SMMUSD Financial Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes
Date: Tuesday, September 22, 2026
Time: 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
Location: SMMUSD District Office – Board Room
1717 4th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401

I. Call to Order : 6:17 pm

Committee Members: Ryan Chin, Dillon Christensen, Nicole Drescher, Alex Farivar, Michael Kremer, Payal Maniar, Atul Porwal, Michael Rotgin

Student Representatives: Charlotte Bonnici – Malibu HS, Elina Nagiel - SAMOHI

Staff: Gerardo Cruz, Kimberley Curry Blue, Andrew Lacson, Caryl Hall, Doug Meza, Thomas Piland, Diana Bouchaaya

Board Liaison: Jon Kean, Jennifer Smith (*late 7:10pm*), Stacy Rouse (*late 7:10pm*)

Absent: Casper Casparian, Matthew Crawford, Seth Jacobson

II. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Ms. Maniar and seconded by Mr. Christensen to approve the September 22, 2026, agenda, with amendments to remove Item V. E. and V. F., and to add Andrew Lacson, Interim Director of Business & Fiscal Services to present the Items V. A – V. D. on behalf of Gerardo Cruz, Assistant Superintendent of Business & Fiscal Services.

AYES: Eight (8) –Mr. Chin, Mr. Christensen, Ms. Drescher, Mr. Farivar, Mr. Kremer, Ms. Maniar, Mr. Porwal, Mr. Rotgin
NOES: None (0)
ABSENT: Three (3) – Mr. Casparian, Mr. Crawford, Mr. Jacobson,
ABSTAIN/NO VOTE: None (0)

III. Approval of Minutes

Minutes for June 22, 2026, and August 13, 2026, were moved for approval at the October 15, 2026, meeting.

IV. Appointment of Nicole Drescher to the FOC
Appointment of Charlotte Bonnici, Student Representative from Malibu High School
Appointment of Elina Nagiel, Student Representative from Santa Monica High School

Minutes:
Committee welcomed Ms. Drescher to the FOC for her 3-year term ending 6/30/2028 and acknowledged her willingness to participate. Committee welcomed the new Student Representatives Elina Nagiel and Charlotte Bonnici as representatives for their respective schools, and their eagerness to learn how the FOC supports staff and the district. Committee discussed additional meeting time/date between staff and the Student Representatives for future communications topics.

Action:
n/a

V. Assistant Superintendent, Business and Fiscal Report: Andrew Lacson on behalf of Gerardo Cruz

Minutes:
Staff made introductions of district personnel to the FOC: Diana Bouchaaya, Communications Specialist, Caryl Hall – Interim Assistant Director of Fiscal Services, Andrew Lacson – Interim Director of Fiscal Services, and Thomas Piland – Chief Communications Officer.

Action:
n/a

VI. Discussion/Action Item

A. Welcome New Members & Student Representative

Minutes:
Reference agenda item IV

B. Acceptance of Joint Meeting Minutes and FOC Charges – August 27, 2026

1. Joint Meeting Minutes

Discussion:
Suggestion for staff to include more detailed notes on the context of the conversation about the presentation, inclusive of comments provided by board.

Minutes:
A motion was made by Ms. Maniar with a second by Mr. Rotgin to accept the Joint Meeting minutes without the Charges.

AYES: Eight (8) –Mr. Chin, Mr. Christensen, Ms. Drescher, Mr. Farivar, Mr. Kremer, Ms. Maniar, Mr. Porwal, Mr. Rotgin
NOES: None (0)
ABSENT: Three (3) – Mr. Casparian, Mr. Crawford, Mr. Jacobson,
ABSTAIN/NO VOTE: None (0)

C. Election of Ad Hoc Subcommittee Membership

Minutes:

A. Budget Recommendations

General: ***Chair Chin****, Ms. Drescher, Mr. Kremer, Mr. Porwal, Student Rep: Charlotte Bonnici, Elina Nagiel*

Unfunded Liabilities: ***Chair Rotgin****, Mr. Christensen, Ms. Drescher, Ms. Maniar*

B. Bond Oversight: ***Chair Kremer****, Mr. Chin, Mr. Rotgin*

C. Measure R Reporting & Process Review: ***Chair Farivar****, Mr. Christensen, Ms. Maniar*

D. Financial Communications: ***Chair Porwal****, Mr. Farivar, Mr. Rotgin, Student Rep: Charlotte Bonnici, Elina Nagiel*

E. Nomination: ***Chair TBD****, Mr. Chin, Mr. Porwal,*

F. Student FOC Representative: *Charlotte Bonnici, Elina Nagiel*

Minutes:

Absent FOC members will be added to subcommittees at the meeting on October 15, 2026.

VII. Report/Presentation

A. Unaudited Action Report – Gerardo Cruz, Assistant Superintendent – Business & Fiscal Services & Andrew Lacson, Interim Director of Fiscal Services

Minutes:

Staff provided general discussion regarding press release coverage of the Unaudited Actuals report. General discussion topics:

- Insight on "factually correct information" angle used by media.
- Communications Department providing information piece to the community on meaning of "What is means to be a Basic Aid District" as an educational article.
    - Option presented by the FOC to staff (based on availability) to draft/create a presentation of hot topics as a Q&A, possibly with the Student Representatives.
- Questions answered regarding textbook spending. Staff advised relief provided by 1x General Fund monies that was required to be used.

Dr. Meza provided a general overview on the current negotiations status with SEIU. The next meeting with the SEIU has been scheduled and the CTE is scheduled to have a full reopening and discussion of (8) eight articles.

VIII. Receive and File *(Limited Discussion)* None

IX. Public Comments None

X. Committee Comments None

XI. Next Meeting:

Thursday, October 15, 2026*
Tuesday, November 10, 2026
Tuesday, December 8, 2026 ##
Tuesday, January 12, 2027
Tuesday, February 9, 2027
Tuesday, March 16, 2027*

Tuesday, April 13, 2027 – (pending**)
Tuesday, May 11, 2027
Tuesday, June 15, 2027

TBD (August 2027) **Please note**: This is a Joint Meeting / Study Session with the Board of Education - *SMMUSD Office Board Room, 1717 4th Street.*

#Note: August 13, 2026, meeting will be added as a Special Meeting for Subcommittee Reporting prior to the Joint Meeting with the Board of Education meeting scheduled for August 27, 2026.
Updated Meeting Date: Previously December 1, 2026.

***Note: April 13, 2027, meeting is a placeholder meeting and has been added for calendaring purposes. The meeting is subject to cancellation if it is deemed unnecessary.*

XII. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:37 pm