

**SHERMAN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
February 29, 2016**

The Board of Directors of Sherman County School District met in the Band Room at Sherman Jr/Sr High School in Moro, Oregon on February 29, 2016. The following were present: Chair, Bill Martin (*arrived at 7:44 a.m.*); Vice Chair, Angie Thompson; Directors: Kyle Blagg, Jim Macnab, Merrie von Borstel; Superintendent, Wes Owens; Business Manager, Kim McKinney; Board Secretary, Jeanie Pehlke; Staff Member: Gerald Casper; Visitor: Jonathan Rolfe

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS TAKEN

Motion by Director Blagg with second from Director von Borstel to approve the agenda for February 29, 2016 as presented. **Vote:** 4 in Favor (Blagg, Macnab, Thompson, von Borstel) **Not in attendance at the time of this motion:** (Martin) **Action:** The motion carried.

Motion Director Blagg made a motion in accordance with 334.015 I move that the Sherman County School District withdraw from North Central ESD effective July 1, 2016. **Action:** The motion died for lack of a second.

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair, Angie Thompson announced that Chair Martin is running late and she was asked to run the meeting until he arrives. She opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag at 7:35 a.m.

Approve Board Meeting Agenda

Board Members were given an opportunity to make changes to the Agenda for this February 29, 2016 meeting. No changes were made.

Motion by Director Blagg with second from Director von Borstel to approve the agenda for February 29, 2016 as presented. **Vote:** 4 in Favor (Blagg, Macnab, Thompson, von Borstel) **Not in attendance at the time of this motion:** (Martin) **Action:** The motion carried.

COMMENTS FROM VISITORS RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS

No comments were received.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Action on whether to withdraw from the North Central Education Service District in accordance with ORS 334.015

Superintendent Owens thanked the board for their thoughtful consideration of the issue and expressed his appreciation for some very helpful presentations last Thursday. He stated that since the board approved the intent to withdraw last October his research has always focused on what is best for kids and what efficiencies we can bring to our district.

Since the meeting last Thursday Superintendent Owens has had some staff members ask questions related to employees of the ESD who work in our district. He reflected back on two laws that were discussed during Gary Peterson's presentation. He read aloud the following: ORS 236.605 Services assumed or acquired by another public employer require transfer of employees if new employees will be hired and ORS 334.017 Requires local districts to interview ESD employees affected by withdrawal from any vacant position for 12 months. Superintendent Owens stated that these laws were put in place to protect employees in ESD opt out situations. He reiterated that this decision is about the services for kids and the efficiencies we can provide.

Director von Borstel asked Superintendent Owens about past discussions with the ESD, specifically if there was room for any kind of [compromise]. Superintendent Owens said that he has met with both Robert Waltenburg and Mike Carroll together. He also met with Robert twice while Mike was out of the country and has also had numerous telephone conversations and email correspondence with both of them. Superintendent Owens has asked those questions, but it goes back to the buffet model. He shared that it was his hope to receive more focused service and not pull out, but the answer he received from the ESD was you are either in or you are out. The current model does not allow for a menu option. He did recall that back in 2012-13 North Central ESD had offered, and the district elected to receive money to pay for individualized professional development and SmartBoard training, but the next year when there was a new superintendent, the option was eliminated.

Director Macnab asked, "What about the tax dollar implications if you are planning to switch districts". It was clarified that switching districts is not an option; the district can contract with a different ESD, a different service provider or even take care of certain services ourselves. Business Manager, Kim McKinney explained that the tax dollars paid to the ESD would stay the same but would be given to the district as the money that we receive to opt out.

Chair Martin stated that he doesn't see why opting out isn't the best thing to do especially if the administration recommends it. He noted that the other option is to stay in the ESD and we won't add any efficiency, we won't save any money and they won't provide any better service than we have already been getting. Director Blagg said that he sees that a big benefit of opting out may be that the resolution services document is vague, hard to define what we are getting and hard to know where the money is going; if we go to the contract basis then there would be accountability and we can be sure we receive the value. Director Blagg added that the 10 percent is well worth this accountability. Chair Martin agreed with Director Blagg's comments and added that we would only be locked in to it for one year. A discussion of the process of opting back in took place.

Superintendent Owens reminded the board that the conversations changed when districts around the state started asking questions about ESD services. He added that it wasn't his intention to opt out; he intended to have conversations to see if North Central ESD could work through those scenarios, but they can't.

Director Macnab stated that he believes that we are part of something. Chair Martin asked Director Macnab if he thinks that is what is best for our kids. Director Macnab replied, "That's something we need to work through." Chair Martin said, "So you don't think our

administration has taken the time to work through this?" Director Macnab said he didn't know. Chair Martin stated that he is concerned that without Director Macnab's support the board may not be able to do what is best for the district. Chair Martin agreed that we are part of a group, but we need different services than the other people in the group. Adding that what's best for our district isn't necessarily what's best for other districts in the ESD. Chair Martin asked Director Macnab how he thinks by staying in this group it is best for our kids. Director Macnab answered that Dale came up with this idea to create this between the three districts and the three counties, and he feels strongly about it.

Director von Borstel asked for a better understanding of why staying in the ESD is not best for our kids. Chair Martin gave an example that North Central ESD offers limited professional development choices that may not fit the specific needs of our teachers to grow, so the district has to pay for what we need to support our teachers. He then gave the example of Mr. Casper doing the tech support when he could be teaching another upper level math class. He reasoned that the district wouldn't even have to pay for that class because we could be getting better tech support than what we are getting now. That would free Mr. Casper up to be able to teach another class and that directly trickles down to our kids. Director Macnab interjected by saying that the last professional development training was delivered by Columbia Gorge ESD. Chair Martin agreed and stated that if we opt out we can use that money to pay for that. We have had to pay for things twice because they don't meet our needs. So you would be staying in a situation that isn't very efficient.

Superintendent Owens shared the example that in 2015-16 the ESD allocated \$9,444 for professional development and next year they have projected allocations of \$15,626. He stated that the school district has also budgeted \$16,000 of district money for professional development that can be spent on anything we need. He noted that the \$9,444 allocation from the ESD is part of the buffet model that the district will not use. Chair Martin clarified that if we opt out of the ESD we can use that money for anything we need to meet the mandatory requirements and if we don't use it all, it is still our money to use somewhere else. Chair Martin said opting out is a win-win. He stated that the job of the board is to be fiscally responsible, and opting out would be a huge step in that direction. He wondered where the money that is left behind with the ESD goes. Chair Martin said that is what he was getting at by saying that we need to do what is best for kids. He continued by saying that it trickles back to accountability, different opportunities and being fiscally responsible so we can provide the teachers with what they need. Technology is another – no one is happy with the service they have been getting there. Maybe we hook into fiber, but we need something better than what we have currently.

Gerald Casper was allowed to make a comment. He reminded the board that they were all voted in by people in Sherman County because people believed that you are going to do the best they can for the students in our county and they were going to do the best they can financially for this school district. He said that is what you are here for by making this decision today. So we can't put emotions or feelings about anyone else, except our kids and our school district.

Director von Borstel said that if we all agree about everything we wouldn't need a board.

Motion: Director Kyle Blagg made a motion in accordance with 334.015 I move that the Sherman County School District withdraw from North Central ESD effective July 1, 2016.

Action: The motion died for lack of a second.

COMMENTS FROM VISITORS

No were comments received.

NEXT MEETING

The next Regular School Board Meeting is scheduled for March 14, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Martin declared the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Chair, Bill Martin

Board Secretary, Jeanie Pehlke