



**REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE ARIZONA
STATE SCHOOLS FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND**

APPROVED BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 10, 2014

Phoenix Day School for the Deaf
7654 N. 19th Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Michael Williams, Board President, called the meeting to order at approximately 4:19 p.m.

Members Present: Elaine Baldrige, Dr. Kathy Jankowski, Taralynn Petrites, Dr. Marv Lamer, Dr. Mark Syms, Michael Williams

Members Present Telephonically: Michael Gordon, Sherri Collins (intermittently during meeting)

Member Absent: Orlenda Roberts

Others Present: William Koehler, Acting Assistant Superintendent, Representatives from the Office of the Attorney General: Michelle Kunzman, Kim Anderson, and Dennis Carpenter

II. Public Comment on Non-Agenda items

Shelley Herbold, parent, asked about Literacy Camp, and if it will happen this summer; thanked the Board for the Live Stream technology; and asked that parents be included if a board member meets with a legislator.

David Bailey, parent, asked if there was new information on SB1393.

Fatuma Lewis, attended a school for the deaf when she moved to America. She spoke how all the teachers and students respected the American flag and recited the pledge of allegiance. She would like staff to recognize the need for unity among the children; have them feel strong, humble and confident that they can succeed. She would like to see the Pledge of Allegiance be brought back in to the schools.

Mr. Williams updated the board on SB1393. Because we've heard from both the blind and deaf communities, the only thing that will survive in the bill, if it does move to the floor, will be the reduction of the April 15 deadline; being able to go beyond that date if needed. A study committee was asked for by the community. The advocacy group for the blind, I believe along with Sherri Collins, will be able to make recommendations to the board the following year. The budget is done, and if the bill moves forward, it may be next week sometime.

III. President's Report

Mr. Williams asked that this item be moved to later in the agenda. Board members agreed.

IV. Election of Board Officers for Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action

Dr. Jankowski, Ms. Collins, Dr. Sims, Mrs. Baldrige, Mr. Williams, and Dr. Lamer spoke to the issue.

Discussion: Dr. Jankowski requested this item be postponed until the next meeting since all members were not present. Dr. Syms commented that per ASDB Board policy, elections should have been done at the first Board meeting of the year which has now passed, and we should be following policy. Mrs. Baldrige asked if elections could wait until January 2015 since elections were held at the June 11, 2013 meeting; keeping the current officers. Dr. Lamer suggested going forward with elections since we are already delayed; and if Sherri Collins is not interested in the position of Secretary, the election can be put on an agenda for adjustment.

Public Comments were taken at this time.

Cynthia Butts, feels elections should wait since two board members are absent.

Shelley Herbold, parent, asked the Board to wait on voting two board members are out. What if one of them is interested in the President position.

It was moved by Mark Syms seconded by Elaine Baldrige, and carried by 5 votes, 1 abstention (Kathy Jankowski), and 1 opposed (Taralynn Petrites), that Michael Williams be reelected as Board President and Sherri Collins reelected as Board Secretary.

V. Employment Contract and Compensation for Dr. Marv Lamer in Position of Interim Superintendent for Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action

Mr. Williams asked the Board if they would like to go in to executive session or hear public comments first. It was decided to hear public comments.

Dr. Lamer explained he will not be participating in any of the decisions made on his contract.

Public Comments:

Shelley Herbold, parent, spoke about not having hidden statements on the contract.

Shelley Herbold expressed concern and wanted clarification that Marv Lamer's position is for Interim Superintendent not permanent Superintendent.

Cynthia Butts advised it is her understanding that Mr. Williams had suggested to the legislature for Marv Lamer to be appointed as interim for 6 months then become permanent.

Becca Bailey, parent, expressed concerns about appointing an Interim Superintendent without feedback from the stakeholders.

Mr. Williams, Dr. Syms, Mrs. Baldrige, spoke to the issue.

Mr. Williams responded he understood the parent concerns, but asked the AGs present for advice. Attorney General commented that the terms of the final contract cannot be made public until the final signatures. He further explained that Dr. Lamer, if interested in the permanent Superintendent position, would need to apply.

Dr. Syms clarified that it is the Board's responsibility to hire not the legislature. The legislature has nothing to do in the selection process for this position.

Mr. Williams explained the purpose of the last Board meeting, March 28, 2014, was to get input from the Board to draft a contract and go into negotiations. Mrs. Baldrige commented that it was also her understanding that the Board is negotiating for an interim superintendent to give time to recruit for a permanent person. It will take time go through the full process.

It was moved by Mike Williams, seconded by Elaine Baldrige and unanimously carried that the Board go in to executive session pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03(A)(3), which will not be open to the public, for discussion/ consultation for legal advice with the Board's attorneys; and, pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03(A)(1), the Board of Directors go in to executive session, which will not be open to the public, for the purposes of discussion and consideration of employment matters.

Board went in to executive session at approximately 5:00 p.m. and returned to public session at approximately 5:53 p.m.

It was moved by Elaine Baldrige, seconded by Michael Williams and unanimously carried by the board to enter into an employment contract with Dr. Marv Lamer as Interim Superintendent for two years with an annual salary of \$125,000.00. And, if a Superintendent is hired while Dr. Lamer is still under contract, Dr. Lamer will be transferred to an appropriate position within ASDB.

Dr. Jankowski and Mr. Williams spoke to the issue.

Dr. Jankowski suggested a hiring timeline be set-up. Mr. Williams advised it could not be discussed at this time as it is not an agenda item.

VI. Business Agenda ItemsA. Intent to Offer/Not Offer FY 2015 Employment Contracts to Management/Supervisory Personal for Discussion and Possible Action

Discussion: Delay contract decision on contracts. Marv Lamer stated that action needs to be taken regarding contracts due to April 15th deadline.

It was moved by Kathy Jankowski, seconded by Mark Syms and unanimously carried that the Board go in to executive session pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03(A)(3), which will not be open to the public, for discussion/consultation for legal advice with the Board's attorneys as it's related to this agenda item. And, pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03(A)(1), for the purposes of discussion and consideration of employment matters as it relates to this agenda item.

Board went in to executive session at approximately 6:01 p.m. and returned to public session at approximately 6:45 p.m.

Public Comment

Michael Williams spoke to those in attendance and asked them to be respectful and very careful of their comments. He spoke on how the public has been professional so far but warned that if anyone becomes inflammatory and out of hand he would stop them from speaking. He will allow each person 3 minutes to speak.

Cynthia Butts, read a statement from Rob Voreck of not renewing contracts for Maria Murphy, William Koehler, and Paul Creasy. She then spoke for herself, to not have Mr. Koehler be responsible over the schools for the deaf.

Judy Robbins, former ASDB employee, spoke against renewing Maria Murphy's contract. She explained that she was let go of during a RIF then her position was re-opened after two years and she wasn't given the opportunity to reapply. She spoke that the process was not followed and chose to leave the school. She felt that many of the contracts should not be renewed.

Jan Goetze, DVR Director, spoke on behalf of William Koehler. Spoke about how supportive and clear guidance. She also spoke of Maria Murphy and her staff and the value the DVR staff has for them.

Henry Garcia, ASDB alumni, spoke of meeting with the school auditors about Robert Hill. Mr. Garcia spoke about staff not working. Let them go. The kids come first.

Polly Brady-Garcia, former ASDB teacher, spoke about the history of the administrative structure. She emphasized that the past structures were simple and in 1965, there were two separate structures. Some administrators worked in other locations and spoke of some administrators had duties in several places. Stability is needed. Handouts were given to the Board for review.

Shelley Herbold, parent, spoke about William Koehler. She feels that if his position is to work with ASB, that's great, but he should not have anything to do with the deaf school.

She asked for clarification of Mr. Koehler's title. She also spoke about Maria Murphy and how a former employee was having issues and HR did not help. She also mentioned rumors about Ms. Murphy's resume.

Randal Kidd, PDSD employee, spoke against renewing Paul Creasy's contract due to IT issues he has faced this year.

David Bailey, parent and PSO President, spoke against renewing William Koehler's contract due to concerns that Mr. Koehler is not familiar with Deaf education, culture, or communities. The Deaf community feels no connection with him.

Mr. Williams clarified that Mr. Koehler's contract is for Executive Director. Anything added on is up to the Superintendent.

A motion was made by Mark Syms, seconded by Marv Lamer, that the Board of Directors renew employment contract for the 2015 fiscal year to the following: Pia Benson, Regional Director-SER, Paul Creasy, Executive Director, Information Technology, Jan Goetze, Regional Director-DVR, William Koehler, Executive Director-ASB & Regional Cooperatives (Detailed into Assistant Superintendent Position), Jane MacDonald, Regional Director-NCR, Maria Murphy, Executive Director-Human Resources, Ruth Parsons, Regional Director-EHR, Terry Pritchard, Executive Director-Operations and Finance, Wemme Walls, Regional Director-SWR, and Kathy Zwald, Principal-ASB.

A substitute motion was made by Kathy Jankowski, seconded by Taralynn Petrites, that each employment contracts be each voted on separately.

Kathy Jankowski, Taralynn Petrites, Mike Williams spoke to the issue.

Discussion involved a request to vote on each contract individually. It was noted that there were now two motions on the floor and seconded.

A vote was taken on the substitute motion on the table and defeated by a vote of 3 in favor (Elaine Baldridge, Dr. Jankowski, Taralynn Petrites), 4 opposed (Mike Gordon, Mike Williams, Mark Syms, Dr. Lamer).

It was moved by Mark Syms, seconded by Marv Lamer, and carried by 5 votes (2 opposed Kathy Jankowski, Taralynn Petrites), that the Board of Directors renew employment contracts for the 2015 fiscal year to the following: Pia Benson, Regional Director-SER, Paul Creasy, Executive Director, Information Technology, Jan Goetze, Regional Director-DVR, William Koehler, Executive Director-ASB & Regional Cooperatives, Jane MacDonald, Regional Director-NCR, Maria Murphy, Executive Director-Human Resources, Ruth Parsons, Regional Director-EHR, Terry Pritchard, Executive Director-Operations and Finance, Wemme Walls, Regional Director-SWR, and Kathy Zwald, Principal-ASB.

It was moved by Marv Lamer, seconded by Kathy Jankowski and unanimously carried that the Board go in to executive session pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03(A)(3), which will not be open to the public, for discussion/ consultation for legal advice with the Board's attorneys as it's related to this agenda item; and, pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03(A)(1), the Board of Directors go in to executive

session, which will not be open to the public, for the purposes of discussion and consideration of employment matters as it relates to this agenda item.

Board went in to executive session at approximately 7:27 p.m. and returned to public session at approximately 7:50 p.m.

Public Comment:

Judy Robbins, former PDSB employee, spoke about Lisa Svenningsen's contract. Judy spoke about concerns with Lisa Svenningsen's supervision on hostility and lack of responsiveness.

Sarah Venier, PDSB Supervising Teacher, spoke about Lisa Svenningsen's contract and how she has been a good supervisor, leader, and it's been an honor working under her guidance.

David Bailey, parent of PDSB student, spoke about how his son feels about Lisa Svenningsen expressing that she is a good role model. David added his sentiments that he has enjoyed working with Lisa Svenningsen and how she always makes time to speak with him.

Randal Kidd, PDSB employee, explained he has worked at both ASDB and PDSB, and addressed the need for consistency at PDSB and the need to keep Lisa Svenningsen.

Shelley Herbold, parent of PDSB student, spoke in support of Lisa Svenningsen, how Lisa Svenningsen is always there to offer advice, and how Lisa always attends the PSO meetings.

Since Lisa Svenningsen requested discussion of her contract in public, the Board invited Lisa to respond to questions of the Board. Mrs. Svenningsen was reminded several times that she could request to enter into executive session to discuss the matters surrounding her contract renewal/non-renewal. Lisa Svenningsen gave a recap of her account of the incident in question involving a bridal shower in a school building and the "guest," and responded to all related questions. She also expressed her concerns with the relationship between her and her current supervisor.

Sherri Collins joined the meeting telephonically at approximately 8:36 p.m.

Spoke to the Issue: Mark Syms, Kathy Jankowski, Taralynn Petrites, Michael Williams, William Koehler

Discussion Highlights: Lisa Svenningsen's knowledge of ASDB policy that does not allow recordings, her reasons for recording of investigation interview without approval of interviewers, and her compliance when interviewer asked her to turn recorder off; number of interviews, conduct of interviews, number of interpreters in each interview, legal interpreters in all interviews, and recommended procedures for interpreting of serious issues in the future; PDSB student progress and student testing results

Michael Williams called for a break at 8:58 p.m. and the Board resumed meeting at 9:09 p.m. Mr. Williams requested Mr. Koehler to provide a report. Mr. Koehler provided a summary of the investigation, timeline of events, discrepancies between Mrs.

Svenningsen's statements and witness statements, and questioned the conduct expectations of leaders in ASDB schools. Board members expressed serious concerns regarding the events that took place and the lack of judgment to immediately take action to stop inappropriate activities.

Upon further questions posed to Mrs. Svenningsen, she requested to go into executive session.

It was moved by Elaine Baldrige, seconded by Michael Williams and unanimously carried that the Board Motion to go in to executive session for the purposes of employment matters.

The Board went into executive session at approximately 9:17 p.m. and returned to public session at approximately 9:50 p.m.

It was moved by Mark Syms that Lisa Svenningsen's contract not be renewed.

A substitute motion was made by Kathy Jankowski, seconded by Elaine Baldrige, that the Board renew Lisa Svenningsen's contract and put an improvement plan in place.

Spoke to the Issue: Kathy Jankowski, Michael Williams, Sherri Collins, Mark Syms, Michelle Kunzman

Discussion Highlights: Viability of a contract that includes an improvement plan though what happened was wrong, and desire to send a clear message this will not be tolerated; zero tolerance for this kind of judgment and action.

Kathy Jankowski suggests we need to look at the overall picture. She agrees that what happened is wrong; desire to send a clear message that this will not be tolerated; renewal of contract with improvement plan.

It was moved by Mark Syms, seconded by Marv Lamer, and unanimously carried that the Board go into executive session for legal advice.

Board went in to executive session at approximately 10:06 p.m. and returned to public session at approximately 10:18 p.m.

A vote was taken on the substitute motion on the table and the motion was defeated with a vote of 3 in favor (Kathy Jankowski, Taralynn Petrites, Sherri Collins), 1 abstention (Elaine Baldrige), and 4 opposed (Mark Syms, Mike Gordon, Marv Lamer, Michael Williams).

The first motion on the table was seconded by Marv Lamer but Lisa Svenningsen interrupted and commented she will make Board's life easier and she will resign.

Marv motioned to remove the second if Ms. Svenningsen is willing to resign. Dr. Syms withdrew his motion. Legal counsel Michelle Kunzman and Kim Anderson privately conversed about legality and Michelle Kunzman advised that since the second and the motion were withdrawn, and Lisa Svenningsen is willing to resign effective June 30, 2014, the Superintendent can accept her resignation.

B. Superintendent Search for Discussion, Consideration and Possible Action

It was moved by Marv Lamer, seconded by Mark Syms, and carried with a vote of 5 in favor, 1 opposed (Taralynn Petrites), 1 abstention (Kathy Jankowski) and 1 phone drop (Sherri Collins) to engage Arizona School Boards Association to assist us in the Superintendent's search at the cost of approximately \$5,055 plus expenses.

Spoke to the Issue: Mark Syms, Kathy Jankowski, Michael Williams

Discussion Highlights: ASDB's membership with ASBA includes this service at nominal cost, reasons for no committee meeting to discuss matter, and tabling item if desired.

C. Status of Executive Director-ASD & PDSB Position for Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action

It was moved by Marv Lamer and seconded by Elaine Baldrige, and unanimously carried that the Board direct the Superintendent to re-establish the Executive Director-ASD & PDSB position and identify funding for the position.

Spoke to the Issue: Kathy Jankowski, Michael Williams, Mark Syms, Elaine Baldrige, William Koehler.

Discussion Highlights: The need for this position to be re-established; having the Interim Superintendent review the organizational structure; need to identify funding for the position; it was stated there are qualified candidates out there.

VII. Consent Agenda Items

A. Meeting Minutes for March 20, 2014 and March 28, 2014

B. Contracts and Agreements

Contracts:

Arlington Elementary School District and Desert Valley Region
Phoenix Elementary School District and Desert Valley Region
Wilson Elementary School District and Desert Valley Region

Facility Rental Agreements-Tucson Campus:

Faith on Fire Church
OCB Bodybuilding
Tucson Junior Strings
Toastmasters International
In Concert/Tucson Friends of Traditional Music

C. Award of two \$1,000.00, Lucille S. Morrison Scholarships to 2014 ASD Graduate Sabina Shysh and 2014 PDSB Graduate Joanna Parades-Canizales

It was moved by Marv Lamer and seconded by Mark Syms and unanimously carried that the Board accept items A, B, and C of the Consent Agenda.

VIII. Summary of Current Events, Future Meeting Dates, and Items for Future Agendas

None

IX. Adjournment

It was moved by Kathy Jankowski, seconded by Marv Lamer, and unanimously carried that the Board of Directors adjourn the meeting at approximately 11:00 p.m.

dated this 18th day of April, 2014 at approximately 9:00 a.m.. by Mary Fult for the Board of Directors