

RIVERSIDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
MEASURE O CITIZENS' BOND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY APRIL 28, 2021

4:30 P.M.

Virtual Meeting

Before the meeting was called to order, Committee Chair Keith Nelson informed the committee and those watching on ZOOM that due to the orders and guidelines handed down from the governor of California, the health officer of the County of Riverside and the CDC, this meeting would be held electronically only and that there was no physical meeting for the public to attend. He asked that anyone in the public wishing to comment on any particular item to follow the link at the bottom of the screen to submit their request. Requests would be accepted until that specific item came up for discussion. Sergio San Martin provided this introduction in Spanish.

Call Meeting to Order:

The Measure O Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee meeting commenced at 4:33 p.m.

Members Present:

Tina Grande-Field, Keith Nelson, Bob Garcia, Terry Walling, Tom Evans, Lara Martin, Amanda DeLaO, Art Alcaraz, Martin De Campo, Diane Kwasman

Member Absent:

David Bristol, Sarah Simpson, Marilyn Robinson

Staff Present:

Sergio San Martin, Ana Gonzalez, Gaby Adame, Eric Walker, Trisha Degrood, Sonia Barron-Rodriguez, Brandy Wiegand, Lupe Aguilera, Nora Lopez, Rene Castro

Consultants Present:

Tarana Alam from KeyAnalytics; David Casnocha, Henry Castillo, legal counsel for the Riverside District School District; Jeannie Garcia from Jeannette O Garcia & Associates, District auditor

Public Present:

Jason Hunter, Kevin Dawson, Richard Davis, Melody Clark

Public Input

Mr. Dawson, Mr. Davis

Action Items:

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes of January 29, 2021 and February 26, 2021
Dr. Nelson asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes of January 29, 2021. A motion was made by Mr. Evans and seconded by Mr. Garcia.

Public Input

Mr. Dawson

A vote was taken via roll call vote per the Brown Act. The vote was as follows.

Yes: Keith Nelson, Terry Walling, Diane Kwasman, Bob Garcia, Tom Evans, Amanda LeLaO, Art Alcaraz, Tina Grande-Field, Lara Martin, Martin De Campo

Motion carries unanimously.

Dr. Nelson asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes of February 26, 2021. Motion made by Mr. Evans and seconded by Mr. Garcia.

Public Input

None

A vote was taken via roll call vote per the Brown Act. The vote was as follows.

Yes: Keith Nelson, Terry Walling, Diane Kwasman, Bob Garcia, Tom Evans, Amanda LeLaO, Art Alcaraz, Tina Grande-Field, Lara Martin, Martin De Campo

Motion carries unanimously.

Discussion Items

2. Chair and Vice Chair Report Out

Dr. Nelson and Mr. Bristol presented the annual report to the board. The board said it would like the committee to improve its reporting cycle, not have the reporting on action items and comments from the public be delayed by financial reporting. Mr. Bristol suggested that an ad hoc committee be created to work on this. They also want to hear the committee's suggestions for changes in its bylaws and what they feel their duties are and their level of independence. The board wants to have a workshop with committee members and their own operations committee to align on those issues. The dates for this workshop have yet to be determined.

Committee Discussion

Mr. Evans agreed that the communication can definitely be timelier. He suggested that the committee send the board a memo recapping the meeting highlights quarterly and then at the end of the year, combine them for the annual report.

Public Input

Mr. Dawson

3. Financial and Performance Audit

Ms. Garcia, owner of Jeannette O Garcia & Associates, the district auditor introduced herself and shared with the committee what her responsibilities were with regards to the financials: To perform the financial and performance audit on the bonds; To form an opinion as to whether the financial statements of the bonds are presented fairly and in accordance with GAAP and to form an opinion as to whether the bond proceeds were spent on approved projects. Their findings were that the financials are presented properly, and the funds were spent correctly. She explained her testing process and said all the items chosen were on an approved project list.

Public Input

Mr. Dawson

4. Measure O Project Updates

Mr. San Martin summarized the progress being made with the renovation projects.

Highgrove Elementary, Harrison Elementary, Jefferson Elementary and Sierra Middle School projects are completed. Madison Elementary is 95% complete.

Projects Under Construction: Jackson Elementary is 60% complete, Magnolia Elementary is 75% complete, Sunshine Elementary is 65% complete, Adams Elementary is 75% complete and Poly High School is 60% complete.

Also under construction: Arlington High School is 40% complete,

Alcott Elementary, Fremont Elementary and Monroe Elementary, are not yet started, but contracts have been awarded and construction will begin this summer.

Committee Discussion

Mr. Evans appreciated the brevity and clarity of the report. He reiterated his questions from last meeting with regards to how many of the contractors being awarded contracts reside in Riverside, and what the effects of the bidding has been? How much money is going to local businesses? He also wanted to know the level of change orders, and if the projects are staying within budget, with not a lot of scope creep.

Mr. San Martin said they do not have that information with them today but will gather it and bring it to the next meeting.

Mr. Garcia said he has driven by most of the projects and is happy with the progress being made.

Ms. Alam with KeyAnalytics then explained the broad summary of Measure O funds and the individual project expenditures and details, highlighting the new information presented per the committee's request.

Public Input

Mr. Dawson

Committee Discussion

Dr. Nelson asked if there was any financial benefit by the work being completed more quickly due to the COVID shut down.

Mr. San Martin responded that it fluctuated. Some projects benefited from the shutdown and some did not. The phasing went more quickly with the schools being closed. As far as supplies, since some of the projects were bid before COVID, the prices were lower. but the cost of some of the supplies will impact future bids.

Mr. Garcia asked if because of COVID, were any of the projects delayed at an extra expense?

Mr. San Martin said that since a lot of the projects were bid before the shutdown, the timelines were expedited as opposed to delayed. Ms. Gonzalez added that the schedules are set and if there looks like there may be a delay in one area, the project managers can reallocate resources to a different parts of the project so that the overall project is not delayed.

Mr. Evans referred back to the earlier discussion of reporting to the school board and said that since the projects are on time and on budget, that is something that should be conveyed to the board. Also, how much money is going to local businesses is something they would like to hear.

Committee Member Ms. Martin referred back to the prior meeting minutes and said that it had been requested to see total actual expenditures for the finished projects compared to the projected budget. She also said that some teachers are concerned with the layoffs due to reduced enrollments and the committee is here talking about building new schools.

Ms. Alam said that she can show the budget comparisons after the close out period, once all the purchase orders are closed out.

5. STEM Education Center

Mr. Evans asked that if the UCR site does not work out after the environmental analysis, are there alternative sites in mind? He also feels that the costs that are incurred on unsuccessful site searches should not be charged to Measure O.

Mr. San Martin responded, that this site is the one the board wants to move forward with, and they gave instruction at the last board meeting to initiate the CEQA process for the environmental impact report which takes 12 months. There are no other sites in mind at this time. That being said, Mr. Evans' concern is that this process is a big undertaking, and if the results come back that this site is unacceptable, the beneficiary of the Measure O funds will be the consultants instead of the students in the district. He asked if this process could be paid for from a different fund?

Mr. San Martin replied that per the direction of the board, this is a Measure O project and funds have been set aside for this CEQA process.

Community Input

Ms. Clark, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Davis

Committee Discussion

Dr. Nelson asked for more explanation on what the CEQA process involved. How much does it cost? If the site turns out to be unacceptable, this money is gone.

Mr. San Martin replied that this report is specific to this site and is required by the California Quality Act and one of the many studies that needs to be done. Once

it meets the criteria, it will move forward and become a project. The report runs between \$200,000 and \$300,000 to prepare.

6. 19/20 Committee Annual Report

It was discussed earlier about forming an ad hoc committee to further discuss the concerns from the board. Mr. Bristol, was absent, but was appointed the chair of the committee. Dr. Nelson requested for additional members, maybe 3 – 4. Mr. Evans volunteered to join the committee. Mr. Garcia, also volunteered to be on the committee.

Community Input

No public comment.

A vote was taken via roll call vote per the Brown Act. The vote was as follows.

Yes: Keith Nelson, Terry Walling, Diane Kwasman, Bob Garcia, Tom Evans, Amanda LeLaO, Art Alcaraz, Tina Grande-Field, Lara Martin, Martin De Campo

Motion carries unanimously.

Committee Discussion

No Committee Discussion

7. Construction Tours

Dr. Nelson asked staff since there are so many projects going on, is it feasible to go on in person tours? If not, is it feasible that the members can visit the sites on their own?

Mr. San Martin responded that the schools are opening but they are still practicing social distancing, and at this time, outside public visitation is not allowed on campuses. He said he will take the request back to Cabinet to see if and when a tour may be allowed.

Community Input

No public comment

Committee Discussion

No Committee Discussion

8. Future Agenda Items

Dr. Nelson wanted to explain how items are placed on the meeting agenda. He said the staff contacts Dr. Nelson to ask what he would like to add to the agenda other than the standard items. Dr. Nelson said he looks at the prior meeting minutes and reviews the committee comments to see what topics were mentioned by committee members for future discussion. These become discussion items on the next meeting agenda. If between meetings, a member would like to add a topic to the agenda, they can email Ms. Gonzalez and/or Dr. Nelson to have an item added. The agenda is prepared 10 days in advance of the meeting so it can be posted on the site 5 days before if possible and at a minimum 72 hour per the brown act.

Community Discussion

Mr. Hunter, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Davis

Committee Discussion

Mr. Garcia would like to add a future agenda item to discuss why these new schools became part of Measure O. He would like staff to share how these new schools got on the list. Were they community requests? He is concerned as to why the school in Casa Blanca keeps getting attacked. There has not been a school there in over 50 years and he feels that there is no support for a school in a minority neighborhood.

Ms. Martin said that at the last meeting it was mentioned that the new schools are to reduce busing of students. She feels that this is something for the board to discuss, not this committee. She asked about future growth again as she is aware that enrollment is decreasing and feels that should be taken into consideration when talking about the future growth of the district. She asked if there will be funds in the future to sustain new projects built now.

Dr. Nelson said we can itemize this topic for next time, but should not continue this discussion as it is not an item on this meeting's agenda.

Next Meeting

The tentative date for the next meeting is July 8, 2021. The committee suggested that since construction is very active, the committee may want to meet on a more frequent basis. Ms. Martin asked if the next meeting was to meet about the third independent counsel appointment. Dr. Nelson said that the committee is waiting for word from the board as to when this is going to happen. Right now, they are trying to schedule the next regular meeting.

Mr. San Martin said at this time, it looks like the workshop will happen in either August or September. Logistics are still being worked out.

Committee Members Comments

Mr. Evans asked that an item be added to the next meeting to hear a report from the ad hoc committee on their progress for reporting to the board.

Ms. Martin said she would like the exploratory meeting on the legalities to take place before the July meeting, and asked if the committee is going to get an independent counsel to review details of Measure O, what would the process be to select the attorney. She knows a couple of constitutional attorneys and asked if staff was going to choose the attorney or if the committee can choose their own independent legal counsel.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn meeting at 6:31 PM

Motion made by Mr. Evans and seconded by Ms. Grande-Field.

No vote was taken.