

**Minutes of  
Special Meeting of the Governing Board  
For Tracy Unified School District  
Held on Tuesday, January 17, 2019**

- 5:45 PM:** 1. President Abercrombie called the meeting to order and adjourned to closed session.
- Roll Call:** 2. Board: S. Abercrombie, A. Alexander, J. Costa, S. Kaur, B. Pekari, L. Souza  
Staff: B. Stephens, S. Harrison, T. Jalique, C. Goodall, B. Etcheverry  
(There is currently one vacancy on the board)
- 6:00 PM** President Abercrombie called the Tracy Unified School District Board of Education to order and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Closed Session:** 3. No Action taken.
- Employees Present:** A. Gossett, M. Petty, R. Pecot, M. Hill, M. Kammen, J. O’Hara, E. Valadez, J. Nott, L. Huerta
- Press:** G. Moore, Tracy Press
- Visitors Present:** S. Voress, V. Eres, R & L. Cortesi
- Hearing of Delegations** 6. None.
- Action Items:** 7.1 **Administrative & Business Services:**  
7.1.1 Conduct Interviews and Approve Provisional Appointment of Board Member for Unexpired Two Year Term  
Each member was asked the following two questions and given up to three minutes to respond to each.
- Question 1:** Why at this time in your career do you desire to serve on the board of trustees?
- Question 2:** After tonight, TUSD will have 6 new board members in the last two and a half months. What expertise in your professional experience are you bringing to assist the board as it moves forward?
- Candidate Jeremy Silcox
1. He has been involved in this community for a long time. He grew up here and was taught by people in this room. He had good experiences growing up here. He remembers people he was around during high school and how they made him feel. He wants to strive for something

better. That led him into teaching and coaching and he realized that coaching was more his passion than teaching. He has been in that capacity in the district for the past 12-14 years and has enjoyed that. He has 5 children from Kindergarten to a freshman which are all in TUSD, one is home schooled but they are working on getting him back into TUSD. These schools have been fantastic and he has a vested interest in the kids. He will look through that lens as far as what is best for the kids and make the decisions. He is a financial advisor and understands there are limits as to what you can and cannot do. The most important thing is to do what is best for kids.

2. Part is in his first answer, his financial background which is his career. He will look through things and knows how to prioritize dollars. He will look at goals and the vision of the different representatives, the union, the district goals and come to a conclusion on what is best to prioritize the dollars. In his capacity, he used to serve as bishop of his church, leading a group of over 500 people. In that capacity, you set a vision of what you are trying to accomplish as a leader. You communicate that vision and hold people accountable to that. He would be able to take emotions out of it and be logical and make good decisions for the district and counsel with those on the board and understand those perspectives. Everyone brings a unique perspective and is important to hear everyone out.

Candidate Guatami Agastya

1. She has been a part of the Tracy community for 15 years, mostly professionally. She has had children in district for past 15 years. One of her children graduated from the IB program at Tracy High and is at UCLA. Her children don't need her at home as much. She is professionally on track and has more time. She does a lot of service during her day job and is motivated to do more for the community. She has 2 prime issues, one is firearms and gun control. She is a member of the American College of Physicians and was elected to fellowship there. In October, ACOP came out with a statement about gun violence. It is not a political stand, but for the patients. They ask everyone they meet if they own a fire arm and is it under safe lock and key. Doctors and teachers are the same and can make a difference. She took a pledge that she would ask her patients if they own a fire arm.

2. On a professional level she has the capacity to understand a wide variety of issues facing the board. She understands the LCAP and knows what interventions are being planned. From a personal standpoint she has the interrelationship skills that are needed. She talks to patients of all backgrounds, mentally challenged, LGBT, and talks and connects with them. She organizes several groups and interacts on different issues of traditions and cultures. A year ago she formed an association of female physicians in the Bay Area, of all different specialties. If anyone has questions, they can put things together, with no political agenda.

#### Candidate Zachary Hoffert

1. His experiences professionally and academically have prepared him for this. He has been part of this community since he was 2 years old. Tracy is his home and he attended college at UNR. He attended TUSD schools and received a quality education. He's been instilled with a need to give back and do community service. He was involved in mock trial, drama and leadership. He attended UNR and majored in political science hoping to contribute to society. He has worked as an orientation guide and has served as academic tutor to student athletes and served as director of policy and media for student government. He saw how it affects students. Most important was his time as special ed teacher. He has seen students who have struggled and need help and are often forgotten.

2. He is bringing his experience of policies and working with diverse students. At the college level he was looking at state and federal level policy and figuring out what needs to be done and what can be done and what isn't being done. At end of day, being a board member isn't just policies but wants to be sure students are getting a quality education. He believes certain students are not getting that opportunity.

#### Candidate Tom O'Hara

1. There is an open seat and there is no other member that has education as a background and thinks he will do a great job. He can be a part of a team and make good decisions. Has done this his whole life with family, teaching, coaching and his military career. He understands problems, gathers information and is a good listener. He would use that to make evidence based decisions. It has worked very well. He was oldest of 8 kids and has been teaching things his whole career. He joined the Airborne Infantry, got promoted and found he had to teach his guys everything. He applied those skills when he joined the teaching profession. He received awards at every level including several teacher of the year awards. He would be able to use some of his strengths and bring them to this board. He understands the board is not involved in the daily running of the district. That is a disaster if you try to get involved in that.

2. The number one thing is that students are number one. He has strengths he can bring because he knows what it is like. At the last board meeting there were a lot of presentations and he knew what they were talking about. TUSD is in a great place. He is a consultant with a writing project and goes to other school districts teaching teachers how to teach writing. Several have asked about what we are doing in Tracy. The word is out that we are doing the hard work that makes good instruction. Many districts don't and they try to just buy a computer and think problems will go away. We are investing in helping teachers learn how to be better. We will never be good enough and always try to get better. He would like to be a part of that operation that is already ongoing. Thinks we could do more for career readiness. We are good for college. A lot of students will not go to college and we should offer more things

for them.

#### Candidate Mateo Bedolla

1. He has lived in Tracy his whole life. He graduated from Tracy High in 2011 and cares deeply about the community. He wants to provide quality education for all students. He has business and legislative experience. He returned to private sector and currently manages teams.

2. His expertise would be legislative and construction management. Before he was a framer. His goal is to help prepare students for college and provide career tech options in health care and trades for students who may not choose a 4-year education.

#### Candidate Vecky Elliott

1. She has served in many capacities and roles as a parent, educator and community organizer. She is active in the classroom and served as a board member in various organizations. She has skills and abilities to help push forward the vision of the school district and bring extra funding and new initiatives to help close gaps in individual academic achievement for students. There are tools available to our students that we do not fully take advantage of. She would like to work with the board and continue collaboration to bring in technology and tools that could benefit the school district.

2. As a community volunteer and organizer she has been a member of many organizations and involved in strategic assessment and long term planning. She has a background in stakeholder and community outreach engagement. She has built capacity in organizations and research development and found potential funding sources. She has done extensive research on outside funding sources and partnership building and collaboration. She does not have experience in negotiations. She is eager, determined and committed to learning from the board. You have done a fantastic job on closing the gap on the budget deficit. She would like to serve in any capacity necessary. She has knowledge and experience in budgeting.

#### Candidate Lavawn Valadez

1. She has had 4 children go through TUSD. Three of them were on IEPs. She has been working in the classrooms with teachers for over 22 years. She understanding the challenges they face. She spoke with Dr. Stephens and Dr. Goodall on several occasions. There is a lot that could be done. The board can come together and work with classified and teachers and she is excited to take on that challenge.

2. She has a background in insurance and finances. She has worked with the teachers and students and has been on committees and meetings for the schools. She feels like she has experience and is proud of what we have done.

Trustee Costa thanked the candidates. Her number 1 pick is Mr. Silcox. Trustee Souza commented that there are many great people here. She votes for Mr. Silcox. Trustee Kaur thanked everyone for being here. She hopes that they keep active in the schools. She picks Vecky Elliot. Trustee Alexander thanked everyone. His pick is Dr. Dr. Agastya. Trustee Pekari commented that this is a very hard decision and no matter what they should keep involved. His first choice is Mr. Silcox. Trustee Abercrombie thanked everyone. His first pick would be Mr. Silcox.

**Action:** Costa, Souza. **Vote:** Yes-6; No-1(Alexander)

President Abercrombie administered the oath of office to Jeremy Silcox.

**Adjourn: 6:40 pm**

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Clerk

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Date