

**SAUSALITO MARIN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
May 31, 2016**

**ATTENDANCE**

Board Members Present: Caroline Van Alst, William Ziegler, Thomas Newmeyer, Joshua Barrow,  
Ida Times

Superintendent: Bob Ferguson

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

**CLOSED SESSION**

The Board and Superintendent convened closed session at 5:31 p.m.

**RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION**

Open session reconvened at 6:25 p.m.

**REPORT OUT OF CLOSED SESSION**

Trustee Van Alst announced that no action was taken in closed session.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Trustee Newmeyer led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Comment on Closed Session**

Gail Henrickson, a community member, said that the children of the district would benefit greatly from continuity in the teaching and administrative staff. Superintendent Ferguson said that these concerns were discussed in closed session and that there would be further clarification during the town hall meeting with the superintendent search company.

**AGENDA ORDER**

The agenda order was approved.

**TRUSTEE REPORT**

Trustee Times announced that she had recently married and her name is henceforth Green. Board members congratulated her and wished her well.

**SMCTA REPORT**

Ellen Franz thanked the board for approving the early retirement plan for herself and two other teachers at Bayside MLK Jr. Academy: James Scullion and Susan Cassidy.

**DIRECTOR OF MAINTENANCE**

Alan Rothkop went over the summer cleaning schedule for Bayside MLK Jr. and Willow Creek Academies. He said that many programs will be using the facilities during the summer and custodians will have to work around those schedules to clean and work on the grounds.

## **PRINCIPAL**

Principal Newton said that testing at Bayside MLK Jr. Academy wrapped up this week. The school celebrated Culture Day, when students honored the many cultures represented on campus. This event was spearheaded by teachers Jennifer Banks and Emily Matto; students and their guest enjoyed tasting dishes from around the world as well as seeing the national dress and listening to the music of many countries. The student art show at the O'Hanlon Center in Mill Valley ended with a very successful auction on May 21, in which our school's non-profit organization, the Center for Excellence received about \$9K. All our students will have a day at the beach on June 14; graduation will take place on June 15 and the step up ceremony will be the next day.

Trustee Times asked how many students are graduating. Principal Newton said six of the eight- graders are graduating, while two are still waiting for a final decision. Overall, most of the students put in a lot of effort in the end of year tests.

## **WILLOW CREEK ACADEMY**

Head of School Royce Conner said he is leaving the school at the end of the school year. He thanked everyone for their hard work and said it has been a privilege to work with all the teachers and administrators here during the past three years.

## **SUPERINTENDENT**

Superintendent Ferguson said that the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence has visited Bayside MLK Jr. Academy and may choose our district as a partner. This would be a great opportunity to participate in a new and innovative State program.

He added that he has had multiple conversations with the Tamalpais School District. As a result, our students will be getting help with math and science from Tam tutors. In addition, we will have a peer counseling program where Tam students will come here to mentor our children and prepare them for high school.

## **PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Trustee Van Alst said this is a group that will start next year. This is a placeholder to indicate that we will have reports from the Council in the future.

## **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

Marilyn Mackel, a community member and school volunteer, said the grounds outside 200 Phillips Drive need a lot of work. Referring to changes in staffing, she said that moving the special education classes from the WCA campus to Bayside MLK Jr. indicates that decisions are being made without talking to the people who are with the students every day. She emphasized that having full-time art and music teachers, as well as a certificated physical education instructor, is crucial to the well being of the students. She reminded the board to be fully transparent and give full details regarding the budget. She thanked teacher Ellen Franz for her hard work in organizing the students' art show at the O'Hanlon Center and said that the presence of board members at this and other recent events was sorely missed. She also thanked Ms. Newton for teaching our students music on Saturdays on her own time, taking them to musical events and acting as chauffeur and chaperone to make life easier for the parents. That

is called being a principal, she said. In sum, I had no problem with separate and equal, but I do have a problem with separate and unequal, she concluded.

**Roll Call Newmeyer/Ziegler/All to approve the following consent agenda items:**

Minutes of the April 2, April 5, and May 2, 2016 Board Meetings

2016-2017 Board of Trustees Meeting Dates (June meeting corrected to June 21, 2016)

Personnel Action Report

Payment of Warrants – Batches 39-45

**INTERDISTRICT ATTENDANCE AGREEMENT**

The board decided to defer action on this item.

**RESOLUTION 727 – CONSOLIDATION OF ELECTION**

This resolution proposes an election to be held in this district's jurisdiction, requests the Board of Supervisors to consolidate with any other election conducted on November 8, 2016, and requests election services by the registrar of voters.

**Roll Call/Newmeyer/Barrow/All to approve Resolution 727**

**California School Employees Association Contract Negotiations**

This letter, which outlines CSEA's agenda for upcoming negotiations, was brought to the Board for its information.

**District in-kind and/or financial support for the Hannah Project Freedom School**

Trustee Times said that the Freedom school has partnered with the district in the past to use its facilities. She invited the director of the Hannah Project, Bettie Hodges, to speak to the Board. Ms. Hodges said the Hannah Project has operated the Freedom School since 2010 and used school space since 2011. She continued: This year, we thought there would not be a Freedom School because of a lack of funds, but we got a call from an anonymous donor who thought that academic options for Marin City children were crucial and offered \$25k towards the cost. Most years, it costs us \$70K to run this summer program. As the district does not offer its student a summer school option, we are asking for a contribution to our program. We have strengthened our academic and arts program. We have raised \$10k through small donations and the Marin Community Foundation has also undertaken to support us. We are close but not quite there. We hope to use our mandatory weekly meeting of parents to strengthen their understanding of the meaning of a community school.

Trustee Newmeyer asked if all grade levels are served. Ms. Hodges said that to begin with, only 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> graders were enrolled, but that since 2013, middle schoolers are also included. Trustee Barrow asked if Bridge the Gap offers a summer program. Ms. Hodges said that they serve K to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and offer a reading program in conjunction with the recreation department. We have met with them and will work to coordinate our programs and come up with a realistic reading challenge for the whole community, she said.

Superintendent Ferguson said the Board can take action on this at the next meeting. I would recommend a funding of \$5k, he said.

Trustee Van Alst thanked Ms. Hodges and said that the Board appreciates her coordination efforts.

## **FINANCIAL & BUSINESS**

### **Resolution 728 – Support of Applications for Funding under the School Facility Program**

### **Resolution 729 – Authorization of Competitive Negotiation for ERate Priority on Data Circuits**

Chief Business Official Paula Rigney said ERate is the federal program to reduce our costs in technology, telephone communications and IT infrastructure.

### **Roll Call/Newmeyer/Barrow/All to approve Resolutions 728 and 729**

### **Supplemental Retirement Plan with Public Agency Retirement Services**

The Board had previously discussed this early retirement plan for three teachers at Bayside MLK Jr. Academy.

### **Newmeyer/Ziegler/All to Approve the Supplemental Retirement Plan with Public Agency Retirement Services**

### **Amendment to Superintendent's Agreement**

Superintendent Ferguson explained that as the new superintendent will not come on board until September, it is necessary to extend his employment agreement.

### **Ziegler/Barrow/All to Approve the Amendment to the Superintendent's Agreement**

### **Selection of Pre-Election Consulting Services Firm**

Superintendent Ferguson said that there are over 100 districts going out for a bond at any one time. Part of the process is doing surveys to find out what issues concern the voters and for this service we need to hire a consulting firm.

Trustee Times asked about the source of funding for this expenditure. Superintendent Ferguson said that it will come from our reserves. Marin County Office of Education Deputy Superintendent Terena Mares said these costs are not reimbursable from bond funds as taxpayers cannot be liable for campaign costs.

Librarian Fran Nelson said that spending \$47K for this service when we are making cuts to funding for teachers is not reasonable. She continued: We are paying a consultant to choose a new superintendent and now we have the bond issue. Is a survey needed in a town this small? I would like to see the money go elsewhere.

Trustee Van Alst said that large portions Willow Creek Academy were built in the 1970s and repairs take up a big part of our budget. Trustee Ziegler said this is all about the kids. Aging facilities cost us a lot of money and at some point we have to take care of this issue.

Trustee Van Alst said the firm of Clifford Moss has been recommended by the architects. The proposal is divided into two; \$27K for the election and \$19,500 for the survey. We can ask for further clarification on the first part and vote on the second tonight.

**Ziegler/Newmeyer /4 Ayes, 0 Noes, 1 Abstain to Approve the Expenditure of \$ 19,500 for a Survey of District Residents by the Firm of Clifford Moss**

#### **Field Trips**

Trustee Van Alst said that current board policy on field trips states that the board must approve field trips in advance and that a curriculum standard must be supported on each trip. She continued: I want to make sure that we are complying with the existing policy and approving field trips in advance. If an alternative is needed, we should amend the policy to give the superintendent or principal the right of approval.

Superintendent Ferguson said we should have the field trip list at the beginning of the year. Experiences outside the classroom are valuable, but our focus should be to get the students to grade level. There has to be a balance between the two.

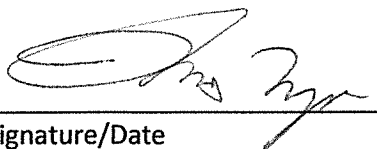
Marilyn Mackel explained that the reason the yacht trip on the bay was organized at the last minute was that it came about as a result of chance meeting between Principal Newton and a Rotary Club member who had lost his wallet. Ms. Newton found it and returned it to him. He was very grateful and asked if she wanted a reward. Ms. Newton asked that he do something for our students. As Dr. Thornton is also a Rotary member, she was able to arrange for a free trip which would otherwise have cost the school several thousand dollars. Things arise at the last minute, and you have to be flexible, she said.

Trustee Barrow said that perhaps 80% of the trips should be arranged in advance and the rest left to be decided as they arise. He asked for the policy to be reviewed. Assistant Principal Dr. Thornton said that the administration needs some discretion to be able to take the children out of school and expand their horizons.

**Barrow /Newmeyer/ All to Approve the Field Trips**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Newmeyer/Times/All to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m.**

 5/21/16  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature/Date

Clerk  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Title