

SunRidge School
Charter Council Meeting
Minutes for 6/9/20

Call to order: 6:00pm

Present: Kalen, Johann, Rebecca, Theresa, Sasha, Jamie, Brian, Deidra, Curt

Absent: none

Guests: Robert Curtis, Sheina Curtis, Lauren Olsen, Metha Singleton, Leah Brosio

Note taker: Rebecca

Quorum: yes

Approval of agenda: Theresa/Johann/8/0/0

Correspondence: Barbara Bickford wrote to inform us that she negotiated with Seb Union District for a freeze on the annual 1% rent increase this year.

Approval of May minutes: Jamie/Theresa/7/0/1 (with a correction -- Jamie was present for April)

Open Session & Announcements:

Sheina attended the meeting to highlight confusion around signing up for a distance learning option for the fall, noting that it was unclear who the teacher would be, whether students would be relinquishing their seat-based spot, etc. She said that there were likely more interested families than had signed up thus far, given the lack of information on which to make a decision.

Robert brought up his dissatisfaction with the amount and quality of communication regarding distance learning. He feels more feedback and information should be solicited from parents, to guide moving forward.

A) Review Action Items/Old Business

All May action items addressed. Johann agreed to start writing short synopses of CC meetings for inclusion in school bulletins.

Kalen will have a draft short-term LCAP ready on 6/15. It will need to be approved by email before going to the THUSD board on 6/23.

Kalen and Johann have collaborated on a community message regarding the budget. They will finish and send it out soon.

B) Admin Report

Enrollment: 279

Pledge – We are closing the year with a big shortfall (about \$72K).

Hiring – Someone has been offered the first-grade position. We have had applicants for the Special Ed director and math positions.

Planning – Teachers are being paid with Foundation money to spend time collaborating together in June.

C) Distance Learning Update

We recently received guidelines from the California Departments of Health and Education on what will be required for schools to open, however we are awaiting detailed guidelines from Sonoma County in a few days. The District plans to start the year with a hybrid model: The proposal has students attending school 2 days and learning from home 3 days per week, cycling students through to reduce the population at school at one time. Certain events could trigger full distance learning again. In January, we could go back to full-time school depending on circumstances.

There are still many details to be worked out and questions to be answered. And information to be gathered.

Dale Thurber created a survey to find out what teachers would like to see.

Kalen is forming a planning group consisting of teachers, parents, and CC members. This group will solicit info from all stakeholders, and use it along with government recommendations, in making recommendations for the fall. Many of those present at the meeting expressed interest in joining the planning group: Deidra, Jamie, Brian, Lauren, Sasha, Johann, and (maybe?) Robert.

Parent guests commented that parent voices have so far been undervalued. They would like to see more collaboration and communication.

D) Revised 2020-21 Budget

LCAP (state) revenue for the current year dropped \$174K. Basic aid support from the district will keep coming, to offset salary increases. The new budget carries a deficit of \$213K with a reserve of \$721K (15%).

We looked at a budget that included cuts to program and personnel but not increased enrollment. The budget shows revenue of about \$2.6 million and expenses of about \$2.8 million (a \$187K deficit). Increasing enrollment could net about \$160K. Without increasing enrollment, our reserve fund will drop to 12%. We can't run a deficit budget like this for more than a year or two.

The district still shows a pledge ask of \$221K, to support instructional aides and specialty programs. This is unlikely to come in.

E) Union Discussion with guest Leah Brosio, Live Oak Charter

Live Oak Charter is an independent charter with its own school-specific union. We invited Leah to attend our meeting to help us learn more about this option, in our effort to gather information about future options. She graciously gave us her time and best efforts to answer our questions.

Here is a bullet point list of topics:

- they pay dues (about \$800/year)
- their union is affiliated with CTA and NEA and has no relationship to Petaluma City Schools
- it may be possible to form a distinct union while remaining a dependent charter

- their union is about 18-19 years old
- collective bargaining is used to clarify and form expectations and structures of the school
- the term of a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) is 3-4 years
- each non-renewal year, the teachers can open up to 3 articles of the CBA, as can the board
- Pros: The CBA creates a clean chain of communication (more respect from board toward teachers) and clarifies expectations of teacher activities, especially important in schools where there are many extracurricular activities and events. It has been good for relationships. *It's not necessary to have a union in order to create a CBA.*
- union members are eligible for various discounts and also legal protection/help (from CTA)
- Potential con: Teachers receive tenure in their 4th year.
- Classified staff are not unionized. If they wanted to be, they would form a union under a different parent organization.
- not a lot of obligations besides voting, but someone does have to be willing to be president (can have VP and treasurer as well but they don't)
- Leah normally spends about 10 hours per year on her work in the role of union president
- Guidance available from CTA (they have a liaison with the Santa Rosa chapter)
- We looked at the CBA – it contains a lot of standard contract language but it was nice to see there is a lot of clarity around extra duties like number of parent evenings and field trips expected. There is obviously thought put in toward equity.

Conclusion: There was a lot to be said for having a CBA, though it would mean a second set of negotiations for our district superintendent. The next step would be to have a faculty discussion (when there is energy for this). Having a CBA without being independent would not allow us to change the salary schedule or create positions. Brian agreed to pull together the original goals of long-term planning and synthesize some of our findings thus far, so that this can be tabled to the fall but details not lost. Thank you, Brian!

Action: Brian will summarize long-term planning.

F) CC Membership & Roles Update

Sasha gauged interest at the last faculty meeting and no one volunteered. Since Rebecca's term is ending this month, for now the CC can carry on with three parents and three faculty members, and the required ratio is maintained. Ideally, with all the work we're facing, and given that most of the council represents younger children, it would be nice to find people and have four and four.

Action: Johann will include a plug for interested parents in his bulletin message.

Roles: Brian is fine with continuing in his facilitation role. Deidra offered up the chairperson seat and is going to hold on to it. And a new notetaker will be determined next meeting.

G) Next meeting is 6/24 (6-7:30pm)

*Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Davenport*