

LINCOLN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Directors- Work Session
Friday, June 14, 2013– 1:00 p.m.
Shilo Inn
Newport, Oregon

Minutes

PRESIDING: Ron Beck, Chairman

Present: Ron Beck, Chairman; Jean Turner, Vice Chairman; Karen Bondley, Liz Martin, Kelley Ellis, Directors

Also Present: Tom Rinearson, Superintendent; Terri Woodd, Director-Elect; Laurie Urquhart, Secretary; Greg McKenzie, Consultant

Call to Order- Establishment of a Quorum

Chairman Beck convened the meeting and called the session to order at 1:11 p.m. with a quorum of all five board members present.

Boards Working Together Successfully

Chairman Beck introduced consultant Greg McKenzie, who worked with the district and board in the past. Mr. McKenzie explained he was a K-12 board member for eight years, is still on an ESD board, worked as an attorney for 25 years, was an OSBA board and staff member, and now has a consulting business of his own. Board members, including board member-elect Terri Woodd, provided brief biographies of themselves.

Mr. McKenzie said it can take two years to really feel comfortable as a board member, after seeing items cycle through twice. “A school district is a complex, multi-million dollar enterprise with hundreds of employees.” With three, soon to be four, relatively new board members, he highlighted the need to discuss leadership skills and roles/responsibilities for a healthy organization.

Board members took part in a problem solving exercise (the nail puzzle), demonstrating how the group works together. They then completed a communication style word association exercise to understand personality types how they may work together. Though people may move between personality types, they revert to their dominant characteristics when under pressure.

Mr. McKenzie noted it is a matter of perception, and said how we see ourselves is not necessarily how others see us. One key for good leadership is the realization that all groups have value; “Everyone brings something different to the team,” said McKenzie.

There are at least five dysfunctions in the workings of teams, including the absence of trust, fear of conflict, lack of commitment, avoidance of accountability and inattention to results.

The group next discussed effective change and things to keep in mind. “Change is a process; if you manage it properly, it can be successful,” said Mr. McKenzie. He added that people sometimes get “stuck” in the “what they are going to lose” part and added that they need to move to a new beginning. He encouraged the group to think of the “people systems, especially if you are changing something that has been in place for a long time.”

Board/Superintendent Roles and Responsibilities

Mr. McKenzie described qualities of an effective leader, including: visionary, good communicator, trustworthy, respected and respectful, innovative and service before self. But he also shared another list of qualities of effective leaders that is not usually considered positive: paranoid, zany, obsessed, monomaniacal, independent, selfish, antisocial, and contrarian.

School boards govern (by setting policy) and Superintendents manage. Policies are the school district “laws,” which the Board approves. The superintendent carries out policy, and is given the means with which to do so. Reference materials for both the board and superintendent include state statutes and administrative rules, school board policy, the superintendent’s contract, job descriptions, operating agreements between the board and superintendent and verbal arrangements.

Superintendent Rinearson noted that board members should feel they can call the superintendent to ask questions.

In Oregon, a board member may be chairman for no more than four consecutive years. In LCSD, the board asks the Vice Chair to serve as mentor for the new board member. Director Beck noted that, after Director Turner’s term concludes, he will be the only board member that has served as Chair or Vice Chair. Directors Martin, Bondley and Ellis noted their willingness to serve in a leadership role at some point.

Preliminary Goal Setting for 2013/14

Superintendent Rinearson noted that District priorities were approved by the board several years ago, and are now nearly complete. “As a result of this, we have not scheduled as many work sessions for the board,” said the Superintendent. He noted that the Board has set “board goals” each year, which represent things the board itself would like to accomplish. He said it would be a good idea to identify those things we know are on the horizon, and reminded board members that the legislature is in session. “There will be new policies to put in place because of this,” he said.

Board members expressed interest in meeting in a work session setting to begin the goal setting discussion. The meeting may or may not be facilitated; Mr. McKenzie said a two-hour session should be sufficient. Laurie will poll the group to determine a date for the meeting.

Leadership Succession Planning Processes

Chairman Ron Beck noted Superintendent Rinearson is planning to retire from PERS as of July 1, 2013. Mr. Rinearson would like to continue as LCSD's Superintendent for at least the 2013-14 year, working up to 1039 hours between July and December, 2013, and 1039 hours between January and June, 2014. He would like to amend his contract with these dates, and would like the budgeted PERS amount for his salary to be paid directly to him. A special session meeting of the Board will be required to accomplish this.

"We have a year for a superintendent search," said Mr. Beck. Greg McKenzie, in addition to training, provides superintendent search services. He provided general information to the Board regarding typical timelines for searches. Part of the process involves visiting communities to learn their expectations/wishes/desires in a superintendent. This should occur in each community of the district (Waldport, Newport, Toledo and Lincoln City). Charter school patrons could be included in the respective area meetings.

"Boards usually decide on superintendent criteria by November/December," said McKenzie. He noted search timelines have been changing in the last couple of years, with closing times varying. "You may not want to be first," said McKenzie.

This topic will be added to the July 16 board meeting agenda for discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Chairman

Superintendent