



Palisades Charter High School

More Than 50 Years of Innovation and Excellence



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

SPECIAL BOARD COMMUNITY MEETING MINUTES

December 19, 2014
1:00 PM, Gilbert Hall

I. PRELIMINARY:

- A. CALL TO ORDER: 1:05 PM
- B. ROLL CALL: 1:05 PM

	Present	Absent		Present	Absent
Mark Epstein	X		Jeanne Saiza	X	
Allison Holdorff Polhill	X		Kimberley Allen	X	
Monica Iannessa	X		Leslie Woolley	X	
Emilie Larew	X		Mystic Thompson	X	
Greg Nepomuceno	X		Michael Stryer	X	
James Pasto		X			

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

	Present	Absent
Ben Safvati	X	

PCHS MANAGEMENT/STAFF

	Present	Absent
Pamela Magee	X	
Greg Wood	X	

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Non-agenda items: No individual presentation shall be for more than two (2) minutes and the total time for this purpose shall not exceed sixteen (16) minutes. Board members will not respond to presentations and no action can be taken. However, the Board may give direction to staff following a presentation. Speakers may choose to speak during the public comment segment and/or at the time an agenda item is presented.

The Board Chair made the following announcement:

Thank you all for attending this meeting today. If anyone would like to make a public comment, please fill out a public comment card, you will be limited to two minutes. This is a meeting in the public. Generally, the Board will not respond to your comments. I understand many of you may have passionate views. We request that you speak within the time limits.

The Board will be discussing potential litigation arising from disparate rules for sports participation in closed session. According to the law, differences in rules and regulations applying to similar situated groups must be founded in real differences otherwise a civil rights action for discrimination may exist. It is our understanding that PCHS will be enacting a uniform conduct policy for all extracurricular activities including athletics. To date, such a policy does not exist.

For clarification, the Board has not taken action to place a player back on the baseball team.

Over two dozen speakers commented concerning the resignation of PCHS head baseball coach Mike Voelkel and his assistant coaches; these resignations were in response to the potential reinstatement of a senior who was suspended from the team for drinking alcohol. The vast majority of speakers, mostly baseball players and their parents, praised Mr. Voelkel and his coaching staff as strong builders of character. Several parents spoke of Mr. Voelkel's dedication. Some parents described the positive transformation of their sons, which they attributed to Coach Voelkel. Some parents noted that baseball players had signed behavior contracts and wondered if possible litigation would force the reinstatement of the suspended student. Some parents noted the difficulty and complexity of the situation. The parents of the suspended student described what they considered the unfairness and inconsistency of their son's suspension. They indicated they thought other players drank alcohol as well. They denied that they were suing or threatening to sue PCHS. The parents of the suspended student and two other alumni parents also questioned whether there was corruption in the administration of the Baseball Trust funds. Several parents, on both sides of the issue, raised concerns of teaching accountability, integrity, and ethics.

III. CLOSED SESSION

A. Anticipated Litigation

The Board went into closed session at 1:56 pm

IV. OPEN SESSION

Board Chair Allison Holdorff Polhill stated "After long deliberation and careful consideration, the Board took no action in closed session. This has the effect of upholding the Administration's decision supporting the applicable policy of the baseball team."

V. ADJOURNMENT

(Meeting Materials can be found on the Pali website under Governance, Board of Trustees, Agendas and Minutes, Material for Board Meetings)