



Dolores Huerta

“A Dual Language Charter Middle School”

1480 N. Main Street

Las Cruces, NM 88001

Phone: 575/526-2984 Fax: 575/523-5407

Regular Governing Council Meeting

Thursday August 7, 2014 6:00pm – Final Minutes

John Vasquez, Acting Chair
Norma Martinez Arrieta, Secretary/Treasurer

Robert del Plain, Member
Saul Hernandez, Member
Rick Serrano, Member

1) Call to Order

Mr. John Vasquez, Acting Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m and asked for a roll call.

2) Roll Call

N. Arrieta - Present

R. Serrano – Absent

S. Hernandez – Absent

J. Vasquez - Present

R. del Plain – Present

Total: (3) members present; (2) member absent. Let the record show that a quorum of governing council members is present, and, that this meeting has been called and posted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

FACULTY/ADMINISTRATION/STAFF PRESENT: Ruben Diaz, Teacher; Kerri Pettes, Teacher; Virginia Gallegos, Teacher; Luz Moreno, Staff; Jose Tena, Teacher; Diana Diaz, Assistant Principal/Teacher; Emmanuel Flores, Teacher; Rene Salazar, Teacher; Mirna Rodriguez, Business Specialist; Corinne Teller, Business Manager; Maria Olivas, Administrative Assistant.

PUBIC PRESENT: Dr. Spencer Herrera, Dr. Christopher Adams, Ray Chavez, Roberto Soriano, Annette Lara

3) Approval of Agenda

Mr. Vasquez asked for any discussion on the agenda. Members discussed needed revisions of the agenda.

Mr. del Plain motioned to approve the agenda with the following amendments: deletion of Closed Session item, change “nomination/election of new governing council member” to “appointment of new governing council member”, and add Business Manager’s Report (no action items) along with Principal’s Report. Ms. Martinez Arrieta seconded the motion. The motion was approved in the unanimous.

4) Open forum-Public Input

Public comments are heard at this time from the public present who signed in to speak.

Luz Moreno, LADH Staff Member:

(paraphrased and translated from Spanish) She explained that she was out of town throughout the summer and was very sad to hear of the news of what happened in regards to Mr. Casillas’ employment during that time. She spoke

in support of Mr. Casillas' leadership abilities. She explained that (3) of her children had graduated from LADH and were very prepared for high school. She said Mr. Casillas is a good person and a good administrator and she hopes the governing council can provide him with a contract for the full school year soon.

Jose Tena, LADH Teacher:

(paraphrased) He would like to hear what specific plans the governing council has for LADH. Everything that took place during the summer has made him feel insecure about his job and that makes him very uncomfortable. He does not believe any employee deserves to be put in the position the LADH staff was put in this past summer. As one of the founding members of LADH he sees it as unacceptable. In the future he hopes we can all work together better (staff and governing council) for the interests of the school and students.

The governing council thanked the public for their input at this meeting.

Action items

5) Approval of consent agenda items

- Approval of June 26, 2014 special meeting minutes
- Approval of June 30, 2014 special meeting minutes
- Approval of July 25, 2014 special meeting minutes
- Approval of August 6, 2014 work session minutes

Mr. Vasquez asked for any discussion on the consent agenda items as listed. Members discussed the needed revisions.

Mr. del Plain motioned to approve the consent agenda items with the following amendments: to remove the June 5, 2014 minutes (already approved on July 3, 2014), to remove the approval of BARs, and to table the July 3 and July 9 meeting minutes until next regular governing council meeting. Ms. Martinez Arrieta seconded the motion. The motion was passed in the unanimous.

6a) Nomination/Approval of Interim-President until regular elections on 09/01/2014.

Mr. Vasquez asked for any discussion on the nomination/approval of Interim-President. Members held brief discussion.

Ms. Martinez Arrieta motioned to approve nomination and appointment of Mr. Vasquez as Interim Chair/President from current date until regular election on 09/01/2014. Mr. del Plain seconded the motion. Motion was approved in the unanimous.

6b) Nomination/Approval of Interim-Vice President until regular elections on 09/01/2014.

Mr. Vasquez asked for any discussion on the nomination/approval of Interim-Vice President. Members held a brief discussion.

Ms. Norma Martinez Arrieta motioned to approve nomination and appointment of Mr. Robert del Plain as Interim Vice-Chair/Vice-President from current date until regular election on 09/01/2014. Mr. John Vasquez seconded the motion. Motion was approved in the unanimous.

7) Substitute Services Presentation: Santiago Soto

Mr. Santiago Soto, representing itsQuest, Inc., provided information on professional employment/human resources available to LADH. The council thanked Mr. Soto for his presentation.

No action was taken.

8) **Approval of Title II Funding**

Ms. Diana Diaz informed the governing council that Title II provides funding support to staff, who are currently on alternative licensure path, to continue and finish their licensure requirements for the State of NM. The application and BAR were approved in June per special circumstances by the NM PED. The council thanked Ms. Diaz for providing this information.

No action was taken.

9) **Approval of GC Agenda Template for regular meetings**

Ms. Martinez Arrieta led a discussion on the proposed agenda template for regular governing council meetings which included the following requirements: Call to Order, Roll Call, Approval of Agenda, Open Forum-Public Input, Action Items, Committee Reports, Principal's Report, New Business, and Adjournment. Ms. Martinez Arrieta added the intention of amending the by-laws to include the approved template. Mr. del Plain requested the inclusion of specifics on what can and what cannot be included in the New Business items. Mr. Vasquez added that once approved the template may be added as an addendum to the by-laws.

Mr. del Plain motioned to table the approval of the GC Agenda Template to the next regular governing council meeting with the revisions discussed. Ms. Martinez Arrieta seconded the motion. Motion was approved in the unanimous.

10) **Approval of appointment of new governing council member: Dr. Spencer Herrera**

Dr. Herrera addressed the council and public present with a short statement of his qualifications and reasons for wanting to participate in the governing council for LADH. The President, Mr. John Vasquez, asked if there was anyone who opposed Dr. Herrera's appointment to the governing council. There was no opposition.

Mr. Vasquez, President, appointed Dr. Herrera as member of the LADH Governing council to be effective immediately. The length of Dr. Herrera's term will be determined at the next regular governing council meeting.

10) **Facility Presentation by Mr. William B. (Bill) Davis**

Mr. Casillas introduced Mr. Davis to the council and the public that was present.

Mr. Davis provided an update on the cost to renovate the Church on the Rock property between \$750,000 -\$1M. He explained that the cost of building itself would be an additional \$2.5M which would make a total of \$3.5M- \$4M. The financial analysis was made using the 200 student enrollment ratio which, he explained, is the magic number of enrollment the school needs to maintain for this acquisition.

Mr. Davis explained some important occurrences this past summer included the owner of the Church on the Rock property put a lot of pressure to purchase by 07/01/2014. Many alternate scenarios were assessed to acquire e-occupancy including: extension of renovation of \$200-\$250,000 that would bring the building up to e-occupancy status; and \$750,000 in build out costs. Each of these alternatives would have been way more than the school could afford at that moment. Investors/other financiers were brought in and no one agreed which put everything on hold.

Previous board member had instructed him to look into other properties for the school. He spoke to the owner of the current facility on N. Main St., Mr. Duke, to secure lease until June 2015. He emphasized Mr. Duke's willingness to be flexible with LADH by making upstairs accessible, etc. Mr. Duke gave a verbal agreement to extend current lease to \$150,000 to renovate current building. To fund renovation of current location: current enrollment of 165 students would have to increase to 200 by the 40th day of school—which is a big task. Mr. Casillas does not want to add more than 23 students to teacher's load.

Mr. Davis explained that we are currently in a holding pattern in regards to the new building which lends the chance to do more homework. The Facilities Master Plan (FMP) is due in October. The PSFA requires that 3 different

facilities are researched as potential new sites (1. Church on the Rock; 2. Current building on N. Main St.; 3. Site built facility from scratch with Investor). He explained that the way to continue to work on ideas would be to appoint a Facilities Steering Committee which should be made up of: 2 GC members (President + one member), 2 Staff members (Principal & Business Manager), and 2 Foundation Members.

Mr. Davis explained the Budget for the new building = Schools Budget + Foundations' Budget

Mr. Ray Chavez spoke on behalf of the LADH Foundation in regards to the new facility. He stressed that transparency is very important. He asked for the governing council to provide a letter of intent to the Foundation and a 5 year strategic plan.

Mr. Vasquez appointed the following as members of the Facilities Steering Committee: Octavio Casillas, Principal; Ms. Corinne Teller, Business Manager; 1 additional LADH Staff member; 1 LADH Parent; John Vasquez, GC President; Spencer Herrera, GC Member; Ray Chavez, Foundation Member; Roberto Soriano, Foundation Member.

11) NEW BUSINESS: DISCUSSION ITEMS ONLY – NO ACTION TAKEN

- a. Discussion of concerns brought up in Work Session on 08/06/14.** Staff concerns that were brought up in the work session included: removing Mr. Casillas from the Facilities Committee, blocking Mr. Casillas from finishing building improvements, and irresponsible use of school funds. Governing council discussed possibilities that would provide checks and balances which included re-enactment regular committees and possible need for ad-hoc committees, possible need for policy in regards to PO approval process, and possible need for Code of Ethics for governing council.
- b. Discussion of re-enactment of regular committees and possible need for ad-hoc committees.** A list of regular committees and their function/duties will be provided during next regular governing council meeting. The President may have to appoint ad-hoc/temporary committees in the future in regards to plans or issues that arise. Having active committees will ensure that different perspectives are gained and vocalized during regular meetings.
- c. Discussion of possible need for policy in regards to PO approval process.** Current PO approval process was discussed. Possibility of new process may be unnecessary – may only need to include an additional signer for PO's and checks to ensure proper checks and balances. Possible need two signers at all times and one back up signer in case someone is unavailable.
- d. Discussion of possible need for Code of Ethics for governing council.** A draft Code of Ethics for governing council members was disbursed to members and public. Staff members present discussed appreciation of this new policy. Final draft will be presented at the next regular governing council meeting for approval.

12) Principal & Business Manager's Report

Business Manager: Cash report submitted to as of June 30, 2014: \$251,916.00

Finances are strong and in good order. Ms. Teller suggested the appointment of a "Charter Revisions Committee" that would work with her to make amendments to by-laws in congruence with Charter that was approved this summer.

Principal: Mr. Octavio Casillas provided a brief discussion on the upcoming events planned for orientation of new students and open-house.

13) Adjourn

Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Martinez Arrieta and seconded by Mr. del Plain. Motion was approved in the unanimous.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.

*Any individual attending a board meeting may sign in to participate in the Public Input section of the Agenda, if any. Such persons may speak on any item after the individual is recognized by the President of the Board and introduces himself/herself at the podium. The Governing Council of La Academia Dolores Huerta will not take action on any item presented under Public Input, until an opportunity to do so is afforded. La Academia Dolores Huerta will provide an interpreter for the Hearing Impaired upon request. Requests should be submitted to the head administrator's office three days prior to the meeting. Simultaneous Spanish translation will be provided at the meeting.