



**SANTA MARIA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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**Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees  
Thursday, September 19, 2013  
6:00 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

Notice is hereby given that a scheduled Special meeting of the Board of Trustees of Santa Maria Independent School District will be held on Thursday, September 19, 2013 at the Santa Maria ISD Board Room, 11119 Military Hwy Santa Maria, Texas 78592.

The Santa Maria Independent School District offers reasonable accommodations for persons accessing its school facilities, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you require special accommodations, please contact Elizabeth Stenhouse, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools at (956) 565-6308 for assistance.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Melissa Aleman: Good Evening and Welcome to Santa Maria ISD Special Board Meeting. It is now 6:02 p.m. and this meeting is called to order.

**ESTABLISH QUORUM**

**Members Present:**

Melissa Aleman, SMISD Board President  
Belinda Lugo, SMISD Board Vice President  
Noe Aleman, SMISD Board Secretary  
Miguel Zavala, SMISD Board Member  
Jose Gonzalez, SMISD Board Member  
Leonardo Martinez, SMISD Board Member

**Members Not Present:**

Adolfo Hinojosa, SMISD Board Member

**Administration Present:**

Maria J. Chavez, Superintendent of Schools  
Enrique Cuellar, Interim Business Manager  
Leslie McCollom, Attorney for O'Hanlon, McCollom and Demerath  
Renee Betancourt, Attorney for O'Hanlon, McCollom and Demerath  
Elizabeth Stenhouse, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools

**Guest:**

George Lazaro, Senior Engineer with Fulcrum Engineering



**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION**

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

1. Update on Parking Lot Project by Fulcrum Consulting Services

Maria J. Chavez – Good Evening, I want to welcome everyone who is here this evening and very excited to bring to you the update on the High School Project and at this time I am going to ask Mr. Lazaro with Fulcrum Consulting to give us an update

George Lazaro – Thank you Ms. Chavez for the record, I am George Lazaro and I represent Fulcrum Engineering Services. We are the architects and engineering service on this school project and we appreciate the opportunity to be here tonight and provide you a status report as to where we are at this time. Several months ago you authorized us to enter an application to the USDA and it was strictly at a conceptual development level. At this time our firm has a completed application and an architectural report that has been submitted to the USDA stating the facts and the needs for a new school facility for Santa Maria ISD. This facility is a little bit different than most traditional type schools in the sense that it has a hybrid facility. The new school will house both the Junior High and High School under one roof area. What this does to the district the population of your students and is more efficient type of facility and you will not have two separate schools as they will be combined into one. It is efficient for electrical costs, personnel costs and other cost saving across the board. This proposed facility is tentatively located east of your existing high school across River Road. This is the actual facility layout plan that was presented in the architectural report and as a breakdown, the actual new junior high classroom space is around 15,600 square feet and that is what is marked in yellow and for the high school classroom space is 17, 100 and then there is common areas where the high school and junior high will share and that is another 14, 900 square feet and finally there is another area around the facility that is 12,400 for a total roof area of that school is 60,000 square feet. The total estimated construction cost for this facility and that includes the facility, contingencies, equipment, professional services and this as a turnkey is estimated at \$8 million dollars. One of the things as we move forward and we start getting to the point where there is an offer presented to the school to move forward with this, we may go through different types of engineering practices to try to maybe reduce the cost of the project to be able to stretch out the financial commitment. One of the big challenges that we encountered for this project was guidelines by the Federal Government. One was because of budgetary issues with the government through the architectural with this project causing environmental impact was done by the USDA personnel but in an effort to stretch out on the consultants and one of the big concerns that we've always had anytime that we work in Santa Maria is that you all are very rich in cultural historical significance. There is an old fort to the South and a historical church and a plantation that has a lot of significance to it. The biggest challenge was to get clearance from the Texas Historical Commission. Today we received this in the mail and as this was the biggest obstacle we were up against because we didn't know how much work it was going to be to get that clearance due to the proximity of the historical clearance takes longer as a geographical survey needed to be taken and in this case we were working closely with the Executive Director of the Historical Commission and as of today we received a clearance letter where it says no historical properties are affected, project may proceed. That is very good news as this correspondence this morning and I went to make a special trip to the USDA and this is a green light for us. Most of the research related to this project falls on us by doing the necessary research. This is just good all the way across and speaking with the local rep it puts Santa Maria ISD closer for consideration to receive monies for this project. We all know that the end of the fiscal year is coming to an end and they think these monies come from the farm bill but the bill hasn't been used in 10 years. That is good news as well and the other thing we've done, the last time I was here is our team of architects have worked up a rendering drawing and a picture is worth one

thousand words. One of the architectural features that you have at the other schools and this becomes a reality and we develop a master plan these will blend together. We went ahead and did a good job to show the different views and it gives you a good idea of how this facility may look in the future. Of course working with the community we will develop other concepts to move forward. Overall, it is good news for Santa Maria ISD and maybe the government coming in and presenting an offer within the next 60 – 90 days and everyone to roll up their sleeves and get to work and bringing those back for review to work sometime next summer and perhaps new students start in 2015 in a new facility if everyone works out. Does anyone have any questions? You are welcome to stop by Ms. Chavez's office to see these renderings.

Jose Gonzalez – Can you turn the renderings around so the audience can see, please?

George Lazaro – I'm going to leave the renderings here so you can see them. They are subject to change but a 60,000 square foot facility is the main plan.

Maria J. Chavez – Mr. Lazaro, thank you for your hard work and I know this was a project that was difficult to get underway but I appreciate your persistence and working closely with us as we defined this initiative. We not only addressed facility needs, but we look at a long range plan for Santa Maria ISD for the next 20 years. We welcome the concept of housing two schools within one facility and as we begin looking at operations cost, this is the needed innovation, for efficiency and cost effectiveness

George Lazaro – Fulcrum Engineering appreciates working with Santa Maria ISD, thank you.

Maria J. Chavez – We also scheduled you to give us an update on the on the parking lot project as well.

## 2. Update on District Status of HS Project USDA Application by Fulcrum Consulting Services

George Lazaro – Yes, and I'm going to do the best I can as the Project Engineer, Daniel Campos, had a previous commitment and could not get out of it but I have been working with him and we've done a lot of the field work to be able to redesign and provide enough elevation to the parking lot and be able to vacate the water in the manner so it will not stay on the parking lot and not hurt any of the asphalt type work that gets done. Our team has come and done the initial stages but because of the rain for the last 14 days it has prevented us from doing the final survey but it has been a blessing in disguise because we can also see where the problems are and they've been out here taking pictures as part of the development and research to the design of those plans. In talking to the Department of Transportation, their thinking is also changed a bit in the rural areas. It used to be that water that came off facilities was welcomed to their ditches and migrated south into the river as urbanization moves and that is how they're evaluating it. They made the call that the school district needs to make plans for the water to release it into the roadway and it will help remedy and different theories go into designing a parking lot and it will create a shallow pond area and what that does is it helps us take that dirt and migrate it to raise and bring the water to bleed it out into the highway at a controlled rate. I'd say that our plans are 85% complete and my crew needs to do some final plans but we should have them for competitive bids within the next two weeks. When we do that we will meet with Ms. Chavez and once she feels comfortable we will then move forward to receive those bids, evaluate and bring back to the board for consideration. That is my report for tonight.

Jose Gonzales – What role does the county play in this?



George Lazaro – It is a shortfall to where the school is to the highway. One of the things we will work with is the way to the river road is cleaned out completely and by controlling some of that flow at an adequate rate and address the issue that is happening now which is when it rains the water stays in puddles. It seeps into the areas where it stays so we are working with the county.

### **ACTION AGENDA**

Maria J. Chavez – At this time, I'd like to report that Santa Maria ISD is working on the Race to the Top Grant in collaboration with Monte Alto and Lasara ISD. Monte Alto ISD will serve as the fiscal agent and prior to pursuing the collaboration we engaged in a required staff vote as we are proposing changes to the evaluation system for teachers, principals and Superintendent. These proposed changes will include a student performance component, the district wide vote shows only 7 individuals that were against the district pursuing this initiative. The Race to the Top Grant will allow us to pursue 4-10 million dollars for all three school districts based on the ADA. This funding will allow us to continue our college readiness initiative. We have improved in this area as well as our dual enrollment. We need to expand on the career and technology pathways. We continue improving our delivery system to increase our teaching effectiveness. We need to close the achievement gap across K-12. All initiatives are through the Race to the Top Grant will increase high school graduation and college readiness.

### **Curriculum and Instruction**

3. Discussion and possible action to approve to move the Santa Maria High School graduation to Saturday, May 31, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.

Maria J. Chavez – The administration recommends the approval of this change. We will close the instructional year on that Monday, if we had initially proposed the graduation on that Monday. Based on communication with the staff and community, we are recommending the change to the Saturday graduation and possibly provide for those traveling out of town.

Leonardo Martinez – This is just for the High School, not the Junior High?

Maria J. Chavez – We will make the necessary adjustments at this point for Middle School, but this evening is for High School graduation.

Motion made by Belinda Lugo, seconded by Noe Aleman. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Discussion and possible action to approve the proposal by American Reading Company for the 2013-2014 Reading Initiative for Tony Gonzales Elementary

Maria J. Chavez – At this time, the administration recommends no action. The school has worked with the staff to try to review this instructional resource and we are still formulating initiatives at this point.

### **Governance**



5. Consider and take possible action regarding termination of the Monthly Retainer Legal Services Agreement with O'Hanlon, McCollom and Demerath, P.C. dated April 16, 2012

Maria J. Chavez – The administration recommends to terminate the monthly retainer for O'Hanlon, McCollom and Demerath Legal Services rendered by O'Hanlon, McCollom and Demerath and to instruct the administration to the termination of services further moved that the district use general counsel of Walsh, Anderson, Gallegos, Green and Trevino, P.C. who are currently engaged in representation of the district current litigations.

Jose Gonzalez – Can I ask why the change?

Melissa Aleman – We just wanted to see what other options are out there?

Jose Gonzalez – The board decided this?

Melissa Aleman – We had two members plus myself who wanted to put this item on the agenda.

Jose Gonzalez – You say the board decided this, I'm on the board and I did not decide this.

Maria J. Chavez – It's an item on the agenda for us to take action.

Jose Gonzalez – I had a question that is why I was asking.

Motion made by Belinda Lugo, seconded by Miguel Zavala. The motion passed with two opposed by Leonardo Martinez and Jose Gonzales

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Melissa Aleman – It is now 6:29 p.m. and we move into Executive Session.

Leslie McCollom – Madam President, what is the effective date?

Melissa Aleman – Effective immediately.

Leslie McCollom – You do not want us to perform any more legal services as of tomorrow.

Melissa Aleman – That is correct.

Leslie McCollom – We just need to know how quickly to get your files to you.

Melissa Aleman – Thank you – It is now 6:31 p.m. and we move into Executive Session.

Discussion under the authority of Section 551, Texas Government Code: If, during the course of the meeting covered by this Notice, the Board should determine that a closed session of the Board should be held or is required in relation to any item included in this Notice, then such closed session as authorized by Section 551.001 *et. seq.* of the Texas Government Code (the Open Government Act) will be held by the Board after the commencement in open session of the meeting covered by this Notice. Such closed session may concern any or all of the subjects and be conducted for any and all purposes permitted by Section 551.071 through and including Section 551.084 of the Texas Open Meetings Act, including, but not limited to, private consultation with the Board's attorney on any or all subjects or matters authorized by law.

- A. Section 551.071—Consultation with Attorney on Any Permitted Subject Including, But Not Limited to:
  - 1) Discussion with School Attorney on Item(s) Exempted under Attorney-Client Privilege
  - 2) Advise of District served on Tuesday, September 10, 2013 on Threatened or Pending Litigation, Cause No. C-5111-13-1, In the 398<sup>th</sup> District Court, Hidalgo County, Texas
- B. Section 551.072—Deliberation Regarding Real Property
- C. Section 551.073—Deliberation Regarding Prospective Gift
- D. Section 551.074—Personnel Matters
  - 1) Resignations, retirements, terminations, proposed terminations, appointments, evaluations, reassignments, duties, and discipline of Professional, Paraprofessional and Non-Contract Employees; Teacher Substitutes and Substitutes for Maintenance, Transportation, and Cafeteria Department
  - 2) Superintendent’s Contract
- E. Section 551.076 – Deliberations on Security Devices or Security Audits
- F. Section 551.082—School Children; School District Employees; Disciplinary Matters or Complaint
- G. Section 551.0821—Personally Identifiable Information about Public School Student

**RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION**

Melissa Aleman – It is now 6:45 p.m. and we are now In open session – At this time, there is no recommendation on personnel matters

Maria J. Chavez – Administration recommends no recommendation on personnel matters at this time

Melissa Aleman – Next item, Superintendent’s contract

Miguel Zavala – Madam President, I move to increase the Superintendent’s salary as discussed in executive session

Melissa Aleman – I have a motion by Miguel Zavala, seconded by Belinda Lugo opposed by Leonardo Martinez

- 1. Discussion and possible action on items discussed in Executive Session
  - a) Discussion and possible action on recommendations for employment of contractual and non-contractual personnel
  - b) Superintendent’s Contract

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

(May be reconvened, if necessary)

**ADJOURNMENT**

Melissa Aleman – It is 6:46 p.m. Do I have a motion to adjourn the meeting? Motion made by Miguel Zavala, seconded by Belinda Lugo