

**SAUSALITO MARIN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
June 27, 2013**

**ATTENDANCE**

Board Members Present: William Ziegler, Caroline Van Alst, Shirley Thornton, Ed. D.,  
Thomas Newmeyer, Joshua Barrow  
Superintendent: Valerie Pitts, Ed. D.

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

The agenda order was approved.

**PERSONS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD PRIOR TO CLOSED SESSION**

There was no public comment.

**CLOSED SESSION**

The Board and Superintendent convened closed session at 5:01 p.m.

**RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION**

Open session reconvened at 6:10p.m.

**Report Out from Closed Session**

President William Ziegler announced that the following reportable actions taken in closed session:  
**M/s/c – Roll Call Van Alst /Thornton/All** to approve administrative contracts for managers.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Trustee Shirley Thornton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PERSONS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD PRIOR TO OPEN SESSION**

There was no public comment.

**Trustee Reports**

Trustee Ziegler reported that he met with candidates for the superintendent position in the morning and that the board was pleased with the interviews. Trustee Newmeyer heard suggestions from the community not to tear down the annex building at 610 Drake Avenue; the additional classrooms will be useful. Trustee Barrow said that he continues to attend Marin Promise meetings. They are entering into dialogue with Marin Kids. Trustee Thornton reported on her meetings with Mr. Lewis of the Marin City Housing to look at truancy and absenteeism in the school district. She thanked him for his leadership role.

## **Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Pitts said that we had a great close of school and we are all motivated to get the work of the school district done.

## **ENSURE THAT ALL STUDENTS WITHIN SMCS D REACH HIGH LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT**

### **Community Schools Presentation**

Assistant Principal Tenisha Tate explained that the community school model aims to look at the whole child and engage parents in their children's schooling. She said that the district is collaborating with community service agencies to hire case managers. First Baptist church has adopted our school and sends volunteers to our classrooms. We have students coming from area schools like Tamalpais High School and Branson to spend time with our kids. We will work with the Marin City Health and Wellness Clinic to move toward a cohesive health care model and to have a place for parents and students to get physicals and screenings. Next year, the Parent Center will be at the entry of the school and provide a central information and referral area for parents.

### **Instructional Minutes and Bell Schedules for the 2013/2014 School Year**

Principal Daniel Norbutas said that every year we bring the school's bell schedule to the board. For next year, the new K-8 timetable will be nearly identical to the current Bayside schedule.

**Thornton/Van Alst/all** to accept the Instructional Minutes and Bell Schedules for 2013-2014 as submitted.

## **MAINTAIN SOUND FISCAL DISCIPLINE AND OPERATIONS**

### **AB 1200 Presentation**

Marin County Office of Education Assistant Superintendent for Business Services Terena Mares explained the history and current status of AB 1200 which became law in 1992. In 2004, AB2756 passed to give more teeth to the original legislation. It is a wellness and prevention measure for school districts, she explained.

### **Approve District Budget**

Board President Ziegler asked Trustee Barrow to bring everyone up to date on the budget discussions. Mr. Barrow said that the Finance Committee opened with a draft budget and worked on the details. It recommended an adjustment to the budget to restore staff and meet core programs of both Bayside/Martin Luther King Jr. Academy and Willow Creek Academy. This would result in a deficit of \$250K. Once the board packet was released, there were further clarifications on revenue and expenses. Since then, additional revenue and expense changes have come up and Willow Creek Academy has gone through its budget iterations, reducing its supplemental support request.

We have been told that the Marin Community Foundation has decided to pause its grant for transforming schools and VAPA. They are not ceasing the funding but want better clarification. We embrace going through that process with them. Our target is to have the grant approved as regularly scheduled.

At this point, Trustee Ziegler asked that Mr. Todd Lee of Greystone West be moved ahead in the agenda schedule to give a construction update.

Superintendent Pitts handed out a packet of information regarding construction to the board and Recommended that contracts for the MLK project be awarded as outlined.

Todd Lee of Greystone West gave an update on electrical and civil engineering work for Martin Luther King Jr. Academy.

He added that the annex is seismically unsafe and the state might award as much as \$750k to eventually tear down and replace the building. In the meantime the building can be maintained and made habitable.

**Newmeyer/Van Alst/all to accept the construction contracts as presented.**

The Board went back to considering the budget at 7:05 p.m.

Trustee Ziegler opened public comment on the budget. Several members of the public asked to hear the budget presentation first. Mr. Ziegler closed the public hearing and called on Business Manager Paula Rigney to present the budget.

Paula Rigney said that the Governor signed budget today and it was hoped that he would sign off on the Local Control Funding Formula on Monday, July 1. She explained that base funding per student is equal for charter and regular schools. The district was notified that it had lost \$426K in Marin Community Foundation funding. We are facing shrinking revenues and increasing ADA district-wide. Marin Community Foundation grants are up in the air. Regarding the re-instatement of these grants, trustee Thornton said this would take place assuming we prove to them that we are on target with their stated goals.

Jeff Knowles, Willow Creek Academy parent and charter school board member, clarified specific points of the Willow Creek Academy budget. He said that the Education Code supports our motion to receive a higher percentage of the basic aid amount. Based on need, we have the equivalent of Bayside/MLK in number of high-need kids receiving free and reduced lunch, residing in public housing and eligible for Calworks, he said.

A motion was made to hear the Willow Creek Academy budget. Zeigler/Newmeyer/All to hear the Willow Creek Academy budget.

Clark Warden presented the Willow Creek Academy budget. He said that we have to work together to address the Marin Community Foundation's decision to drop its grant to the district. We can discuss and resolve our differences or submit our budget subject to the mandatory 45- day review.

Board President Ziegler opened up the meeting to public comment.

Diane Brocket said she has a Kindergarten student at Willow Creek Academy, where she sees big economic and ethnic diversity in the student population. This is a gem of a district and we can give each student a stellar education. We are lucky to have adequate resources, let's use them wisely, she added.

Sharon Turner, a community member, said the decision making process so far has been distressing. It has resulted in moving Bayside to Marin City with portables and giving Willow Creek Academy state of the art facilities. The district has a fiduciary responsibility to the public school. Willow Creek Academy is independent and is supposed to raise private money and not been dependent on the district. If all costs were counted, we would be equal in costs per pupil.

Julius Holtzclaw, district employee and community member, said there has been a lot of misinformation. I want all students to be successful, he said. Let us look at the buried costs. We should blend the schools and come together.

Sue Krenek, a Willow Creek Academy board member and parent of two students, said we should hang on to classroom funding and not cut into it. When is it appropriate to use the extra 5% reserve, she asked?

Kerry Headington, parent of two students at Willow Creek Academy and chair of its parent council said that the charter school does not have a student body that can raise its own funds. 90 of our families live in public housing. Our school is growing and that is a good thing but also a challenge. We have more kids struggling with reading and literacy. Without support there will be more kids who fall through the cracks. Willow Creek Academy is successful in its integrated approach. We need extra resources to support that approach, she said.

Pamela Dake, a local resident, said staff at Bayside/MLK is creating a program that is dynamic. She said the district is legally required to give Willow Creek Academy \$5600 per student. How much money does the district give to Willow Creek Academy in total and what is the difference between that amount and the legally required sum, she asked.

Neil Hammari, a community member, said that his father moved to the area during wartime to work in the shipyards. My kids go to Bayside, he said. My older kid went to Bayside and MLK. Bayside has the best education I could offer my kids. If you have an extra dollar, please arrange for full-time music teacher for all the district.

Gail Theller, the executive director of Community Action Marin, said that she feels strongly about the children of Marin City. Community Action Marin operates Head Start here. We are concerned about where the kids go when they leave our program. I have high regard for the charter school, they are doing something right, but that does not mean that we don't have needs in the public school system. If you mean to take \$600 or \$500K and give it to charter school, put it on hold for a year and have the two boards come together and hold workshops. Something is wrong here, she said.

Jeff Knowles thanked the board for its work. Under the new State funding formula, if you have more than 55% of your students on the free and reduced lunch program, you get a boost. We are relying on that increase to reduce our supplemental request. There is confidence that the Marin Community Foundation money will not go away. All our kids should get the core education they need.

Alexandra Cantin, mother of a Kindergarten student at Willow Creek Academy said that it is a frugal and scrappy school. The district should come together and share its resources.

Carolyn Younger said her son is a third grader at Willow Creek Academy. He has been in special education for five years. His schooling has taken a lot of time and commitment. He is a minority in a very diverse class. We should stop poisoning our children and teach them to love each other, she concluded.

David Suto, a Sausalito resident, said when you look at the budget, you can see declining revenues and increasing ADA. Willow Creek Academy has made poor policy choices and is getting the school district to bail them out. They are saying their costs are so much less but they are double counting the costs of Bayside and MLK overhead and creating an incorrect ratio. If you can't identify the waste there is no waste. I would like a more honest budget, he said.

Denise Suto, teacher at Martin Luther King Jr. Academy., said that we are far away from our strategic priorities. The presented ratios are not realistic and continue to create divisions.

Melvin Atkins, a community member, said that we are robbing Peter to pay Paul. Willow Creek Academy is doing an excellent job, but we have separated these schools. When it comes to need, Marin City is expected to take the blow. If you can help Willow Creek Academy without hurting Martin Luther King Jr. Academy, I am for it. Whatever we can do to help without hurting Marin City, I am for it, he emphasized.

Philip Kerr said there are three points to consider: There are 150 district kids who qualify for free and reduced lunch. Half go to Bayside, half to Willow Creek. I hold everyone responsible for bringing divisiveness to the table, he said. Fund the schools, fund the kids. Encourage the board to bring the community together and end the divisiveness.

Everett Brandon, member of the board of Marin City Community Services, asked how much is the capital budget and where does it come from? Construction should relate to the community and engage it so that we can all be part of the development.

Marta Villela, a Bayside parent, said it is difficult to understand the budget information being presented. The kids just want to learn and advance. Think about them in equal terms; they are our future.

Kellye Mckinley, parent of two children at Bayside and Martin Luther King Jr. Academy, said that the board has a responsibility to do the right thing for the children. Since Willow Creek Academy came along, there has been segregation, she suggested. What is the best thing for the children? These are human beings whose education should be top priority.

At 9:10 board took a short break. Trustee Ziegler reconvened the meeting at 9:20 pm

The Board resumed its discussion of the budget. Trustee Barrow said the board wishes to support the staff and restore the positions that were cut: paraprofessionals, PE and Art. In order to do that we have to deficit budget at \$250K, he explained. My interpretation of the letter from Marin Community Foundation is that the grant is not terminated and funds are not officially pulled but that we need to address the question of the vision and trajectory for Sausalito Marin City schools and equity for all

students of the district. This is not easy but it is a healthy process and we should be happy to go through it, he said. We want to support both schools. The revisions are relatively small and consist of putting \$390K back in and restoring the staffing. Those are the only changes we are talking about, he explained.

Trustee Thornton said that if the Marin Community Foundation if says it is concerned about all the students, then the two boards should get together.

Trustee Newmeyer said the greater worry for him is not supporting the classroom at both sites. Principal Norbutas wants to restore the staff at MLK and Willow Creek Academy wants the supplemental at \$520K. I would support 520 minus 70, he said, adding that this is all subject to revision.

Trustee Van Alst said our goal was to support both programs and it looked like we were there at the conclusion of the Finance Committee meeting.

**Barrow/Newmeyer/All to approve the budget as presented, with following changes: restoring the Marin Community Foundation funds, restoring the staffing level of paraprofessionals, PE and Art and adding a .4 FTE position to music, adjusting the Willow Creek Academy grant to a total of \$450K, and reducing the operational non- personnel fund by \$100K.**

**Approve Willow Creek Academy Budget**

**Newmeyer/Van Alst/all to conditionally accept the WCA Budget for 2013-2014 as submitted.**

#### **Resolution 685 - Establishing Fund Balance Policies (GASB 54)**

**M/s/c – Roll Call Van Alst /Thornton/All to adopt Resolution #685**

#### **Resolution 686 - Budget Transfers to Permit Payment Obligations at Close of Year**


**M/s/c – Roll Call Thornton/Newmeyer/All to adopt Resolution #686**

#### **CONSENT CALENDAR**

**M/s/c - Roll Call Ayes 5 Noes 0 to approve the following consent agenda items:**

**Approval of the minutes of the special board meeting of June 6 , 2013  
Resolutions 687, 688, 689 - Authorization to Sign on behalf of the Governing Board**

Thornton/Newmeyer/all to adjourn at 10:20 p.m.

 7/25/13  
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Signature/Date

  
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Title