M I N U T E S

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
The Board of Education met for a special meeting on Thursday, October 1 2015, at the Education Center, 1401 North Handy Street.

2. ESTABLISH QUORUM
Board members present: Deligianni, Ledesma, Moffat, Ortega, Salas, Surridge, Wayland
Board members absent: n/a

3. CALL TO ORDER – OPEN SESSION
Board President Ortega called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
Mr. Ortega invited the audience to join together in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. OATH OF OFFICE

   A. Administration of Oath of Office
Mr. Christensen administered the Oath of Office to Gregory Salas, who was appointed to the open seat in Trustee Area 1 at the September 21, 2015 Board of Education meeting.

6. ADOPTION OF AGENDA
Motion No. 28
It was moved by Dr. Deligianni, seconded by Mr. Wayland and carried by a vote off 7-0 to adopt the October 1 agenda.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

Speakers

Michelle Gabbard remarked on the provisional appointment and the lack of partnership between the Board and the community and students, noting this is a non-partisan position.

Farah Javbi voiced her opposition to the way the Board of Education has handled the provisional appointment while there was overwhelming support for highly qualified candidates who were not selected.
Lisa Kent voiced her opposition to the way the Board of Education has handled the appointment of the new Trustee stating that the Board is not listening to the people. She also stated that denouncing the petition process is bypassing the constitutional right to petition for an election.

Sandra Davidson voiced her opposition to the way the Board of Education has handled the appointment of the new Trustee adding that the Board did not take into consideration the community’s comments. She stated that she has no confidence that the Board will listen to their constituents.

Carole Miller stated she was shocked at the appointment of Mr. Salas and hopes Mr. Salas uses Mrs. Moffat as his mentor. She hopes the Board of Education learns to know its audience.

Michele Weisnberg stated she was opposed to the way the Board of Education handled the appointment of the new Trustee adding that political party affiliation should not be an issue.

Nicol Jones stated she was opposed to the way the Board of Education handled the appointment of the new Trustee.

Kim Adams commented on the resolution stating that it indicates that the Board does not believe in the democratic process. She encouraged the Board to vote against the resolution.

Jim Dinwiddie expressed his dissatisfaction with the Board as it has underestimated the willingness of its constituency to challenge Board decisions that they believe are wrong. He questioned the appointment of Mr. Salas as the most qualified candidate. He views the wasteful use of scarce resources for the special election as a direct result of the misguided decision by the Board.

Jim Thomaston stated he was opposed to the way the Board of Education handled the appointment of the new Trustee and urged the Board to do things for the right reason not for political reasons.

Barbara Agahi stated she accepts Carole Miller’s criticism because she has chosen to stay out of the political arena. She was disappointed with the way the Board handled the appointment of the new trustee.

Andrea Yamasaki stated as elected officials, it is the Board’s duty to do the right thing; it’s imperative to serve in an ethical manner and not choose a candidate based on partisan politics.

Lara Montano stated she has concerns about the cost of a special election – dollars that could be used for educational programs. She believes that a special election is not warranted.

Lissa Smith accused the Board of disregard to responding to the educational needs of the communities. After consideration, she has concluded that the results of a special election could be disastrous with widespread implications. Ms. Smith stated she would work with the Board to support a successful bond measure to improve facilities.
8. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

A. Board Discussion Regarding Candidates Selected for Appointment to the Open Seat in Trustee Area 1

Board President Ortega proposed that each Trustee have an opportunity to state their reasons for supporting the candidate of their choice in the provisional appointment that occurred September 21.

Discussion

Mr. Wayland commented that when it was suggested that candidates call the trustees, only two candidates called him. He asked questions of both and he wanted a commitment that the candidate would stay beyond one year if appointed.

Mr. Surridge stated he met with community leaders, the CARE group, City Council members, and school principals and asked for their ideas of who they thought would be suitable for the school board. As a consequence, he met with six to eight people who might be a good fit. His concerns were first to support a school bond and second, someone who could fit well with the Board. Mr. Surridge reached out to Greg Salas with whom he played basketball 15 years ago. He added that Mr. Salas was the only candidate who spoke with every Board member, stayed to the end of the September meeting, and the only candidate to attend the Facilities Subcommittee meeting. Mr. Surridge pointed out that Mr. Salas has a background in business that would bring knowledge for the passage of the bond. Mr. Surridge added that he looks forward to working with Mr. Salas.

Mrs. Moffat stated she first considered the qualities of what makes a good school board member – people of high character, truthful, and hardworking. She values a commitment to OUSD and the community – the stronger that commitment, the better. Mrs. Moffat felt that it was important that the community know what each candidate stated in their applications and read a portion of each candidate’s application. She stated she selected Andrea Yamasaki because she had the most stellar resume as well as the support of the community and possessed qualities that the community is looking for.

Dr. Deligianni stated she chose Christopher Nguyen because he indicated his main goal was to prepare students for college or a career which goes along with own her personal philosophy of education. She added that Mr. Nguyen is very smart. He understands the needs of the community and students and is knowledgeable on public policy. He has served on many advisory committees.

Mr. Ledesma explained the appointment process as he experienced it. He met with candidates Andrea Yamasaki and Greg Salas. He stated that he was impressed with Andrea Yamasaki who is the favored person for that community. Mr. Ledesma spoke of Mr. Salas’ interest to be involved in the community and of his business background. Mr. Ledesma felt that Mr. Salas was the best candidate due to his business background, knowing that budget decisions lay ahead as the District pursues a bond. He stated that the cost of a special election doesn’t make sense; it takes money away from students and educational programs.

Mr. Salas thanked the Board for the appointment, saying he takes this position very seriously. He added he is not a politician, but does have a business background and currently works for a finance company. His vision is to see the Board unite and get the bond passed. He will work with everyone
in support of the bond as the goal is to give kids the best education possible. The community needs to see that the Board can work together and he will work tirelessly to do a good job.

9. ACTION

A. Resolution No. 08-15-16 in Opposition to a Special Election

Board President Ortega asked the Board to consider the attached resolution opposing a special election due to the estimated $500,000 cost, as these funds can be more wisely expended toward the District’s educational programs.

Mr. Ortega stated he is not opposed to the democratic and electoral process, but noted that the Board voted in August to make a provisional appointment rather than call a special election. This resolution is a reaffirmation of the Board’s vote. He is not against the special election as that is part of the democratic process, but the cost of nearly $500,000 could go towards education.

Motion No. 29

It was moved by Mr. Ortega to approve Resolution 08-15-16 in opposition to a special election. There was no second to the motion.

Discussion

Mr. Ledesma commented that expending funds for a special election will make the passage of a bond very difficult.

Mr. Surridge stated he agreed with Mr. Ledesma, but having a resolution might be going a step too far. He expressed concern that a special election will make it very difficult to pass a bond.

Mrs. Moffat stated that this resolution should not be adopted. It was incumbent upon the Board to take all due care to make sure the appointment process was fair and transparent. She reflected on the process that was followed for the provisional appointment and reiterated her opposition to the process at that time. She, like many community members, was shocked at the selection of Mr. Salas. Mrs. Moffat indicated that the Board could have referred to CSBA’s free publication, Filling a Board Vacancy, which would have shown wise leadership. Mrs. Moffat stated that this resolution has no affect and does nothing to correct the flawed process. It only serves to point a finger of blame at the community.

Mr. Ortega stated that Resolution 08-15-16 did not receive a second to the motion and, consequently, does not move forward.

8. ADJOURNMENT

By call of the President, the special meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Mark Wayland
Clerk of the Board