

El Rancho Unified School District Minutes

Joint Board of Education / Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee Meeting

December 09, 2015
6:00 PM

El Rancho Unified School District
Technology Room
9333 Loch Lomond Drive
Pico Rivera, CA 90660

Attendance Taken at 6:15 PM:

Present:

Jose Lara
Dr. Teresa Merino
Gabriel Orosco
Dr. Aurora Villon

Absent:

Rachel Canchola

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Aurora Villon, President at 6:15 p.m.

1.A. ROLL CALL - Members of the Board of Education

Rachel Canchola
Jose Lara
Dr. Teresa L. Merino
Gabriel Orosco
Dr. Aurora R. Villon

1.B. ROLL CALL - Members of the Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee

Esther Mejia, Chairperson
John Chavez, Member
Vincent Chavez, Member
Javier Pacheco, Member
Susana Rodarte, Member

1.C. ROLL CALL - Members of the Administrative Cabinet

Martin Galindo, Superintendent
Ruben Frutos, Assistant Superintendent, Business Services

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

RECORDER - Sandy Watkins

VISITORS - Register No. 18-2015/2016

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

- 3.A. Approved the Agenda for the Joint Board of Education/Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee Meeting of December 9, 2015.

Motion Passed: Passed with a motion by Jose Lara and a second by Gabriel Orosco.

Absent Rachel Canchola
Yes Jose Lara
Yes Dr. Teresa Merino
Yes Gabriel Orosco
Yes Dr. Aurora Villon

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS - Blue Speaker's Cards

Public Comments is the time when members of the audience may address the Board. Please be aware that Government Code 54954.2 prohibits the Board from taking action at this meeting if the item does not already appear on the posted agenda. In the interest of time, your remarks will be limited to three (3) minutes. We ask that you confine your comments to new ideas to avoid repeating what has already been said. Comments on the same topic will be limited to a maximum of fifteen (15) minutes. Please do not refer to students, employees, parents or other individuals in a derogatory or potentially offensive manner. For your information, Board and Cabinet members may take notes, either written or on an electronic device during Public Comments.

- Esther Mejia thanked the District for hosting the recent parent workshop. She pointed out the need for increased technology throughout the District. Ms. Mejia expressed a concern about the type of meals served to students and offering them more food choices.

5. AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

This is the time on the agenda when the Board recognizes personnel, schools(s) and/or District programs.

- 5.A. Recognition of individuals for their service to the El Rancho Unified School District's Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee.

A plaque was presented to Dr. Teresa Merino and Javier Pacheco for their service and dedication to the Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee and the District.

6. STUDY SESSION

- 6.A. Review 2013/2014 Annual Report Critical Questions and Recommendations

Critical Questions:

- **Critical Question #1:** What procedures are in place to reduce re-opening fees for closeouts? (E.g. September 2013, October 2013, March 2014 DSA expenditures Measure A)?

Answer: During the last year, there were well over 50 outstanding projects. Currently, District staff is working with the architects and DSA on closing out the last two projects without any additional fees.

- **Critical Question #2:** Who is responsible to ensure all projects are closed out by DSA deadline to avoid re-opening fees?

Answer: It is the responsibility of the Assistant Superintendent of Business Services in conjunction with the facilities team to ensure all projects are closed out properly.

- **Critical Question #3:** When bond money is allocated to specific projects, what assurances are there that additional bond money will not be allocated to redo the projects? (E.g. Traffic mitigation projects.)

Answer: The District has implemented a rigorous process in which the way contracts are crafted. In the past, the architect was paid more than 95% of the fee by the time the project went to DSA which left no incentive to redo the project. Currently, we have almost 25% of the fee payable near the end of the process which provides more of an incentive for the architect to finish the project.

Recommendations:

- **Recommendation #1:** The Citizens' Oversight Committee recommends a CBOC member continues to sit on the interview committee when interviewing CBOC candidates.

Response: The District has received one application for the vacancy in the category of an active member of a bona fide taxpayer agency. Due to receiving only one application, the interview process has been waived. For future candidates, the Board approved process will be followed.

- **Recommendation #2:** The Citizens' Oversight Committee recommends a printed copy of the CBOC annual report be made available to the community stakeholders at our local libraries.

Response: District staff will ensure that the report is made available to the local libraries as well as posted on the District website.

- **Recommendation #3:** The Citizens' Oversight Committee recommends the Board of Trustees to expand the roles of the CBOC members by allowing, at a

minimum, one member to sit on Request for Proposal (RFP) committees that involve bond expenditures.

Response: This process has already begun. Invitations for participation will be extended to CBOC members at the discretion of the Board.

- **Recommendation #4:** The Citizens' Oversight Committee recommends an invitation is made to CBOC members when future school site visitations are made where projects funded by bond funds will be expended.

Response: Invitations will be extended to CBOC members when the Board has a scheduled, agenda school visitation related to bond projects.

- **Recommendation #5:** The Citizens' Oversight Committee recommends *cost effective* professional development in financial training be scheduled yearly.

Response: As the District finalizes the implementation of the new accounting system, we still have to train staff. After that is finished, a financial training will be provided to the Board and CBOC members at an upcoming meeting.

- **Recommendation #6:** The Citizens' Oversight Committee recommends protocols from the CBOC handbook should be followed. (e.g. Prior to issuing bonds, notification be made to CBOC members, independent auditors shall meet with CBOC annually, CBOC will be given the opportunity to review and comment upon major changes [10% allocation budget] in bond projects prior to final action being taken [CBOC 2-3].)

Response: Prior to the issuance of any financing or re-financing of a bond, the CBOC needs to be notified for two reasons;

1. The committee has the obligation of documentation.
2. The committee has the obligation to render an opinion based on the cost of issuance.

When we issue a bond in the future, the approach would be to contact the financial team responsible to develop a timeline. Within the timeline there are two approval processes:

1. Board approval of the rates.
2. Board approval of the issuance.

The timeline and approval information would be shared with the CBOC so that they are aware and to give them the ability to document and comment.

A request was made to have the protocols, in writing, be available for review at the next joint Board/CBOC meeting.

- **Recommendation #7:** The Citizens' Oversight Committee recommends the district take a corrective action plan when the audit timeline is not met by bond auditors in order for CBOC to complete the Bond Annual Report in a timely manner.

Response: Last year, the auditor had significant challenges with the timeline for both the District audit and with the bond audit. Since then the District has procured a new auditing firm. Conversations have taken place with the California Department of Education and the Los Angeles County Office of Education to allow the District to change auditing companies in the middle of a two-year contract as well as to secure additional time to complete the audit appropriately. The firm of Nigro & Nigro have completed their initial review and is working more efficiently than the company in the past. The expectation is that the auditor will be in contact with CBOC in January. The contract for services has been crafted in such a way that timelines need to be met or the company does not get paid.

A request was made to have the binder of expenditures ready for CBOC review prior to the winter break.

- **Recommendation #8:** The Citizens' Oversight Committee recognizes the Facilities Master Plan is a living document and therefore recommends in addition to future bond measures that other sources be researched to help cover the FMP cost.

Response: The District has an interest to bring additional funding through bonds or grants to cover the total conceptual cost of the Facilities Master Plan which exceeds \$300 million. Recently, most technology purchases have been funded through E-Rate in an effort to maximize bond dollars.

Discussion took place on the use of Prop 39 funds related to solar energy and water conservation.

- **Recommendation #9:** The Citizens' Oversight Committee recommends that the Facilities Master Plan Board of Trustees presentation updates be archived in the "Projects in Progress" tab located on the District website for community stakeholder review.

Response: In an effort of transparency, District staff will post the facilities presentations from Board meetings on the CBOC tab of the District website. In addition, a request will be made to have the ERUSD2025 website to be brought up-to-date.

- **Recommendation #10:** The Citizens' Oversight Committee recommends that the District website be "mobile optimized" to facilitate viewing CBOC webpage on a mobile device.

Response: The District webpage can be viewed on most mobile devices via the "desktop version" button located at the bottom of the home page.

- **Recommendation #11:** The Citizens' Oversight Committee recommends that the Board of Trustees consider the "School Marquee" FMP project be moved from a legacy project and be made an active project. The CBOC also recommends that they be electronic marquees such as the ones in *the*

surrounding communities (League of Women Voters). Moving up the project ensures more communication with our community and it is also a *visible* use of bond funds at school sites.

Response: The Superintendent has authorized staff to research the purchase of marquees for school sites. Funding has been identified to purchase two marquees per year over the next several years to begin the replacement. A preliminary design and quote have been received for South Ranchito and North Park. A concern is to be able to maintain the current area to not trigger DSA and increase in cost.

- **Recommendation #12:** The Citizens' Oversight Committee recommends that the Board of Trustees considers a sustainability action plan be added to the Facilities Master Plan. Cost savings in water and energy use would improve ability for the general budget to support much needed deferred maintenance projects.

Response: Water and energy use component can be incorporated into the Facilities Master Plan if the Board so desires.

- **Recommendation #13:** The Citizens' Oversight Committee recommends that the Board of Trustees considers joint use projects be continued to be sought out. (E.g. Rio Hondo partnership.)

Response: There are a couple of projects that the District is working on with the City of Pico Rivera in addition to them partnering with us to secure grants. A question arose as to if the District can request project funding from the City through the extra 1% sales tax residents of Pico Rivera are charged.

6.B. School Visitations

The CBOC has requested to conduct a series of school visitations on Thursday, December 10, 2015 beginning at 12:00 noon. Schools visited will be El Rancho High, Rio Vista Elementary and North Park Academy of the Arts.

A request was made for photographs to be taken for posting to the District website.

6.C. Itemized List of Microsoft Reimbursements

An itemized report of requested Microsoft reimbursements was shared with the Board and Committee. We have a total allowable amount of \$138,000 for hardware and another \$282,000 for software. We have submitted for reimbursement far in excess to ensure we receive our total allowable reimbursable amount. We expect to be notified by March 2016 of our allocation.

6.D. Update on Microsoft Software Available to Students

The District team has been working on accelerating the process. A document summarizing the steps to implement was shared with the Board and Committee. It is the District's goal to have student access to Microsoft Office 365 by January, 2016.

- Question: Does the staff have access to Microsoft Office software?

Answer: Staff has an opportunity to purchase a license for \$10.

- Question: Is offering Microsoft software to students an addition to Google Docs?

Answer: Yes, students will have access to both platforms. The District is building a strong institutional partnership with Google.

- Question: How will students and parents know they have access to the software?

Answer: We will send an email to all students, publish on the website, provide the information to the principals and send an automated telephone message.

6.E. New Bond Law Firm - Future Training for CBOC Members

The District has new bond counsel. Once a full Committee membership is established, training with the law firm will be scheduled.

6.F. Update on CBOC Vacancies

There are currently three vacancies on the Committee; a member of a bona fide taxpayer organization, a member of the business community and a member at large. We will attempt to bring forth a new member to the Board for approval at the December 15, 2015 meeting.

7. ADJOURNMENT

- 7.A.** Adjourn the Joint Board of Education/Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee Meeting of December 9, 2015.

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Motion Passed: Passed with a motion by Dr. Teresa Merino and a second by Gabriel Orosco.

Absent Rachel Canchola
Yes Jose Lara
Yes Dr. Teresa Merino
Yes Gabriel Orosco
Yes Dr. Aurora Villon

NOTE: Exhibits listed herein are a part of these minutes and are filed in the Official Board Minutes Record Book of the Board of Education, which is open for public inspection.

Minutes approved, as written , as corrected

Board President

Superintendent
