gives the District the ability to terminate the contract without cause. Mr. Miller shared the contract and request with the District’s legal counsel and they indicated that the District is covered without any penalty per other language within the contract. They saw no concern for the District by removal of the language. Therefore Mr. Miller is recommending that the Board honor the request and amend the contract by striking the language in 2.13B.

CURL SCHOOL BUS
CONTRACT
REVISION
DISCUSSED

Discussion was held. Concerns were shared by Stacey Pelster and Brittanie Roberts. Greg Kintz recommended tabling the discussion to the February meeting. Mr. Miller shared that he will get the full contract to the Board members as well as invite Rob Curl and the District’s legal representation to attend the meeting when discussion resumes.

7.3 School Re-Opening Update: February 8 is still the target date for Mist Elementary K-5 and Vernonia Elementary K-2 to return to campus. The District would be liable if we make decisions outside of the guidance provided by ODE. Therefore, we will follow the metrics and the County infection rate numbers.

SCHOOL REOPENING
UPDATE

Mr. Miller is anticipating updates to the metrics and guidance to come out soon. He feels the updates will make it easier to have students back at school. Our plans are to be prepared for guidance received by ODE. The District’s Operational Blueprints spell out how to safely open. Teachers are already working at keeping the same routines and safety measures in place for when all students return. VES 3-5 students would begin attending 2 weeks after the first round on Feb 8th and then 2 weeks after that 6-12th grades would return. Middle School/High School would be on an A/B schedule with High School attending M/T (remoting W/Th/F) and Middle School attending Th/F (remoting on M/T/W). Elementary students would be on campus M/T/Th/F with Wednesday being a day for students to work from home on assignments. Start and stop times would likely be modified. Cleaning and sanitation will be a big part of the plan.

Discussion was held. The following questions were directed to Mr. Miller:

The recent ruling about absolving schools from liability in regards to COVID was questioned. According to Mr. Miller, yes this ruling did take place, as long as you follow the guidelines.

Why only two days on campus for MS/HS? With MS/HS they have 8 classes a day and are exposed to a greater number of students than elementary classes which remain with the same

students all day. The district must follow the cohort (number of students) guidelines of up to 100 students. An elementary wing would be a cohort. Middle School and High School cohorts can't be on campus at the same time. We don't have enough space to keep social distancing in place and keep students from crossing cohorts. Each student can belong to two cohorts which includes bussing and athletics.

Can volunteers help? No. There will be no volunteers in the building.

Mr. Miller explained that this is not an easy puzzle and appreciates any out of the box ideas. The District will always err on the side of safety.

7.4 Staff Retirements: Aaron Miller shared that two of the District's long time staff are retiring at the end of this school year. Byron Brown HS Social Studies teacher and Graduation Coach Dana Hyde. STAFF RETIREMENTS ANNOUNCED

8.0 ACTION ITEMS

8.1 Curl School Bus transportation Contract Revision: There was no action as discussion was tabled until next month. CURL SCHOOL BUS CONTRACT REVISION DISCUSSION TABLED

8.2 Staff Retirements: Brittanie Roberts moved to accept the retirement of teacher Byron Brown effective June 30, 2021 and classified staff member Dana Hyde effective June 30, 2021. Jeana Gump seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. RETIREMENT OF B. BROWN and D. HYDE ACCEPTED

9.0 MONITORING BOARD PERFORMANCE: Greg Kintz shared recent training announcement from OSBA. Upcoming training opportunities include Board Self-Assessment Seminar, Board Performance, and Get On Board – What you Need to Know to Get Ready for an Election. Greg will forward information to the Board – contact him if you have questions. MONITORING BOARD PERFORMANCE

11.0 CONSENT AGENDA:

11.1 Minutes of 12/10/2020 Regular Meeting MINUTES APPROVED

Stacey Pelster moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Susan Wagner seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. CONSENT AGENDA APPROVED

Other Issues: upcoming meetings:


Board Workshop – DEMSP Scholarship Program Training #2 – Jan. 30, 2021 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
School Board meeting Feb. 11, 2021 – 6:00 p.m.

OTHER ISSUES

12.0 MEETING ADJOURNED at 9:35 p.m. ADJOURNED

Submitted by Barb Carr,
Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent and Board of Directors


Board Chair


District Clerk

