



Grand Canyon Unified School District #4

Thursday, December 2, 2021

6:00 p.m.

Special Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Minutes are recorded as annotations of the agenda, as indicated in gray background and left paragraph bars (bars have been added because the gray background may not copy).

This meeting will be conducted online and telephonically

Pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.02, notice is hereby given to the public that the Governing Board of the Grand Canyon Unified School District #4 will convene for a Special Meeting. The Meeting will be held Thursday, December 2, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

Please click the link below to join the meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85384863841>

Or One tap mobile :

US: +17207072699,,85384863841# or +12532158782,,85384863841#

Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 720 707 2699 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 646 558 8656 or
+1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799

The Governing Board reserves the right to move into Executive Session for discussion and consideration of employment, assignment, promotion, demotion, salaries, etc., and/or legal advice with its attorneys for any item listed on the agenda, in person or telephonically, pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03(A)(1) or (A) (3). ***All items on the agenda may be discussed or considered at this meeting.***

AGENDA

1. OPENING ITEMS
A. CALL TO ORDER

Motion by: Ms. Kathryn Morris
At: 06:01 PM
Motion: Call to Order
Second:

Vote Tally

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Kevin Hartigan	Yes
Kathryn Morris	Yes
SuZan Pearce	Yes
Donny Cone	Yes
Daniel Hendrix	Yes

Motion passes

B. ROLL CALL

Board Members

- Ms. Kathryn Morris (Board President)
- Mr. Kevin Hartigan
- Ms. SuZan Pearce
- Mr. Donny Cone joined at 6:03 PM
- Mr. Daniel Hendrix

District staff members present:

- Tosca Henry, JD, Legal Counsel
- Mr. Thomas O'Connor, Program Director, acting Board Secretary

C. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion by: Ms. Kathryn Morris
 At: 6:02 PM
 Motion: Approval of the Agenda as modified from that presented by moving item 4 until after item 6.
 Second: Ms. SuZan Pearce

Vote Tally

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Kevin Hartigan	Yes
Kathryn Morris	Yes
SuZan Pearce	Yes
Donny Cone	NA
Daniel Hendrix	Yes

Motion passes

Mr. Donny Cone joined at 6:03 PM.

2. Approval of final payout for Superintendent Shonny Bria of \$105, 485.19.

Motion by: Ms. Kathryn Morris
 At:
 Motion: Approval to complete the final payout of Dr. Shonny Bria to her estate in the amount presented including unused leave, and prorated 403(B) and performance pay.
 Second: Mr. Kevin Hartigan
 Vote Tally

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Kevin Hartigan	Yes
Kathryn Morris	Yes
SuZan Pearce	Yes
Donny Cone	Yes
Daniel Hendrix	Yes

Motion passes

3. Discussion and possible decision on the creation of a donation/scholarship fund in memory of Superintendent Shonny Bria.

Board President Ms. Kathryn Morris explained that this item was added to the agenda because Dr. Bria’s memorial scholarship fund will be tied to the school and thus needs Board approval to create appropriate accounts.

Ms. Henry will work with Mr. O’Connor to establish the appropriate accounts and documents to establish the scholarship fund.

Motion by: Ms. Kathryn Morris
 At: 06:12 PM
 Motion: Approval for the business office to establish a scholarship fund in memory of Superintendent Dr. Shonny Bria.
 Second: Mr. Kevin Hartigan

Vote Tally

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Kevin Hartigan	Yes
Kathryn Morris	Yes
SuZan Pearce	Yes
Donny Cone	Yes
Daniel Hendrix	Yes

Motion passes

- 4. Discussion and possible action regarding succession planning, including the possible appointment of an interim superintendent or delegation of superintendent duties, tasks and authorities.

Note: Item 4 was moved to after item 6 in the approval of the agenda, item 1C above.

5. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. The Board may vote to enter Executive Session, pursuant to A.R.S. Section 38-431.03 (A)(1) for discussion or consideration of employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, demotion, dismissal, salaries, disciplining or resignation of a public officer, appointee or employee and (A) (3) discussion or consultation for legal advice with the attorney of the public body, regarding succession planning, including the possible appointment of an interim superintendent or delegation of superintendent duties, tasks and authorities.

Motion by: Ms. Kathryn Morris
 At: 06:20 PM
 Motion: Enter into Executive Session, pursuant to A.R.S. Section 38-431.03 (A)(1) and (A) (3) for consultation with the attorney regarding succession planning, including the possible appointment of an interim superintendent or delegation of superintendent duties, tasks and authorities.
 Second: Ms. SuZan Pearce
 Vote Tally

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Kevin Hartigan	Yes
Kathryn Morris	Yes
SuZan Pearce	Yes
Donny Cone	Yes
Daniel Hendrix	Yes

Motion passes, the Board entered executive session at 6:20 PM.

6. RECONVENE REGULAR SESSION

The Board exited Executive session at 07:34 PM

Motion by: Ms. Kathryn Morris
At: 07:34 PM
Motion: Reconvene to Regular Session
Second: Ms. SuZan Pearce
Vote Tally

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Kevin Hartigan	Yes
Kathryn Morris	Yes
SuZan Pearce	Yes
Donny Cone	Yes
Daniel Hendrix	Yes

Motion passes

The Board may take possible action on the items discussed in Executive Session 5.A.

See Item 4, was moved to below for discussion and possible action.

- 4. Discussion and possible action regarding succession planning, including the possible appointment of an interim superintendent or delegation of superintendent duties, tasks and authorities.

Note: The discussion below is an approximation of the discussion which followed. It is intended to convey a sense of the meaning of the discussion, and should not be interpreted as a direct transcription of the dialogue.

Board President Kathryn Morris: The Board recognizes that decisions need to be made on a daily basis at the District, and the Board members only have legal authority when in session. As a result, it is the responsibility to hire someone who can oversee the daily operation of the district.

We have to acknowledge that we have a really great staff and team. They have been keeping the district and schools open with this loss. They know what to do, when to do it, and how.

It is a testament to Shonny’s leadership that the staff is as qualified as they are.

Board member Suzan Pearce: Do we want to do an interim, or jump right into the superintendent search for a permanent Superintendent?

Ms. Morris: Superintendent searches take time, we can expect that we probably wouldn’t have a fully vetted candidate ready for hire until at the earliest, probably July.

Ms. Pearce: I agree, we don't want to be rushed, it would be good to have an interim.

Board member Mr. Kevin Hartigan: I appreciate the kind words about staff and fully agree with the assessment of competence. We need to support our kids. If we keep this space open, we would be moving in the wrong direction. I'd like to see the spot filled in the interim.

Board member Donny Cone: I think we need a superintend, no reason to not have a temporary.

Ms. Morris: We would be doing a disservice if not appointing an interim.

Board member Mr. Daniel Hendrix: I agree, for continuity's sake, we should have someone at least in an acting role as superintendent.

Motion by: Ms. Kathryn Morris
At: 07:42 PM
Motion: Move forward with seeking out and selecting an interim superintendent.
Second: Ms. SuZan Pearce
Vote Tally

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Kevin Hartigan	Yes
Kathryn Morris	Yes
SuZan Pearce	Yes
Donny Cone	Yes
Daniel Hendrix	Yes

Continued Discussion

Mr. Hartigan: I'd like to jump start with my thoughts here regarding hiring the interim from outside vs within. Both have merits, and to go back to doing what is best for kids, we want to provide both high quality and high experience in our choice.. Unfortunately, the district is not high on experience. When Shonny and Tom Rowland were in the district, they together held more than 50 years of school leadership experience. We are now out of that depth. This leaves me leaning towards going out. By going out, it will assist current staff in continuing to be successful, especially since we are planning to move to hire for permanent status. This will allow everyone time between Shonny and the person named permanent Superintendent.

There is a lot of talent within the organization, and those talents are focused and highly yielding within their fields. Appointing an internal candidate would be a big learning activity for many people.

Ms. Pearce: The people in their positions are doing an amazing job of keeping things going. I think stability now is really important. I think it might be best to pull someone from outside.

Mr. Cone: A simple question: what is the definition of internal vs. external in this argument?

Ms. Pearce: When Katie said internal, she was referring to someone full time at the school. External would be anyone who doesn't fall into that category.

Mr. Hartigan: I agree with SuZan.

Ms. Morris: You add external to increase the capacity so we don't overload our staff. We are a small district and so have no deputy superintendent to move into the position.

We have internal staff who may be interested, but we need to make sure we have the capacity, and cognizant of the impact of shifting resources around on that capacity.

I want to give employees the opportunity to grow, but want to be cognizant of work-life balance. I also don't want all my eggs in one basket. I do worry that if we select someone internal, they may have two jobs, and may impact quality of work.

Ms. Pearce: I want to avoid the domino effect. We need the continued ability of people to do what they do well.

Ms. Morris: I think we need to go forward and look at some candidates for interim. We do have some candidates.

Moving forward with this.

Motion by:	Ms. Kathryn Morris
At:	07:56 PM
Motion:	Motion to offer the interim superintendent position to the former school principal, Mr Tom Rowland.
Second:	Mr. Kevin Hartigan

Discussion:

Mr. Hartigan: I think we need to place parameters, timing, negotiation parameters and such.

Ms. Morris: If this is approved, we can appoint someone to approach Mr. Rowland to work out those parameters.

Ms. Pearce: What if Mr. Rowland won't be available until June?

Ms. Tosca Henry: That would be addressed as a separate action.

Vote Tally

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Kevin Hartigan	Yes
Kathryn Morris	No
SuZan Pearce	Yes
Donny Cone	No
Daniel Hendrix	No

Motion Fails

Motion by: Ms. Kathryn Morris
 At: 08:00 PM
 Motion: Motion to offer the interim superintendent position to the current school principal, Mr. Matt Yost.
 Second: Mr. Daniel Hendrix

Vote Tally

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Kevin Hartigan	No
Kathryn Morris	Yes
SuZan Pearce	No
Donny Cone	No
Daniel Hendrix	Yes

Motion Fails

Motion by: Ms. Kathryn Morris
 At: 08:02 PM
 Motion: Motion to offer the interim superintendent position to Mr. Thomas O'Connor.
 Second: Mr. Kevin Hartigan

Vote Tally

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Kevin Hartigan	Yes
Kathryn Morris	No
SuZan Pearce	No
Donny Cone	Yes

Daniel Hendrix Yes

Motion Passes

Ms. Morris noted that we need someone to negotiate acceptance and parameters, and will need an executive session to formalize those parameters.

Motion by: Ms. Kathryn Morris

At: 08:04 PM

Motion: Approve the Board President to negotiate with Mr. Thomas O’Connor and bring the results to the Board meeting next week.

Second: Mr. Kevin Hartigan

Discussion:

Ms. Pearce: What if Mr. O’Connor does not accept?

Ms. Morris: We move on.

Vote Tally

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Kevin Hartigan	Yes
Kathryn Morris	Yes
SuZan Pearce	Yes
Donny Cone	Yes
Daniel Hendrix	Yes

Motion Passes

Motion by: Ms. Kathryn Morris

At: 08:08 PM

Motion: Approve signature authority for Mr. O’Connor equivalent to all roles held by former Dr. Bria between now and official approval of Mr. O’Connor in the interim role.

Second: Mr. Donny Cone

Vote Tally

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Kevin Hartigan	Yes
Kathryn Morris	Yes
SuZan Pearce	Yes
Donny Cone	Yes
Daniel Hendrix	Yes

Directions to staff for the next Board meeting:

- Need input to the Board for special ed director
- HR resources discussion
- 400 Building opening date

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by: Ms. Kathryn Morris
 At: 08:12 PM
 Motion: Adjourn
 Second: SuZan
 Vote Tally

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Kevin Hartigan	Yes
Kathryn Morris	Yes
SuZan Pearce	Yes
Donny Cone	Yes
Daniel Hendrix	Yes

Motion passes

Respectfully Submitted By, _____
Board Secretary

Date _____

Kathryn Morris
Board President

Daniel Hendrix
Board Member

Suzan Pearce
Vice President/Board Clerk

Kevin Hartigan
Board Member

Donny Cone
Board Member