

# **SONORA UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **Special Board of Trustees Meeting**

**Board Self Evaluation Workshop- Facilitated by Terry Clark**

**July 09, 2019**

**1:00 PM**

100 School Street, Room FL-1, Sonora, CA 95370

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### **Trustee Members Present:**

Jim Riggs, President

Kim Norton, Clerk

Erik Andal, Member

Nancy Scott, Member

Jeanie Smith, Member

**Others Present:** Superintendent Mark Miller, Recording Secretary Cindy Costello, and community members.

## **1. OPENING BUSINESS**

### **1.1. Call to Order and Establishment of Quorum**

Establishing a quorum, Trustee Riggs called the meeting to order at 1:03 pm.

### **1.2. Pledge of Allegiance**

Trustee Riggs led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **1.3. Adopt Agenda**

Motion by Trustee Smith, second by Trustee Norton to adopt the Agenda as presented.

Ayes: Andal, Norton, Riggs, Scott, Smith

Motion Passes

## **2. PUBLIC COMMENT for non-agendized items**

Rationale:

Members of the public are welcome to address the board at this time regarding non-agendized items: Time is limited to five (5) minutes per speaker, with a cumulative time of twenty (20) minutes. This is a time for members of the public to comment and for board members to listen.

There was no public comment.

## **3. BOARD OF TRUSTEES SELF-EVALUATION WORKSHOP**

Dr. Miller introduced Terry Clark, the facilitator for this workshop.

Terry Clark reviewed how the board came together. Dr. Miller started in August and then three new board members started in December. They all began their service during a time of active issues such as the Dome, Ranch, budget, class sizes and low staff morale. Terry encouraged them to slow down and take a breath during this workshop.

Some things that have surprised board members are the amount of time necessary to satisfy the role of a board member and not receiving timely communication regularly.

Some things they like are being involved and letting the community/ students know they are heard.

Something that has been difficult is being approached by the public regarding board business while trying to quickly run personal errands.

When asked to evaluate the self-evaluation tool, board members shared that they believe the tool is sufficient and that the questions were not too intrusive. This evaluation tool asks board members if they feel they are acting as they should. The goal setting meeting will evaluate if the district is meeting its goals.

### **3.1. Review Board Bylaws**

#### **3.1.1. Board Bylaw 9400 Board Self-Evaluation**

Board members believe BB 9400 is adequate as it is.

#### **3.1.2. Board Bylaw 9000 Role of the Board**

In reviewing BB 9000, board members shared that they would like to meet more than once per year to assess their progress toward their goals so they can alter their direction if needed.

They would like to be informed of administration's strategy behind each board goal. For example, do we have a grant writer to meet the goals of being fiscally responsible?

They would also like to receive a quarterly report on how the district is meeting the strategic plan to fulfill the board goals.

The board understands that they should not micro-manage but would like to hear about the progress of the schools toward the goals.

Board members also mentioned that they realize LCAP, WASC, and strategic goals should all reflect the district goals and work in concert.

When asked about community leadership, board members agreed that role should belong to the superintendent. Board members hold an informal relationship while the superintendent holds the formal role of attending events to promote the high school. The superintendent should belong to multiple service clubs and invite board members to attend some events with

him from time to time. Board members should attend informal events like the fair and livestock show.

Board members suggested bringing BB 9000 to a future board meeting to revise the wording of No. 4 to “~~Ensuring~~ Providing community leadership on behalf of the district and public education.” They would also like to revisit Nos. 3, 4 and 5 in the section “To fulfill these basic responsibilities, the Board shall”.

Board members feel that involving the community to share their perspective has been important and meeting with staff on campus leaves them feeling more closely involved with staff and students.

Board members feel that meetings intended for public opinion have not been largely attended but feel that actively listening to who attends makes a big difference.

It was recommended that board members meet quarterly to review how they are doing with the goals. They would like to bring one goal to one board meeting per month on a three-month trial basis to review and assess their progress toward their goals.

### **3.1.3. Board Bylaw 9005 Governance Standards**

It was clarified that a board member should not give a directive to staff. Board members can give requests to Dr. Miller and/or Trustee Riggs. Dr. Miller can then determine if the request is a good use of staff time.

Board members’ primary roles are to stay reasonably informed and come to meetings, but they feel that they have had to do much more than that. To save board members time, they request that the superintendent act as their shepherd and share information with them more frequently.

Board members agreed that it should take great resistance in overseeing how management runs the district but there are times that things need to be addressed. Ongoing improper conduct that is not addressed by the superintendent or principal needs to be addressed when safety is a concern.

They also agreed that with most issues, the board members need to actively listen and report the issue to the superintendent. As individual board members, they have no authority so they should talk and take action as a whole. If needed, the board can call a special meeting to address an issue in a more timely manner rather than waiting until the next regularly scheduled meeting.

The Board members want to see more improvement in the low morale of district employees that was caused by budget issues, declining enrollment and increasing class sizes. They believe communication and building relationships would make those situations feel less hurtful and help improve morale. They would like to see one of the new principal's goals to establish an improved climate on campus.

Board members prefer transparent communication. For example the principal would inform the superintendent when he speaks with board members and board members would inform the superintendent when they come on campus.

Dr. Miller explained that when he came to the district staff would approach him or board members to address things that should be addressed by the principal. He has begun the process of redirecting them to the principal and following up with them afterward. The district needs to get back into the proper chain of command: employee goes to supervisor/principal, then the superintendent. The board keeps the superintendent accountable, who keeps the principal accountable, who keeps the employees accountable.

The Board believes that employees need to feel listened to.

#### **4. Consider Adoption of Board Performance Standards (A, B or Hybrid)**

Board members would like to see the Board Performance Standards added to BB 9005. Either combine the two or add this as an exhibit. Trustees Riggs and Scott will work with Dr. Miller on this.

#### **5. Consider Adoption of Board Performance Evaluation Instrument**

The Board would like to keep the same questions for comparison of data in the future and add questions if they want more information.

#### **6. Discussion of How the Board Sees Itself in Relation to the Adopted Standards**

There was no discussion of how the board sees itself in relation to the adopted standards.

#### **7. Consider Adoption of Guidelines for Participating in Board Meetings**

It was suggested that these guidelines be brought back to the board once per year as a reminder.

#### **8. Discussion of Board Self-reflection Instrument and Results**

The Board members discussed items on the self-reflection instrument that were marked lower than a “five”.

No. 4: Board members believed that the Wildcat Ranch situation affected responses to this question and discussed the difference between not supporting and sabotaging a situation.

No. 7: As discussed earlier, board members don’t have individual authority and now agree that direction from individual board members should not happen.

There was discussion about the Union Democrat article that disclosed all emails and texts concerning the sale of the Wildcat Ranch. Some of the emails included opinions and are being interpreted as directive from individual board members which is incorrect. Again, board members agreed that individual board members are not to give directives to the superintendent, but rather inform him that something needs to be addressed.

No. 12: Board members agree that long-term planning needs to be addressed so they can make decisions concerning ongoing issues with long-term plans in mind. They want to see an in-depth five-year facilities master plan in addition to the one-page plan the district currently has.

Board members asked Terry Clark about his tenure as principal at Sonora High School. He shared that he joined the district at a time when morale was low and it took him three years of building relationships before he earned the trust of staff.

## **9. Meeting Operations**

### **9.1. Dates of Meetings**

Board members have noticed that the district has needed more than one meeting per month so they asked Dr. Miller to draft a board meeting schedule with two meetings per month only during the months that the business office needs them. (e.g. June for budget approval purposes) They discussed whether it is effective to call a special meeting when needed versus scheduling regular meetings and then canceling them when not needed. They decided it is more efficient to cancel regular meetings when not needed and gave directive to Dr. Miller to bring the draft meeting schedule to the next regular meeting for board consideration.

### **9.2. Binders Kept in Conference Room**

There was no discussion about binders.

### **9.3. Other**

There were no other discussions requested.

**10. Next Steps**

There were no next steps discussed.

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

Rationale:

Pursuant to Board Bylaw 9322, late agenda material related to open session can be inspected in the superintendent's office at 100 School Street, Room FL-2, Sonora, California. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if any person needs special assistance to participate in the meeting, please contact the superintendent's office at (209) 533-8510 ext. 1, 48 hours prior to the meeting.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:47 pm.

  
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Kim Norton, Board Clerk

  
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Mark Miller, Ed.D, Board Secretary

  
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Cindy Costello, Recording Secretary