

**West Contra Costa Unified School District
Minutes of the Special Board of Education Meeting
DeJean Middle School
Multipurpose Room
3400 Macdonald Ave.
Richmond, CA 94805**

October 23, 2013

B. OPENING PROCEDURES

President Madeline Kronenberg called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

B.1 Pledge of Allegiance

President Kronenberg led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance.

B.2 Welcome and Meeting Procedures

President Kronenberg offered welcome and instructions to the public regarding the meeting.

B.3 Roll Call

Board Members Present: Randall Enos, Todd Groves, Madeline Kronenberg, Elaine Merriweather, Charles Ramsey

Staff Present: Steve Collins, SELPA Director; Bill Fay, Associate Superintendent for Operations; Sheri Gamba, Associate Superintendent for Business Services; Wendell Greer, Associate Superintendent K-Adult Schools; Bruce Harter, Superintendent; Debbie Haynie, Executive Secretary; Joshua Herrera, Electronics Technician; Mary Phillips, Chief Technology Officer; Nia Rashidchi, Assistant Superintendent Educational Services; Ken Whittemore, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

B.4 Agenda Review and Adoption

MOTION: Mr. Ramsey moved approval of the agenda including moving item C.2 before C.1 and tabling item D.1. Mr. Enos seconded. Mr. Enos, Mr. Groves, Mr. Ramsey, Ms. Merriweather, and President Kronenberg voted yes, with no abstentions and no absences. Motion carried 5-0-0-0.

B.5 WCCUSD Public Comment

Giorgio Cosentino, Al Kirkman

C. ACTION ITEM

C.2 Ratification of Staff Awarded Contract: Pinole Valley High School Detention Basin, Utilities and Paving

Mr. Fay asked the Board to ratify the award of contract for the Pinole Valley High School detention basin and utilities.

Public Comment:

Richard Bohler, Bob Lilley

Board Comment:

Mr. Ramsey had questions for Mr. Abdalla regarding employees of a subcontracting electrical company. Mr. Abdalla responded that he was in contact with individuals to resolve. Mr. Ramsey continued with questions about trends in project bids. Mr. Abdalla spoke about the trend being seen with Coronado and El Cerrito with increases in costs. Discussion was held about increase in pricing and upcoming projects such as Nystrom, Kennedy Swim Center, and Montalvin.

MOTION: Mr. Ramsey moved approval to ratify the staff awarded contract: Pinole Valley High School Detention Basin, Utilities and Paving. Mr. Groves seconded. A roll call vote was taken with Mr. Enos, Mr. Groves, Mr. Ramsey, Ms. Merriweather, and President Kronenberg voting yes, with no abstentions and no absences. Motion carried 5-0-0-0.

C.1 Authorization for Community Survey

Superintendent Harter spoke about a recent meeting with community groups to address the impact of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). He spoke about the widespread belief that LCFF will relieve financial problems. He said that if implemented as improved, LCFF offers a good future for the District. However, in the short term the District is still \$29 million short of the 2007-08 funding for the same numbers of students. The District has multiple

needs as well as a strategic plan that will show the Board and community where the education delivery system needs to be and will drive up costs as well. He continued to say that assessed property values continue to be a problem, resulting in a decrease of 6% in Richmond setting bond the program back. He introduced Bryan Godbe of Godbe Research to provide a frame of the landscape and possibilities for a local revenue increase.

Mr. Godbe provided a review of data from the last survey performed for the District. He explained the percentages of support at various levels from the community of voters sampled in the survey. He further spoke of a split sample approach to survey a parcel tax and/or bond measure for a June 2014 election. He also addressed the timing of the survey and the impact of the upcoming holiday season.

Public Comment:

Antonio Medrano, Dennis Cody, Carolyn Day Flowers, Eduardo Martinez

Board Comment:

Mr. Ramsey invited Dave Olson, Jeff Baratta and Scott Henry, bond finance investment advisors, to join in the discussion. Mr. Ramsey recalled history of past election efforts.

Mr. Ramsey asked Mr. Godbe questions about the level of tax threshold voters are willing to fund. Mr. Godbe responded with information about the changing economic climate. Mr. Ramsey said he was interested in a bond and parcel tax survey with 600 potential voters sampled. He spoke of the voters as sophisticated and smart enough to understand. He also spoke about teacher salaries, school maintenance, music programs and class sized reduction as issues of concern to voters.

Mr. Olson, Mr. Baratta, and Mr. Henry offered opinions about the need for flexibility to maintain and even accelerate the construction program.

Mr. Enos spoke about the cost of a survey in order to develop a plan. He said he felt it important to see the data in order to base a decision to place a ballot measure before voters. He said he was in support of funding the strategic plan and teacher salaries.

Ms. Merriweather expressed concern about rushing into an election. She said that her opinion was that the District has many efforts demanding attention with the implementation of Common Core Standards and the strategic plan. She expressed feeling very uncomfortable about rushing. She said she felt it important to take time to look at the strategic plan based on the funding already in the District. She urged postponing a survey for at least a year and allow the strategic plan to guide the District.

Mr. Groves asked Mr. Olson about funding assumptions built into the bond program under the current measures. Mr. Olson responded with information regarding bonds issued in alternate years through 2023. Mr. Groves had additional questions about the maximum tax rate. Mr. Olson responded with information about bond measures reaching maximum rates, repayment and expenditures of new bond funds fitting within the financing plan. They discussed risks of issuing new bonds with the major risk that the District is working hard to build public trust and transparency.

Ms. Merriweather had questions about the current funding available. Ms. Gamba responded that the District just issued \$125 million, with \$77 million also available, plus capacity for \$515 million yet to be issued. Ms. Gamba added that \$77 million under Measure J will not be easily accessible in the next few years.

Mr. Groves asked Superintendent Harter about the operating budget and funding for the strategic plan. Dr. Harter responded with information about preschool, kindergarten, and enhancing counselors with a preliminary estimate for operating revenues needed annually to be close to \$40 million per year. Dr. Harter added that a three cent parcel tax would generate close to \$4 million.

President Kronenberg said she had carefully looked at the strategic plan and felt it was not something that could be done within the current budget or without LCFE funding. She spoke about the community that came out to tell the District what was important and teachers committed to changing teaching practices. She said she thought it fair to ask the community what they want to pay for and what they are willing to pay.

MOTION: Mr. Ramsey moved approval of the Community Survey to include a sample size of 600 with survey questions including both a parcel tax and bond measure. Mr. Enos seconded. A roll call vote was taken with

Mr. Enos, Mr. Groves, Mr. Ramsey, and President Kronenberg voting yes, Ms. Merriweather voting no, with no abstentions and no absences. Motion carried 4-1-0-0.

D. DISCUSSION ITEMS

D.1 Project update for Downer Elementary School Playfield

This item was tabled to a future meeting.

E. COMMENTS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Ramsey spoke about upcoming Brown and Yale alumni groups meetings. He also said that he hoped the Board would receive updates on the Montalvin, Kennedy Swim Center and Nystrom projects after the Facilities Subcommittee meeting. He concluded by thanking staff and saying he looked forward to getting the survey information.

F. THE NEXT SCHEDULED BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Lovonya DeJean Middle School – November 6, 2013

G. ADJOURNMENT

President Kronenberg adjourned the meeting at 7:42 PM.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><u>CTR</u> Approved 11/20/13</p>
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