

ROSEBURG PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Regular Meeting

Roseburg High School – The Rose Theatre

400 West Harvard Avenue, Roseburg, Oregon

Vol 2 No. 18

March 17, 2021

Board Members:

Dr. Brandon Bishop	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rodney Cotton	Exc
Micki Hall	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rev. Howard Johnson	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rebecca Larson, Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>
Charles F. Lee	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steve Patterson, Vice Chair	Exc

Administration:

Jared P. Cordon, Superintendent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Richard Burton, Director of Student Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Robert Freeman, Director of Human Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>
Michelle Knee, Assistant Superintendent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cheryl Northam, Chief Operations Officer	<input type="checkbox"/>

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

TIME/PLACE: A regular meeting of the Douglas County School District No. 4 Board of Directors was held at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 17, 2021, in The Rose Theatre on the campus of Roseburg High School, located at 400 W. Harvard Avenue in Roseburg, Oregon, in person and accompanied by live streaming.

CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Board Chair Rebecca Larson confirmed that we had live streaming active and called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed attendees. Student Services Director, Richard Burton, led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDANCE: Board and Cabinet members attended in person, with the exceptions of Director Steve Patterson and Director Rodney Cotton, who were both excused. Education reporter, Sanne Godfrey and RHS Leadership student, Marin Gray, also attended in person.

COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD / REVIEW OF AGENDA

Superintendent Cordon informed the Board that there were no changes to the regular agenda this evening. Mr. Cordon thanked our Technology staff and Communications Analyst, Chelsea Duncan, for facilitating the videotaped reports from the Student Recognition and RHS Student Leadership Report portions of the agenda.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

A previously videotaped presentation by Rose Principal, Randal Olsen, to Rose School Student, Shervon Madison was viewed by the Board. Mr. Olsen reflected that Shervon was highly deserving of this recognition, demonstrating hard work and becoming a safe and inclusive leader on the Rose campus. Especially supportive of new students, this student reminds her teachers why they entered the profession. Randal summed up his pride for this student, sharing that Shervon's drive is forever and ability to lead with equity is a model for us all. Chair Larson shared that we wish we could have honored Shervon in person, but are very proud of her.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP REPORT

RHS students Marin Gray and Chelsea Miller appeared via video to provide an update of activities at the high

school. Chelsea shared that counselors have been helping students with 2021-22 registration. The RHS Closet is opening soon as a valued resource for students. FBLA regional competitions organized by Logan Bishop, Aiyana Brown and Joey Garcia were held in February resulting in 26 placements. The virtual Brain Bowl trivia competition is coming up. FFA students are excited to be receiving their piglets and both staff and students are getting excited for Spring Break. All sports but X-country are being live streamed including baseball, golf, softball, lacrosse, basketball, track, tennis, football and soccer. Athletes are very happy to be running outdoors.

Spirit Week highlights will include “Spring Training Day”, “Spring into the Future”, a “Taking Care of the Earth” social media contest; “Earth Day” and “Favorite Spring Outfit”. The leadership students are also working to build their leadership capacity and have finalized the ASB constitution revisions. Seniors will be providing input via a survey inquiring about proposed end of year senior events. To promote positive atmosphere at RHS, “Music in the Hall” has begun, along with individual outreach to ensure students are supported, valued and develop a strong sense of belonging.

CONSENT AGENDA:

The Consent Agenda was presented, including Approval of the Consent Agenda, Minutes from the February 24 Board Meeting, along with Gifts to the District. Personnel actions included a recommendation to employ Alexis Smith, Second Grade Teacher at Green Elementary School, a temporary position for the 2020-21 school year. Notices of resignations and retirement included:

- Sharon Bareswill, Fourth Grade Teacher at Winchester Elementary, will be retiring at the end of the school year after 34 years in education;
- Cary Cermak-Rudolf is resigning at the end of the school year and will be joining the administrative team at the Sutherlin School District;
- Casey DeGroot, Fifth Grade Teacher at Sunnyslope Elementary, is resigning at the end of the school year after four years in the District, with plans to relocate;
- Sarah Koens, RHS Counselor, is resigning after 15 years in the District in order to relocate at the end of the school year; and
- Morgan McLain, Fifth Grade Teacher at Sunnyslope Elementary, is resigning at the end of the school year following three years in the District.

Director Micki Hall moved to approve the Consent Agenda and Director Brandon Bishop seconded. The Motion passed unanimously.

M2-85 Approved the Consent Agenda

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Chair Larson opened the Public Participation portion of the meeting, explaining that with Douglas County currently designated extreme risk, the public had been encouraged to submit any comments to the Board members electronically. Board members are now in receipt of public comment submissions from Owen Bascom, Megan Bentley, Pretty Deer Eagleman, Trina Johnson, Meredith Krugel, Annie Reichelt and Michele Torvik. Ms. Eagleman advocated to retain the current RHS mascot, and the others advocated to retire the mascot.

2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR PROPOSAL

Human Resources Director, Robert Freeman, reviewed the proposed 2021-22 school year calendar, noting that

the draft is very similar to the 2020-21 calendar and has been vetted through District administration, union representatives, office managers and District Office staff. With Labor Day occurring on the sixth of September, this calendar would reflect a student start date of August 30th. The last student day would be June 9th.

Director Micki Hall moved to adopt the 2021-22 school year calendar as proposed. Director Howard Johnson pointed out that the potential make-up days are in February, March and June, and recalled that in previous years there had been concern expressed at make-up opportunities late in the school year. Mr. Freeman noted that the make-up days are placeholders in the event of emergency closures that assures that students benefit from being in the classroom. Director Charles Lee seconded, and the Motion passed unanimously.

M2-86 Approved the proposed 2021-2022 School Year Calendar as presented

PERS PENSION BOND FUNDING

Chief Operations Officer, Cheryl Northam, had provided an explanatory memo regarding the consideration of the issuance of pension obligation bonds. If the Board is interested in this opportunity, they would need to consider a final opt-in or opt-out formal action in June. The District participated in two issuances in the early 2000's resulting in cumulative investment earnings approximating \$15,602,572 since 2004.

The Board viewed a levy rate analysis provided by Carol Samuels, Managing Director of Piper Sandler. Interest rates are currently at historic lows. Over 100 Oregon pension obligation bonds were issued between 1999-2018 with interest rates ranging from 3.43 to 7.06%. Generally positive PERS returns since borrowings means that most, but not all, have realized savings, but carry significant risks. Success depends on the market returning more than the cost of the bonds. Current projected borrowing rates are at 3.5%.

Cheryl explained that based on the analysis, if true interest cost is 2.5%, we would have an approximately 95% chance of success. If interest rates were at 4.5%, chance of success drops to 80%.

Director Micki Hall moved to approve moving forward with consideration of issuance of pension obligation bonds. Director Brandon Bishop seconded. After numerous questions regarding a maximum rate cap, Director Micki Hall amended her motion to reflect a rate cap of 4.5%. Director Brandon Bishop again seconded, and the Motion passed unanimously. Cheryl will present a resolution for consideration at a future Board Meeting.

M1-87 Approved the consideration of issuance of pension obligation bonds not to exceed an interest rate of 4.5%

COMMITTEE REPORT – BUILDING & SITES (March 1, 2021)

Committee Chair, Howard Johnson, stated that it was a privilege to share that Building & Sites Committee met and reviewed three key areas: 1) Bond Measure; 2) Bond Marketing; and 3) Location of an agriculture building to be placed on the RHS campus. Minutes were included in the Board Packet.

The Board did confirm their interest in moving forward with a May 2022 bond measure. Superintendent Cordon agreed to have project costs recalculated from the prior bond effort and will provide those to the Board as soon as they become available. The Board asked that a Work Session be scheduled either April 14 or 28 to begin discussing next steps.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

The Superintendent shared an inspiring recap of March 2020-March 2021, illustrating how far we have come in spite of the challenges resulting from the pandemic. His report began with a quote from Nelson Mandela, *"There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children."* The numerous accomplishments this year have included providing emergency child care services to 85 front-line workers at the beginning of the pandemic; distribution of thousands of tech devices and hot spots to students to support distance learning; provided 645,105 free meals to children in our community, including breakfast, lunch and dinners; hundreds of family home visits provided by our principals and staff to reconnect with students and support families in crisis. An Operations Team was created to support health and safety guidelines as required by the state and we have successfully reopened our schools with a measured, predictable approach that prioritized the health and safety of our students and community.

The District implemented a Learning Management System and successfully procured webcam technology to facilitate remote and hybrid learning. Our IT Department made vast improvements to the district's network and information structure to ensure our students and staff have the access and reliable connectivity required to navigate remote and hybrid learning.

Roseburg Public Schools was the first 6A school district in Oregon to reopen to in-person learning and we have managed to limit the spread of COVID-19 in our school environments. Despite the pandemic's disruption of the final portion of the 2019-20 school year, graduation rates saw significant improvements. RHS graduation rates grew by approximately 10 percentage points, to 86 percent. Our District continues to be a resource for many school districts across the state in terms of reopening planning and implementation strategy. Many state agencies and partners continue to reach out to us to better understand how to successfully prioritize students, community and staff needs in the short and long term.

Student Investment Account (SIA) funds this year have gone toward increased staffing to reduce class sizes and expand opportunities and supports for students; the elimination of student fees to expand access, and purchasing books for school libraries. More robust SIA funding is expected in upcoming years and will fund four elementary STEAM teachers; social emotional learning support; and the expansion of before and after-school activities such as robotics, coding, drama and art.

Throughout the pandemic and beyond, we know that our students and families appreciate learning model choices. Next year, RPS will roll out our virtual school options for students interested in working toward an RHS diploma at their own pace remotely.

And finally, a successful May 2022 bond measure would increase levels of safety, opportunity and quality for students for years to come by providing the consistent funding levels unattainable via grants, SIA and other intermittent support. We look forward to working with our community partners to create learning environments that our entire community can be proud of.

INDIVIDUAL REPORTS BY DIRECTORS

Director Charles Lee shared that he enjoys coming to these Board Meetings with his fellow directors.

Director Micki Hall stated that she is proud of the work of this Board, even when they don't agree, in representing a resilient Roseburg Community. She also noted her enjoyment of attending Board Meetings and

the back and forth conversation with fellow Board members. Director Lee expressed that he considers it an honor to serve with her as well. Director Hall did suggest that the Board consider contracting with the Oregon School Boards Association (OSBA) to facilitate an update of District policies to assure that we are in compliance with Oregon law. This was last done in 1997. This would not mean the elimination of the Policy Committee, as they have done a good job, but it's challenging to move forward quickly enough to remain in compliance.

Director Howard Johnson reflected that he has observed the First Student buses on the road and stated that they are doing a fantastic job getting our kids to school and back again. He encouraged the District to communicate to First Student staff that they are doing a fine job for Roseburg Public Schools.

Chair Rebecca Larson thanked everyone for their grace and patience throughout this challenging school year. We have all learned a lot. She is looking forward to taking lessons learned and using them as a springboard. Chair Larson assured those viewing the meeting that written public comment was accepted and has been given to the Board and they will all be reviewed. This Board is listening to all of you.

ADJOURNMENT: With all business concluded, Chair Larson adjourned the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

Jared P. Cordon, Superintendent

JPC/jlk

Next Meeting: April 14, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in The Rose Theatre located at Roseburg High School, 400 W. Harvard Avenue, Roseburg, Oregon.