

CHURCHILL COUNTY BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

Fallon, Nevada

SPECIAL MEETING

February 21, 2018

CALL TO ORDER

President Hendrix called to order the special meeting of the Churchill County School District Board of Trustees at 6:00 p.m. at the Churchill County School District Administration Office, 690 South Maine Street, Fallon, Nevada.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Greg Koenig led the pledge of allegiance.

VERIFICATION OF POSTING OF AGENDA

President Hendrix confirmed the posting of the agenda, pursuant to NRS 241

ROLL CALL

Trustees Present

Trustee Clay Hendrix, President
Trustee Kathryn Whitaker, Vice President
Trustee Carmen Schank, Clerk
Trustee Matt Hyde, Acting Clerk
Trustee Tricia Strasdin
Trustee Phil Pinder
Trustee Rich Gent

Others Present

Dr. Sandra Sheldon, Superintendent
Phyllis Dowd, Director of Business Services

Debra Shyne, Executive Assistant
(Interested Staff/Community Members per Attached List)

REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Trustee Whitaker moved to adopt the agenda as written, seconded by Trustee Gent. There were no public comments. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. For Discussion and Possible Action: The Board will deliberate and may take action to consider and hire a superintendent search firm, including but not limited to: receiving presentations from firms; asking questions as to firm qualifications and other matters; analyzing and deliberating on proposals and qualifications of search firms; discussion search firm contract terms; deliberating and taking action to choose a search firm and approve a contract with that firm in an approximate amount of \$8,000 to \$12,000.**

President Hendrix reported that two firms were interested in being interviewed to provide the District with superintendent search services. One of the firms was not available for the board meeting so President Hendrix and Vice President Whitaker interviewed that search

firm on tape, so that the interview could be heard by the full board at the meeting. The firm being interviewed at the Board meeting will be asked the same questions. Sharla Hales, legal counsel, commented that the Board can ask clarifying or follow-up questions.

Vice President Whitaker asked Bill Jordan of Northwest Leadership Associates questions and Board members asked follow-up questions. The recording of the interview with Greg McKenzie was then played.

Sharla Hales stated that she let both search firms know that Nevada has more rigorous open meeting laws than many states. Ms. Hales noted some items in the search firms' proposals that would need to be modified to comply with the Nevada open meeting law.

Vice President Whitaker reported that she asked Dotty Merrill, Executive Director of the Nevada Association of School Boards, if she had any recommendations for search firms. Ms. Merrill provided one name, but wasn't certain if that person was still providing services. After research, Vice President Whitaker learned that person had retired. PoolPact only provides what the District's human resources can provide; no recruitment, no help with vetting candidates or background checks, and does not have a means to involve all stakeholders. Vice President Whitaker commented that hiring a superintendent is one of the most important things the Board does. Board leadership spent quite a few hours working on this over the past several weeks. It is a lot of work, and they actually missed things they should have been doing, but just didn't know.

Vice President Whitaker moved to accept the proposal from Greg McKenzie from NextUp Leadership, option one. Trustee Schank seconded the motion.

President Hendrix invited comments from the community.

Greg Koenig concurred with the motion commenting that it was a wise choice. Andrea Zeller supported the Board's motion but voiced concerned about the March 30 deadline. Natalie Pacheco, Fallon Tribal Business Council, concurred with the Board's motion. Ms. Pacheco noted that the proposal indicates that the firm is willing to work with the Board and be flexible with budget and timeline. Michele Taylor, NAS Fallon School Liaison Officer, asked if the Board had checked references from past districts who have utilized these firms' services. Dr. Sheldon stated that she is familiar with both firms, they are both reputable, and she had no qualms recommending either of them. Ms. Taylor stated that both firms have a high success rate, but our District is unique. The first firm listed a lot of the schools that they worked with, and Ms. Taylor recognized a lot of them. Ms. Taylor did agree with the Board's motion of Mr. McKenzie, but wanted to ensure that the District has reached out to the other districts who have utilized these consultant's services.

Trustee Gent stated that typically board members hear what other Board members have to say before requesting public comment. Trustee Gent commented that he would listen to what other Board members had to say before he votes.

Trustee Hyde noted that NextUp Leadership firm's proposal does indicate that he has completed searches for a lot of schools, as this was also a concern of his. Trustee Hyde stated that he was more impressed with the NextUp proposal and was in support of Option 1 as stated in the motion.

Trustee Pinder commented that his questions had been answered and thanked Trustee Whitaker and Trustee Hendrix as he felt he was well represented in their interviews, but voiced concern about the timeline.

President Hendrix commented that he spoke with both search consultants and both feel that there is time to complete a late-season search, though the March 30 deadline may need to be extended by a couple more weeks.

Trustee Strasdin also voiced concern about the timeline, citing timeline as one of the reasons why the Board needs to hire a search firm. Trustee Strasdin voiced confidence in the search firms that Dr. Sheldon recommended and stated that Board leadership has also done an excellent job with these firms.

Vice President Whitaker commented that these firms mentioned that the number of people applying for superintendent is diminishing. Most of us remember what a struggle it was to find a superintendent that fit for our District prior to hiring Dr. Sheldon and asked Phyllis Dowd to weigh in on finances.

Phyllis Dowd reported that Dr. Sheldon was 90 percent sure about her decision when the budget was submitted in December, so additional funds were budgeted for recruiting a superintendent as well as recruitment costs and bonuses for teachers. Ms. Dowd stated that the travel expected for the superintendent search consultant is also in the budget.

Vice President Whitaker commented that at a recent Board meeting staff presented their recruitment plans. There are substantial costs associated with staff attending recruitment fairs when you consider transportation, food, lodging, and the additional \$6,000 the Board approved as a signing bonus for new teachers. A cost of \$12,000 or \$13,000 would be a good investment for the District to ensure a superintendent is hired that is a good fit with the District.

Trustee Schank cited information from Greg McKenzie's proposal that supported her decision.

Trustee Gent agreed with Board members.

The motion passed unanimously.

B. For Discussion and Possible Action: The Board will deliberate and may take action to move the superintendent search forward, including: discussion and taking action on superintendent search timeline; directing staff or a search firm as to first steps; directing staff or a search firm regarding the process of gathering community and school district input as to desirable qualifications and superintendent characteristics; and other related matters.

President Hendrix commented that he and Vice President Whitaker worked hard to get to this point and asked the rest of the Board to allow Board leadership to be the liaison between the Board and the search firm for purposes of communicating, coordinating, and approving expense requests. Decisions would come to the full Board. Sharla Hales, legal counsel, commented that the Board would know about everything, but they can't be a part of all of the decisions. For example, should the search consultant meet with the classified association during lunch or the teachers' association? Substantial decisions would come before the Board.

Trustee Schank moved to allow Vice President Whitaker and President Hendrix handle the logistics of the superintendent search, seconded by Trustee Hyde. Greg Koenig commented that he could see a handful of one agenda item meetings, and the Board should be prepared for them as time moves on.

The motion passed unanimously.

President Hendrix thanked the public for their attendance and service. President Hendrix reported the Superintendent Search Committee currently consists of: Bus Scharmann, Greg Koenig, Eric Olsen, Stuart Richardson, Lane Mills, Andrea Zeller, Carol Lloyd, Nate Strong, Nancy Upton, Gary Troxel, Michele Taylor, Erica Bartel, Sandra Williams, and Natalie Pacheco.

Trustee Gent moved to move forward with the names provided, seconded by Trustee Hyde. Dr. Sheldon commented that the list contained people from different community areas within our school district such as parents, the agriculture community, the Fallon Shoshone Paiute Tribe, business partners, military partners, and the Churchill County Coalition. President Hendrix commented that they do not have the right to vote or select the superintendent, but they will assist with the process including reviewing applications. Vice President Hendrix commented that this group was formed based on the committee formed five years prior.

There were no public comments. The motion passed unanimously.

President Hendrix asked the Board if there was anything else they needed to talk about before Board leadership meets with the search firm to discuss logistics.

Trustee Gent voiced concern about the timeline. President Hendrix commented that both search firms felt confident a selection would be made in the April timeframe. Vice President Whitaker felt comfortable with the search firm's responses, but there is no time to delay.

Trustee Hyde commented on the importance of matching the candidate to the needs of the District. President Hendrix stated that he would not vote for a superintendent who is not a good fit. It was noted that the search firm was going to be helping the District until a superintendent is hired.

Trustee Schank asked about developing a leadership profile. President Hendrix commented that he, Vice President Whitaker, and Sharla would work with the search consultant on a leadership profile and bring that document to the Board for changes. Dr. Sheldon commented that Debra Shyne sent the Board an email asking them to compile a list of characteristics to be narrowed down at the next meeting.

Sharla Hales commented that it was good that a search firm has been chosen as the consultant will guide the Board in the next steps. The Board's questions and uncertainties will be alleviated because Mr. McKenzie will visit the District and provide an update on the process.

C. For Discussion and Possible Action: Modifications to Policy 2120.0 – Superintendent of Schools Responsibilities – First Reading.

Sharla Hales, legal counsel, commented that recently the recruiting team told the Board they would like to make an offer at the recruitment fair to not lose out on the ability to hire qualified teachers. Trustee Whitaker noted that there are steps for recruiting and requirements of the Board and Superintendent in Policy 2120.0. The change to the policy is the first step in allowing recruiters to make a job offer on the spot, contingent upon Board approval (see page 9 of BoardBook). Ms. Hales explained the change to the policy.

This policy will return for a second reading at the next Board meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Stuart Richardson commended the Board for an excellent meeting and stated that the Board made a great decision, that he was impressed with the system, and felt that the process is going to work.

ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Whitaker moved to adjourn, seconded by Trustee Schank, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 7:55 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Carmen, Schank, Clerk of the Board

Prepared by Debra Shyne