

# MEETING MINUTES

## VERNONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD of DIRECTORS Workshop Meeting – August 29, 2024 Vernonia Schools, 1000 Missouri Avenue, Vernonia

- 1. CALL TO ORDER:** A Workshop of the Board of Directors of Vernonia School District 47J, Columbia County, Oregon was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Susan Wagner, Board Chair. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER
- Board Present:** Susan Wagner, Joanie Jones, Stacey Pelster, Amy Cieloha, Greg Kintz and Javoss McGuire BOARD PRESENT
- Board Absent:** Position #7, currently vacant. BOARD ABSENT
- Staff Present:** Jim Helmen, Superintendent; Barb Carr, Administrative Assistant; and Brett Costley, Licensed Staff. STAFF PRESENT
- Visitors Present:** Lisa Curry, Colton DeWitt, Alicia Mahoney, Tony Holmes and Janice Cockrell (virtual). VISITORS PRESENT
- Vacant Director Interviews:** The Board received copies of all applications/questionnaire responses for the vacant director position #7 prior to the meeting. The original term for this position expires June 30, 2027. However, the individual appointed will served until June 30, 2025 and then seek to be elected for the remaining two years of the original term. VACANT DIRECTOR INTERVIEWS

Board members and applicants introduced themselves. Submitting an application for consideration were Janice Cockrell, Lisa Curry, Colton Dewitt, Tony Holmes, and Alicia Mahoney.

The board asked for additional information or had questions for the applicants:

1. Share what your strengths are to be of assistance during the budget process.
2. There are a minimum of 12 meetings and a couple budget meetings as well as an occasional extra meeting. Are you willing and able to participate fully?
3. What would you like to see the board accomplish this year? What have you appreciated that has already been accomplished by the board and what would you like to see the board focus on going forward?
4. In the past the District has gone through some politically charged years. The Board has come together, despite the laws, for the benefit of the schools. How do you feel your personal beliefs or persuasions would impact your time on the board?
5. What is your comfort level on asking questions or opening yourself up to discuss items?
6. How will you separate advocating for your child and advocating for all the children in the district?
7. How many school board meetings have you attended?

The Board all felt that receiving five qualified applicants interested in serving on the board is exciting. Unsuccessful applicants were encouraged to be involved and continue to attend the board meetings. They were also encouraged to run in the May 2025 election if not appointed.


Jim Helmen thanked all the applicants. He further stated that the District has an unbelievable board of directors, focused on giving every student a chance. There is a lot of technical work behind the scenes that is often not seen. The selected person will be privy to a lot of information and will always be considered a board member by the public. The people will hold you to a higher standard. It is a serious investment to our community and in each other. He is passionate about this work and wants whoever is selected to be just as passionate.

The Board will make their selection and appoint to fill the vacancy at the September 12, 2024 regular board meeting. Applicants were asked to attend as the appointee will be given the oath of office and will be seated at the table as an active member of the board for the remainder of that meeting.

**School Board Evaluation:** Tabled for another time.

**ADJOURNED:** Workshop adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

ADJOURNED

  
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Board Chair

  
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District Clerk

08/29/2024