

**ESCONDIDO UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Education
March 3, 2011**

The special meeting of the Board of Education was called to order at 6:34 p.m. by President Linda Woods with all members present. Superintendent Walters led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Call to Order;
Pledge

The following persons were present:

- Linda Woods, President
- Zoe Carpenter, Vice President
- Marv Gilbert, Clerk
- Joan Gardner, Member
- Marty Hranek, Member
- Jennifer Walters, Superintendent
- Staff and press representatives

Present

Gina Manusov, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, shared the following information which was requested at the February 24 meeting:

Overview of
2011-12 Potential
Budget

- Consortium buying vs. using other vendors; current system in place generally ensures best pricing and warranties. The Purchasing Department does make some exceptions for budget-savings alternatives.
- Leasing vs. purchasing computers; no actual savings as financing increases costs.
- Consolidation of Maintenance and Operations and Facilities Planning Departments; preliminary evaluation – significant savings is unlikely at this time, primarily because we have already accounted for reductions in Maintenance and Operations, to look at a future restructuring, more time would be needed.
- Use of redevelopment funding-make minimum debt service payments only on FBC refunding bonds.
- It was explained that in the last five years travel/conference expenditures have been allowed if it was “essential” to someone’s job, or if it was essential to goals written in to a school plan.

Leila Sackfield, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, addressed consumables costs and how the district might reduce the costs (required vs. optional) and indicated that she is working with principals on further reductions. Mrs. Sackfield addressed a modified elementary music program should there be music teacher layoffs. With one full-time teacher the district could concentrate on one grade level for a possible eight-week period and instruct on the ‘elements of music’ where students can learn to read music and build their musical literacy; she stated that an eight-week period is not long enough to learn to play an instrument.

Kelly Prins, Assistant Superintendent of Special Education/PPS reported on the differences between the CARE Youth Project social workers and middle school counselors.

Discussion took place about TOSAs regarding layoffs, being reassigned to classrooms, and how they are paid for (by restricted funds vs. general funds). It was noted that currently, 15 TOSAs may go back to the classroom, due to categorical budget reductions.

Mrs. Manusov reported that EUSD Nutrition Services is fully self-sustaining and, in fact, augments the districts' general budget. Last year indirect costs contributed over \$300,000 to the general fund.

Mrs. Manusov gave an overview of the 2011-12 potential budget; concentrating on scenario "B." Focus had been on remaining solvent for the full three-year period and brainstorming different ways to come up with cuts, while keeping a required 3 percent reserve to ensure long-term solvency.

Carol Rouse, Director of Business Services gave a brief summary of long-term debt, including the districts refunding bonds.

Superintendent Walters was informed by the City Manager that redevelopment revenues are a bit down this year, below the projections.

Carol Rouse reviewed the revised multi-year projections which included a reduction of \$11,563,539 in 2011-12, an increase from the \$10,884,539 projection shared on February 24.

Linda Woods indicated keeping a 4.75 percent reserve during these times was very difficult for her and suggested lowering it to 4 percent.

Mrs. Manusov ended the discussion announcing that a districtwide spending freeze will be announced on March 4.

President Woods asked if there was anyone wishing to speak to an item on the agenda or on another topic that lies within the board's jurisdiction.

Oral Communication:

Rick Beebe, CSEA President, offered additional furlough days by classified Maintenance and Operations staff, if it would help reduce the number of classified layoffs being projected in Maintenance.

Romero Maratea, EEEA President, noted that all districts are in a similar position, and that it won't be settled until the tax extension is finalized. He reported that prior to the board meeting a group of EEEA and CSEA representatives and board members met and wrote letters to the legislators in support of the tax extension. Mr. Maratea then read a letter he sent to our elected leaders.

Richard Garner, Danielle Duarte, Felipe Robinson, Trish Hatch, Dawn Ayles, Judy Lancaster, Molly Francis, and Sherry McPhillips expressed concerns about possible reductions of district counselors.

Barbara Williams, Holly Hart, and Kitty Clark expressed concerns about possible

reductions of district nurses.

David Gibney, Debi Pellkofer, Jon Sengstacke, and Peggy Ann Jackson expressed concerns about possible reductions to the elementary music program.

Jose Fragozo expressed concerns on the state of the districts' budget.

Zoe Carpenter thanked the audience for coming. She reiterated that we are following a required structure; March 15- pink slips to certificated, a balanced budget by June 30 approved by the board, and projecting three years out. The district cannot rely on revenues coming in, but must rely on what we know. The cuts are damaging beyond repair, but it is the stark reality. Items important to her for reduction reconsideration are Nicoloyasen Community Day School, counselors, and nurses, and if possible the music program. She questioned if offering an early retirement packet would help.

Board Budget
Discussion

Joan Gardner said the board knows how serious it is when each program being cut is vital and necessary to the education of students. The district hasn't yet looked into employee contracts and over 90 percent of the budget is salaries/benefits; need to look at negotiated items. She applauded Mr. Beebe and CSEA for the idea of helping fellow employees with additional furlough days. Mrs. Gardner suggested looking for further reductions via copier contracts, paper usage, CSBA Legal Alliance, Escondido Education COMPACT, and PowerSchool maintenance and support, and a continued district emphasis on the S.A.V.E. program. An item important to her for reduction reconsideration is Nicoloyasen Community Day School.

Marv Gilbert thanked everyone in attendance for sharing their thoughts. He shared that the March 15 deadline for issuing lay-off notices is to comply with Ed Code. He said that the district is in this position by no fault of its own; leadership in Sacramento for the last few years has put districts in this position. He expressed the need to get the tax extension issue on the ballot. He shared that it was extremely difficult to make the budget reduction decisions as it relates to people's lives and the quality of the educational programs in Escondido. The board is committed to looking under every rock to find every possible savings. He expressed his personal opinion that the district has been asking employees to do more each year and has empathy for employees who may lose their jobs, and for those who are not-as the workload isn't changing and employees will be working harder with less. He doesn't believe that layoffs are beneficial to programs and furlough days aren't the most effective, although they help to accomplish a reduction in overhead costs. Mr. Gilbert said going back to the negotiating table deserves consideration to possibly work on salary reductions across the board to reduce layoffs, as it would be a more equitable treatment. He concurred with some fellow board members that Escondido Education COMPACT and CSBA Legal Alliance are dispensable.

Marty Hranek asked about an internal process to review contracts, and if there were any contracts \$50,000 and above that the district could do without. He suggested a freeze on travel and to discontinue the Rady Children's Hospital contract. Items important to him for budget reconsideration were APs, nurses and counselors as they are all needed.

Linda Woods questioned the cost on storage for summer school supplies; Mrs. Manusov confirmed the cost is to be eliminated. Mrs. Woods asked if the district had to be a member of CSBA to utilize GAMUT. She supports the cancellation of the contract with Rady Children's Hospital if the district keeps nurses; she could not support the loss of APs, counselors, and the music program. She suggested reducing district reserves from 4.75 percent to 4 percent. She further suggested looking at a four-day work week, the feasibility of reducing the school year, and an exploration of a parcel tax. She requested a recap of what the district has saved the last two years; questioned the Library Techs being the only classification taking an additional two hours per day off, and suggested that they not be included in the 2011-12 furlough days.

It was moved by Marv Gilbert, seconded by Joan Gardner, and passed 5-0 to adjourn at 11:36 p.m.

Adjournment

I hereby certify the preceding to be a true and correct copy of the actions of the Board of Education at a special meeting, as recorded in these minutes.

Certification

Jennifer Walters, Superintendent/Secretary

Marv Gilbert, Clerk