



Dolores Huerta

“A Dual Language Charter Middle School”
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GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES Thursday, August 17, 2017 at La Academia Dolores Huerta

1) **Call to order:** @ 6:05 p.m.

2) **Roll call and establish quorum:**

Present: Dr. Spencer Herrera, Chair; Steve Pereira, Treasurer; Carmen Gallegos-Marrujo; Dr. Michelle Saenz-Adames, Maríaelena de la Rosa, Dr. Michael Gutiérrez

Absent: Elena Hinderlich, Vice Chair; Clara Lopez, Secretary; Sarah Ramos

Explanation of postponement of August 10, 2017: Meeting was postponed due to absences of three veteran members and wanting to have as many members present as possible due to important items that need to be discussed and voted on. PEC is tightening up and we need to comply, members need additional training. All absent members called notifying the Chair that they were unable to attend.

3) **Approval of agenda:** Chair mentioned that Mr. Bill Davis had notified him that his wife was ill and he would be unable to attend today's meeting. Dr. Herrera asked for the removal of Item #7 since Mr. Davis would not be present. Steve Pereira motioned to approve the agenda as amended; Dr. Saenz-Adames seconded the motion. Agenda approved unanimously by all members present.

4) **Approval of June 15, 2017 and July 11, 2017 meeting minutes:** After the Governing Council reviewed the minutes, Mr. Pereira motioned to approve the meeting minutes for June 15, 2017 and July 11, 2017; Dr. Gutiérrez seconded the motion. Meetings' minutes were approved unanimously by members present.

5) Open forum-public input*

Public comments and observations regarding education policy and governance issues, as well as the strategic planning, are heard at this time. Time limit per presenter may be imposed by Chair.

Public Present: Ms. Olga Ramirez, Parent; Ms. Socorro Soriano, Staff member; Mr. Roberto Soriano, Ex-oficio member; Erica McDowell, Staff member

Ms. Ramirez, requested information about parent representation on Governing Council. Dr. Herrera encouraged her to apply, turning in a letter of interest and resume to Mrs. Gallegos-Marrujo or Mr. Pereira. Information was given on where she could get contact information for each Governing - Council member. In addition, Mrs. Gallegos-Marrujo and Mr. Pereira gave her their contact information. Dr. Herrera mentioned that two new Governing Council member who are parents are needed to take the place of two members whose terms will end in September and that it is a three-year term. Parent was encouraged to apply. Dr. Herrera mentioned that voting for new parent members would take place at our next meeting on September 14, 2017.

Principal Melissa Miranda asked that this meeting change from September 14 to September 7 or September 21 because the school would be hosting Parent/Teacher conferences. Governing Council member present decided that September 21st would work best.

Ms. Socorro Soriano then addressed those present to thank all those who helped with the donations of backpacks and school supplies. Special thanks to Dr. Herrera. Dr. Herrera stated that special thanks should go to the NMSU professors who donated, some gave \$100 donations, even his Realtor donated. Mr. Pereira was also personally thanked for his donations. Ms. Soriano stated that all their needs had been met. Dr. Herrera stated that even when he stepped down he would be glad to help any special drives that were needed, whether they be supplies, coats, or whatever students needed. Then staff suggested baskets for Thanksgiving for families which is a Student Council activity. At one point, they make 15 baskets. Dr. Herrera asked them to let him know.

Dr. Herrera asked if there was any other public forum input, with no other person requesting to add anything.

NEW BUSINESS: DISCUSSION ITEMS ONLY – NO ACTION WILL BE TAKEN

6) **Principal's Report by Ms. Melissa Miranda:** Ms. Miranda presented her first Principal's Report, there was discussion about enrollment numbers and waiting lists. Ms. Miranda introduced Ms. Erica McDowell who is co-teaching in Science and seeking to pursue Alternate Teaching License, she has a Microbiology Degree. Two of the new staff members are former students! She further discussed upcoming professional development for staff, to include a CYFD session on Reporting Child Abuse /Neglect. She mentioned that Ms. Soriano was instrumental in obtaining this training session. Additionally, she mentioned that the State Financial Audit, NMDASH training due to school grade and upcoming events, the fundraiser "World's Finest Chocolates", school supply donations (special thanks to NMSU Hispanic Faculty/Staff Caucus, Daniela and Cindy Gomez, Steve Pereira), monetary donations (special thanks to Kula Foundation, Honeywell, Elaine Palma) and ended with community collaborations.

7) **Update on facility process provided by Mr. Bill Davis: Removed due to absence of Mr. Davis due to wife's illness.**

8) **Mr. Del Rosario's July 11, 2017 GC meeting feedback:** Discussion took place where Ms. Gallegos-Marrujo, Dr. Gutiérrez, Dr. Saenz-Adames, Ms. Maríaelena De la Rosa concurred that the feedback aligned with what was presented at our PEC July 22, 2017 training. This is feedback to show us where we need to improve and doesn't need a reply. However, we can ask them for specific training based on the feedback. Dr. Herrera added information about Open Meetings Act, Quorum, Rolling Quorum, Bylaws, position duties, transparency, and communication by phone and e-mail. Ms. De la Rosa mentioned the need to let public know if there is quorum in a public place and letting the public know that business that not discussed. An example would be if we all went to the next school presentation. Dr. Herrera then mentioned importance of looking at Bylaws, changing what needs to be changed after discussion, as well as the Employee Manual which may not address areas that we may come up. It was mentioned by Ms. Gallegos-Marrujo that Mr. Baylor Del Rosario worked for Las Cruces Public School District.

9) **Update on parent recruitment for GC membership by Carmen Gallegos-Marrujo:** Ms. Gallegos-Marrujo mentioned that she and Ms. Sarah Ramos interviewed Ms. Palma on July 25, 2017. She passed out copies of Ms. Palma's letter of interest and resume to those present. Ms. Gallegos-Marrujo mentioned that she worked with Ms. Palma previously and knew her to be very passionate about what she believed and had integrity. Ms. Palma was dedicated and had previous board

experience. Her goal was to increase parent involvement. Ms. Gallegos-Marrujo asked if there were any questions and there were none. There was a comment from Dr. Saenz-Adames that she seemed like a great candidate. Ms. Gallegos-Marrujo requested that parent recruitment be placed in the school website, notes sent home, and any other means since there was a time factor to consider.

10) **GC retreat date, time, and location:** Dr. Herrera mentioned that it would be good if we have a retreat to develop a guidebook mainly for parents that would include meetings and what he has learned in three years. Ms. Gallegos-Marrujo mentioned that during the July 22 training session with PEC that we could have a 3-hour school-specific training on Vision, Mission, Bylaws and that this would meet the extra 3 hours needed to complete the yearly training requirement for board members. Ms. De La Rosa mentioned that it would be a good time for sharing. Dr. Spencer added requirements needed before new members could vote and the development of a calendar. It was decided that Saturday, September 9, 2017 from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. at La Academia Dolores Huerta would work for everyone. Ms. Gallegos-Marrujo requested that hard copies of what was available only online in the school website be provided for all council members. Principal Miranda said she would ask Mirna. Discussion followed about moving the next meeting from September 21 to September 7, 2017 so that the two-new parent member could participate in the retreat.

ACTION ITEMS

11) **Check Signer/PO Signer Socorro Soriano:** Ms. Juliette Sanchez mentioned the importance of having back-up check signers at the school in case of the Principal not being available. Liability was discussed, as well as electronic signatures, audits, bookkeeping, missing signatures, Treasurer's responsibilities, checks and balances. Mr. Roberto Soriano mentioned that Ms. Soriano is not an action item, that the President is not for the day-to-day issues but for lease. He mentioned fiduciary decisions, situations that arise. Mr. Soriano suggested that Item 11 be tabled until next meeting. Ms. Maríaelena De La Rosa motioned for Item 11 to make Ms. Soriano a check signer/PO signer and Mr. Pereira seconded the motion. Action passed unanimously by members present. Ms. Maríaelena De La Rosa motioned to table a third emergency check signer/PO Signer. Mr. Pereira seconded the motion. Action passed unanimously by members present. Dr. Spencer Herrera's term ends on September 7, 2017 so after that date he can no longer be a check signer/PO Signer.

The GC voted

12) Appoint authorized school representatives for attorney communication: Discussion on this item followed. Dr. Herrera mentioned how a teacher had contacted the attorney and the school was charged. He then passed out some information from Matthew Fox Attorneys and Counselors at Law and present council members reviewed the information. Suggestion was given that Governing Council Chair and School Principal be selected. Ms. Gallegos-Marrujo asked about possible conflicts. Mr. Soriano said this would be a disciplinary action and not an attorney situation. The attorneys are in the best interest of the school. Personnel matters would require the Principal to get his/her own attorney. This would be a sneaky way to get money when we were charged for a conversation with a teacher. There was discussion about whether they should have spoken to teacher and whether payment had been made. Mr. Pereira mentioned that we hadn't authorized certain people to talk to attorneys. Mr. Soriano then mentioned situations when he was on the board and how they proceeded. Dr. Gutiérrez recommended that Head Administrator and Governing Council Chair be the authorized persons to contact attorney. Motion for Dr. Herrera to send e-mail to attorneys authorizing Head Administrator and Governing Council Chair to be the only points of contact for La Academia Dolores Huerta was made by Dr. Gutiérrez and Ms. De La Rosa seconded the motion. Action passed unanimously by members present.

13) Cash out of annual leave of former principal Octavio Casillas: There was great discussion about this item regarding what the correct amount was, history, what attorneys were recommended, policies and procedures, what the Employee Handbook stated, the time frame in question, paystub information and supporting documentation. Mr. Soriano actively gave input, suggested we look at Labor Law, options, possible outcomes, agreements, possible discussion with Mr. Casillas, and partial payments. Dr. Gutiérrez motioned that Mr. Casillas be paid fully for his annual leave in the amount of \$13,909.00. Ms. Gallegos-Marrujo seconded the position. The vote the followed is as follows:

1 Aye – Ms. Gallegos-Marrujo

2 Nays – Dr. Gutiérrez and Dr. Saenz-Adames

3 Abstentions – Dr. Herrera, Mr. Pereira, Ms. De La Rosa

Dr. Gutiérrez then motioned that Item #13 be tabled until we received more information and Ms. De La Rosa seconded the motion. Action passed unanimously by members present.

Discussion then followed as to exactly what information was needed and Ms. Juliette Sanchez, Principal Miranda and office staff would bring that information.

14) **Addendum to Principal Miranda's contract to add annual leave clause:** Dr. Herrera mentioned that we had not included leave on Principal Miranda's contract and needed to be. Ms. Gallegos-Marrujo motioned that 6 days of leave be added to Principal Miranda's contract for six months to be automatically renewed for the next six months if she continued as Principal with total reimbursement of unused leave. Ms. De La Rosa seconded the motion. Action passed unanimously by members present.

15) **Adjourn to closed session:** To discuss personnel matters relating to any individual employee, including hiring, promotion, demotion, dismissal, resignation, or investigation of complaints or charges against an employee. [10-15-1(H)(2) NMSA 1978]

Mr. Pereira motioned to go to closed session to discuss a personnel matter directly related to a staff member. Dr. Saenz-Adames seconded the motion. Action passed unanimously by present members.

After a lengthy discussion, Ms. Gallegos-Marrujo motioned for the meeting to come out of closed session, Mr. Pereira seconded the motion. Action was passed unanimously by members present.

Mr. Pereira motioned for meeting to adjourn, Ms. De La Rosa seconded the motion. Action was passed unanimously by members present.

**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 and simultaneous Spanish translation upon request. Requests should be submitted to the governing council three days prior to the meeting.*