

**LA CAÑADA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

November 13, 2007

The Regular Meeting of the Governing Board of La Cañada Unified School District was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by President Scott Tracy on November 13, 2007, in the Round Building at 4490 Cornishon Avenue in La Cañada, California. Present were Board Members Scott Tracy, Jinny Dalbeck, Susan Boyd, Cindy Wilcox, and Joel Peterson.

**CLOSED SESSION**

The Governing Board adjourned to Closed Session at 4:31 p.m. in the Round Building at 4490 Cornishon Avenue in La Canada, California. Present were the five Board Members, Superintendent James Stratton, Deputy Superintendent Bill Loose, Assistant Superintendent Mike Leininger and members of Management Team. Closed session adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**        Mr. Scott Tracy, President  
                                     Mrs. Susan Boyd, Vice President  
                                     Mr. Joel Peterson, Clerk  
                                     Mrs. Jinny Dalbeck, Member  
                                     Mrs. Cindy Wilcox, Member

**WORKSHOP: Class Size Reduction**

The workshop on Class Size Reduction began at 6:21 p.m. Mr. Stratton stated that the goals of the workshop are to: briefly review the research on class size reduction; present updated current 2007-08 comparable district and private school class size information; provide information on districts that have a parcel tax for class size reduction; propose specific recommendations on next steps.

Mr. Stratton discussed research results as summarized in a handout. Mr. Tracy asked if it was possible to chart district student standardized test scores in small classes. Mr. Stratton stated that it is hard to control the variables. Mr. Tracy thinks that some demonstrable connection between smaller class size and increased achievement on test scores would assist with fundraising.

Mr. Stratton provided private and public school comparisons to LCUSD class size averages in grades 4 – 6. 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades were also compared. La Canada Unified is on the upper end of class sizes when compared to other districts included in the research.

Mr. Stratton talked to the Superintendent of each district that has a parcel tax to find out the amount of the tax, the use of the tax, who their consultant was, whether they are experiencing declining enrollment and whether they allow interdistrict permits. The five districts researched that have a parcel tax are Palo Alto, Las Virgenes, Palos Verdes, San Marino and Piedmont. Mrs. Boyd asked what the actual revenue from the parcel tax is for these districts. Mr. Stratton will provide that information in TWIR.

Mr. Stratton asked Dr. Loose to discuss class size reduction staffing projections for a 5 year period. This information included enrollment projections, the number of sections needed in grades 4, 5 and 6 and the change in staff to meet the increase in sections, along with the cost of the reduction by site.

A similar 5 year projection was discussed in regard to the high school. Core classes and foreign language were considered in the high school figures.

Dr. Leininger reported on the five year enrollment projections in K – 12 and the impact of class size reduction on facilities. He concluded that existing facilities could accommodate class size reduction.

Mr. Stratton reported on class size reduction long term and short term recommendations. Mr. Stratton stated there are many variables that affect the budget and enrollment. Mr. Stratton recommended the approval of a demographic study and that the Governing Board wait for the completion of that study prior to making any class size reduction decisions. Mr. Stratton is also preparing a study on full day Kindergarten. He would also like that recommendation prior to the final decision on the funding source for any class size reduction. Mr. Stratton would like to see one more year of incoming Kindergarteners and most importantly would like better projections of state funding. The current budget picture is troubling. Currently, the amount of money the district is going to have for the general fund is not clear. Mr. Stratton recommended the district proceed with a plan for incremental additional class size reductions in 2008-09 if funding is available and further recommended the district continue with employment only related permits and that the district maintain the current ceiling of 3 – 5% on those permits.

A parcel tax was discussed. Mr. Stratton suggested a parcel tax be considered for class size reduction only. Mrs. Dalbeck suggested the district look at the timing of the election for a parcel tax due to funding of the tax. Mr. Peterson suggested limiting the parcel tax to 5 years.

The Board thanked Mr. Stratton for the workshop on class size reduction.

### **REGULAR MEETING**

The Regular Meeting of the Governing Board was reconvened at 7:23 p.m. in the Round Building at 4490 Cornishon Avenue in La Canada. Present were the five Governing Board Members, Mr. Stratton, Dr. Loose, Dr. Leininger and Executive Secretary to the Superintendent Kim Bergner. There were approximately 12 people in the audience. Mr. Tracy asked Karen Mathison to lead the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

### **REPORT OUT OF CLOSED SESSION**

Mr. Tracy reported there was no action taken in closed session.

### **REVIEW OF AGENDA**

No agenda modifications were requested.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Tracy stated that the minutes of the September 11, 2007 meeting of the Governing Board had been distributed to the Governing Board Members in advance for review. Amendments were presented for consideration. The minutes of the September 11, 2007 meeting of the Governing Board were approved as amended.

### **REPORTS**

**1. Student Representative**

Mr. Heller reported that ASB is planning for the annual LCHS blood drive which takes place next week.

**2. Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Stratton deferred his report.

**3. President's Report**

Mr. Tracy deferred his report.

#### 4. **Assistant Superintendent of Facilities and Operations Report**

Dr. Leininger reported on Food Services stating participation at both the high school and the elementary schools is up. The district is \$13,000 over last year's revenue for the month of October. This is the second month that participation has been up. A sandwich bar has been implemented at the elementary schools. The pizza vendor has changed; Dominos is currently at the elementary schools and La Canada Imports is supplying the high school pizza. These two vendors will not be selling in the parking lots at the high school any longer but are supplying pizza for the cafeteria. Parents in the audience asked additional questions about participation numbers and the quality of pizza served at the cafeterias.

Construction Report – Dr. Leininger discussed the construction flow chart distributed in TWIR and the evening meeting with the Design Review committee. Mr. Peterson will provide some comments to Dr. Leininger for some flow chart clarification. Mr. Stratton stated that the revised written chart will be available before the Holidays.

The lockdown hardware at Palm Crest Elementary is in. There is some welding that is still needed which will be completed next week. The locks for La Cañada Elementary should be delivered next week.

Dr. Leininger is continuing to monitor progress on the Foothill median project. There was some consensus on the project that will be going to the City Council soon.

#### **OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS BOARD**

The following audience members addressed the Board:

None

#### **PROPOSED ACTION ITEMS**

##### 1. **First Reading**

- a. **\*Proposal to contract for demographic planning services, R53-07-08.** It was moved and seconded (Boyd/Peterson) to approve the proposal to contract for demographic planning services, R53-07-08. Dr. Loose reported that Davis Demographic & Planning, Inc. has expertise in providing demographic planning services. This contract will provide for a demographic study to assist the district with enrollment projections and class size reduction decisions. Mr. Tracy asked about the timing of the report. Dr. Loose stated that the report could be completed in 6 – 8 weeks. The motion to approve entering into a contract for demographic planning services with Davis Demographic & Planning, Inc. in the amount of \$13,670 was adopted unanimously.
- b. **\*Request to approve funding proposal for the Oakgrove bathroom and locker room project, R62-07-08.** It was moved and seconded (Boyd/Peterson) to approve the funding proposal for the Oakgrove bathroom and locker room project, R62-07-08. Dr. Leininger gave a brief history of the project. The proposed cost (including design) of the project is \$155,000. The proposal is that the district and the city would split the funding of \$79,000 and that the user groups would come up with the additional \$75,000 to complete the project. The City is taking this item to the next City Council meeting. The district previously agreed to fund \$11,000 in architect fees, which was split with the City. Mr. Peterson stated that originally this project was presented to the district as being completely funded by the user groups. The district concern was that it would take too long and would be too difficult for the user groups to fully fund the project. During the discussion

through the Joint Use Committee this proposal was created. In the interest of assisting the user groups with the funding, who originally thought the funding would be split in thirds, the District and the City are proposing a time value clause stating if the user groups put up \$70,000 of the \$75,000 this year instead of over a 2 – 3 year period a discount of \$5,000 would be provided. The additional \$5,000 would be split by the City and the District.

Mrs. Dalbeck asked if maintenance has been considered and whether this project will be part of Joint Use. Mr. Peterson responded that it is assumed this will be part of the Joint Use agreement. Terms of the Joint Use agreement were discussed.

Mr. Tracy expressed concern with the accuracy of the project costs. Dr. Leininger stated that based on what the architect is reporting the building costs are solid and he is confident that the project can be completed at this cost. The user groups include Sports Coalition, La Cañada Jr. Baseball and Jr. Softball, AYSO, and the Flyers. Mrs. Wilcox asked how much money had been raised by the user groups for this project to date. Mrs. Boyd said \$70,000. Scott Cox clarified that some of the commitments were in the form of pledges. Mrs. Wilcox then asked if the current boards could bind future boards to a multi-year contract. The response from a member of the audience was that the current board for Jr. Baseball and Softball is seated from October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008 and they expect to complete the commitment in that time frame. A commitment letter was requested from these groups by the end of November. Funding commitments were discussed. In the interest of accommodating the \$5,000 discount to user groups it was moved and seconded (Boyd/Peterson) to amend the agenda item recommendation to increase the approval amount from \$34,500 up to \$37,000. The motion to amend the motion was approved 4:1, Wilcox dissenting. The motion to approve the funding proposal for the Oakgrove bathroom and locker room project was adopted 4:1 with Mrs. Wilcox dissenting.

### 3. Consent Agenda

It was moved and seconded (Dalbeck/Boyd) to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion to approve the Consent Agenda was adopted unanimously.

- a. **Personnel Report, P6-06-07.** The Board approved the following Personnel Items: *Certificated:* New Hires: Althea Collins. Resignation: Ivette Ellis. *Classified:* New Hires: Marie Harper, Gina Leemhuis, Julissa McCarthy, Ivett Parseghian, Bradley Rancourt, Issagholian Serjick, Clarice Buniatyan, Bob Nicholson, Timothy Gutierrez, Lida Aboulian, Rachel Cotsenmoyer, Miriam Ruiz, Sheri Brakebush. Modification: Karen Smedley, Crissa Cruz.
- b. **Special Activity: PCY Valley Forge, R49-07-08.** The Board approved the PCY Valley Forge field trip March 31 to April 4, 2008.
- c. **Special Activity: PCY Wrightwood, R50-07-08.** The Board approved the PCY Wrightwood trip March 3 to March 7, 2008.
- d. **Special Activity: PCY Riley's Farm, R51-07-08.** The Board approved the PCY Riley's Farm trip March 31 to April 4, 2008.
- e. **Special Activity: PCY Pilgrim Overnight, R52-07-08.** The Board approved the PCY Pilgrim Overnight trip May 6 – 7, 2008; May 7-8, 2008 and May 19 – 20, 2008.
- f. **Special Activity: LCHS Chamber Singers, R56-07-08.** The Board approved the LCHS Chamber Singers trip to Boston, Massachusetts March 26 to March 30, 2008.
- g. **Special Activity: LCHS Women's Ensemble, R57-07-08.** The Board approved the LCHS Women's Ensemble trip to San Diego, California April 17 to April 20, 2008.

- h. **Special Activity: LCHS Concert Choir, R58-07-08.** The Board approved the LCHS Concert Choir trip to Palo Alto, California April 27 to April 30, 2008.
- i. **Special Activity: LCE Valley Forge, R63-07-08.** The Board approved the LCE Valley Forge trip February 4 - 8, 2008.
- j. **Notice of Completion, R59-07-08.** The Board approved the Notice of Completions for HMI Construction, Painting & Décor, Ltd., and Floor Covering Unlimited.
- k. **Changer Orders for Building B 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, R60-07-08.** The Board approved the change orders for Building B 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor project for HMI in the amount of \$18,625.19; and Floor Covering Unlimited, Inc. in the amount of a \$2,000 credit.
- l. **Change Order for Building F & Elevator, R61-07-08.** The Board approved the change for HMI Construction Service in the amount of \$6,862.56.
- m. **Surplus of Equipment, R55-07-08.** The Board approved surplus of two wood shop machines at the high school.
- n. **Gifts to District, R54-07-08.** The Board approved the Gifts to the District as presented.
- o. **Purchase Order List #7.** The Board approved Purchase Order List #7.

### COMMUNICATIONS

The December CTA school board dinner was discussed.

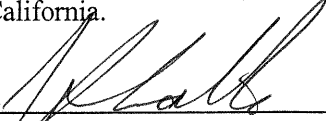
The Holiday get together at Mr. Tracy's was scheduled for December 17, 18 or 19<sup>th</sup>. Spouses are welcome.

Mrs. Wilcox asked for Budget assumptions ahead of time, prior to the December 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

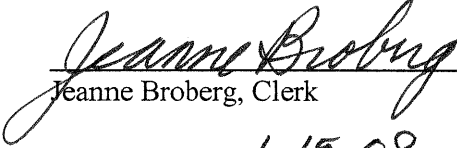
Mrs. Wilcox asked whether the Budget Advisory Committee has met and stated it would be helpful for the committee to provide an updated competing needs list requiring on going funding and a separate list of one time needs. Mrs. Wilcox discussed the need to accumulate funding requests.

### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m. The Next Regular Meeting of the Governing Board will be held on Tuesday, December 11, 2007, at 7:00 p.m. in the Round Building at 4490 Cornishon Avenue in La Canada, California.

  
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 James E. Stratton, Superintendent  
 Secretary to the Governing Board

### MINUTES APPROVED

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Jeanne Broberg, Clerk

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 Date

1-15-08

