

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE
WINSLOW UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1
GOVERNING BOARD**

CALL TO ORDER: The special meeting of the Governing Board of Winslow Unified School District No. 1 was called to order by Mrs. Marilee Ervien, President, at 5:01 p.m., February 2, 2017, in the District Board Room, 800 Apache Avenue, Second Floor, in Winslow.

PRESENT: Mrs. Marilee Ervien
Mrs. Josephine Montoya
Mr. Joey Hartnett
Mrs. Sharon Greenwood
Mr. Allen Leonard

ABSENT:

**WORK STUDY
SESSION:** Mrs. Ervien introduced Karen Loftus from Arizona School Boards Association. Ms. Loftus thanked the Board for inviting her to present information about services available from ASBA to assist in the search for a new Superintendent.

Ms. Loftus distributed a packet containing a search agreement, a template for information to be used in a job posting, a sample of a full posting, possible desired attributes and a cost list. She discussed the process and possible timelines. A posting would be developed; a search consultant would be assigned; the posting would be opened and closed. The search consultant would come to the second meeting to assist in reviewing the applications. Finalists would be chosen and notified, and interviews would be scheduled. Interviews would be scheduled to take place during the next meeting. ASBA would help develop interview questions and agenda language. An option to consider is whether to have a meet and greet event after the interviews, with the community to be invited. This is a great way to observe the candidates in a different setting and to see how they interact with people. Community input could be solicited. After this event, the Board would reconvene, have an executive session to discuss the candidates, and then return to the open meeting to possibly act on entering into contract negotiations with a particular candidate.

Ms. Loftus said that a training session covering roles and responsibilities, evaluation of Superintendent, and communication, among any other desired topics, is included in the cost of the search. This meeting would be held as soon as possible after July 1.

Ms. Loftus told the Board that if ASBA is retained as our search agent, it is critical that all communications and references be handled by them. She also said that confidentiality is of the utmost importance, and attendance at the upcoming meetings is also very important.

She also informed the Board that ASBA will conduct electronic background searches on all of the finalists. This will be done after the finalists are determined and prior to the interviews.

Ms. Loftus continued by discussing the Board's responsibilities in helping to get the job posting developed, and the Board will have the opportunity to write two additional narrative questions to be included in the interview. She also pointed out the part of the agreement that addresses compliance with the open meeting law.

The compensation schedule was reviewed, as was the possibility of partial services. Ms. Loftus was asked how many applicants were typical, and she replied that more than 40 was high, some are in the 20s, but it really varies from district to district.

Mr. Leonard asked what assistance we would receive as part of our ASBA membership, and Ms. Loftus said that a link to our site could be put on ASBA's website for free.

The Board expressed that help with the interview questions would be valuable and Mrs. Mattox added that assistance with the agendas would be good as well. Mrs. Ervien said she liked the idea of a training session in July.

Mrs. Montoya asked if Ms. Loftus has seen the current position description for Superintendent. She has not. Mrs. Montoya asked the members of the Board if they have seen it, and several replied that they have. Mrs. Montoya continued, saying that ASBA has helped us in the past and we already have the tools to accomplish a lot of this work ourselves. We already have seven applicants. She does feel that the Board should study the position description and consider making changes, pointing out that our district is 51% Native American. She said again that we have received help from ASBA in the past, when Mrs. Mattox was hired and when Mr. Heister was hired. She feels that the cost seems expensive. Ms. Loftus said the Board needs to decide whether they have the time, talent, energy and resources to conduct the search, or part of the search process. She acknowledged that part of the process has been done because of the applications already received. If the Board deems that the applicant pool is sufficient, ASBA could assist with the process beyond accepting applications. If the Board would like more applicants, ASBA could assist with that.

Mrs. Greenwood stated that we already have a service that we are paying for which accepts applications, so perhaps we don't need assistance with that part of the process. Mr. Leonard said he would like to get references from other districts. Ms. Loftus said ASBA has conducted 85 searches in the past seven years, and she named some current searches that ASBA is conducting.

Mrs. Montoya said she would like to have assistance with the crib sheets as ASBA has done before with hiring of our other superintendents so the Board would know what questions to ask during an interview. She would like the Board to use the position description during the interviews, and then have input from staff regarding the candidates, particularly the administrators as they are the masters in their field. Ms. Loftus said that if ASBA is hired, they have an online survey regarding leadership attributes that could be used and the data could be provided to the Board. Mrs. Montoya said we already have the data in place and we have done surveys before.

Mrs. Ervien said time is short and maybe we should start with what we have and see if we get any more applicants in the next week or two. She said that help with the agendas and interviews would be very helpful. Mr. Hartnett agreed the Board needs to move forward and stay on track because time is short. He believes ASBA can help in this regard and keep the process streamlined.

Ms. Loftus said it sounds like the Board is discussing two options: 1) going forward with the applicants we have and hiring ASBA to help with the process from this point on, or 2) hiring ASBA for the entire process and trying to get more applicants.

The members of the Board expressed the desire to proceed with ASBA's assistance from this point forward, without the posting of the position and the accepting of applications. Ms. Loftus also discussed the need to decide on desired attributes and the salary range. She suggested that a neutral party handle the salary negotiations, possibly the attorney for the District, and then gave the Board information about the median salary for Superintendents in various categories and with various tenure and various degrees.

Ms. Loftus said that the Board may want to consider \$110,000 somewhere in the salary range as this seems to be a common amount. The Board discussed the fact that the Superintendent may not have an assistant and would, therefore, be doing more work.

At this time, the Board discussed a closing date for accepting applications and it was decided that the posting will close February 12, 2017. Ms. Loftus said the next step would be to have an executive session to review the applications.

Next, Ms. Loftus reviewed the cost of certain components of the process. Per day, for ASBA to come to Winslow and assist, will be \$500 plus expenses.

Mrs. Montoya said she would like the administrators to submit five questions each to be used in the interviews. Mrs. Mattox suggested that the Board consider having ASBA present for the four meetings discussed. Ms. Loftus said this would be for the screening meeting and the interviews; two meetings if the Board was going with a one-interview process. The post-hire training would be in a different fiscal year. ASBA could handle the background checks of the finalists.

A member of the audience spoke, saying that it was a conflict of interest for Mrs. Mattox, as Acting Superintendent, to be involved in this discussion. It is not fair to the candidates that are present.

Ms. Loftus reviewed what has been decided regarding services to be purchased from ASBA. For their presence at and assistance with the screening meeting and the interview meeting, the cost will be \$1,000. The background checks will be \$125 each, and the post-hire training will be \$500. In addition, the District will pay travel expenses. Consultation for the two meetings is included.

Ms. Loftus cautioned the Board against discussing specific interview questions in a public forum. She said it is okay to talk about the themes of questions, but you don't want to give an advantage to any candidate. The Board can authorize the Board President to work with ASBA to finalize specific questions.

The audience member offered for the Superintendent's Advisory Committee to meet with the Board and help them with interview questions.

Ms. Loftus reminded Mrs. Ervien that there was not a Call to the Public on the agenda, so audience participation and feedback is not provided for at this time.

Mrs. Lomeli asked to speak and Mrs. Ervien asked her to proceed. Mrs. Lomeli said that an option would be to talk to nearby Districts for information and support. They can be a valuable resource. The Board can also do some research on things that have been in place in the past.

Ms. Loftus said that the interview questions can be crafted at the screening meeting. She then reviewed the agenda items and explained the process again, in accordance with what the Board had decided. Items C, D and E would not need to be voted on. The agreement for services would be modified to include only the items discussed above.

Mr. Leonard asked if he can call ASBA. Ms. Loftus said if the Board votes to authorize him to do so, then yes. Open meeting law and transparency was discussed. Ms. Loftus said ASBA will answer generic questions posed, but questions specific to the search need to be pursued in a legal way.

The issue of travel expenses was discussed, as was the content of the screening meeting.

Ms. Loftus advised against viewing the application materials prior to the screening meeting. She also discussed the makeup of a top sheet to check off qualifications.

Mr. Leonard asked whether ASBA will do the free posting on the sites listed on the handout. Ms. Loftus said that ASBA will post the link to the District's application site and she thinks that ASBA can post the opening on most of the listed sites.

After discussion, it was decided to have the screening meeting on Thursday, February 16, 2017. The background searches can begin the next day. The interview meeting and community meet and greet event will be held on March 6, 2017. If necessary, a special meeting could be called to handle any other details that need to be taken care of. Ms. Loftus said that if Mrs. Mattox applies for the position, she will not be a part of the planning and discussions going forward.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Mrs. Greenwood made a motion to secure ASBA as the Board's search agent to assist the Governing Board in an effort to hire a new District Superintendent. This motion was seconded by Mr. Hartnett. All members voted "aye" and the motion carried.
- B. Mr. Hartnett made a motion to grant the Board President the authority to sign, on behalf of the Board, a board-approved search agreement with Arizona School Boards Association for services rendered, as defined in the agreement, in an effort to secure a new District Superintendent. The motion was seconded by Mr. Leonard and carried with an affirmative vote from all members.
- C. Mr. Leonard made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Greenwood, to not act on New Business Items C, D and E. A vote was taken, with all members voting "aye". Motion carried.

The Board thanked Ms. Loftus for her assistance.

F. Mrs. Mattox asked the Governing Board to approve the following out-of-state travel. She said that the employees are football coaches and the Football Club will pay all expenses for this trip.

- Three employees to travel to Las Vegas, Nevada, February 10 – 12, 2017, for a coaches' clinic

Mr. Leonard made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Montoya, to approve the trip. All members voted "aye" and the motion carried.

G. At this time, the Governing Board discussed the creation and implementation of a staff survey. Mrs. Ervien said the intention of conducting a survey is to get input from district employees to assist the Board in determining direction. The survey would be anonymous and confidential. The pros and cons of paper vs. electronic surveys were discussed. Mr. Hartnett said the Board wants to get honest feedback to gauge the pulse of the district for the purpose of helping to develop goals.

The Board asked Ms. Loftus to give input regarding the survey. She said that to protect anonymity, demographic questions need to be very broad, and without names on the surveys, specific issues raised are not actionable. She advised that the survey not have too many questions and that the questions be crafted in a manner that will gather the information the Board is looking for. She mentioned the many types of electronic surveys that can be developed through Survey Monkey. Mrs. Mattox added that Robin, as secretary for the Board, can compile the results.

Mr. Hartnett said he wants the staff to be comfortable making comments. He understands people having reservations about speaking out but he wants to hear what the employees have to say. Though no specifics could be acted upon, general ideas can be shared and given attention. Mrs. Ervien added that the Board just wants to get some direction for the future and some help in setting goals.

Mrs. Jodie Garner, Principal at Jefferson Elementary School, said she thinks it is a great idea and a way to hear from everyone, not just the squeaky wheels. She thinks the Board is not hearing from the majority, and this would be a way to do that.

Mr. Hartnett said the Board is not just wanting to hear about negative things, but to get information to plan and move forward. His idea of survey questions is list three things we are doing right, three things that we are not, and three things we can improve upon. He added that he would like to know if the employees feel like they have the support of administration. He asked the administrators in the audience if they felt their employees would respond better to a paper survey or an electronic survey. This was discussed among the Board and the audience, as was confidentiality. The Board decided to do paper surveys, to be distributed by a Board member and returned in a sealed envelope directly to the Board member.

The content of the survey and the cover letter message was discussed, as was the delivery and retrieval plan.

Mr. Leonard made a motion that the Board create and implement a staff survey as discussed. This motion was seconded by Mrs. Montoya and carried with a vote of "aye" from all members.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mrs. Ervien asked if there was a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Montoya made this motion and Mr. Hartnett seconded it. All members voted "aye" and the motion carried. The time was 7:09 p.m.

President

Vice-President

Clerk

Member

Member

Cyndie Mattox, Acting Superintendent