JOINT HERCULES CITY COUNCIL AND
WEST CONTRA COSTA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD
JANUARY 15, 2013
MEETING MINUTES

Mayor Delgado called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 P.M.

A. OPENING PROCEDURES

A.1 Pledge of Allegiance

Council, staff and the audience pledged allegiance to the flag.

A.2 Welcome and Meeting Procedures

Mayor Delgado extended a welcome to Board Members and District staff.

President Kronenberg appreciated the opportunity to building a stronger relationship.

A.3 Roll Call

Council Members Present: Delgado, de Vera, Kelly, McCoy and Romero

Council Members Absent: None

Board Members Present: Enos, Groves, Kronenberg and Ramsey

Board Members Absent: Merriweather

A.4 Public Communications

Giorgio Cosentino, Hercules Resident, extended a welcome to School Board Members and asked how residents could better support Hercules schools.

Sarah Creeley, Vice President Hercules Democratic Club, announced the Martin Luther King Jr. event set for January 14, 2013 at the Hercules Middle School Auditorium.

B. DISCUSSION ITEMS

B.1 Ohlone Elementary School Construction Update

Dr. Bruce Harter, WCCUSD Superintendent, provided an introduction of Rebecca Giacomini, Ohlone Principal and Magdy Abdalla, District Engineering Officer.

Mr. Abdalla reported that two phases are currently underway, with completion expected in March

2015. He added that at Board's direction he returned to the design board to incorporate the updated education standards and upgrade to technology into the project. He added that the project is back on track, with buildings A and B and the associated area to be complete in the middle quarter of next year.

With respect to the updated education standards, Board Member Ramsey explained that the purpose of the redesign was to allow students to benefit from the new standards.

Mr. Abdalla added that equipment standards are also being upgraded, so when construction is complete, the City can be assured that it was constructed to the latest and greatest standards.

In response to comments, Mr. Abdalla explained that the day care center remains in the construction drawings for Phase 3, which also includes the multipurpose room and the kindergarten building. He noted that the multipurpose room was not certified by the Department of State Architect, but would incorporate their suggested corrections in the current set of plans and submit for certification.

Board Member Ramsey acknowledged his support for the construction of the day care center, stating that it is fair and equitable as far as the dollars the City is contributing to the overall bond program and noting that other cities are benefitting from that as well. He believed that it was the least that could be done in terms of good faith, as well as the new culinary and science centers at the high school.

Council Member Romero stated that additional discussion is required by the City Council in order to clarify to the Board what the city is doing, appreciate the child care, but needs to be addressed as Council.

Board Member Ramsey reiterated that the Board is showing good faith by having the center designed and that it is just a matter of determining if it will be a part of the bid packet.

Board Member Groves inquired it there had been any preparation regarding the incorporation of the Smarter Balanced Technological Infrastructure requirements that were released a few months ago. He stated that they needed to consider how they will be implemented in all schools.

In response to Board Member Groves inquiry, Mr. Abdalla acknowledged that wireless technology devices had been incorporated into the new Ohlone campus.

Board President Kronenberg stated that she had always supported day care center, as she believes it is part of the fabric of education in Hercules.

In response to President Kronenberg' s inquiry, Mr. Abdalla advised that the last phase of the project, child care, kindergarten buildings and the multipurpose room, will be put out to bid in September 2014, with anticipated opening in September 2015, and with classrooms open in the second quarter of 2014.

Vice Mayor de Vera questioned who would be responsible for the child care center.
Board Member Ramsey believed it was to be run by the City, as it is not being constructed for a private entity, emphasizing that it is a community partnership, as that is where students go before or after school.

Pedro Jimenez, Hercules Parks and Recreation Director, explained that the City runs an onsite before and after school program. He requested information regarding the demolition in the second phase in order to be able to determine what infrastructure he will need to continue to run the program during the demolition process. He emphasized the need for an onsite program and supported the construction of the center for the benefit of the community.

Council Member Romero suggested that the Board provide a visual presentation regarding the construction on January 22nd in addition to the Bond waiver presentation.

Regarding student access to wireless networks, Dr. Harter stated that students are already using with cell phones, however, the District does not allow their use during class time or during passing time. He further stated that as moving toward a wireless world, will want students to have access to textbooks and other materials on their devices or devices provided by the District. He reported that there is wireless set up at El Cerrito High School and that they have not found any increased issues, as students are engaged in learning. He added that in the future the District will not be buying textbooks, will have wireless devices.

Council Member Kelly inquired as to the provisions that are to be made for those students who would not have access to a wireless device to access textbooks.

Dr. Harter responded that it has been determined that with the cost of textbooks, the District may be able to purchase and assign tablets to students. He added that the issue and similar issues will be discussed in the strategic planning process.

B.2 Safety Update on Hercules Schools

Adam Taylor, Executive Director for Hercules Schools, provided a report on emergency preparedness and safety plans for Hercules.

Bill Goswick, Hercules Police Chief, acknowledged the District's efforts regarding emergency preparedness. However, he expressed concern regarding the lack of security and the excessive number of calls addressed by the Police Department during the period of August 2012-January 2013. He noted that a majority of these calls require backup for the School Resource Officer, which results in an officer being pulled from street patrol.

Council Member Romero provided a copy of the City Council's Resolution which had been adopted in November supporting a second School Resource Office at the High School.

Dr. Harter advised that the Resolution would be presented as part of the Board's February 6th agenda, for consideration to include funding in the Fiscal Year 2013/14 budget.

Board Member Enos reported that the issue was discussed at a recent safety meeting, acknowledging that safety is everyone's responsibility on a daily basis.

Council Member McCoy expressed her support for the additional officer at the school and inquired how the community could bridge the gap for the remainder of the current school year.

In response to Board Member Ramsey, Chief Goswick stated that a current patrol officer, who previously served as an SRO and has received the appropriate training, would transfer to the school and he would fill the patrol position.

Board Member Ramsey and Board President Kronenberg offered their support for the retention of a second SRO and to providing funding for the remainder of the school year.

Vice Mayor de Vera expressed concerned with the number of calls for service and questioned how it was being addressed.

Jen Bender, Principal, Hercules Middle High School, stated that she understood the current issues and in response have expanded the 180 Intervention Program to include the middle school and have increased the number of high school students involved. She added staff has been increased at the school based health center, and the center provides groups for students to address stress management, grief, girl empowerment, increasing student engagement in school. In addition, she stated that the school has expanded the college culture, offering more visits from post secondary education institutions, not only 4 year, but technical institutions as well. With respect to conflict resolution, she stated that she is looking at implementing a life skills class next year at the middle school. She further stated that discussions are occurring at the staff level regarding a Restorative Justice Program, explaining that the program would provide for interaction with students after an event, for them to think about their actions and the impact. She further explained that the purpose would be to bring all involved into a group for the student to see what their action does, to build empathy, for student to know that although it is known what they have done, that they will be welcomed back with the understanding that they can change.

Council Member Romero suggested that the Police Department be involved so that they understand what is occurring with the program, he also suggested community outreach.

Ms. Bender stated that there would be training of staff and community members, with a communication plan to roll out to students and for the scheduling of community meetings.

Council Member Kelly emphasized the need for teachers to understand when it is time to step aside and let the SRO do their jobs. He suggested that the program be expanded to increase the number of entities involved, such as the District Attorney Office.

B.3 Hercules Middle-High School Update

Ms. Bender stated that in addition to information already discussed, Hercules High has had

students accepted to Tulane, University of Miami, Cal Poly, Cornell and St. Louis University. She added that three students have been accepted to Cornell as part of the Ivy League Program.

B.4 Joint Facility Use Agreement

Bill Fay, Associate Superintendent for Operations, stated that he had been working with City staff to develop a Joint Use Agreement. He further stated that they are in the process of preparing an umbrella agreement for all city stakeholders, which will be on the next Board agenda for approval. He stated that the purpose is to leverage each other's facilities, which is something the Education Code speaks highly of, cooperation between district and cities.

Mr. Jimenez added that he is in the process of reviewing the latest version of the agreement and that there is a need to finalize the details of potential fees.

B.5 Discussion of Need For and Site for New School in Hercules

Dr. Harter explained that the process for determining the need for a new school is to review projected enrollment and trends, live births, grade to grade progression, mobility factors, dwelling yield. With the slowdown in growth, he believed the enrollment in Hercules will slip in the next ten years and then come back up, not anticipating a need in next the next ten years for a new school. He noted that enrollment is staying flat and that there is plenty of space in current schools to accommodate students over the next ten years. He suggested Mr. Faye and a City representative work on what may be possible in the future.

Council Member Kelly believed there is a need for new schools as there are currently 4-5 residential development which are long distances from current schools. He expressed concern with students crossing San Pablo Avenue to get to school.

In response to comments, Dr. Harter stated that the District has seen a growth of approximately 300 students over the last year and sees the District continue to grow; however, the growth has not been in Hercules.

Council Member McCoy questioned if the District factors in the distance to school, particularly at the elementary level.

Dr. Harter believed it would be proactive for the Council and District to look for potential sites in that part of Hercules. He explained that when considering new schools, staff looks at the number of seats available in schools and draw attendance lines to get students as close to those schools as possible. He added that the demographer did consider potential development at Sycamore North, Sycamore Crossing and Victoria Crescent in the current projections, stating that the waterfront, as it is far in the future, is not, but will be in succeeding years as the plan is implemented.

Vice Mayor de Vera advised that the waterfront project is to break ground next year and that there will be residential development and requested that the demographer update his report to include this information.

Dr Harter will ask demographers to do so and will provide an update in March.

B.6 Capital Project Plans for Hercules

Mr. Abdalla provided and overview on plans for Hercules Middle High School, in terms of the Measure D and Measure E Bonds.

In response to Vice Mayor de Vera's inquiry, Mr. Abdalla reported that 31 classrooms are to be constructed at Ohlone. Regarding Capital Projects, he anticipated two new science buildings at the Middle High School, with a future plan to add a theater and culinary arts center.

Board Member Ramsey noted that the District completed a solar project at the high school and stated that Hercules will be the only city in the district that will have all new schools.

B.7 WCCUSD Debt Limit Waiver for Measure E 2012

David Leifer, KNN Public Finance, provided an overview of the District Bond Program and explained the purpose of the debt waiver.

Board Member Ramsey expressed concern should the waivers not be approved, stating that the anticipated installation of surveillance systems would not occur, nor would they be able to provide the $35 million needed for the educational software and upgrades.

In response to comments, Jeffrey Baratta, Piper Jaffray & Co., explained that now is the time to go out to market due to the low interest rates, noting that investors are looking at how much support the District has. He stated that with the 2012 approved bond, investors are comfortable that the community has supported and is willing to tax themselves in the least costly manner. With the 2012 bond measure, he stated that the District has the capacity to structure the lowest cost financing, however, if forced to use some other bonding capacity, would move into more costly financing techniques.

Scott Henry, De La Rosa and Co., added that by passing the waiver, the taxpayers have a protection, which is the tax rate.

Mr. Baratta continued to explain that by having two authorizations the District is able to balance the tax rate and the ability to provide facilities, without this, would have to go back to the 2010 authorization and slow the program down. He identified the positives as the cap of the 5% bonding capacity waiver and the 12 year term, stating that combined with the Proposition 39 tax rate cap, there is protection that makes the old bonding capacity less important.

Mr. Cosentino stated that he had taught at Richmond High many years ago and that it was an unsafe place at the time. He believed the bond program has made students much safer today. He emphasized the need for qualified experts looking out for fiscal health of City, County and schools and expressed concern that the County Counsel’s impartial analysis did not address the

waiver process.
Mayor Delgado requested that any Council comments be held until the item is before them at the next Council meeting.

Mr. Ramsey stated that there are safeguards and protections and that the $48 per $100,000 is what the voters agreed to pay.

It was the consensus of the City Council and School Board to schedule a presentation only on January 22, 2013, with discussion and possible action for the February 12, 2013 meeting.

C. OPEN FORUM

As comments were received under agenda item A.4 Public Communications, no additional comments were received at this time.

D. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Delgado adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:05 p.m.

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John Delgado, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Doreen Mathews, City Clerk

CTR
Approved 3/20/13