

**Paso Robles Joint Unified School District  
Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees  
January 19, 2021**

**MINUTES**

**A. OPENING CEREMONY/CEREMONIA DE APERTURA**

**1. Call the Meeting to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m. Board President Arend and trustee Jim Reed participated via Zoom. Board Clerk Chris Bausch served as President Pro Tem as the Zoom concept made it impractical for Mr. Arend to perform the duties of running the meeting.

**B. ADOPT AGENDA**

**1. Adopt Agenda**

A motion passed unanimously to adopt the agenda as published. Motion by Mr. Tim Gearhart; second by Mr. Lance Gannon.

**C. Salute to the Flag**

Trustee Williams led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**D. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

**1. Comments from the Public**

Jennifer Gaviola, speaking as a parent and community resident, read a statement urging the Board to avoid inflammatory/derogatory language and to lead with integrity, to serve all students and parents regardless of their language, and act in the best interests of the overall Paso Robles community.

Seth Hidalgo expressed frustration with recent school schedule changes which are impacted by the lack of transportation, meaning his students were reassigned from GATE and Honors classes to other less-preferred programs. He urged the district to find alternatives that would allow students who live too far to walk (and may have working parents not able to drive them) to participate in special programs.

Ruth Enriquez Bagge discussed the lack of translation services and cited several legal areas that require the district to provide those services. She chastised President Arend's previous comments that "English is the official language."

Board Trustee Baker read a letter from County Superintendent Jim Brescia regarding his appearance and comments at the last Board meeting.

## **E. ACTION ITEMS**

### **1. Continuation of Discussion and Possible Action Regarding District Response to Grand Jury Report- "Paso Robles Schools: A Cautionary Tale," dated November 17, 2020**

Mr. Dale Gustin spoke to the Report's allegation that three groups' actions led to the fiscal crisis which is the primary subject of the Report. The Board continued their discussion of the Grand Jury Report.

The Board gave unanimous consensus of agreement with the Report's suggestion that the District provide training and information for residents contemplating running for election to the Board. They discussed inservices offered by SLOCOE and meetings with District staff and considered additional things that might be provided to educate prospective trustees about the District and the role of Board members, making it clear that any informational system should be reasonably short to ensure it would be read and should not overburden staff in preparing the same.

As to recommendation #11 (that the District must establish and document minimum qualifications for candidates for the superintendency including financial management), the Board agreed unanimously.

Recommendation #12 proposed that standardized financial reports and monthly reporting should be developed to provide the Board with tools for effective decision making and greater accountability related to specific goals and objectives. Mr. Arend suggested this has already been implemented, and the Board concurred.

Recommendation #13 posed that the District determine whether, under current circumstances, the aquatics project is still viable. The Board discussed how to make such a determination given that circumstances are constantly changing, but unanimously agreed with the Grand Jury's recommendation.

Recommendation #14 stated the Board should consider collaborating with the City of Paso Robles on sharing the expenses of operating the aquatics complex. Superintendent Dubost responded that no such conversations have been held. The Board felt the response to this item should be "no," with the addition that the District is willing to explore ways to share operational and maintenance expenses. Mr. Arend dissented from the group consensus on the basis of interpreting the language.

Recommendation #15 suggested the Board require a comprehensive audit of the 4A Foundation. Following extensive discussion, the Board unanimously supported the concept of receiving such information, but felt it could be adequately completed by the Foundation's regular accountant as opposed to an expensive auditing firm such as Price Waterhouse Cooper. Mr. Powlowski explained the differing dates under which the District (educationally) and its Business office (fiscally), and the Foundation (per IRS rules) handle and report their finances. These differences lead to reports coming to the District and Board months later than might be optimum.

Regarding the Board's proposed response to the Grand Jury Report, Mr. Arend delivered a draft of his personal attempt to begin such a response. This raised concerns about whether it was appropriate for him to undertake this on his own and whether it could be posted for the public. It was agreed this could be used as a starting point for the Board's consideration of a response, but that it should not be posted publicly as this could lead to great confusion; albeit the document itself (with a notation that it is Mr. Arend's personal proposal) is a public document. During the Agenda Setting Meeting scheduled for January 20, 2021, the Superintendent will review the proposal and determine whether this can come forward as an agenda item on January 26 for further discussion and revision. The Agenda Setting Meeting will be attended by Dr. Dubost and Trustees Dorian Baker, Chris Bausch, and Lance Gannon.

A motion was unanimously adopted to approve all the foregoing positions regarding the Grand Jury Report, including those stated at the previous two special Board meetings. Passed with a motion by Mr. Nathan Williams and a second by Mr. Lance Gannon

**2. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO HIRE ADDITIONAL LEGAL COUNSEL RELATIVE TO THE GRAND JURY RESPONSE**

Mr. Dale Gustin commented on the poor quality of audio transmission and asked anyone participating at the Board meeting (not via Zoom) speak closer into the microphone. Mrs. Holmes, recording secretary, read a statement from PRPE Executive Director Jim Lynett urging the Board to conclude discussions and finalize their response to the Grand Jury Report. Trustee Baker introduced a motion to authorize staff to seek counsel for the Board's consideration. Discussion followed.

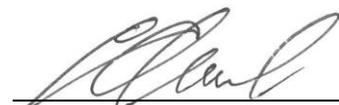
A motion was unanimously adopted to authorize staff to begin a search for a law firm to review the Board's draft response to the Grand Jury Report, not to exceed \$5,000; subject to the Board's later action to approve the actual selection. Passed with a motion by Mrs. Dorian Baker and a second by Mr. Lance Gannon

**F. ADJOURNMENT**

**1. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was adopted to adjourn the meeting at 7:13 p.m. Motion by Mr. Tim Gearhart; second by Mr. Nathan Williams.

  
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Board Clerk

  
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Board President