

## **Vista School Board Meeting**

**June 17, 2015 Minutes**

**Location: 585 East Center, Ivins, UT 84738**

**Board members present:** Neil Walter (Board President), John Berger, Gail Neumann, Brad Owen  
**Others present:** MaryAnn Oram (Financial Director), Troy Bradshaw (IT Director), Britni Armstrong (Board Secretary), Kathy Carlson, Sam Struck, Kim Struck, Tiffany Westover, Will Armstrong, Chris Barnum, Lene Morford, Carrie Hymas, Kim VonCannon, Burt Shelley, Crystal Fairbanks, Rebecca Summerhays, Sydney Prisbrey, Melissa Webb, Kat Garrard, Jessica Staheli, Carissa Sawyer, Andrew Monson, Eva Lorentzen, Tammy Engel, Scott Moody, Brooke Black, Tyler Black, Michelle Walter, Twila Kay, Kayla Clark, Greg Clark, Stacy Terrell, Kelly Geary, Diane Biasi, David Jones, Melodie Jones, Rob Foster, Valerie Foster, Brian Ludlow, Rachel Jensen, Kent Jensen, Aimee Hansen, Joel Taylor, Chelsey Clarkson

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### **5:00 PM - Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions - Neil Walter**

#### **5:00 PM - APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

##### **❖ May 20, 2015 Board Meeting Minutes**

Neil defers until Brad Owen arrives. Started at 6:24- Brad notes that his last name does not have an "s". John moves to approve minutes with spelling change. Unanimously approved.

#### **5:00 PM - PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Lene Morford- wonders if we will be offering more assistive technology for students (i.e. iPads to take home, etc). Neil discussed the ability to focus on arts, technology and education simultaneously without taking away from anything.

Brooke Black- concerned that these things are already here at Vista and is concerned that technology will overtake the other aspects of our charter. Is worried that it will upset the balance of what is good. Neil assured that there are not intentions of changing what is currently in place.

Rob Foster- wonders how the decision to let Mike go was reached and wondered why parents and teachers weren't involved in the decision. Neil explained the process of evaluating the director and the resources the board uses for evaluations. Based on surveys submitted, decision was made to let Mike go. John notes that board decisions are very well thought out and meticulous.

Brooke Black- notes that surveys are only from those who are angry. And wondered why Neil was still in his position. Neil explains that he was asked to stay in his position by administration, and was not a part of the decision to extend terms. Explains that there was not public interest in board positions.

Lene Morford- points out that it is important to be involved from the very beginning and not just when things go bad.

Rob Foster- notes that it's the way it happened.

Andrew Monson- notes that he has never received an email or survey to his email. They are here because they are low income and want their kids to be involved in the arts. Notes that some families cannot stay for board meetings due to scheduling and gas money issues. Has issues with the time and day of the meeting. Thinks things have been going "awesome". Again, wants to know why Mr. Webb was let go. Neil is not sure eh can release any information about actual reasons.

John Berger- assures that the decision was weighed very heavily; it was not rash but a long process.

Kelly Geary- explains that the board is all volunteer and really appreciates it. Wants to thank the board.

David Jones- notes that it's important to support and thinks the board made the right decision. Says he did not fill out a survey not because he felt everything was going well, but because he was angry. Wants to know the future of a new director. Neil responds that they are looking for someone who wants to help lead in where Vista is going, someone who has the skills to cultivate opportunities and allow faculty to innovate- who can take the step to help Vista get better.

Rachel Jensen- "if it isn't broke, don't fix it" What happens if we get a bad director? What if everyone decides to leave? Neil explains he is confident that everyone will let him know that they are not happy, and if they mess up, the board will be held accountable. Gail notes that the students and parents will not see the drastic change as much as the faculty.

Michelle Walter- notes that there seems to be a fear that arts will change- assures that it will not change, her students are involved in the arts, they are important and will not change.

Twila Kay- seconds that fact that the school is big with lots of faculty and have a lot invested in the school, too. Staff and faculty will let board know if things aren't going well.

Brook Black – wants to know why Mike was not given the time for probation. Neil explains that it has happened 2 times already- board has been working on this for 2 years now. Claims that Neil doesn't like Mike, Michelle Walter says that Neil was crushed to have to let Mike go. Wants to know if they really feel that Mr. Webb could not bring the school forward- Neil responds with “yes”. Explains that the only person the board is responsible for is the administrator (Director)

Kim Struck- Mr. Webb is her uncle. She's sad to see him go, but he's doing ok. Wants to know specifically what the board wants in the future. Neil explains we have to get better. We have to improve academically every year. John explains why they struggle with the “specifics” of what they want, they have to find a new director first.

Kent Jensen- notes that Vista wants to avoid being stagnant.

Kim Struck- wants to know if we can change times for meetings to a later time, at least during the transition of directors. Neil says they can consider a time change.

\_\_\_\_\_ - what is the exact direction of the future of the school.

Joel Taylor- How do you measure “making things better”? Neil explains that Vista is accountable to that state charter school board for upholding the charter, visited with Maralise Burns (VP of charters of Utah) her intentions are to meet with every charter school to ensure schools are keeping to the charters. Board intends to figure out who we are and how we measure our effectiveness of becoming who we say we will be.

Chelsey Clarkson- thinks there needs to be more involvement from parents in order to understand what is going on. Says lack of communication is the problem.

John Berger- points out that board meetings can be a bit boring and that the board can work on advertising it more.

Aimee Hansen- It's not only the school's responsibility, but parents also to make sure they are updating information and reading emails and newsletters.

Britni Armstrong- explains that board meetings are posted on the website, along with agendas and minutes. PTO is not allowed to access our records for emails, and reminded to make sure emails are updated on SIS.

Neil- explains that a charter is so different from a district school because they have an opportunity to allocate their funds however they see fit to enhance the educational experience.

Foster- asked how much it was last year, if it increases every year. Neil explains that it does increase every year and allows the board to give raises and pay for other things. Points out how lucky we are to have so many arts teachers, etc.

Aimee Hansen- points out that what Neil was just talking about is the “boring stuff” but it also helps everyone understand what is going on if they come to the meetings.

Twila Kay- notes that she put the meetings in her phone and even thought she only made it to a few but felt like she was much more informed because of it.

Neil- thanks everyone for coming and putting in their feedback. Tells attendees that Jason Wells position is open and he is more than happy to take any candidates- it will either be appointed or left vacant for the following school year.

Diane Biasi- notes that PTO also has several board positions available and that attending the meetings really helped her with her new position as PTO President last year.

### **6:30 PM DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS**

#### **❖ Discussion of and proposed approval of General Release, Separation, and Severance Agreement between Vista School and Michael Webb**

Met with school's counsel at Snow, Jensen and Reese to create agreement which has been emailed out to board members and Mike. John notes for record that his vote does not imply legal counsel. John moves to approve document as written. Unanimously approved. John makes sure that vote officially ends Mike's contract. Neil agrees that it does end the contract.

#### **❖ Discussion and proposed authorization to search for a new director for Vista School**

MaryAnn has posted position to several different places. Board will be providing job description. MaryAnn can add board member emails when anyone applies for position. Brad recommends reviewing applicants before hand and then discuss as a board. Neil would like a 3 week timeline of accepting applicants. John and Brad would like to be on committee. Neil moves to authorize committee for search for new Director. Unanimously approved.

#### **❖ Discussion and proposed approval of an interim director**

Neil moves to appoint Marie Ehlers as interim director. Unanimously approved.

## 6:40 PM - REPORTS

- ❖ **Director's Report – MaryAnn gave report**
  - **Faculty/Staff Changes**

New position for Food Services Director filled- Stacey Terrell. A few positions open for lunch workers and custodians.
  - **Enrollment and lottery update**

Enrollment looks really good. Upper grade are full and that makes it harder for new students to come mid-year. Secretaries have been asked to make calls to those on wait list or unconfirmed current students.
  - **Fall School lunch update**

Started construction on kitchen and moving things around to prepare hot meals. Look at serving 400+ students per day. MaryAnn reviews budget. Neil passed around bids and layout of new kitchen.
- ❖ **Financial Report – MaryAnn Oram**
  - **Review Final 2015 school year budget**

Based on 855 students. MaryAnn feels confident that we can uphold bond covenants and cash on hand. We are at 62.8 days cash on hand. **Review proposed 2016 Budget**  
MaryAnn was able to discuss most line items with Mike and has left it as-is so far. John moves to approve

## 6:55 PM - COMMITTEE REPORTS

- ❖ **Finance Committee –**
- ❖ **Academic Excellence Committee –**
- ❖ **Public Relations Committee – Gail Neumann**
- ❖ **Governance Committee – John Berger**

## 6:55 PM - DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

- ❖ **Final 2015 Budget**

Neil moves to adopt revised 2015 school budget. Unanimously approved.
- ❖ **Proposed 2016 budget**

John moves to approve proposed 2016 budget. Unanimously approved.
- ❖ **Discussion and proposed approval of kitchen construction/remodel bids**

Went over 3 bids on kitchen. Brad wants to know if they are hard numbers or estimates. All 3 companies were asked to bid based on the drawings of future kitchen. Gail notes the differences between the bids. Gail moves to accept bid from Tooke Development.
- ❖ **Discussion and proposed approval of landscaping contract**

Neil passed around bids, discussed the differences between bids. Decided to address to immediate need for the grass and discuss things later.
- ❖ **Discuss status of teacher/aid/staff agreements**

Teacher agreements were given out in May, para-professional positions and other positions will be given out after MaryAnn has met with interim Director and SpEd director. Administration not done but needs to be done by the end of the month. Gail can help get new agreements out. Neil moves for he and Gail to work on employment agreements ASAP. Unanimously approved.
- ❖ **Discussion and proposed amendment of Trust Lands funds use.**

MaryAnn discussed why certain goals were not met and what funds were rolled over from last year. Current balance of \$3,796.00 over flow. MaryAnn recommends to purchase 2 teacher mac book pro's. MaryAnn mentions that the School Land Trust is a great way for parents to be involved. Neil moves to approve amended School Land Trust grant for 2014-2015. Unanimously approved.
- ❖ **Marquee Digital Display Replacement**
- ❖ **Mission/Vision progress and related goals and associated Charter Amendment**
- ❖ **Discuss Administration Evaluations**
- ❖ **Budget Revisions**
- ❖ **Jason Wells Board Resignation**

Neil has official resignation from Jason- will be filed.

## TABLED AGENDA ITEMS

**MISC COMMENTS**

**CLOSED SESSION (if needed)**

**To discuss the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of individuals.**

**7:40 PM - ADJOURN**