

# MEETING MINUTES

## VERNONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD of DIRECTORS Regular Meeting – September 12, 2024 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 Susan Wagner. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER
- Board Present:** Javoss McGuire, Joanie Jones, Amy Cieloha, Susan Wagner, Greg Kintz, and Stacey Pelster. BOARD PRESENT
- Board Absent:** Position #7 which is currently vacant BOARD ABSENT
- Staff Present:** Jim Helmen, Superintendent; Nate Underwood, Middle/High School Principal; Michelle Eagleson, Elementary Principal; Marie Knight, Business Manager; Barb Carr, Administrative Assistant; and Lee Costanzo and Kendra Schlegel, Licensed Staff. STAFF PRESENT
- Visitors Present:** Colton DeWitt, Lisa Curry, Tony Holmes, and Alicia Mahoney (virtual) VISITORS PRESENT
- 1.1** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- 2.0 AGENDA REVIEW:** Amy Cieloha moved to approve the agenda as amended – numbering adjustment. Stacey Pelster seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. AGENDA REVIEW
- 3.0 BOARD VACANCY APPOINTMENT:** BOARD VACANCY APPOINTMENT
- 3.1 Discussion of Selection Process:** Jim Helmen shared the process for selecting the person to fill the vacancy on the Board. It is important that there is transparency in the process. Round 1 voting – the Board selected their choice. Barb Carr collected the ballots, tallied and announced. Round 1 Results: Lisa Curry - 1 vote: Janice Cockrell - 1 vote: Tony Holmes - 2 votes; and Alicia Normand - 2 votes. SELECTION PROCESS EXPLAINED
- Board members were given the opportunity to share why they voted the way that they did. Stacey Pelster and Greg Kintz shared their impression of Tony Holmes for his involvement and his attendance and board meetings. Amy Cieloha read a statement supporting Alicia Mahoney. Javoss McGuire also stated his support of Alicia stating her involvement on the Budget Committee.
- Round 2 voting – Board members were asked to vote again to break the tie for the number 1 choice and to vote for either Tony Holmes or Alicia Mahoney. Round 2 results were Tony Holmes – 4 votes and Alicia Normand – 2 votes.
- Round 3 voting – Board members were asked to vote for their number 2 choice. Round 3 results – Colton DeWitt – 1 vote; Alicia Mahoney – 5 votes.
- Round 4 voting – final vote between the #1 and the #2 choice Tony Holmes and Alicia Norman. Round 4 results: Tony Holmes - 4 votes and Alicia Normand - 2 votes.
- 3.2 Selection of Appointee:** Stacey Pelster moved to appoint Tony Holmes to fill position #7 until June 30, 2025. Greg Kintz seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. HOLMES APPOINTED TO VACANT POSITION #7
- 4.0 OATH OF OFFICE:** Jim Helmen administered the Oath of Office to Tony Holmes. Following the Oath of Office, Tony was seated at the Board table for the remainder of the board meeting. OATH OF OFFICE ADMINISTERED
- 5.0 PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA and NON-AGENDA ITEMS:** None. PUBLIC COMMENT
- 6.0 SHOWCASING of SCHOOLS** SHOWCASING OF SCHOOLS
- 6.1 Administrator Reports:** All administrative reports were provided to the Board members prior to the meeting for their review. ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS
- Joanie Jones commented on all the new electives at the high school. Nate Underwood shared that at the end of the year last year they offered an elective assembly to the students. Students

signed up for their favorites and the classes that rose to the top were offered up to teachers to see who was willing to teach them. Mr. Underwood shared that there is a lot of positive energy with staff and students and gave a shout out to Pete Weisel for the work he did on the scheduling.

Tony Holmes asked Nate Underwood about the CAD program. Computer Automated Design – can take something from design to production on the 3D printers.

A question was asked about Outdoor School. According to Mr. Underwood, is it going well. He hasn't had a chance to get out there yet but the reports coming in are that students are having a great time.

Joanie Jones asked Michelle Eagleson about the PAX Assembly. Michelle Eagleson shared that the key is consistency with all staff. Teachers use the same signal to quiet students down which is the harmonica. All the work with PAX ties into the PBIS program. It's been a great first couple weeks of school according to Mrs. Eagleson.

New staff at the high school – Doug Bilodeau, Nick Console, Luke McCallum, Juan Munoz, Rachel Plummer are all doing great. The new elementary PE teacher is also a great addition. The new placement of Dawn Jay into the elementary Enrichment Class is a success, kids are loving the class.

Jim Helmen shared that the admin team is working very hard and he is proud of what they are accomplishing.

## 7.0 BUSINESS REPORTS:

**7.1 Superintendent Report:** Jim Helmen's report was provided to the Board prior to the meeting for their review.

SUPERINTENDENT  
REPORT

Board members thanked Mr. Helmen for his communication through messaging.

As a highlight to his report, Mr. Helmen gave a shout out to his staff as the District met all longitudinal goals set last year. Almost all targets were hit as well.

Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) document was shared with the Board. The work during year one consisted of looking at data and deciding where we as a District want to be in regards to high achievement, CTE program, and SEL programs. The CIP document also contains a review of the District goals. Mr. Helmen reviewed the goals and related instructional practices and explained their importance. All goals and instruction is geared towards achievement the 70-70-90 goal of the District.

The CIP is adding a section titled "Portrait of a Professional". This outlines the characteristics that everyone should have. This includes every person interviewed and hired, as well as all current staff. Currently, staff are completing a survey. The top results will be incorporated in the plan and implemented. This is in the works for next year.

An important goal at the high school this year is to increase their 9<sup>th</sup> grade on track percentage. 9<sup>th</sup> Grade on Track directly impacts graduation rates. Currently the high school is at 62% with the goal of being at 67% at the end of the school year.

Mr. Helmen shared that the highlighted areas in the document are the priorities of the District. It is also a living document and things will change. It's collective and everyone has buy in. Bottom line, we are making adequate progress in all areas. Greg Kintz commented that he appreciates that Mr. Helmen is data driven.

Amy Cieloha asked what happens when some students are ready to move on to another standard and others aren't ready to move. It was explained that teachers move to the next standard when 80% have grasped the standard. Those that aren't ready will get intervention groups and extra help.

Stacey Pelster asked how students are chosen for the CTE courses at middle and high school? None of her students were selected to take a CTE course after asking to be scheduled into a

class. Discussion was held and Mr. Underwood offered to look into the matter. Amy Cieloha shared she would like to see that when families come to registration that there is an opportunity to meet with the counselor.

**7.1.1 Staffing Update:** There are two new hires on the agenda for approval.

STAFFING UPDATE

**7.2 Financial Report:** Marie Knight shared that her report contains only a couple months of actuals. At this early stage she is able to estimate a healthy ending fund balance. After September and the first payroll, all positions will be encumbered and numbers in her future reports will be more accurate.

FINANCIAL REPORT

She is working with high school secretary and bookkeeper, Teresa Williams on the student body accounts. They have started their work by creating a Student Body Manual to assist and provide processes in regards to managing student body funds.

The District has moved over to Quick Books online. This allows the use of credit cards for registration and eventually for concessions and athletic gate entrance fees. The Software is different and they are learning how to run reports. They intend to take training to reduce the risk of fraud and mishandling of funds. This training information will be shared at a winter coaches meeting and to all staff including advisors that fundraise.

At the October board meeting an updated student body account list will be provided although Marie is unable to attend the meeting. In November, Marie is hoping to present training to the Board. The overall process will take time and she appreciates the questions coming from the Board.

**7.3 Maintenance Report:** Mark Brown's report was provided to the Board prior to the meeting for board member review. A highlight in his report is that the concession stand is up and running. Joanie Jones asked for a status update on the Mist gym floor. According to Mr. Helmen, it was repaired but did not get completely redone. This will be looked at for next year.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

**8.0 BOARD REPORTS/ BOARD DEVELOPMENT:**

**8.1 Committee Reports:**

COMMITTEE UPDATE

**8.1.1 Policy Committee:** A meeting is planned for next Monday.

**8.1.2 Safety Committee:** Susan Wagner shared that the committee learned a lot in a recently attended training. It was determined that they have been reporting on things that should not have been reported in their committee meetings. She will provide an update next month.

**8.1.3 Scholarship Committee:** Nothing reported.

**8.2 Board Member Items:** Greg Kintz is heading out to Salishan for the OSBA Retreat. A new Executive Director of OSBA has been hired. Additional updates from OSBA was shared.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

**8.3 NWRESB Board Vacancy:** When filling a vacancy on the NWRESB board, a required component is that District Boards in that zone cast a ballot in support or against the candidate. Currently one individual from Scappoose is seeking to be appointed to the vacant zone 4 position.

NWRESB BOARD VACANCY

**9.0 OTHER INFORMATION and DISCUSSION**

**9.1 Athletic Co-op w/Jewell:** Jewell School District has submitted a Co-Op Agreement with Vernonia to OSAA for the 2025 Baseball and Softball season, allowing their athletes to come play with Vernonia. Jewell is so small they are unable to field a team.

ATHLETIC COOP DISCUSSED

**10.0 ACTION ITEMS**

**10.1 New Hires:** Stacey Pelster moved to approve the Superintendent's recommendation to hire Luke McCallum., MS/HS Health/PE Teacher and Juan Munoz-Sandoval, HS Math Teacher. Joanie Jones seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

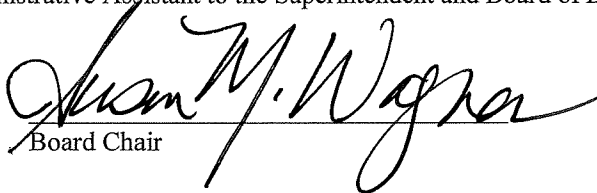
McCALLUM and MUNOZ HIRED

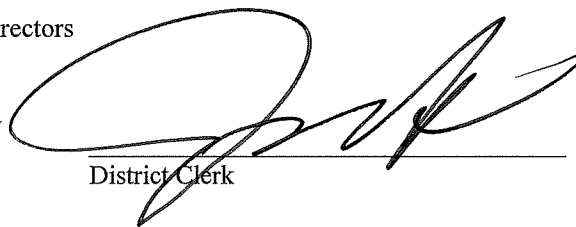
**10.2 NWRESB Board Vacancy:** Greg Kintz moved to endorse candidate Michelle Graham as presented to fulfill the vacancy of NWRESB Zone 4 to begin October 9, 2024 through June 30, 2025. Javoss McGuire seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting yay with the exception of Amy Cieloha who abstained from voting. A reason for the abstention was not provided.

NWRESB BOARD CANDIDATE ENDORSED

- 10.3 Athletic Co-Op Agreement with Jewell:** Joanie Jones moved to approve the Athletic Co-op Agreement with Jewell as presented. Amy Cieloha seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. ATHLETIC CO-OP WITH JEWELL APPROVED
- 11.0 MONITORING BOARD PERFORMANCE:** Chair Wagner asked board members to be cautious in comments made during board meetings when it blurs the line between a parent advocating for their child and a board member elected to serve all students in the District. MONITORING BOARD PERFORMANCE
- 12.0 CONSENT AGENDA:** CONSENT AGENDA  
**12.1** Minutes of 08/08/2024 Regular Meeting and 08/29/24 Workshop.  
 Amy Cieloha moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Stacey Pelster seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. CONSENT AGENDA APPROVED
- 13.0 OTHER ISSUES:** OTHER ISSUES  
**13.1** Next Agenda Setting Meeting will be held Oct 2<sup>nd</sup> at 5:00 p.m. virtually. Amy Cieloha will join Susan Wagner and Jim Helmen.  
 Joanie Jones shared how uplifting things were at the beginning of the meeting. The administrators deserve a round of applause.
- 14.0 UPCOMING DATES:**  
 October 10, 2024 – School Board Meeting – 6:00 p.m. at Mist Elementary.  
 Jim Helmen shared he is unable to attend as he will be in Kansas City. Joanie Jones also stated she is unable to attend the October meeting.
- 13.0 MEETING ADJOURNED** at 8:00 p.m. ADJOURNED

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

  
 Board Chair

  
 District Clerk