



Board of Directors, Special Meeting/Workshop and Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 26, 2022
RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 400
BENTON COUNTY, RICHLAND, WASHINGTON

The Board of Directors of Richland School District No. 400 met for a Special Meeting/Workshop and Regular meeting Tuesday, April 26, 2022, at 4:30 P.M. via Zoom and in person, 6972 Keene Road, West Richland, Washington. School Board President Jill Oldson presided. Board members present: Kari Williams, Audra Byrd, Semi Bird, and Rick Jansons. Administrators present: Superintendent Dr. Shelley Redinger, Deputy Superintendent Mike Hansen, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education Brian Moore, Executive Director of Financial Services Clinton Sherman, Executive Director of Information Technology Mike Leseberg, Executive Director of Operations Richard Krasner, Executive Director of Teaching, Learning and Curriculum Nicki Blake, Executive Director of Special Education Dr. Tracy Blankenship, Director of Communications Ty Beaver, and District Counsel Galt Pettett.

1. Workshop Topics: 2022/2023 Budget

Ms. Oldson called the special meeting to order at 4:37 P.M. Clinton Sherman, Executive Director of Finance, reviewed the General Fund Revenue Projections. Mr. Sherman reported budgeting for 13,375 students for the upcoming year. He stated the District is grateful for the community support for the recent levy and reported the voters approved the levy amount. This amount does not increase when assessed valuations rise. Summer school will be offered at no cost to students using Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds again this year. Total Revenues for the 2022/2023 school year are estimated at \$208,436,200.

Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) funds were discussed. Over the past several years this payment has been reduced from \$5M to \$2.5M. These funds go into Capital Projects since the amount varies from year to year. The Hanford Site is approximately 85% of the District land. Mr. Sherman also explained the District was able to keep all staff during the drop in enrollment due to the pandemic. State stabilization funds received were used to back fill salaries.

Ms. Oldson recessed the meeting at 5:46 P.M. The meeting was reconvened at 6:00 and moved directly into executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (Personnel, Legal)

The Board adjourned to executive session at 6:00 P.M. to discuss qualifications of an applicant for employment or review of performance of an employee (final actions must be taken in public and discussions affecting employees generally must be held in public) 42.30.110 (1) (g); and discussion with legal counsel, of enforcement actions, litigation or potential litigation, if public discussion might result in an adverse legal or financial consequence. (Does not permit an executive session solely because attorney is present.) 42.30.110 (1) (i). The executive session was projected to last thirty minutes, with no action expected. Executive session ended at 6:26 P.M.

The Board returned to the regular meeting at 6:33 P.M.

2.0 CALL TO ORDER

2.1 Pledge of Allegiance

2.2 Roll Call-All Here

3.0 COMMUNICATIONS

3.1 Student Representative/Student Advisory Report

Shreya Mehta, Hanford High School Student, was introduced as the Student Representative to the Board for tonight. She also shared information from the recent Student Advisory Committee regarding the process to select two student representatives to the Board of Directors for the next school year.

3.2 GOOD NEWS-Destination Imagination (DI) - William Wiley Elementary

Rachel Clayton, Assistant Principal-William Wiley Elementary, reported 16 teams from the District competed at the state tournament. Students from William Wiley place first in the Team and Instant Challenge events.

3.3 Requests and Comments by Visitors (2 minutes per individual/30minute limit)

Carrie Hallquist shared concern regarding the District paying legal fees for Board members.

Sara Flores Anderson shared concerns regarding the District paying for Board cell phones, asked Board members to recuse themselves from voting on Item 5.2 per policy 1050, and would like a policy outlining the cost of legal fees for Board members.

Rebecca Peterson shared her concern regarding equity vs equality for Jefferson Elementary.

Heather Hadler shared Jefferson Elementary is the highest poverty school in the District and feels more should be provided for their programs.

Elizabeth Lugo shared concern regarding Item 5.2 on the agenda and feels the three board members named need to recuse themselves from voting.

Brianna Watson reported on a Jog-A-Thon at Jefferson and received support from businesses. Ms. Watson asked community members for input on the Bond and some felt partisan politics are at play.

Joe Cotta stated masks don't work and commended the three Board members who voted to stop the requirement of masks in schools.

Evelyn Menzel asked the District to pay the legal fees for three Board members and feels they represent the children of the District.

Giuseppe Rubinacci asked staff to complete a needs analysis for Three Rivers HomeLink.

Ms. Oldson called for a recess at 7:08 P.M. due to crowd disruptions. The meeting was reconvened at 7:14 P.M.

Krista Calvin thanked the student representative for her voice of reason and asked the three Board members to recuse themselves from voting on Item 5.2.

Chrystal Schott stated concern for out-of-town speakers taking time at the previous meeting and asked all to be role models for our students.

Jenn Smith stated Board members are causing upheaval and possibly costing the District money.

Denise Reddinger reported on the *Check and Connect* program happening at Richland High School which recognizes and alerts teachers of struggling students.

Ms. Oldson stated Board leadership will discuss the process for public comments at future meetings.

4.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

4.1 Performance Audit Update

Dr. Redinger reported on the annual State Financial Audit. She reported Mr. Sherman and the Finance Department did an excellent job with no findings reported. Superintendent Redinger is also working with Hanover Research to conduct a new curriculum audit for the District.

5.0 NEW BUSINESS

5.1 Bond Proposal

Richard Krasner, Executive Director of Operations, reported extensive work by the Facility Planning Committee has been completed for long term planning. The Bond proposals will be presented at multiple meetings as well as a Thought Exchange survey to gather further community input. Mr. Krasner introduced Melissa McFadgen, NAC Architecture, who shared proposed project packages. Committee work began in 2019 including meetings with focus groups and middle and high school students. The goal is to develop the final bond package in June with the bond package on the ballot in February 2023. Ms. McFadgen presented three bond packages. Each listed the highest priorities as:

- construction of a third high school in West Richland
- construction of a new and enlarged River's Edge High School
- consolidation of District operations (transportation, technology, nutrition services) into a new building

Multiple other projects were mentioned including safety and security updates District wide, HomeLink expansion, upgrades to Hanford and Richland High Schools, and land acquisition. The cost of Bond packages ranged from \$302,700,000 to \$383,350,000, with the highest cost to include a new elementary school. Board discussion followed.

Cory Plager, DA Davison, shared details of how the proposed bond packages would impact property taxes. Mr. Plager shared existing bonds and tax rate projection amounts with increases in 2024 ranging from \$1.17 to \$1.48/100,000 assessed valuation, depending on the bond package chosen.

Dr. Redinger advised a Thought Exchange survey could begin as soon as tomorrow. Ms. Byrd asked that a needs analysis be completed before the survey. Mr. Bird felt this could be done

simultaneously with the survey. After discussion, there was consensus to move ahead with the Thought Exchange.

5.2 A - Consider Requests, Discussions, and Potential Vote by Board Members to pay Attorney's fees for Board Member Representation at the Superior Court Hearing Related to the Recall Petition - Director Semi Bird

Galt Pettett, General Counsel, recused himself and introduced outside counsels Cliff Foster, Porter, Foster Rorick LLP, and Michael Rio, Bell, Brown and Rio. Mr. Foster was retained by the District as a special counsel pursuant to District Policy 1050-Conflicts of Interest. Mr. Foster shared information involving conflict of interest and stated it is not prohibited by law that Board members recuse themselves. He shared several considerations to be examined before deciding whether to vote to approve indemnity for a person's own legal defense costs or to recuse themselves including:

- 1) failure to recuse may be looked at as an invitation by some for filing a lawsuit.
- 2) a statute that governs school district indemnity that requires anyone receiving the funds to repay them if a court finds the conduct involved was either not within the scope of a board member's duty or acting in bad faith, there is a possibility to recover the funds that were paid.
- 3) risk undermining the credibility of the Board in the eyes of the public.

Mr. Rio, Attorney, stated he had reviewed Mr. Foster's letter and stated it appears to be sound.

Ms. Byrd questioned whether a vote could be done after the recall goes to a judge. Mr. Bird also stated a vote is not needed tonight and would rather leave it to the courts and the people and move forward. Mr. Bird feels the recall would cost the District \$150,000-\$200,000 if it goes forward. Board discussion followed.

It was moved by Rick Jansons and seconded by Audra Byrd that-

THE DISTRICT REIMBURSE BOARD DIRECTOR SEMI BIRD FOR LEGAL COSTS IF THE JUDGE DETERMINES THERE IS INSUFFICIENT GROUNDS FOR RECALL.

Vote: Bird, yes; Jansons, yes; Williams, yes; Byrd, yes: and Oldson, yes.
Motion was approved.

5.2 B - Consider Requests, Discussions, and Potential Vote by Board Members to pay Attorney's fees for Board Member Representation at the Superior Court Hearing Related to the Recall Petition - Director Audra Byrd

It was moved by Rick Jansons and seconded by Kari Williams that-

THE DISTRICT REIMBURSE BOARD DIRECTOR AUDRA BYRD FOR LEGAL COSTS IF THE JUDGE DETERMINES THERE IS INSUFFICIENT GROUNDS FOR RECALL.

Vote: Bird, yes; Jansons, yes; Williams, yes; Byrd, yes: and Oldson, yes.
Motion was approved.

5.2 C - Consider Requests, Discussions, and Potential Vote by Board Members to pay Attorney's fees for Board Member Representation at the Superior Court Hearing Related to the Recall Petition - Director Kari Williams

It was moved by Rick Jansons and seconded by Audra Byrd that-

THE DISTRICT REIMBURSE BOARD DIRECTOR KARI WILLIAMS FOR LEGAL COSTS IF THE JUDGE DETERMINES THERE IS INSUFFICIENT GROUNDS FOR RECALL.

Vote: Bird, yes; Jansons, yes; Williams, abstained; Byrd, yes: and Oldson, yes.
Motion was approved.

Mr. Rio, who was retained to represent the District for the vote, agreed with the Board's decision on whether to cover the legal costs of the Board members facing recall.

Public Comment on Bond Project:

John Nicacio advised the wrestling program at Richland High School has grown, including the girls' program. He asked that facilities for wrestling be added to the bond projects.

6.0 CONSENT AGENDA (approval by a single vote of the Board)

Mr. Bird asked to pull Item 6.4-Superintendent Contract for further discussion.

It was moved by Audra Byrd and seconded by Rick Jansons –

THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS (6.1; 6.2; 6.3; 6.5; 6.6; 6.7; 6.8; 6.9) INCLUDING AN UPDATED PERSONNEL ACTION.

Vote: Bird, yes; Jansons, yes; Williams, yes; Byrd, yes: and Oldson, yes.
Motion was approved.

Discussion: Mr. Bird would like more time for feedback. Mr. Jansons is ready to move forward. Ms. Williams and Ms. Byrd stated if a member wants more discussion, then the item should be moved to the next meeting agenda. Ms. Oldson is ready to move forward. Board discussion followed.

It was moved by Audra Byrd and seconded by Semi Bird that –

THE SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACT BE PLACED ON THE MAY 10, 2022 BOARD AGENDA AND SCHEDULE AN EXECUTIVE SESSION TO FURTHER DISCUSS.

Vote: Bird, yes; Jansons, yes; Williams, yes; Byrd, yes: and Oldson, yes.

6.1 Personnel Actions

CERTIFICATED PERSONNEL

NEW HIRES FOR THE UPCOMING 2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR

Gall, Colette, 1 FTE, Science, Chief Joseph Middle School, non-continuing

Hussey, Heidi, 1 FTE, Science, Hanford High School

White, Lonnie, 1 FTE, BESST, Chief Joseph Middle School, non-continuing

REASSIGNMENTS FOR THE UPCOMING 2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR

Bennett, Erin, 1 FTE, Teacher on Special Assignment, Pacific Crest Online Academy, to
Instructional Specialist, Pacific Crest Online Academy

Corbin, Nicole, 1 FTE, Counselor, Enterprise Middle School, to Counselor, Leona Libby MS

Gaddis, Kimberly, 1 FTE, ELL Instructional Specialist, Tapteal Elementary, to ELL Instructional
Specialist, Enterprise Middle School

Hocker, Melissa, 1 FTE, Leave of Absence, to 1st Grade, William Wiley Elementary

Kok, Shelly, 1 FTE, Resource Room, Leona Libby MS, to 6th Grade Math, Leona Libby MS

Spears, Tamber, 1 FTE, Life Skills to Resource Room, Enterprise Middle School

RESIGNATIONS FOR THE END OF THE 2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR

Deffenbaugh, Kendra, .80 FTE, Science, Chief Joseph Middle School

Klein, Ashley, 1 FTE, Psychologist, Special Programs

CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL

NEW HIRES FOR THE 2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR

Baslee, Paula, Bus Driver, Transportation, effective 4/21/2022

Jimenez, Lynn, Nutrition Services, Richland High School, effective 4/21/2022

Miller, Donald, Mechanic Lead, Transportation, effective 5/9/2022

REASSIGNMENTS FOR THE 2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR

Mak, Jinju, Paraeducator (from Nutrition Services) Badger Mountain Elem., eff. 4/20/2022

RESIGNATIONS FOR THE 2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR

Chmura, Svitlana, Paraeducator, Tapteal Elementary, effective 4/22/2022 (will sub)

LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR THE 2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR

Comstock, Brenda, Secretary, Hanford High School (2nd year LOA)

6.2 Strategic Plan-Objectives

6.3 Updated Calendar-2022/2023

6.4 Superintendent Contract

6.5 Approval of Minutes (April 12, 2022)

6.6 Equipment Grant-Alwardt-Instruments

6.7 Enrollment Monthly

6.8 Budget Monthly

6.9 Payroll and Warrant Information

ASB Fund Warrant Nos. 40006981 through 40006990 for \$12,136.54

Nos. 54000420 through 54000422 for \$2,868.51

Nos. 74000135 through 74000136 for \$9,173.13

Nos. 40006991 through 40006994 for \$23,196.40

Nos. 54000423 through 54000427 for \$113,731.85

No. 74000137 through 74000138 for \$7,956.96

Capital Projects Fund Warrant Nos. 20001791 through 20001793 for \$2,611,127.50

Nos. 52000273 through 52000276 for \$117,216.28

No. 20001794 for \$53,136.90

No. 52000277 through 52000278 for \$41,452.78

General Fund Warrant Nos. 10081024 through 10081140 for \$454,203.46

Nos. 51001570 through 51001588 for \$520,555.77

Nos. 71002646 through 71002678 for \$129,844.33

Nos. 10081141 through 10081198 for \$137,629.37
Nos. 5100159 through 51001599 for \$423,197.59
Nos. 71002679 through 71002691 for \$34,455.44
Self-Insurance Fund Warrant No. 57000078 for \$7,765.08
No. 70000240 for \$684.67
No. 57000079 for \$24,775.10
No. 70000241 for \$278,972.64

7.0 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

7.1 Approval of May 10, 2022 Agenda

The Superintendent contract will be added to the consent agenda for May 10, 2022.

There was discussion regarding an effort to clarify the public comment portion of the meeting.

Suggestions included:

- Signup to speak in advance
- List topic for input
- Residents-list stakeholder category
- Eight spots for each (online and in person) - save one spot
- Two minutes per person-strictly control

8.0 BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT REPORTS

Shelley Redinger shared All Kids Every Day will take place Thursday evening in the Teaching, Learning and Administration building. This week is Office Professionals' Week and she shared appreciation for the dedication shown by these professionals.

Semi Bird advised Jefferson staff that he will do what he can to help since all kids need to learn.

Audra Byrd attended the Parent Advisory meeting and shared more volunteers are needed. Ms. Byrd asked parents to turn in the required paperwork to volunteer in schools.

Rick Jansons spent the weekend at the Washington State School Director Association (WSSDA) Board meetings. He also attended the Parent Advisory meeting and stated the group is focused on students. He reported on the Poetry Slam at Hanford High School where a student spoke regarding hurtful comments in the community. Mr. Jansons reminded all that we are here to serve every student.

Kari Williams reported on the Hanford High School performance of Treasure Island and reminded all of the Special Education PTA meeting tomorrow night.

Jill Oldson will be attending the WSSDA Legislative Committee meetings this weekend. She also stated she visited several schools.

Shreya Mehta shared she hopes all students be allowed to participate on the Student Advisory Committee and Representative to the Board, not just student leaders or Associated Student Body (ASB) officers.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:43 P.M.

RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 400

SECRETARY, BOARD OF DIRECTORS