

**HARWOOD UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2017 6:00-9:30 P.M.
HARWOOD UNION HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY**

Amended & Approved Minutes

Attending Members: Christine Sullivan, Jill Ellis, Peter Langella, Maureen McCracken, Rosemarie White, Garrett MacCurtain, Alex Thomsen, Jim Casey, Alycia Biondo, Gabriel Gilman, Sam Jackson, Heidi Spear, Rob Williams, Caitlin Hollister

Administration: Brigid Nease, Michelle Baker, Pietro Lynn, Esquire, Attorney

Public: (Administrators) Ray Daigle, Stephanie Hudak, Sheila Soule, Beth Peterson, Amy Rex, Donarae Dawson, Jean Berthiaume

1. Call to Order: Christine called meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

2. Additions or Deletions to the Agenda: Heidi suggested each school share the original calendar for the year that was previously created. Might shift some of the discussion items for later in the year.

3. Action Items

A. Approve Meeting Minutes of 1/18/2017: Rosemarie asked to change "maintenance group" to "maintenance Plan" in the Facilities paragraph of the minutes. **Rob moved to accept meeting minutes as amended, Alycia seconded. Motion passed.**

4. Discussion Items

A. Debrief the HUUSD Budgeting Process: Talk about lessons learned this year and what to do to get process in place for next year. **Christine:** according to policy, there actually is supposed to be a Budget Committee. **Garrett:** large board takes time to come to consensus and getting to know each other. Shocked by lack of civility in both board and public at some of the meetings. Remember that all working together, and working to see what's best for our students. Need more public from each district. **Rob:** appreciative of group work and hope all work together in the future; think out 3-10 years. **Peter:** excited for the next budget season; will be better prepared. Harwood faculty doing great work managing the curriculum; hope to work well with them in future. Want to rethink where these meetings are held. Could they be held at all the different schools in the future. **Maureen:** echo Garrett's thoughts about lack of civility. Find better ways to ask questions instead of emotional issues. Respect each other. Get calendar going – build budget in time for community input before any numbers are put on table. Develop a good process for this. **Gabe:** First try at very a novel thing. Brought communities together. Get better as the process is repeated. Also make sure board is open to grievances from the public. **Caitlin:** think will improve. Thank Brigid and Michelle for bringing all the information to the table. **Jill:** hope to be able to discuss visioning and come to table with a unified vision at the end of the day. **Rosemarie:** agree with most. Have strong board with different people. Want to treat each other with respect. Would like to start next budget season now. Look forward to getting to know other schools and develop strategic plan. **Heidi:** Agree with all. If we had strategic plan and knew other schools, would have been easier and

more pleasant. Next year establish a foundation to grow schools and thrive. Conclusion to budget, how do we get community support for the budget? Work to be done. **Alycia:** proud of all. Difficult but did good job. A lot to be said for the walk through of the schools. Realize how important this job is – more important than ever.

Alex: want to think about process and what our roles were. Thought voting on each individual item not really our role, but the role of the administration. Need to vote on budget as a whole.

Brigid: looking forward to moving forward. With high functioning team, there is a process. Timeline was an issue. First year the hardest. House needs strong foundation – could happen with board development. Continue to work together. Somehow felt disrespected at times in the budget process. Brigid's job is to make recommendations. Fear-learning more each year, have lots of legal work to do, Suggest three key presentations (WWSU Action Plan, Work Language Summary, Proficiency Based Learning). Talk about negotiations. **Sam:** agree with most. More information in general and from the administrators will be helpful going forward. Would like to see less adversarial atmosphere. **Jim:** agree with all. Two observations: how we acted and how it's perceived – concern as folks questioned judgment of the administrators, which we shouldn't do. Seemed like it was borderline obstructionism, when we questioned what's best for the schools. Don't have a lot of time, tax rebates will be gone in next 5 years. Have to address the elephant in room: merging of the middle schools. Remember the big picture. Be more efficient and thoughtful. **Christine:** have lots of work to do. Remember we are Pk-12 that involves all of the schools. Be respectful and acknowledge the rules.

B. Board Development: Roles, Responsibilities and the VSBA Code of Ethics:
Review the role of the chair – go to Roberts Rules and make sure board, committees and the public follow the rules. Sub-committee needs to work the same way as in the main group.

Discussion of what this would involve by the Policy Committee. According to Articles of Agreement, have to have policies in place by July 1. Suggest adopt policies board is operating on now, and then make revisions as needed. Recommendations by sub-committee come to full board. Have to go to legal review (VSBA) when changes made. Would take much time.

Discussion of policy issues by Attorney Pietro Lynn and how to follow the statute. Consider adopting policies in total and then later choose some of them to discuss in the sub-committee. Some policies board has no choice – they are required by VSBA. Some of these are very thoughtful regarding board exposure. Committee feels that some of the policies are ancient and need to be changed. Feel need to have something in place at this point, then work on revising later. Have already been operating on these, so not a big leap to adopt them. **Adopting policy is already warned for next meeting and will be discussing full manual next week.**

Attorney Lynn said that rules of order are important for such a large board, and different than what small boards are used to. Question of Conflict of Interest policy; Question about content of comments - members of the community have boarder free speech rights than the board members. Discussion of including a letter from the public to be in the board minutes has to be approved by board. **Review VSBA code of ethics next meeting and discuss.**

Review three policies: Intra-district Choice, K-8; Admission of Resident Students, K-12; and Admission of Non-resident Tuition Students, K-12. **Jim moved to approve these three policies and add them to the next board meeting for a first reading and the next meeting for adoption, seconded by Maureen. Motion approved.**

C. Discuss & Review Ed Spending - A Look Back: Michelle was asked to present data over five years for the measures referenced in Heidi Spear's recent letter in the paper on Total Expenditures per ADM and the Education Spending per Equalized Pupil for 2012-2017. Next year both of these will be completely different because of unified schools system. This information maps to suggestion of having boarder discussion of equity. Need to have discussion of how board defines equity.

Have discussions that are of interest to school administrators earlier so they don't have to stay late (ask them to be here between 6-8) to discuss issues regarding quality, parity, consistency, difference, equity and the "non" versions of each.

D. Discuss Governor's Scott's Education Proposal: If this had passed, it would have totally changed our budget. Next year this probably will be very real. Need to be prepared now for the budgets that we are presenting. We are not finished with budgeting and need to get the word out. Need to get a few Op-Eds about budget out there. Communications Working Committee has a plan.

Future agenda items: concerted effort to figure out what are cost reduction or cost shifting – including the middle school issue. Have a retreat with a focus of one or two topics, including materials, etc.

E. Discuss HUUSD Responsibilities with the Warren Bond: Letter from Barry Simpson & email from Nathaniel Fredericks of Sim Operations Services (attachments):

Discussed in Facilities Committee. Finalizing financing process, specs to go out to bid within next week or so. Suggest we have TruexCullins come to give information on what is in and what is not in the bid at the Feb 22 meeting. Team of people (Principal, Clerk of Works, 1 or 2 board members, Ray, Michelle, etc.) to meet one time weekly to approve issues that may have come up. This group should convene mid-May. If additional cost needed – ask three questions: can it be taken care of in this year's budget, in next year's budget or does there have to be a change in bond. Consider Barry Simpson's letter for next time.

Next meeting: discussion on policy issue (put at the end of the agenda), communications about budget meeting, facilities, and TruexCullins information.

Christine and Rosemarie volunteered to be on the Team for Warren (Alycia may also be there)

5. Reports

A. Work Group Reports

i. Communications: Heidi read letter that will be in the paper tomorrow with information about what was decided on in budget, meeting times, new plans, etc.

Rob volunteering to serve as funnel for questions from the public (send any email questions to him); need to see presentation that will be delivered in March; willing to prepare PowerPoint or whatever local school boards might need. Discussion of how to present to own towns. Peter will miss the board meeting on the budget so he can be at the Moretown pre-meeting on the same night. Will Michelle present information at the meeting with Christine being available for questions. Christine will go to Communications Meeting at their next meeting. Heidi will draft some speaking points.

ii. Facilities: Rosemarie will send minutes

iii. Policy: Drafts of Intra District Choice, Admission of Resident Students

iv. Negotiations: Brigid read letter received today from Support Staff negotiating committee that they agree to open meeting bargaining.

Superintendent/Director of Finance Report

6. Superintendent Report
7. Director of Finance Report
8. Act 46 Project Statewide Update (attachment)
9. Presentation: Compensation and Benefit Agreements for Non-Unionized Staff FY 18:
On a bit of a timeline: over Feb break, staff starts to generate letters to staff who are not under any agreement. Handouts presented by Michelle – ask to read and discuss next time. There are significant differences in payments and benefits for staff between school districts. Need to decide how to handle extreme differences in salary, insurance and benefits for existing staff and as new staff members are brought on. Majority of budget spent on salaries, benefits and compensation. In the next budget year, have to decide if important to address this now and come up with some parity. Grandfather all existing agreements? Create steps based on the number of years worked? Health insurance has to be addressed. (Need to look at 80/20 for health plan.) What are market rates for a new staff in a position? Insurance is the difference in compensation. Needs to get recommendation from board – 1 or 2 key issues to address at the next meeting. As move forward, build foundation to work on moving forward – for example health insurance 80/20. Grandfathering will create more issues.

Things to Discuss: uniform sick leave, number of work days, 80/20 health insurance, progression of pay. Need to create salary schedule for future hiring. Need to be aware of equal pay for equal work. How much spending on dental, etc.?

10. Public Comment
11. Other Business
12. Rob moved to Adjourn meeting at 9:50 p.m., Alex seconded, motion carried.

Submitted by Freya Chaffee

Next Meeting: February 22, 2017 6:00 P.M. at Harwood Union High School Library.

March Meetings: March 8, March 15 (?) – if needed, March 22, March 29