

**VALLEJO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
MEETING MINUTES OF THE  
CLOSURE AND FACILITIES ADVISORY (7-11) COMMITTEE**

**September 25, 2024  
5:30 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.**

**District Office – Governing Board Room  
665 Walnut Avenue  
Vallejo, CA 94592**

**MINUTES**

Pursuant to Education Code Section 17387 *et. seq.*, the Vallejo City Unified School District ("District") has authorized the establishment of the District's Facilities Advisory (7-11) Committee ("Committee"). The Committee will meet to convene public meetings to solicit input, comments and questions on the disposition and proposed use of certain real property owned by the District.

**1. Call to Order.**

Sarah Polito, Esq., an attorney from Fagen Friedman & Fulfrost LLP, introduced herself to the committee and called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

**2. Roll Call (Present or Absent) and Initial Introductions.**

- (1) **Ralph A. Gross** - Present
- (2) **Hazel A. Wilson** - Present
- (3) **Tony Vargas** - Present
- (4) **Evangeline Espiritu** - Present
- (5) **Ruby Acevedo** - Present
- (6) **Kevin Steele** - Present
- (7) **Melissa Tigbao** - Present
- (8) **Joe Hatchett** - Present
- (9) **Ydelita Valera Gonzales** - Present
- (10) **Katrina Rodgers** – Present

**District Staff present:**

Rosa Loza – Chief Business Official

Dr. Gigi Patrick – Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources

Mitchell Romao – Assistant Superintendent, Operations

Heather Topacio - Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services

Celina Baguiao – Director of Communication

**3. Welcome – Superintendent Ruben Aurelio**

The Superintendent welcomed and explained the role of the committee. Mr. Aurelio asked for the committee to come with an open mind and to be as objective as possible. He also discussed how certain state recommendations are encouraging districts to be mindful about surplus facilities and how resources are being used.

**Each committee member spoke briefly about themselves.**

Tony Gross: In the district since 1988. Tony is retired and will be mindful of his duties with an eye towards protecting the students.

Hazel Wilson: Served on the school board for 14 years. Hazel is very involved with the community. She hopes to look at the causes of the declining enrollment, programs that are being offered, and find what more the district can offer the families.

Tony Vargas: Parent. Tony has a child who attends Steffan Manor and moved to Vallejo from San Francisco several years ago.

Katerina Rodgers: Parent. Katrina Graduated from VCUSD and works at VCUSD as a noon duty supervisor. She is determined to find a solution to the issue at hand.

Melissa Tigbao: Public Works Director for the City of Vallejo. Melissa worked with different cities in her tenure and is an alumni from VCUSD. She lives and raises children here in Vallejo.

Ruby Acevedo: Values the public proceedings and is focused on supporting the children.

Kevin Steele: Teacher for 18 years at VCUSD, and labor negotiator.

Evangeline Espiritu: Teacher at VCUSD. Her children went to VCUSD and she has experience with prior school closures.

Ydelita Valera Gonzales: Went to school in Vallejo in the 80's/90's. Ydelita's kids attend VCUSD, and she was a graduate from Vallejo High. She was also involved in school closures when Hogan was closing as a high school. She wants to be part of the decision making process by providing a recommendation.

Joe Hatchett: Former Military and Director of Operations for the District. Joe wants to assist in making a sound decision for the District.

**4. Public Comments.**

Community members are encouraged to attend the public 7-11 Committee meetings. Any citizen may address the Committee concerning any item that has been described in this agenda or any items under the purview of the Committee. However, Committee members will not enter into discussion nor take action on any item not previously published on the agenda. Citizens are asked to submit a comment card in order to speak.

One (1) Public Comment: A yellow public comment card was submitted by Bridget Winkley. Ms. Winkley spoke about Steffan Manor and how it was/is a popular school with many students she is involved at the site and was attending the meeting because of concern about a potential closing. She wants what is and will be best for the local families.

## **5. Committee Orientation. [Sarah Polito]**

A. The 7-11 Committee's role and Education Code requirements.

Ms. Polito explained the 7-11 Committee's role, and how a minimum of 7, no more than 11 members can compose the committee. The law requires that the Committee be a cross section of the community members and that they listen to the desire of the community and make a recommendation. The goal is to make recommendations for potential closure or consolidation as well as disposition of closed sites.

Ms. Polito discussed the Education Code requirements and how the Committee is asked to review pertinent information to determine surplus space, facilitate a public hearing for the community and develop recommendations that can and should be detailed. A final written report will then be presented to the Board of Education. Ms. Polito described how the Committee is advisory by nature.

B. Review of Brown Act, conflicts of interest, Roberts Rules of Order and Public Records Act applicability to the proceedings, description of norms and protocols for Committee conduct.

The Committee is a legislative body. Transparency is an important component. It is a formal meeting. Ms. Polito gave an example of an accidental illegal committee meeting in a parking lot. Meetings need to be agendaized. The Committee will not have a closed session. We discussed "Serial Meetings", prohibited under the Brown Act and how meetings are conducted around items that are in the agenda only. Public must be given to public and speak, with a 3 minute time limitation. Public records are made available to the public. Binders were given to the Committee for all the information and can be taken home if they choose to. Agendas will be made available to the public within 72 hours before the meeting starts. Roberts Rule of Order is not legally required, but is adopted by legislative bodies for meeting conduct structure.

Quorum – Need at least 6 for a 10 person Committee to proceed. Please inform the Committee if not available to attend the meeting.

Vote – Each member has the right for one vote and to make a motion. Someone will

make a motion, and someone will second the motion.

Conflict of Interest – Economic of Interest. Public official should not benefit financially

Contractual Interest – Cannot have a contract with district

Common Law – Vested interest could be a conflict.

Question from Ruby Acevedo: How is the public notified? Posting of the agenda and through the district webpage developed just for the 7-11 Committee.

What is the draft? Sarah Polito answered: It is a framework. No substance. Explained to Ruby what the framework will be. Conflict of Interest, need an example: Sarah gave an example with an individual for the potential closure and purchase of the property.

- C. Review the Committee’s authorizing resolution and general process expectations.

Ms. Polito explained how the committee was formed and appointed.

## **6. Introduction to the Properties. [Sarah Polito/Mitchell Romao]**

1. Information regarding: Steffan Manor Elementary School
  - 815 Cedar St., Vallejo, CA 94591
  - APN 0071070260
  
2. Information regarding: Vallejo Charter School
  - 2855 Tennessee St., Vallejo, CA 94591
  - APN 0069181220
  
3. Information regarding: Loma Vista Environmental Science Academy
  - 146 Rainier Ave., Vallejo, CA
  - APN 0068011060
  -
  
4. Information regarding: Mare Island Health and Fitness Academy
  - 400 Rickover St., Vallejo, CA 94592
  - APN 0066030010

Mitch introduced himself.

Showed overview of the District and numbered property locations. One correction pointed out is #3. #3 is the old Beverly Hills school. #2 is approximately where Vallejo Charter is located. 20 schools are listed. Only 19 in existence. Vallejo Adult is a program at the Finney Site.

Talked about closed sites to date = 8 schools.

Talked about declining enrollment. Only approaching 8,000 students YTD.

Some schools are hard to close due to the demographics. Schools that are geographically isolated. Schools in proximity to each other are really the focus of these efforts. Explained the green dots on the maps (students enrolled).

## 7. **Presentation and Review of Property Data and District Goals. [Mitchell Romao]**

### A. District Data

- ❖ Committee members were provided with data regarding the student enrollment and facility capacity.
- ❖ The State is saying that we have too much capacity for our school size.
- ❖ Katrina questions the capacity for Pennycook and Steffan. Excess capacity was explained to the committee member for each site. 0% of students in Lincoln were proficient. Need to look at higher proficient rate. Look at: updates in the facility, which campus has been upgraded?
  - Ralph requested information for a list of facilities that has been upgraded
  - Superintendent: 12 schools in San Leandro. Gave an example of how sites can be consolidated.
  - Joe: Where is the enrollment for Vallejo Charter? There is no boundary for Vallejo Charter. No proximity. Everyone attends it through a lottery system.
  - Katrina: Must the district have a charter school? No.
  - Hazel: What happens if we close the schools and what would be available? What is the business next to Loma? It is Elite.
  - Tony: If Steffan Manor were to be sent to Pennycook, how are they being transported? How much further do kids have to walk to go to another school? How much further will it be? Additional data will be brought to the committee on this point.

Cabinet members in attendance were introduced to committee

- District plans for facilities improvements and available funds.

Discussed Bond projects and contracts.

Does not include restricted funds. (LCAP).

Bond funds: Community voted and approve. \$194 million in total

Question by Ruby Acevedo:

Request for data

1. What year for the sites already closed?
2. Where are those kids are now/where were they relocated?

- Costs associated with surplus facility operation.

Law restricts funds from sale, and needs to go back to facilities.

#### B. District Goals

- Introduction of staff-analyzed options for potential consolidation, closure and future use or transition of designated properties.
- When developing reports and recommendations, consider short term and long term consideration. Give the board options, timelines.
- What becomes of the facility/building? Site can become a dedicated site for other program. Loma has the farm.
- Recommending closure of Mare Island, expand Lincoln and get it back to capacity. Robust program can be built.

See District Goals and Options

1. Vallejo Charter – Can become a community hub, professional development center, enrollment center, move health clinic from Pennycook to Vallejo Charter (Short term).
2. Rollingwood is in escrow. Sold for 6 million. Vallejo Charter is more marketable. (Long term). Developers are interested in the property. Enrollment for Vallejo Charter = 350 STD.
3. Question from Committee: Does the district own the parking lot across the street in Vallejo Charter? Answer = YES
4. Question from Ruby Acevedo:
  - a. Want information on who is interested, offers, for Vallejo Charter. Who are they?
  - b. Wants to know for schools already closed, which ones the district owns and does not own.

- Explanation of how these options as justified by program quality, financial and equity principles.

Discussion on Charter Schools such as Elite, GTA, and Caliber. How is VCUSD tied to these charter schools.

- Having charter schools affects our enrollment. When students leave to other districts that also impacts enrollment and funding, they bring their funds to other districts.
- Committee believes that we have lots of good teachers and wants to work on parent/school relationships.
- Hazel Wilson: Look at neighboring schools. Sports program? Music/Bands? VCUSD has no band. Would like to see the Arts at the elementary level.

Napa and Benicia are also in declining enrollment.

**8. Discussion and Review of Potential Recommendations and Data Requests.**

- A. Should the Properties continue to be used for their current purpose?  
What subsequent use should the Properties have?

Think about the 4 sites that have been assigned. Review and plan out ideas and feedback for our next meeting. Consolidating programs will have benefits. List ideas and study the options. Will be discussed and a potential recommendation developed.

Challenge from Superintendent: Did we go far enough with the recommendation?

- B. Discuss Committee requests for additional data and/or information to be provided at the next meeting.

None given.

**9. Action Items.**

- A. Election/Appointment of Committee Chairperson

ACTION

The Committee elected Mr. Tony Gross as the Committee Chairperson.

Motion by: Katrina Rodgers

Second by: Ydelita Valera Gonzales

Vote = 10

- B. Election/Appointment of Individual or Subcommittee to Assist with drafting Committee report. ACTION

Motion: \_\_\_\_\_ Second: \_\_\_\_\_ Vote:

Will not appoint for detail drafting. Full Committee instead.

**10. Meeting Schedule.**

**Meeting Two: October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**Meeting Three: October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024**

**Meeting Four: November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**Presentation of Committee Report: Regular Board meeting on November 20th, 2024**

Possible Study session after 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting for the board to occur on October 28<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> so board can get an update per Superintendent Aurelio.

If a committee member cannot attend a meeting, it is okay to give a recommendation to another committee.

**11. Adjournment.**

**Motion:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Second:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Vote:** \_\_\_\_\_

The meeting adjourned at 7:30pm

Motion by: Evangeline Espiritu

Second by: Ydelita Valera Gonzales

Vote = 10

*Agendas of public meetings and any other writings distributed to all or a majority of the members of the Committee in connection with a matter subject to discussion or consideration at an open meeting of the Committee are public records. If such writing is distributed less than 72 hours prior to a public meeting, the writing will be made available for public inspection at the District Office located at 665 Walnut Avenue, Vallejo, CA 94592 at the time the writing is distributed to all or a majority of the members of the Committee.*

**REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION**

*In order to help ensure participation in the meeting of disabled individuals, appropriate disability-related accommodations or modifications shall be provided by the District, upon request, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Persons with a disability who require a disability-related accommodation or modification, including auxiliary aids and services in order to participate in a Committee meeting, shall contact the District superintendent or designee in writing by noon the day before the scheduled meeting. Such notification shall provide personnel to make reasonable arrangements to assure accessibility to the meeting.*