

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District
Board Of Education
Legislative Committee Meeting

Committee of the Whole

MINUTES

February 19, 2015

Legislative Chair Dominique called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. in the board room of the FNSBSD Administrative Center at 520 Fifth Avenue.

Chair Dominique read the district's mission statement: *"Our mission is to provide an excellent and equitable education in a safe, supportive environment so all students can become productive members of a diverse and changing society."*

Present:

Wendy Dominique, Chair & Board Vice President
Heidi Haas, Board President
Allyson Lambert, Board Treasurer
Lisa Gentry, Board Clerk
Sue Hull, Board Member
Sean Rice, Board Member

Absent:

Michael O'Brien, Board Member

Staff Present:

Dr. Karen Gaborik, Superintendent
Lisa Pearce, Chief Financial Officer
Dave Norum, Executive Director of Facilities Maintenance
Janet Cobb, Executive Director of Technology
Johanna Carson, Director of Public Relations
Sharon Tuttle, Executive Assistant to the Board

Others:

John Ringstad

Public Testimony – limited to items on the agenda only [0:00:37]

Chair Dominique called for public testimony. Hearing none, testimony was closed.

Update from Legislative Visit [0:00:44]

John Ringstad, district lobbyist, Mr. Rice, and Mrs. Hull reported on their recent visits to Juneau for legislator visits. The visits went well. Board members were able to communicate the district's needs and relate reductions to people and families. The message members heard from legislators was the need to prioritize needs. There seemed to be some discomfort between the legislative branch and the administrative branch. Legislators could not make any promises, but would try their best to get education supplemental funding restored.

Agenda Adoption with Consent Agenda Item [0:09:44]

**1. January 22, 2015 Legislative Committee Meeting Minutes

GENTRY MOVED, HULL SECONDED, TO ADOPT THE AGENDA WITH CONSENT
AGENDA ITEM.

HEARING NO OBJECTION, MOTION CARRIED
(RICE, HULL, GENTRY, LAMBERT, HAAS, DOMINIQUE)

Education Legislation/Strategies [0:12:10]

No new education bills had been introduced since the last legislative committee meeting. There were many conversations and discussions regarding the need to make long-term structural changes in education to make it more efficient and cost effective. Fairbanks was in a unique position in comparison to the other large districts in the size of cuts and budget shortfall. Legislation was visibly absent.

Capital Projects [0:21:50]

Mr. Norum and Dr. Gaborik stated they had been approached by the borough to start conversations regarding potential bond questions – one for the final phase of Barnette Magnet School’s renovation and one for other projects. Committee members were in general agreement a bond would probably be needed, and further conversation would be needed, if additional funding for the project could not be secured through the legislature.

Funding [0:35:09]

Dr. Gaborik spoke to the upcoming budget presentations. The message would be a push for restoring the supplemental funding. There wasn’t really anything new regarding funding. During the recent AASB conference, the motto and message to legislators was “Keep the Promise.” It was suggested the district website offer an opportunity for suggested budget comments and input.

Juneau Travel [0:38:24]

Board members discussed Juneau legislative visits and travel. The board needed to be strategic with their legislative trips. Board members agreed it was important to get the biggest bang for their buck. Chair Dominique, Mrs. Lambert, and Mr. Ringstad were scheduled to travel to Juneau the week of March 16, and Mrs. Hull, Mrs. Gentry, and Mr. O’Brien would be attending the March AASB Legislative Fly-in. Dr. Gaborik would be in Juneau in March for the superintendent conference. Depending on how the session progressed, Chair Dominique and/or President Haas may make a trip in April with Mr. Ringstad.

Education Legislation [0:45:22]

Ms. Pearce spoke to HB2 regarding the minimum wage and how it might affect bus drivers. The district would not be directly affected, as they did not employ bus drivers. But it could have a significant impact on the district’s transportation contract with First Student, as the wage for bus drivers could increase significantly. Ms. Pearce stated the bill hadn’t moved to this point, but the district should approach the Interior Delegation about proposing an amendment. The board asked Mr. Ringstad to speak to legislators about the issue.

Mrs. Hull spoke to the need for a system of identifying ways legislators could help the district. Legislators had indicated they wanted to help districts. One example was the costs related to unfunded mandates. Legislators were willing not to add unfunded mandates, but districts needed to be clearer about the increases unfunded mandates added to their bottom line. It would be helpful to have an easy way to determine estimates for legislators. Dr. Gaborik stated there was often a difference between rural and urban districts. Many times the Fairbanks district could easily absorb the mandates, where other districts may not have that ability. She thought it was probably time to outline the specific costs to the district.

The committee meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Submitted by Sharon Tuttle, executive assistant to the Board of Education and Legislative Committee.