

**SAUSALITO MARIN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
April 21, 2015**

ATTENDANCE

Board Members Present: Caroline Van Alst, William Ziegler, Thomas Newmeyer,
Ida Times
Absent Joshua Barrow
Superintendent: Steve Van Zant

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

The Board and Superintendent convened closed session at 5:01 p.m.

RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION

Open session reconvened at 6:07 p.m.

REPORT OUT OF CLOSED SESSION

Trustee Van Alst announced that no action was taken in closed session.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Trustee Ziegler led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA ORDER

The agenda order was approved.

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

Trustee Ziegler said he would like to thank Principal Newton for the tour of Bayside MLK Jr. Academy that he was given. The teaching environment has improved substantially. It fit my idea of what a school should be doing and the students were all well behaved, he said.

Trustee Newmeyer said that both he and trustee Barrow visited the school on separate occasions. The campus looks good and teachers and students were all engaged, he said.

Trustee Times said that she attended the annual meeting of the California Association of African American Superintendents and Administrators in San Diego. This was a great experience; I kept hearing Dr. Thornton's name wherever I went, she told the board.

Trustee Van Alst reminded everyone that the annual Marin County School Board Association meeting will take place May 27 in Tiburon. She encouraged all to attend.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

Alan Rothkop, the director of maintenance and operations, said that Willow Creek Academy's new lights are almost all installed. It has made a lot of difference to the school, he said.

The fence at Bayside MLK Jr. Academy is up. We are missing a couple of gates which will be installed this week. Principal Newton has been informing the community about the project's progress.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Van Zant said he had the pleasure of being principal for a day. It was an uneventful, quiet day, which was a good thing, he told the board.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Principal Jonnette Newton said that there are a few important matters regarding our students that we must face and discuss. She handed out a list that outlined the mental health issues affecting Bayside MLK Jr. Academy students. She told the board: Teachers have to deal with these issues as well as teach; this is a heavy load for them.

She continued: Our students sometimes simply refuse to do their work. Five weeks of summer school cannot make up for 36 weeks of the school year. I asked the counselor to look at the social and mental health issues of these students. As the data shows, these failing students are dealing with many traumas, including domestic violence, violent death of a family member, homelessness, parental neglect, physical and sexual abuse, a parent in jail. In addition, they are not seeing a lot of people in their environment who are using education to improve their lives. We still have a lot of work to do to help our pupils. We are going to create counseling groups for our middle schoolers to talk about issues that are getting in the way of their education and to help them to see what is stopping them. It is evident that negative peer influence is one of the big problems that these students face.

Trustee Ziegler said the lower grades have the same issues, why aren't they affected in the same way? Principal Newton said most of the students in individual counseling are the younger pupils. This is why the Tam High School district complains that our students do not enter 9th grade well prepared. Our parents also need support and counseling. One of the pushbacks we get from parents is that they want their children to be tested for special education - they have heard that special education students will not be held back.

Trustee Times said this is deflating. I have been looking at the work of the Harlem Children's Zone Project and its leader Geoffrey Canada. I plan to raise some flags to let the community know about this crisis. Our parents should be petrified, she said.

Principal Newton said we need to talk about summer school and how we will shore up the academics. We have asked the parents of all failing students to come in and talk to us.

Trustee Newmeyer said it is imperative to let the kids know that they will not be moved up if they are failing. Unless that one factor – the students' attitude towards learning - changes, nothing else will work. This is the line in the sand.

Trustee Ziegler said this can't continue. There has to be intervention to avoid repeating this pattern - We have to have a viable program. Superintendent Van Zant said you passed the resolution about grade level expectations, now we need to show resolve and stand behind Principal Newton as she implements this. Rather than relying on outside people who parachute in, let's rely on Marin City community members.

Trustee Van Alst asked about fifth graders. Principal Newton said we have a great group of 5th and 6th graders. The 6th grade boys are on the edge, so we have to include them in our counseling groups so they do not adopt the wrong attitude.

WCA REPORT

Head of School Royce Conner reported that Willow Creek Academy raised over \$61K during its annual benefit and auction.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Science Teacher Denise Suto gave an update on the Sausalito Sakaide Sister City Program and invited everyone to attend the Full Moon Blossom Festival on May 16. Proceeds from this event will help support the Sister City program.

2015-2016 DISTRICT CALENDAR

Newmeyer/ Times/All to approve the 2015-2016 District Calendar

FINANCIAL & BUSINESS

Resolution 715 - Budget Transfers to Permit Payment Obligations during Fiscal Year and at Close of Year

Superintendent Van Zant explained that this is a recurring resolution that allows the district to move money around within funds without changing the final appropriation of said funds.

Roll Call Newmeyer/Ziegler 5 Ayes, 0 Nos to approve Resolution 715 - Budget Transfers to Permit Payment Obligations during Fiscal Year and at Close of Year

Willow Creek Academy Second Interim Budget

Clark Warden said that the charter school's budget will show a slight surplus.

Ziegler/ Newmeyer/ All to accept the Willow Creek Academy Second Interim Budget

CONSENT AGENDA

Trustee Van Alst asked that the payment of warrants be taken out of the consent agenda.

Newmeyer/Ziegler/All to approve the removal of the payment of warrants from the consent agenda

Roll Call Ziegler /Newmeyer/4Ayes, 0 Nos, to approve the following consent agenda items:

Minutes of the March 10,2015 Board Meeting

Quarterly Report: Williams Uniform Complaints Act

Field Trips

Payment of Warrants – Batches 34-38

Trustee Van Alst said the register of warrant payments as presented to the board is somewhat difficult to read. She said: Our approval is meant to ensure that payments are within the budget and sources of funds align with the funds. One suggestion was to export this data to Excel and add a description of the source. Another idea that came up was to assign one board member for each meeting to review the warrants and report out to the board to give us another level of assurance and help us understand the budget. Board members agreed that both suggestions should be taken up. Trustee Van Alst said she would volunteer as the first board member to review the next batch of warrants.

Newmeyer/ Ziegler /All to approve the Payment of Warrants – Batches 34-38

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Finance Committee

The board decided to defer action on this item until trustee Barrow returns.

ADJOURNMENT

Ziegler/Times/All to adjourn the meeting at 7:15p.m.

Ada Ames 5/26/15
Signature/Date

Clerk
Title