



## **Sedona-Oak Creek Joint Unified School District #9**

**February 13, 2024  
REGULAR PUBLIC MINUTES**

- I. Call to Order** Randy Hawley  
Board President Hawley called the meeting to order at 4:02.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance** Randy Hawley
- III. Roll Call of Members**  
Randy Hawley, Present  
Lauren Robinson, Present  
Karen McClelland, Present  
April Payne, Present  
David Price, Present  
Emily Frey, Present
- IV. Statement of Welcome** Randy Hawley
- V. Call to the Public** Randy Hawley  
Public Comments regarding the SPAC will be heard before the related agenda item.
- VI. Governing Board Member Comments** Board Members  
Lauren Robinson thanked volunteers for their efforts at the Booster Club's Casino Night fundraiser. Karen McClelland was present at a recent legislative event in Phoenix and spoke regarding the negative impacts of a proposed bill that would require in-person voting for public school elections.
- VII. Student Representative Update** Emily Frey  
Student Representative Emily Frey gave an overview of student events throughout the district including spring sports, NHS activities, plans for the prom, student nominations for Girls State and Hobby, and Interact Club activities.
- VIII. Superintendent's Update** Tom Swaninger  
Superintendent Swaninger thanked volunteers for their support of the recent Casino Night fundraiser. Dr. Swaninger gave an overview of spring sports and marketing ideas to increase participation in athletic programs. The superintendent also recognized Flinn Scholarship Finalist Lauren Pfaff.
- IX. Approve Order of the Agenda Including the Consent Agenda and Minutes** Randy Hawley  
The consent portion of the agenda is to expedite routine matters that must be acted on by the Governing Board of Education. All items approved will be done by one non-debatable motion passed unanimously. Any item may be removed for debate on request of any member of the board, staff, or public. Items removed from the consent portion of the agenda become the first item of business on the regular agenda.

## ATTACHMENT 1

### Consent Agenda

1. Minutes for Governing Board meetings: January 9, 2024
2. Payroll vouchers – 14-16
3. Accounts Payable vouchers - 2423-2427
4. Gifts and donations -
5. Fund balance statements - Attached
6. Personnel - Attached
7. Fundraisers – Attached

**A motion made by Lauren Robinson/Karen McClelland** to approve the order of the agenda including the consent agenda and minutes carried by a vote of 5-0.

### X. Business Items and Presentations

#### A. Discussion Regarding Possible Options for Big Park Property

Tom Swaninger

Dr. Swaninger introduced this topic as discussions with Yavapai County for purchase of the property have slowed and progress is uncertain. Board Member Karen McClelland noted that the cost of maintaining the property may soon be cost prohibitive for the district. McClelland, Board President Hawley, and Vice President Robinson noted that the district is not prepared to be a landlord long-term since these efforts divert resources from our main responsibility of educating students. Dr. Swaninger noted that if the district puts the sale of Big Park Campus on the ballot, we are not obligated to sell the property if voter approval is received. He further noted that we would seek advice from our attorney the process before taking a potential sale to the voters. Board Member Price noted that there is a very limited chance that the campus would ever need to be used as a school again and that the costs associated with bringing the buildings back into good shape is growing. He feels that the clock is ticking for the board to vote on this issue. He also feels that this could motivate the county and Big Park residents to lobby their representatives if they do not support a public sale. President Hawley reiterated that voter permission does not obligate the district to a sale and that the county can still pursue the property if they choose. He further noted that we do not have proper staffing or resources to repair the facilities and maintain focus on educating students. Board members directed Superintendent Swaninger to research the process for getting the sale of the Big Park Campus on the ballot. Superintendent Swaninger noted that there is not an action item relating to this discussion tonight in an effort to be transparent with the community about the process. Board members Payne and Hawley noted that the community hopes a potential sale would benefit the residents of the Village of Oak Creek as opposed to tourists.

#### Call to the Public regarding the SPAC:

Comments from Althea Johnson, resident of Sedona and representative of the Sedona Dance Academy. Ms. Johnson noted that the academy is growing and serves 124 participants. The group feels that performance space in the SPAC is high, especially with technical costs. As a result, their recent performances have been held in Cottonwood and Camp Verde. There is need for a quality performance space in Sedona and a demand for arts programs and performances throughout the community.

#### B. SPAC History and Rates Overview

Jennifer Chilton

- Strategic Plan Alignment: Effective Use of Communication
- Attachment 2: SPAC Presentation

- Director of Facilities Jennifer Chilton presented an overview of the SPAC development, rate history, itemization of costs associated with rentals, and partnership possibilities (see attached for detailed information). She noted that contract costs for items like lighting are often more expensive than the actual rental rate. She also noted that there have been no rate increases since 2010 with the exception of custodial rates. Options for the future could include the revival of an arts partnership/sponsorship organization, new rate structure study, and/or expanding discounted rates to local arts organizations. Board Vice President Lauren Robinson asked if district costs could be covered if fees were lowered for community groups. She requested additional information to ensure that any rate reductions do not come at the expense of students. Jennifer Chilton noted that costs of energy, supplies, and repairs would have to be accounted for. Karen McClelland asked if the prices paid by commercial groups help subsidize non-profit rates. Dr. Chilton reiterated that a rate structure study is needed, noting that all costs have risen since rates were set in 2010. She also noted that our staffing capacity is an issue. Superintendent Swaninger noted that many district resources are devoted to SPAC rentals, diverting staff resources from efforts to support students and staff. He would love to see a 3<sup>rd</sup> party in charge of SPAC rentals, freeing up district resources for our students. Karen McClelland noted that during her tenure with the board, there have been many ideas and groups to support the SPAC, but none have been sustainable. Randy Hawley noted that the small size of the district complicates things as staff resources are limited. He requested an analysis of rates, revenues, and costs associated with the SPAC. Karen McClelland asked if this could include an overview of commercial rates to verify if it is possible to increase those rates to subsidize non-profit rates. April Payne noted that many groups are making substantial money and feels that it would be fair to develop a rate structure that differentiates between large groups like the Sedona Film Festival and the Sedona Dance Academy that ultimately helps these smaller groups. Dr. Swaninger noted that this could be the responsibility of these groups, noting that he routinely fundraises for his children's activities. Board Member David Price noted that the SPAC should be a different entity in our books to make sure that it breaks even in the short and long term. He noted that the idea of the district making money off of these events is misleading, and that we cannot be expected to subsidize community use. April Payne reiterated that she would like to see local arts groups receive a non-profit rate. Finance Director Stacy Saravo and Director of Facilities Jennifer Chilton will research the SPAC rental rates and provide additional information at a future board meeting.

#### **C. Final Overview of Proposed Spanish I and II Curriculum**

Tom Swaninger  
(5 minutes)

- Strategic Plan Alignment: High Student Achievement
- Attachment 3: ¡Así Se Dice! Curriculum Brochure
- **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible action to approve the proposed Spanish I and II Curriculum.
- This curriculum was presented to the board by Deana Dewitt in December and has been on display for public review since then. Board members verified that no community members have viewed or made comments regarding the curriculum.
- **Motion made by Karen McClelland/April Payne:** A motion to approve the proposed Spanish I & II Curriculum carried by a vote of 5-0.

#### **D. Proposed 2024-2025 Academic Calendar**

Tom Swaninger

- Strategic Plan Alignment: Effective Use of Resources
- Attachment 4: Proposed 2024-2025 Academic Calendar
- **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible action to approve the 2024-2025 Academic Calendar as presented.

- Dr. Swaninger noted that significant work has gone to ensure significant time for PD and to meet the needs of all students. An early release day at WSS and late start at SRR would set aside time for staff meetings, structured collaboration, professional learning communities, and PD. He feels that this ongoing process will help improve both schools. Staff is aware of the burden the early dismissal could have on families and is committed to providing no-cost childcare, clubs, and tutoring during early release time. Karen McClelland verified that the majority of early releases would be devoted to PD as opposed to parent teacher conferences. Randy Hawley asked about bussing. Dr. Swaninger noted that there will be multiple options that are being finalized by our transportation department. Before making a decision, school staff will gauge the needs of students and staff. Karen McClelland verified that the calendar largely aligns with other schools in the Verde Valley, especially Yavapai College. President Hawley appreciated the emphasis on collaboration among teachers. Board members Price and Robinson voiced appreciation for the support and investment in district teachers.
- **Motion made by Lauren Robinson/Karen McClelland:** A motion to approve the 2024-2025 Academic Calendar as presented passed by a motion of 5-0.

#### E. FY2025 Employment Contract Overview

Stacy Saravo

- Strategic Plan Alignment: Effective Use of Resources
- Attachment 5-6: Contract Overview Presentation and Information
- **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible action to approve step increases for FY2025 certified employee contracts as presented.
- **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible action to approve step increases for FY2025 classified employee contracts as presented.
- **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible action to approve step increases for FY2025 administrator contracts as presented.
- **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible action to approve a reduction in force in FY2025 as presented.
- **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible action to approve non-renewals of contracts in FY2025.
- Finance Director Stacy Saravo gave an overview of 2024-2025 employment contracts. This information is being presented to the board earlier than normal to allow the district to deliver contracts to staff members, determine staffing needs, and recruit quality teachers as early as possible. The proposed salaries are competitive for the area; including a 2 step raise and potential mid-year longevity stipend for returning staff. Presentation attached.
- Member David Price feels that the proposed salaries respond to market forces and demand. He feels these are reasonable, well thought out, fiscally responsible numbers.
- Member Lauren Robinson verified that these raises will also apply to coaches. Stacy Saravo indicated that board members will see these raises when stipends are brought to the board for approval later in the year.
- April Payne verified that the budget carryover helps fund proposed raises.
- Dr. Swaninger noted that the district considered many different options. Priorities were to maintain a carryover of 3-5% and to propose sustainable raises.
- **Motion made by Lauren Robinson/April Payne:** A motion to approve step increases for FY2025 certified employee contracts as presented carried by a vote of 5-0.
- **Motion made by Lauren Robinson/David Price:** A motion to approve step increases for FY2025 classified employee contracts as presented carried by a vote of 5-0.
- **Motion made by Lauren Robinson/Karen McClelland:** A motion to approve step increases for FY2025 administrator contracts as presented carried by a vote of 5-0.

- **Motion made by Karen McClelland/Lauren Robinson:** A motion to approve a reduction in force in FY2025 as presented carried by a vote of 5-0.
- Board member Karen McClelland verified that staff are aware of the reduction in force. She also verified that the behavior interventionist position is not warranted at this point.
- **Motion made by David Price/Randy Hawley:** A motion to approve non-renewals of contracts in FY2025 carried by a vote of 5-0.

**F. Second Reading of Proposed Changes to Policies 748-762**

Tom Swaninger

- Strategic Plan Alignment: Effective Communication and Use of Resources
- Attachment 7: ASBA Policy Advisory 748-762
- **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible action to approve the proposed updates to Governing Board Policies 748-762.
- Dr. Swaninger gave an overview of the second reading to ASBA policy advisory 748-762.
- **Motion made by Karen McClelland/April Payne:** A motion made to approve the proposed updates to Governing Board Policies 748-762 carried by a vote of 5-0.
- Karen McClelland noted that ASBA will help the district tailor policies if needed.

**XI. Other Business**

Randy Hawley

Future board meeting dates and agenda items: The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 5 at 4:00 and will be held at the WSS multi-purpose room due to a scheduling conflict at the SPAC.

**XII. Adjournment**

Randy Hawley

**Motion made by Lauren Robinson/April Payne** to adjourn the meeting at 5:58 passed by a vote of 5-0.

Submitted by: Amanda Stanfield

Signature of Attendees:



Randy Hawley



Lauren Robinson



Karen McClelland



April Payne



David Price