

NORTH CONEJOS SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-1J
REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

April 16, 2024

District Administration Building

6:30 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting scheduled for 6:30 pm at the District Administration Office was called to order at 6:30 pm by Mary Jane Valdez, President.

ROLL CALL

Kimberly Baroz, aye; Tyler Buhr, absent; Jacob Cary, aye; Nathan Coombs, absent; Kristin McCarroll, aye; Mary Jane Valdez, aye.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA/CHANGES TO CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Kim Baroz to approve the consent agenda as presented, seconded by Kristin McCarroll.

Kimberly Baroz, aye; Tyler Buhr, absent; Jacob Cary, aye; Nathan Coombs, absent; Kristin McCarroll, aye; Mary Jane Valdez, aye.

The motion passed.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

A motion was made by Jake Cary to approve the agenda following additions of action item 11 e. staff resignation, seconded by Kim Baroz.

Kimberly Baroz, aye; Tyler Buhr, absent; Jacob Cary, aye; Nathan Coombs, absent; Kristin McCarroll, aye; Mary Jane Valdez, aye.

The motion passed

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

None

FINANCE PRESENTATION

Presentation of Third Quarter Report

Gale Gallegos reported that General Fund is currently at 73% of budget. Property taxes are low right now due to a new accounting system and with time those taxes should come in and that should help our funds. The cost of energy at the new high school has been very high. The energy is cleaner but more expensive. We have had to move more funds to the high school energy budget and will need to make those changes when setting up the CHS energy budget for next year. There is a question if the solar plans we have now are really benefitting the district. We will need to do an analysis to see if there is a true benefit for the district with the two solar companies we are currently under contract with.

2023-2024 Final Budget

Gale Gallegos shared with board members that some of the numbers have changed from the first budget. She gave the board the prior budget and let them compare to the current final budget to see the changes.

ACHIEVEMENT/ACCOUNTABILITY REPORTS

Principals Report

Please see attached Principals reports. Susan Hamilton reported that she has completed the annual application for the Alternative Education Campus Designation with the Colorado Department of Education. Superintendent and Board President's signature is needed to complete the application. The district will be informed through email if the application is approved.

*Tyler Buhr in at 6:57pm

BOCES Report

There will be a BOCES meeting next Wednesday, April 24th. Nathan Coombs will be unable to attend so Mary Jane Valdez will be attending in his place. Mr. Edgar will get the information to Mary Jane. Mr. Edgar attended the last meeting via zoom. BOCES will be purchasing the property for the new BOCES building in Monte Vista. They will be applying for a BEST grant soon. SLV school districts will probably be looking at a bigger assessment. The District needs to make sure we are getting all the services needed and will need to make sure this is further discussed with BOCES.

NCEA

Misty Espinoza told the board that there was nothing new to report.

Administration Report

The 2024-2025 staffing plan lists all full-time and part-time certified and classified employees recommended for renewal of employee agreements by the administration and superintendent of schools. The staffing plan notes those retiring and requesting a transitional year, voluntary resignations, positions eliminated and added positions recommended for hiring.

Mr. Edgar and Gale Gallegos met with brokers from Assured Partners who are the administrators of our employee health insurance plan. Our current insurance carrier is Cigna and they are proposing a 24% increase in premiums/assessments for the coming year. Accepting this increase would consume more of the HSA benefit and place a greater out of pocket expense on employees. Assured Partners presented three carrier group plans for the coming year. Gravie has provided a proposal on a plan that will actually save employees and the school district money and not increase the deductible and decrease benefits. We are reviewing the plans and will wait to hear a counter offer from Cigna. There are currently six or seven school districts in the San Luis Valley who are under a Gravie health benefit plan. Gravie is not an insurance carrier per-say, but works much like a third party administrator. As an attempt to gain feedback Mr. Edgar sent out a short survey to staff. This was a valuable resource in hearing staff concerns and struggles with our current health coverage. Darren plans to have a recommendation to the board on an employee health/benefit plan for the coming year before the regular scheduled board meeting in May.

House Bill 24-1430 Long Appropriations Bill is in committee and under consideration. The bill is significant in putting together a state budget as it pertains to providing the payment of expenses of the executive, legislative, and judicial departments of the state of Colorado, and of its agencies and institutions, for and during the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024. This bill impacts funding areas from preschool to PERA, and mill levy equalizations. The Colorado state budget proposal looks as though it will make a greater priority on funding K-12 schools. The 40.6 billion dollar budget would increase the average per pupil spending by 7% or \$780 per student. This is great news and we anxiously wait to see whether it changes or not. This would be the first budget proposed since 2009 that fully funded K-12 schools and would erase the budget stabilization factor (debt) the state owes school districts in Colorado. In the case of North Conejos, the state would pay back the BSF which is around \$180,000. Other bills discussed were bills concerning bullying prevention, concurrent enrollment, expansion apprenticeship program, and professional development for Science teachers.

Mr. Brock Miller launched a new website today and it looks very appealing and efficient.

The district has been meeting with Infinite Campus and receiving training on the K-12 online registration for next year.

Recruiting and hiring are under way for the 2024-2025 school year. As soon as the board approves the 2024-2025 staffing plan, we will notify all employees of the district's intentions to renew their employee agreement for the 2024-2024 year. This will be a letter from the Superintendent. We will give staff a sept increase for now and will discuss the raise in the fall as previously discussed in last month's board meeting.

Mr. Edgar is working to complete the audit on the staff attendance policy and leave practices. He will present his finding at a later board meeting.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Sports Complex Concession/Restroom Facility

Currently we have received one proposal on the sports complex concession/restroom facilities. This proposal is from SLV Concrete and is in the packet for the board review. We are currently waiting on a proposal from Robins Construction and Mr. Edgar hopes to have their proposal soon. As we prepare for next year's budget and look realistically at putting together the work for this summer the board will need to make a decision whether to move forward on the concession/restroom facility or not. This decision will dictate how much the district can contribute from capital reserve on other district needs. We are potentially budgeting \$300,000 next year to capital reserve with \$150,000 carryover from this year. The high school parking lot work does need to be done to prevent damage to the current CHS parking lot. We may need to spread some capital projects over one to three years. Mr. Edgar does not believe moving forward now with the sports complex concession/restroom facility will affect salaries, raises, textbooks, etc. Gale Gallegos feels that the time to do this update to the CHS facility is now and we will be fine financially.

A motion was made by Kristin McCarroll to move the discussion item sports complex concession/restroom facility to action item 11 h., seconded by Tyler Buhr.

Kimberly Baroz, aye; Tyler Buhr, aye; Jacob Cary, aye; Nathan Coombs, absent; Kristin McCarroll, aye; Mary Jane Valdez, aye.

The motion passed.

ACTION ITEMS

2023-2024 Final Budget Resolution

A motion was made by Kimberly Baroz to approve the 2023-2024 Final Budget Resolution as presented, seconded by Jake Cary.

Kimberly Baroz, aye; Tyler Buhr, aye; Jacob Cary, aye; Nathan Coombs, absent; Kristin McCarroll, aye; Mary Jane Valdez, aye.

The motion passed

Quarterly Report

A motion was made by Jake Cary to approve the third quarter report as presented, seconded by Tyler Buhr.

Kimberly Baroz, aye; Tyler Buhr, aye; Jacob Cary, aye; Nathan Coombs, absent; Kristin McCarroll, aye; Mary Jane Valdez, aye.

The motion passed.

Second Reading Policies: DIA, DIA-E1, DIA-E2, JLCD, JLCD-R, JLCD-E, JLCD-E-1

A motion was made by Jake Cary to approve the second reading policies: DIA, DIA-E1, DIA-E2, JLCD, JLCD-R, JLCD-E, JLCD-E-1, seconded by Kim Baroz.

Kimberly Baroz, aye; Tyler Buhr, aye; Jacob Cary, aye; Nathan Coombs, absent; Kristin McCarroll, aye; Mary Jane Valdez, aye.

The motion passed.

First Reading Policies: GCE-GCF, GCE-GCF-R, GDE/GDF, GDE/GDF-R, GBA, JLDAC, JLDAC-E, AEA, GBI

A motion was made by Kristin McCarroll to approve the First Reading Policies: GCE-GCF, GCE-GCF-R, GDE/GDF, GDE/GDF-R, GBA, JLDAC, JLDAC-E, AEA, GBI, seconded by Tyler Buhr.

Kimberly Baroz, aye; Tyler Buhr, aye; Jacob Cary, aye; Nathan Coombs, absent; Kristin McCarroll, aye; Mary Jane Valdez, aye.

The motion passed.

Letters of Resignation

A motion was made by Jake Cary to approve the letters of resignation for Judy Bahr, ME teacher (transitional contract); Paige Fringer, CMS Physical Education teacher (transitional contract); Denny Fringer, ME Principal (transitional contract); Esther Sowards, CMS Custodian; Mason Larsen, CHS Social Studies teacher; Antonio Corvera, CMS Math teacher, seconded by Kristin McCarroll.

Kimberly Baroz, aye; Tyler Buhr, aye; Jacob Cary, aye; Nathan Coombs, absent; Kristin McCarroll, aye; Mary Jane Valdez, aye.

The motion passed.

2024-2025 Staffing Plan: Renewal of Certified and Classified Agreements

A motion was made by Tyler Buhr to approve the 2024-2025 Staffing Plan: Renewal of Certified and Classified Agreements, as presented, seconded by Kristin McCarroll.

Kimberly Baroz, aye; Tyler Buhr, aye; Jacob Cary, aye; Nathan Coombs, absent; Kristin McCarroll, aye; Mary Jane Valdez, aye.

The motion passed.

Hiring: CHS Coaches

A motion was made by Kristin McCarroll to approve the hiring of Jeremy Romero, CHS head girls basketball coach and Clare Sowards, CHS head cross country coach, seconded by Jake Cary.

Kimberly Baroz, aye; Tyler Buhr, aye; Jacob Cary, aye; Nathan Coombs, absent; Kristin McCarroll, aye; Mary Jane Valdez, aye.

The motion passed.

Sports Complex Concession/Restroom Facility Project

A motion was made by Jake Cary to approve proceeding with the Sports Complex Concession/Restroom Facility Project by soliciting bids from contractors and awarding a bid to begin construction this summer, seconded by Tyler Buhr.

Kimberly Baroz, aye; Tyler Buhr, aye; Jacob Cary, aye; Nathan Coombs, absent; Kristin McCarroll, aye; Mary Jane Valdez, aye.

The motion passed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

Meeting adjourned 8:15 p.m.

There will be a board work session on the 2024-2025 budget on May 7, 2024 at 6:00pm.
The next regular board meeting will be on May 14, 2024 at 6:30pm.