

MEETING MINUTES

VERNONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD of DIRECTORS Regular Meeting – September 11, 2025 Vernonia Schools Library, 1000 Missouri Avenue, Vernonia

- 1.0 CALL TO ORDER:** A Regular Meeting of the Directors of Administrative School District 47J, Columbia County, Oregon was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Greg Kintz, Board Chair. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER
- Board Present:** Greg Kintz, Amy Cieloha, Lisa Curry, Javoss McGuire, Joan Jones, and Tony Holmes, BOARD PRESENT
- Board Absent:** Alicia Mahoney BOARD ABSENT
- Staff Present:** Jim Helmen, Superintendent; Nate Underwood, Middle and High School Principal; Michelle Eagleson, Elementary Principal; Barb Carr, Administrative Assistant; and Kendra Schlegel, and Brett Costley, Licensed Staff. STAFF PRESENT
- Visitors Present:** Scott Laird, Amanda Sicard, and Tiffany McTaggart. VISITORS PRESENT
- 1.1** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- 2.0 AGENDA REVIEW:** Lisa Curry moved to approve the agenda as presented. Amy Cieloha seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously with those in attendance. AGENDA REVIEW
- 3.0 PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA and NON-AGENDA ITEMS:** Amanda Rose Sicard commented on the K-2 play area drinking fountain not working. Mr. Helmen stated he would get back in touch with her. PUBLIC COMMENT
- 4.0 BUSINESS REPORTS:**
- 4.1 Administrator Reports:** All Administrator reports were provided to the Board prior to the meeting. ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS
- Mr. Underwood spoke to the cell phone ban and being pleasantly surprised at how well it's been going. Students are talking and are engaged with each other. He has had staff bring eight phones to him and the students didn't argue or give him a hard time. Parents have been supportive when he has called them.
- Lisa Curry asked Mr. Helmen about potential legal ramifications surrounding the list of consequences for not adhering to cell phone guidelines. Everything has been vetted with District legal counsel and is acceptable, according to Mr. Helmen.
- 4.2 Superintendent Report:** The Superintendent report was provided to the Board prior to the meeting. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT
- Mr. Helmen provided an update on the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) for the District. It is a requirement that the District review the plan every 4 years or if drastic changes to the plan occur. This year the District is focusing on 1) High quality instruction 2) Student engagement 3) Consistent behavior systems and 4) Effective Professional Learning Teams. Last year the District struggled with attendance and there is a continued focus on getting kids to attend more regularly.
- Mr. Helmen's recent article in the newspaper, Vernonia's Voice, provided a lot of information. His goal is transparency. The District is being conservative in our financial outlook. Many Districts are financially struggling. The hit will come for VSD at some point. We are not immune.
- 4.3 Financial Report:** Marie Knight's financial report was provided to the board prior to the meeting. According to Marie, her report contains mostly estimates as it is still early in the year. She is still working to get everything set up for payroll. Lisa Curry asked about \$190K in expenditures? According to Marie, this is the District's liability insurance for the year. FINANCIAL REPORT

4.4	Maintenance Report: Mark Brown's report was provided to the Board prior to the meeting. According to Mr. Helmen, Mark Brown is looking at bids for what the cost would be to go into Mist and replace the internal components of all toilets, or maybe even a full system replacement. They feel this is the reason for the water issue. Porta pottys are going to be onsite in case there is a need but so far this year there has not been an issue with running out of water. Columbia County states there is no issue of the water table being impacted by well drilling. Discussion was held on the vandalism at the Football concession stand. There are gravel scratches on the counter top finish. Amy Cieloha asked for care to be given to the baseball / softball fields. Greg Kintz stated the lines on the football field need to be done again. It is hard to see them.	MAINTENANCE REPORT
5.0	BOARD REPORTS/ BOARD DEVELOPMENT:	
	5.1 Committee Reports:	COMMITTEE UPDATES
	5.1.1 Policy Committee: Jim Helmen stated that he has read through the latest updates from OSBA. He will set up a meeting with the policy committee. OSBA is still working on a draft cell phone policy and will send out to Districts as soon as it is ready. This new policy needs to be adopted by the end of October.	POLICY COMMITTEE
	5.1.2 Safety Committee: Amy Cieloha shared a brief recap of the recently held safety committee meeting. She was unclear as to why another committee specifically for students needs to be created. According to Marie Knight, the committee learned that they were not operating correctly. The required OSHA safety committee is for staff only. The committee therefore wants to develop a student-focused committee.	SAFETY COMMITTEE
	5.1.3 Scholarship Committee: The committee will meeting for a workshop on October 30 starting at 6:00 p.m. to review the current scholarship description, criteria and scoring sheets. This information will be provided to committee members prior to the meeting for review.	SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE
6.0	OTHER INFORMATION and DISCUSSION	
	6.1 Superintendent / Board Operating Agreement: Jim Helmen shared that this document was reviewed and discussed at the last meeting. Board member names have been updated. Discussion was held.	SUPERINTENDENT / BOARD OPERATING AGREEMENT REVIEWED
	6.2 Board Meeting Schedule Adjustment: Greg Kintz requested that a discussion be held on the October school board meeting. It is taking place during VHS Homecoming week and there is a volleyball game that night. After discussion it was the consensus of the board to move the October 9th meeting from Mist into Vernonia and hold the November meeting at Mist instead.	BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE ADJUSTMENT DISCUSSED
7.0	ACTION ITEMS	
	7.1 Superintendent / Board Operating Agreement: Javoss McGuire moved to approve the superintendent/Board Operating Agreement as amended and discussed. Amy Cieloha seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously with those in attendance.	SUPERINTENDENT / BOARD OPERATING AGREEMENT APPROVED
	7.2 Board Meeting Schedule Change: Lisa Curry moved to adjust the School Board Meeting Schedule by moving the October 9th meeting to Vernonia and the November 13 meeting to Mist and adding an October 30th workshop starting as 6:00 p.m. as discussed. Tony Holmes seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously with those in attendance.	BOARD MEETING MEETING SCHEDULE ADJUSTMENT APPROVED
	8.0 MONITORING BOARD PERFORMANCE: Greg Kintz shared that he sends out ORED news to the Board. OSBA will hold a regional meeting on September 29th at ESD offices in Astoria. Board members were asked to let Greg know if they wish to attend. Greg also updated the Board on business of OSBA relating to a real estate transaction and OSBA employees unionizing.	MONITORING BOARD PERFORMANCE
9.0	CONSENT AGENDA:	CONSENT AGENDA
	9.1 Minutes of 08/14/2025 Workshop and Regular Meeting. Javoss McGuire moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Amy Cieloha seconded the	CONSENT AGENDA

motion. Motion passed unanimously with those in attendance.

APPROVED

10.0 OTHER ISSUES:

OTHER ISSUES

Javoss McGuire will join Greg Kitnz and Jim Helmen for October's agenda setting meeting on Wednesday October 1st at 5:00 pm.

Amy Cieloha read a personal letter stating that she asks and has always asked alot of questions at board meetings. She is using her voice for herself and others.

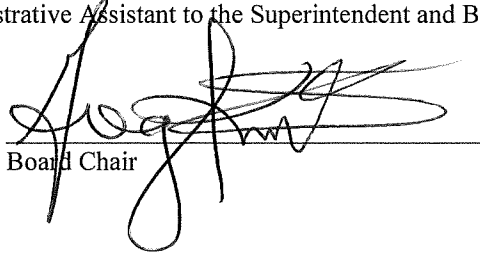
11.0 UPCOMING DATES:

October 9, 2025 – Board Meeting 6:00 p.m. Joanie Jones indicated she is unable to attend.

12.0 MEETING ADJOURNED at 7:07 p.m.

ADJOURNED

Submitted by Barb Carr,
Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent and Board of Directors



Board Chair



District Clerk