SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SPRINGFIELD, OR 97477

SCHOOL BOARD SPECIAL MEETING
MONDAY, MAY 5, 2026

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

A Special Meeting of the Springfield School District No.19 Board of Education was held on May 5, 2026.

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Board Chair Jonathan Light called the Springfield Board of Education Special Meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

A. The Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Light led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. The Land Acknowledgement:

Vice Chair Amber Langworthy shared the following Land Acknowledgement:

We acknowledge that we are in the traditional homeland of the Kalapuya people, specifically the community that was known as Chifin, the area that we now call Springfield.

Kalapuya people, who have lived in this region since "Time Immemorial", were illegally dispossessed of their land and forcibly removed to what are now the Grand Ronde and Siletz reservations over several years, but most notably in treaties between 1851 and 1855.

The Kalapuya are now members of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, and members of the Kalapuya still live, work, study, and thrive in this area, and continue to make important contributions here in Springfield, across the land we now refer to as Oregon, and around the globe.

This information is shared out of a responsibility to prevent the erasure of Native culture, heritage, and people and to ensure a quality contemporary education for future generations.

Attendance

Board Members in attendance included Board Chair Jonathan Light, Board Vice Chair Amber Langworthy, Director Bob Brew, and Director Ken Kohl. Director Nicole De Graff was absent.

District staff and community members identified included Ruth Sylvester, Jeff Michna, and Miranda Cyr.

2. PRESENTATION

A. OGEC - Public Meetings Law Training

Chair Light welcomed board members and participants, introducing Oregon Government Ethics Commission Trainer (OGEC) Ruth Sylvester.

Ruth Sylvester informed the board that the live training satisfied Oregon public meetings law requirements for board members, however participants must engage in live polling and attend the entire session in person to receive a certificate of completion.

The meeting focused on OGEC training for public officials on Oregon's public meetings law. Details of OGEC's jurisdiction, including Oregon government ethics law, lobby law, and public meetings law were shared. Sylvester emphasized the importance of understanding and complying with the law. Key points included the definition of a public meeting, responsibilities of governing body members, and the enforcement of public meetings law. Participants engaged in polling questions to test their knowledge and were reminded of available resources, including OGEC's website and the Attorney General's public records and meetings manual. The training aimed to ensure board members are familiar with the law and its provisions.

Board members freely asked questions and/or posed scenarios for clarification throughout the training session.

Training Topics:

- Responsibilities and Enforcement of Public Meetings Law
    - The Ethics Commission has authority to determine if communications violate public meetings law.
    - Governing body members are individually responsible for ensuring compliance with public meetings law.
    - Enforcement of public meetings law and the consequences of non-compliance, including the role of legal counsel.
    - The importance of open and transparent decision-making, with a focus on public meetings, work sessions, and the need for legal counsel for clarification on specific scenarios.
- Intermediary and Serial Communications in Governing Bodies
    - Serial communications are prohibited by public meetings law when a quorum of governing body members use them to deliberate or decide on any matter.
    - Definitions of public, governing, decision-making, fact gathering, and advisory bodies explained.
- Exceptions to Public Meetings Law
    - Purely factual or educational, and non-substantive communications, such as training sessions, board meeting reminders, and social gatherings where no discussions about official business take place.
- Convening and Communication in Public Meetings
    - Governing bodies gather and communicate through physical meetings, electronic communication, and serial communication.
    - The importance of ensuring that all communication is transparent and complies with public meetings law.
- Decision-Making Process and Types of Meetings
    - The decision-making process includes identifying the nature of the decision, gathering information, assessing alternatives, and making the decision.

    - Regularly scheduled, special, emergency, workshop meetings, and executive and work sessions.

- Non-Meetings and Public Meetings Requirements

    - The importance of being mindful of what is discussed during non-meeting situations.
    - Public meetings are required to be open to the public, with exceptions allowed only by specific statute.

- Legal Counsel and Advisory Opinions

    - The Ethics Commission has issued advisory opinions to governing bodies about complying with public meetings law. The Commission provides advice and makes determinations about public meetings law.
    - The importance of each member of the governing body in being informed and prepared for meetings.

The responsibilities of board members under the new law, emphasizing the balance between public transparency and effective governance was emphasized.

Training Topics:

- Public Meetings Law and Board Member Responsibility

    - Governing body members must be aware of administrative provisions of public meetings law, even if staff support is available.

- Public Attendance and Meeting Location and Access Requirements

    - Public Meetings law does not require public comment or testimony, but governing bodies can choose to allow it.
    - Governing bodies must make good faith efforts to provide interpreters for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing if requested at least 48 hours before the meeting.

- Meeting Notices and Recordings

    - Governing body members are responsible for issuing public notices for meetings, including regular, special, and emergency meetings.
    - Emergency meetings can be held with less than 24-hours notice, but notice must still be given to the media and interested persons.

- Grievance Process and Media Access

    - The governing body is responsible for reporting grievances to OGEC.
    - Media access is determined by the governing body, and individuals can apply to be recognized as media.

- Electronic and Virtual Meetings
    - Executive sessions may be held using electronic communication or by telephone, and media are authorized to attend these sessions.
    - Reasonable security measures can be established to ensure media attendance is conducted through a secure connection or method.
- Media Definition and Compliance
    - The Attorney General's opinion 8291 addresses who qualifies as media and is up to each governing body to determine if an individual meets the requirements.
- Meeting Notices and Posting Requirements
    - Meeting notices must be posted on the public body or governing body's website in an obvious place and include the date, time, location, and subjects to be considered.
    - The governing body must describe the emergency that justified less than 24-hour notice in the minutes of the meeting.
- Recording and Minutes Requirements for Executive Sessions
    - The same documentation requirements apply to Executive Sessions as to other public meetings and all minutes or recordings must be available to the public within a reasonable time after the meeting.
    - Voting must be done by public vote, and the results of all votes, including the vote of each member by name, must be recorded.
- Voting Procedures and Record Keeping
    - Written minutes must state whether the motion passed unanimously or by a split vote.
    - Secret ballots are not allowed, and the results of all votes must be announced during the meeting.
- Voting Procedures and Record Keeping
    - Official minutes recorded by audio or video recording must have the chair announce each person's vote by name during the meeting.
- Public Meetings Law and Executive Sessions
    - The specifics of executive sessions, such as discipline, dismissal, and performance evaluations must be included in the minutes.
    - Public meetings law does not require an adversarial hearing but allows for open sessions, and other laws or contracts may provide additional rights.

— Board Break: 6:45 - 6:51 p.m. —

- Labor Negotiations and Real Property Transactions
    - The provisions for labor negotiations, including the ability to request media to leave.
    - Public meetings law does not allow for general evaluations of agency goals, operations, or compensation; these discussions must be held in executive sessions.
    - Labor negotiations can be conducted in open meetings unless both parties or the governing body and employees request an executive session.
- Real Property and Trade Negotiations
    - The governing body can hold executive sessions to discuss real property transactions, including buying, selling, and long-term lease negotiations.
    - The governing body can hold executive sessions for preliminary negotiations involving matters of trade or commerce when in competition with other states or nations.
    - This provision does not apply when the governing body is in competition with other governing bodies in Oregon.
- Security and Safety Provisions
    - Executive sessions can be held to review or approve security programs for various topics, including data transmissions, telecommunication systems, and hazardous substances.
    - New provisions in 2023 for security and safety, including cybersecurity, safety plans for school, governing body members and staff safety, and security programs for various systems can be held in executive session.
- Media Attendance and Exclusion in Executive Sessions
    - Members of the news media are generally allowed to attend executive sessions, but can be asked to leave for specific reasons, such as labor negotiations, expulsion of an elementary or secondary school student, or review of confidential student records.
- Governing Body Member Responsibilities in Executive Session
    - Each governing body member is responsible for the executive session recordings and/or documentations being in compliance with the meetings law.
    - Actions to be taken if the discussion moves beyond its scope and the process for handling conflicts of interest.
    - The importance of public disclosure of conflicts of interest before entering executive session.
- Grievance and Complaint Process
    - The public body must provide information on how to file a grievance, the statute of limitations for lawsuits and grievances, and time allotted for a public body

response.

- Enforcement of Public Meetings Law
    - Potential financial penalties for violations and the role of circuit court lawsuits.
- Training Requirements and Certification
    - The resources available for maintaining records of compliance with public meetings law.

Sylvester concluded the training session emphasized the importance of reaching out to OGEC and the Ethics Commission for advice, and to consult the Attorney General's public records and meetings manual for detailed guidance.

5. NEXT MEETINGS:

May 7, 2026 – First Budget Committee Meeting at 6:00 p.m.
May 11, 2026 – Business Meeting at 7:00 p.m.
May 14, 2026 – Second Budget Committee Meeting at 6:00 p.m.
May 20, 2026 – Special Meeting at 1:00 p.m.
May 21, 2026 – Third Budget Committee Meeting at 6:00 p.m. (if necessary)
May 27, 2026 – Special Meeting at 10:00 a.m.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Having concluded all business, Chair Light adjourned the Springfield Board Special Meeting at 8:02 p.m.

(Minutes recorded by Trenay Ryan, LCOG)