



# WCCUSD

## CITIZEN'S BOND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Kathy Fleming  
Vice Chairperson

Don Gosney  
Chairperson

Cameron Moore  
Secretary

### **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

**03/20/19**

The Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee met just last Thursday for our regular meeting so we could take care of critical business before next Wednesday's joint meeting with the Board of Education.

Highlighting this meeting—which will also come up at next week's meeting—were the Bond Program Financial Audit, the Bond Program Performance Audit, the Interim Review of the Implementation of Forensic Audit Recommendations and, lastly, the agenda for next week's joint meeting.

While the Financial Audit is largely just an overview of the money that came in and the money that went out, it's still a critical part of the process to ensure that the People's money isn't being squandered.

The Performance Audit, though, is a bit more revealing in that the auditors are supposed to review exactly how the funds were spent and then to compare those expenses against what was promised the people when the District sought their approval to tax themselves for the next 30 to 40 years.

An integral part of this audit is to review how the CBOC interacts with the Board and District staff. This requires an open line of communication.

For some reason, when the District changed auditors they no longer asked the auditors to actually speak with key members of the CBOC. Effective with this audit, input from CBOCers was sought.

It may sound simplistic but when the auditors are looking over the collective shoulders of District staff, are their voices the only ones to be listened to? This is too reminiscent of the fox guarding the chicken coop. Does anyone

# WCCUSD

## CITIZEN'S BOND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

expect District staff to rat themselves out and tell the auditors how they're mismanaging the Bond Program?

There has to be a balanced approach to this audit. As a very long time member of the CBOC I was able to play the part of the old guy to remind people of the way we used to do things and insisted on that open line of communication between the auditors and key members of the CBOC.

The Performance Audit was just released but after just a cursory review it appears as if the auditors—Moss Adams—found some areas of concern.

In my last Chair Report I mentioned the Interim Review of the recommendations stemming from the Forensic Audit. To review, some of our biggest concerns are how long it's taking for the District to review these recommendations and, when necessary, implement them.

You're all smart people so I don't have to remind you all that a recommendation is not the same as a directive. The Board not only has the right but they have a mandate to review these recommendations and either implement a response or to disagree with the recommendations. One way or another, though they need to address these recommendations.

At the rate that the District is going, it may take as long as four and a half years for these recommendations to be addressed.

There are plenty of reasons why it's taking forever—the biggest being that manpower has been slashed so deeply that staff is being pulled in a dozen different directions. Nonetheless, what does it say when you're being told that the building is on fire and it takes you four and a half years to grab a fire extinguisher?

# WCCUSD

## CITIZEN'S BOND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

A couple of weeks ago, as CBOC Chair, I met with Board President Panas, Superintendent Duffy and Associate Superintendent LeBlanc to come up with a draft agenda for our joint meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

Typically, at these joint meetings the District tries to limit the length of the meeting to 90 minutes. This year, they graciously allotted two hours. Typically, we're allowed only three items to discuss but this year they agreed to six critical agenda items.

As Chair of the CBOC, I'm grateful for this cooperation.

As for the CBOC, however, their reaction to only being allotted 2 hours (when the three audits were budgeted for 90 minutes and basic opening and closing items are budgeted for nine minutes) was not pleasant so maybe you can understand why they were so angry that the three items that were of critical importance to the CBOC was only being allotted 21 minutes.

Year after year we ask this question: If the Board routinely takes five or more hours to conduct their twice monthly meetings, why would the Board tell the CBOC that for their **twice yearly** meetings they could only give them maybe 30% that much time?

I can't give them a satisfactory answer to that question so maybe you can explain to the CBOC and the public why a group of volunteers representing the 247,000 members of this District is not deserving of your time and attention. Give us a good response to that and maybe we'll shut up about that issue.

The response from the CBOC at that meeting was loud, angry and not very understanding. There was a motion to cancel the joint meeting if the District was going to treat it only as an obligation. I was directed to go back and negotiate more time for the joint meeting but because of the time constraints that wasn't practical.

# WCCUSD

## CITIZEN'S BOND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Now that vinyl records are back in vogue, I can use a phrase where younger people might understand my reference: I know I'm sounding like a broken record but if this Board wants to convince the voters to tax themselves even further to come up with funds to finish SOME of the remaining restorations, then they need to convince the voters that they can be trusted. You can change the faces of the people sitting at the dais but unless you change the way the people perceive of them, then any ballot measure is doomed to failure. We saw that last year when your proposed parcel tax to pay for the well deserved pay increases for our teachers was met with disdain by the voters when the pollsters called.

Prop 39 requires a bond oversight committee. We have one of those but if the Board and the District don't work with them, then it becomes obvious to the voters that it's all a charade and they look upon the Board and staff through the same lens of distrust. You have the ability to reverse this but it's going to take a concerted effort.

Lastly, the CBOC has been working on a revised set of rules governing the CBOC. We will have a proposed set of revisions to your Board Policy. When you get these, please understand that, in large, this is a rewrite. You're going to see a sea of red and this may turn you off. What you need to do is look closely at the new text to see if it's something that works for you.

Next week's joint meeting will be at 1400 Marina Way South and will start promptly at 6:15. All are welcome.

