

# **PUBLIC MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 42 (MAPLE RIDGE-PITT MEADOWS)**

**Wednesday, March 25, 2009 (6:00 PM)**

The Meeting of the Board of Education of School District No. 42 (Maple Ridge - Pitt Meadows) was called to order by

## **ROLL CALL**

UPON THE ROLL BEING CALLED, THE FOLLOWING WERE PRESENT:

### **BOARD MEMBERS:**

Board Chair – Kathie Ward

Vice Chair – Ken Clarkson

Trustee – Susan Carr

Trustee – Mike Huber

Trustee – Eleanor Palis

Trustee – Dr. Dave Rempel – ABSENT

Trustee – Stepan Vdovine

### **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Superintendent – John Simpson

Deputy Superintendent – Jan Unwin

Secretary Treasurer – Don Woytowich

Executive Assistant – Tina Fuchs

## **A - OPENING PROCEDURES**

### **1. Call to Order**

The Board Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

### **2. Ordering of Agenda**

Added:

- Trustee Vdovine added a motion around the Provincial Election regarding ideas he has – under Trustee questions

### **ORIGINAL - Motion P301 – 08/09**

Member (Stepan Vdovine) Moved, Member (Eleanor Palis) seconded to approve the ORIGINAL motion 'That the agenda be ordered as amended'. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 0.

**The motion CARRIED. 6 - 0**

### 3. Correspondence

#### **ORIGINAL - Motion P302 – 08/09**

Member (Ken Clarkson) Moved, Member (Eleanor Palis) seconded to approve the ORIGINAL motion 'That the Board receive any Correspondence for information.' Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 0.

**The motion CARRIED. 6 - 0**

### **B - CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

#### 1. March 11, 2009 Public Meeting Minutes

Trustee Rempel was away due to illness at March 11<sup>th</sup> meeting and it wasn't noted in the minutes.

#### **ORIGINAL - Motion P303 – 08/09**

Member (Ken Clarkson) Moved, Member (Eleanor Palis) seconded to approve the ORIGINAL motion 'That the Minutes of the March 11, 2009 Public meeting minutes be approved as amended.' Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 0.

**The motion CARRIED. 6 - 0**

### **C - PRESENTATIONS**

#### 1. My Story Presentation by Doug, Hoey

Doug Hoey explained that the My Story project started over a year ago all from an idea and a grant from IBM. Cathy Crook, the Aboriginal Support Teacher then went on to explain how it began and how they chose to incorporate the tradition of Aboriginal Story telling about their past. With the completion of a number of stories, a kit was put together that included lessons and lesson plans for teachers. Then they went over it with all the teachers and half a day was given for teachers who were doing the program, to give a lesson about Aboriginal Culture and Storytelling. The teachers would then talk to other teachers about what they did and would choose how to best represent their stories with the kids. Cultural Support Quentin Harris then explained the totem pole art where animals were chosen for family members based on the characteristics of each animal. Some students and teachers from came to the meeting to tell their stories, make presentations, and explain their memory bag. The teachers explained that kids were engaged as soon as the computers came into the classroom and they also made some memory bags which contained artifacts from their families in them. The Students also made a button blanket and presented it to the Lieutenant Governor, that was signed by all the students. It was also noted that one of the students won an award for public speaking from sharing her My Story. They also explained that there have been a lot of powerful spin offs from the program as well.

#### 2. Maple Ridge Montessori Society Presentation –

The Maple Ridge Montessori Society made a presentation explaining their alternative learning program in the public school system which is located at Hammond Elementary. They wanted to thank the Board and School District 42 for all their support, funding, and assistance with raising public awareness.

## H - CEO DECISION - DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT

### 1. Riverside Kindergarten Enrollment

The Deputy Superintendent explained that the issue of having only 6 students in Riverside kindergarten is coming back to the Board in the context of both the budget constraints as well as teaching and learning issues that this number creates. There are three possible different configurations for Riverside for Sept 09. No matter how it's done, there are still Bill 33 issues to be considered.

Discussion ensued about the three possible options.

Staff wants to go out to the school and present the situation now that it has been brought to the Board as to the range of possibilities. There haven't been any discussions with parents yet but before talking to them, staff wants to know what the possibilities are so that can be shared with the parents. Staff also needs to be prepared with the answers to the parents' questions before going and talking to them.

#### **NEW - Motion P304 – 08/09**

Member (Stepan Vdovine) Moved, Member (Ken Clarkson) seconded to approve the ORIGINAL motion 'That the Board table the recommendations by staff regarding Riverside Kindergarten Enrollment' Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 0.

**The motion CARRIED. 6 - 0**

#### **NEW - Motion P305 – 08/09**

Member (Stepan Vdovine) Moved, Member (Ken Clarkson) seconded to approve the ORIGINAL motion 'That the Board direct staff to bring back options for possible school closures consultation process including timelines for the process' Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 0.

**The motion CARRIED. 6 - 0**

The Trustees agreed that discussions should start as early as possible and that there is no immediate need to make decision on Riverside Kindergarten tonight. The Trustees gave Staff an informal recommendation to contact the Parents of the 6 students and discuss the possibilities that are being considered. They need to also need to look at 2009 as well as 2010.

Trustee Clarkson wanted it noted that this is about the government not financing public education as much as they should be and so this is what Trustees are left with as a choice. There will not necessarily be full school closure in Sept, may be something more palatable.

Trustee Huber wanted to echo what Trustee Clarkson said, and he wanted to add that a lot of times a negative spin is put on split/multi-grade classrooms but it should not be viewed negatively. Studies have shown that not only for students, but for educators, it can be good for students socially as well as educationally. Research shows they are most successful when it is a result of a choice for the students/parents/teachers not a forced situation.

#### **NEW - Motion P306 – 08/09**

Member (Stepan Vdovine) Moved, Member (Mike Huber) seconded to approve the ORIGINAL motion 'That the Board lift the motion from the table concerning the recommendations from staff regarding kindergarten enrollment at Riverside ' Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 0.

**The motion CARRIED. 6 - 0**

**ORIGINAL - Motion P307 – 08/09**

Member (Stepan Vdovine) Moved, Member (Eleanor Palis) seconded to approve the ORIGINAL motion 'Recommend that based on the information provided, the Board reconsiders the motion from the last Board meeting and allows Sr. team to move the 6 students currently registered for Riverside Kindergarten to Maple Ridge Elementary or to a school of their choice if space permits.'. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 0 Nay: 6.

**The motion FAILED. 0 - 6**

**H - CEO INFORMATION ITEMS - DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT**

1. Using daycare addresses for kindergarten catchment registration

The Deputy Superintendent advised that the Board had asked for Staff to find out how many kindergarten students use daycare as the address for catchment area to determine if any changes should be made in catchment criteria. She attached a compilation of information collected from all the elementary schools. About 10% of the population uses their daycare in their catchment area. This means that when it's decided as to whom is accepted into a school, the catchment area is first in the criteria for acceptance, and looking at it, it is not an issue. There was no one within catchment who did not make it into their own school.

**ORIGINAL - Motion P308 – 08/09**

Member (Ken Clarkson) Moved, Member (Mike Huber) seconded to approve the ORIGINAL motion 'That the Board receive the information on using daycare as catchment address for kindergarten registration.' Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 0.

**The motion CARRIED. 6 - 0**

**H - CEO INFORMATION ITEMS - SECRETARY TREASURER**

1. Motions from Public Meeting November 28, 2007 related to the development of a new Logo

As requested by the Board, the Secretary Treasurer attached copies of the Minutes of the Public Meeting of November 28, 2007 relating to the development of a new District Logo.

The Board asked for copies of past motions and they are self evident.

The Board Chair stated that she thought the motion said that the Board had the final decision but in reality it is the committee that has the final decision.

Communications Officer Seamus Nesling said that he thinks it wasn't seemly for the Board to make decisions in this regard. He then assured that nothing will happen without it coming to the Board first anyway.

**ORIGINAL - Motion P309 – 08/09**

Member (Ken Clarkson) Moved, Member (Susan Carr) seconded to approve the ORIGINAL motion 'That the Board receive the copies of the minutes of November 28, 2007 related to the development of a new Logo for information.' Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 0.

**The motion CARRIED. 6 - 0**

## 1. School closure background information

The Secretary Treasurer attached background information requested by the Board in order to facilitate discussions regarding possible consideration for school closure which includes policy, past minutes, past timelines, court decisions related to school closures and BCSTA advice on the process. He advised that any consideration for school closure could not come into effect prior to September 1, 2010 and that the current School Closure Policy is not inconsistent with the current legislation.

He then agreed to bring information regarding how much money would be saved from closing schools, from other districts and what they have saved, to the next meeting.

The Board wants financial information behind each option that Board is voting on and they want everyone to get up to speed on land disposal and look at how the Ministry funds it especially the block funding. The Secretary Treasurer advised that this will be looked at during the next Finance Committee meeting. The Secretary Treasurer then agreed to have the chart put on the website and to amend the policy.

### **ORIGINAL - Motion P310 – 08/09**

Member (Ken Clarkson) Moved, Member (Susan Carr) seconded to approve the ORIGINAL motion 'That the Board accept for information and discussion the attached information to assist in determining whether or not school closure will be considered for 2010'. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 0.

**The motion CARRIED. 6 - 0**

## **I - COMMITTEE BUSINESS - COMMITTEE & ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### 1. Education Committee

### 2. Aboriginal Education Committee

### 3. Human Resources Committee

There is a meeting tomorrow.

### 4. Inclusive Education Committee

There is only a meeting every 3 months.

### 5. Finance Committee

The Secretary Treasurer advised that we are now fully into the Budget process and that there had been a committee meeting earlier today. He said that the Ministry released its funding announcement just before spring break and that the press release spoke to the highest ever rate, along with a year of declining enrollment. At the core of it is the basis at which the budget for every district is built upon. There is the block funding and for students it has stayed the same for 4 cycles now, which means basically that our funding has been capped. The money left over from kids not there used to be passed out to school districts in the spring and fall but that hasn't happened for 4 funding cycles now. There is

more money coming into the education ministry, but it's not into District budgets with the exception of funds to meet negotiated salary increases. If we were to include all the things that we want to do as well as what we have to do, there is a shortfall of 7 million dollars. If we only look at the things that we have to do, the shortfall is about 3 million dollars. This is significant because we are heading into declining enrollment of about 215 next year which is a loss of about a million in our interest revenue as we are only getting half as much interest a loss of about \$500,000.

The International Ed. money is declining because of the world economy. This is causing us to lose \$800,000 -\$900,000 from International Ed. revenue. There are no more surpluses left. We had a million in a reserve fund which was used to balance the 2008/09 budget, and less than a million in surplus is forecast which means less money carried forward to the next year to help us balance the budget. This year is the start of a long term cycle of continuing enrollment decline and for the next 5-6 years. This is a long term problem and we need to balance the budget in ways that allow us to achieve savings in the long run. \$350,000 for school fees now has to come from us which we never had to do before. Bill 33 cost is a big cost for us.

Trustee Vdovine suggested to perhaps submit a "Needs Budget". Trustee Clarkson added that he thinks it's worthwhile but it is a lot of work and public consultation in order to do it properly. He thinks the Needs Budget should be put off until next year given what's going on right now. He explained that this is not a unique situation to our district, it is affecting all the districts across the province. the government needs to start making a choice to fund education, it's not a Trustee choice, it's a provincial government choice, and we need the public to start getting the government to start funding provincial education - which is exactly why a Needs Budget should take place.

#### 6. Anti-Vandalism Committee

Next meeting is on March 30<sup>th</sup>.

#### 7. Policy Advisory Committee

#### 8. Communications Advisory

Next meeting is tomorrow.

#### 9. French Immersion Advisory

#### 10. District Student Advisory

Next meeting is April 9<sup>th</sup>.

#### 11. Social Wellness Committee

#### 12. Nutrition Committee

Next meeting is March 30<sup>th</sup>.

#### 13. Historical Committee

Next meeting is April 7.

## **J - QUESTION PERIOD**

### 1. Trustee Questions

Trustee Vdovine wanted to submit a motion in time for the agenda prep but he didn't. The timing is interesting in terms of the provincial election coming up. He feels that it is important that we make an effort to educate the public and the parties and the candidates as to what the implications are regarding public education funding, policies, and facilities.

Communications Officer Seamus Nesling then weighed in by saying that he's not sure if everyone is aware, but the BCSTA is actually producing some materials for Trustees for the election process.

Trustee Vdovine then said that he thinks we need a more local document. He feels the expertise is here in the room and it's just a matter of pulling it all together.

Trustee Clarkson then advised that Saanich has already done it and so we could use theirs as a model to follow to create ours. It needs to be publicized by the end of April.

Trustee Clarkson wanted to pass a new motion to discontinue the District's contract with Electronic School Board and look into other options. He thinks that it's a good idea in time of budget crunch being it is not even working well for most of the Trustees. Perhaps staff could come up with a system that works better and would be significantly cheaper.

### **ORIGINAL - Motion P311 – 08/09**

Member (Ken Clarkson) Moved, Member (Susan Carr) seconded to approve the ORIGINAL motion 'That the Board discontinue the District's contract with Electronic School Board and look into other options.' Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 0.

**The motion CARRIED. 6 - 0**

### 2. Staff Questions

### 3. Employee Group Questions

George Serra from the MRTA had a question around the Riverside Kindergarten options. It alluded to the Bill 33 situation coming into effect and he was wondering if Bill 33 violations have been considered in cost, as it can add up to more than the cost of teacher. He advised that this year alone at Riverside, there was a classroom that had 6 identified kids in it that required an extra teacher.

The Deputy Superintendent said that it wasn't present at this stage as this was just a preliminary projection. However Laurie Meston had also pointed that out and I will be considered in the next round of projections.

### 4. DPAC Questions

### 5. Public Questions

## **K - TRUSTEE REPORTS**

### 1. Ridge Meadows Education Foundation

2. Joint Leisure Services

3. Social Planning Advisory

There is a meeting next week.

4. Municipal Advisory & Accessibility

5. Ridge Meadows Community Arts Council

6. BCSTA Provincial Council

7. District Parent Advisory Council

There is a meeting on April 6, a 7pm, at Thomas Haney.

8. Tzu Chi Foundation

9. Youth Society Committee

The Committee meets next month, right now they are working on things for the Home Show.

10. External Representative Reports

11. Board Liaison Representative Reports

12. Other Trustee Reports

Good news items:

- Trustees Carr, Palis, Huber had the opportunity to be judges at the Golden Ears public speaking event. It was wonderful, the kids were great, kudos to the teachers who worked with the kids and the kids themselves for the courage to do it. It was very hard to judge.
- Superintendent John Simpson - The International Ed endeavors in China – we are building optimistic numbers for next year despite the challenging economic challenges.
- Trustee Palis advised that the Quebec exchange students have arrived.
- Deputy Superintendent Jan Unwin is working with a group of teacher leaders after school about using technology to engage the learner. The teachers at all stages so they're very excited and letting kids teach them how to use technology.

**L – OTHER BUSINESS**

**M - ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

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Chair

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Secretary Treasurer