

**MINUTES
NORTH STAR CHARTER SCHOOL
GOVERNING BOARD
October 8, 2009**

I. REGULAR MEETING

- A. Meeting called to order: by Chairperson Herrold at 7:09 p.m.
- B. Roll Call: Chairperson Herrold, Trustee Pipal, Trustee Wiskerchen, Trustee Reeve, Trustee McCarthy, Trustee Carroll and Trustee Waniata were present.
- C. Approval of Agenda: Chairperson Herrold requested a motion to approve the agenda. Trustee Carroll requested to move John Hansen under Reports and Discussion under Principal's Report. The motion was made to approve the amended agenda by Trustee Carroll and seconded by Trustee Pipal. Motion passed 6-0.

Persons wishing to speak to an Agenda Item: Kathy Pennisi, Monica Stone, Alina Jensen, Lisa Szentes, Warren Ririe, Merlinda Haueter, Susan Madsen, Sharon Ledesma, Mike Mooney and Debbie Cleverly.

Persons wishing to speak to a Non-Agenda Item: Kathy Pennisi, Lisa Szentes and Susan Pfeifer.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

The Governing Board reviewed the enclosures under the consent agenda. A motion to approve the consent agenda for accounts payable for the month of September, 2009 in the amount of \$130,316.04, to approve the financial reports and to approve the minutes for 9-10-09 was made by Trustee Carroll and seconded by Trustee McCarthy. Motion passed 5-0. Trustee Pipal did not review the financial reports in advance so he abstained from the vote. There were no contracts to approve.

III. REPORTS & DISCUSSION

- A. Principal's Report: Principal Smith gave an update of what has been happening in the last month. The K-5 staff has met in the last month and compared notes with Kali Kurdy. There is a lot of investment in time from teachers for students who need reassurance and time to adjust to the transition to the new school. There were a few more choices for middle school electives this year. Principal Smith is very pleased with how the year is going so far. The few problems so far have been with established students. The block schedule is working well. There will be a quarterly report on how the block schedule is

working for the next board meeting. The climate in high school is much different this year. There have been different reports from the teachers stating that they are surprised by the respectfulness and the academic level of the students. Student council elections are in progress and there are posters all over the school. The special education department is growing and the room across from the office has been turned into an extended resource room for special education. Money comes in from the state to accommodate the needs of special education. Next week IBEDS reports are due to the state. The IRI's are done and need to be reported. Principal Smith and Principal Wold are assisting Idaho Charter School Network in writing a proposal to the Kathryn Albertson Foundation for monies that would benefit charter schools in the state. They are also applying for another grant from the Kathryn Albertson Foundation for North Star; it is based on increased enrollment and strength of program. Next Tuesday, Tom Luna will be at the school to answer questions. Next Thursday, Dan Hollinger will come to the school to meet with the staff to discuss a new competitive grant proposal called Race to the Top. There have been several visits from Hidden Springs' staff. There has been tracking on how many people are reading the newsletter, between 68% and 71% of people are reading it. There was a shadow day last week, with 38 students shadowing. From that day, nine students enrolled and more signed up on the waitlist. Enrollment is down for grades 9, 10 and 11. There will be another shadow day on October 9th. Trustee Pipal asked Principal Smith how the block schedule is going to be measured. Principal Smith stated that the administration and staff is working on that now.

Two teachers gave presentations on the classes that they teach. DeEtte Huelse teaches business and economics. Dr. Tom Stone teaches instrumental band, music theory and world music for the IB program. Trustee Carroll expressed his appreciation to the teachers for the presentations. Chairperson Herrold stated that the presentations were great.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Voting Rights for Teacher's Spouses and Support Staff: John Hansen thanked the board for taking the time to listen to the proposal for voting rights. Mr. Hansen talked about how everyone at North Star pitches in for the school and it is very encouraging. The elections at North Star have been organized by the PTO. In talking to fellow staff members, they have been asking about who gets to vote and what the qualifications are. Spouses of staff members contribute in so many different ways to make this school special for the students that attend North Star. Mr. Hansen encouraged the board to make a change and allow spouses of board members, administrators and staff members to be able to participate and be given the recognition as a stakeholder in this process. Trustee Pipal stated that usually when a change is requested, there is some reason for it and asked what the underlying reason for the change was. Mr. Hansen stated that there was no reason; he feels that the families are stakeholders. Trustee Pipal asked where to

draw the line for a stakeholder; every tax payer is a stakeholder. Mr. Hansen stated that he believes this would be a good change.

Monica Stone added that she hadn't really thought about it very much, but as the school grows. When she came as a first year teacher, it felt risky and the teachers signed their contracts in good faith. The teachers teamed up with the family and the kids and it has always been about partnership. As those of us that are founding teachers and have been on this mission together, they have a lot to be grateful for. She and her husband are third generation teachers and this is the first place that they and their families have worked that there has not been a teachers union. When they sign contracts, they are in good faith and they have not heard any talk about a union and she thinks that it is a value. She would add to that that some of the teachers have children, so the spouses can vote. She sees this as good faith and a good proactive measure. Employee's families are very much affected by their lives at North Star and it would be a very respectful gesture to allow any teacher and their families to have the same say as all of the other North Star parents.

Alina Jensen is a teacher at North Star and also has children that attend North Star. She asked that the teachers who have her children in any of their classes to raise their hand. She said that these people take care of her children and all of these people are helping her children. She stated that she feels that it would be a discredit to them if their spouses couldn't vote.

Trustee Pipal asked again what is behind this request and what the underlying threat is. He also stated that he did not want to disappoint the teachers because he feels they are the greatest teachers in the world, but he may not vote for this and he doesn't want the teachers to feel that they are not being treated fairly or that it is inequitable and that the teachers are not doing a good job. Ms. Jensen stated her opinion that the teachers and spouses are all stakeholders. Trustee Pipal stated that the board needs to define what a stakeholder is. Trustee McCarthy stated that she is very impressed by how many teachers come again and again to the meetings and they are certainly stakeholders. She sees a stakeholder as someone who has direct participation and she thinks that this would allow her husband to vote and he hasn't been to one board meeting; she questions whether or not he would have enough commitment to vote on that. Really, since this is a family and since the board and the school are tied together in what happens, she thinks that the school would want people that have a true commitment and who are totally involved when they come to vote. Trustee McCarthy stated that she seconded what Trustee Pipal said.

John Hansen stated that this is a proposal to make something better and perhaps it is anticipating changes that will be coming because he knows that spouses of the staff are affected and they do care. Just because someone has the right to vote, doesn't mean that they will exercise that right. He feels it would be good idea to include spouses since decisions that the board makes can affect his entire family,

such as the change to health insurance. Mr. Hansen also commented on how Bonnie Drick's husband helped at the school. Bonnie Drick stated that her husband is very excited about this proposal and that he talks to people about how great North Star is.

Trustee Carroll stated that businesses that he has been involved in have taken the employee and spouse out to dinner, recognizing the importance of the spouse; and employee retention has been better. Trustee Pipal asked if the spouses were allowed to vote as to how the business was operated. Trustee Carroll stated that it was for a retention tool only.

Warren Ririe stated that he appreciates the teachers and they deserve credit for all of their hard work. The by-laws in the charter identify who the stakeholders are and he doesn't see a clear reason why that should be changed at this point. One concern is the use of the term spouse and that brings a new set of issues into it, as in what the definition of a spouse is.

Lisa Szentes stated that she does not see the logic in the proposal and has never heard of any entity that allows the spouses to vote. Merlinda Haueter and Susan Madsen stated that they have as the same position as Lisa.

Sharon Ledesma stated that her vote in the last election was excluded because she was the spouse of a teacher, but she is also a parent. Chairperson Herrold stated that should not have happened and she should have been allowed to vote.

Chairperson Herrold stated that she wants to make sure that this is handled right and it would be a good idea to have an attorney involved. "The teachers are very important to us as a board and we want to treat you fairly, but I also really feel very passionately about the school. The reasons the school was started and the reason we exist is for the kids and I believe the connection with voters and stakeholders of the school, although anyone who considers them a stakeholder can be a stakeholder, I do feel that there are certain privileges and not all stakeholders are created equal. For instance, my kids' grandma could consider herself a stakeholder. But it's the relationship and the connection to the student. As I look through the ballot, I do see and I don't how we, we approved that ballot back February 26, 2008, nobody even caught the fact that it really wasn't clearly defined who was allowed to vote other than family. We do allow teachers to vote and according to our article 4, section 3, employees of the school. And I also think we need to clearly define in the ballot parents, whether you're a teacher that's a parent, parents of students get to vote, so that would be both. Some of the research that I did was kind of unusual because I had to go back to people that kind of put this thing together because I think our ballot is a little unusual and a lot of them really felt, and I think that that is kind of the heart of what we need to really consider, is that they just really felt that the charter school is started because a group of parents wanted a lot of say in their kids' education. That is why the school got started. And they felt that the parent involvement is what started the

school and that involvement was so important and that not every parent who has a child would may be want to vote the same way and if you had a divorced family, that those parents still needed to be able to vote and have a say in their child's education. And so they made it very clear that the parents of the child, that voice was very important. I think that what we really need to look at in this is the connection to the child, to the student and by looking at that connection, who is affecting that student; the parents, the teachers, the staff, the paraprofessionals that work in the classrooms. Those are the people who are really having that one on one connection with the student and that's how I truly feel and read this. For me, it doesn't mean that spouses aren't stakeholders, they definitely are stakeholders, but whether they get that same privilege to vote, that's something that I think as a board we need to discuss further. But I really appreciate your time, I appreciate all of you very much and you mean a lot to us and we want to have a good relationship with our teachers. You guys are taking care of our kids every day and it's very important and I don't want you to think that we take this lightly. But we will discuss this again. Thank you."

REPORTS & DISCUSSION CONTINUED:

B. Construction Update: Joe Saucerman with Kreizenbeck gave the board an update on the construction project. Joe complimented the staff on how well the school looks after turning it over. There were some issues with ACHD, but they are all taken care of. The only thing that is left is the final signoff from ACHD, which is scheduled for next Tuesday morning and North Star should get the bond money back then. At that point we should be done. There was one issue with the city, but that is being worked out now. The landscape contractor is required to blow out the sprinkles and to start the sprinklers up again in the spring; also to mow the grass once it is in. If it is now grown enough to mow this fall, he will come and mow it in the spring. There is a one year warranty on the building and landscaping. There was 5% hold on payment for the contractors and it is reflected on the most recent payment summary. They are waiting for the last bills to come through and in October, they should have all billings in. Trustee Wiskerchen thanked Joe for all of their hard work and told him it was nice to work with him.

C. Bank of Cascades: Trustee Wiskerchen thanked Mike Mooney and Debbie Cleverly from Bank of the Cascades for coming to the board meeting and stated that he has heard nothing but positive things about the bank and about how wonderful the customer service is. At the last board meeting, there was some concern about Bank of the Cascades. Mike and Debbie stated that all of the funds for North Star are FDIC insured and all of the funds are safe. Trustee Pipal asked about how stable the FDIC is and if there are any concerns with the FDIC. Mike Mooney stated that the FDIC has never failed in the 75 years that it has been in force and no one has lost any money where their funds were FDIC insured. The interest rate that Bank of the Cascades offers North Star for the savings account is currently higher than what the State Treasury Fund has.

D. CPE Committee: Trustee Pipal stated that the committee met this week. The committee talked about what they are what they are not. The main goal right now is to come up with how to communicate well. Trustee Carroll asked the board involvement. Trustee Pipal stated that everything the committee does will go through the board. The next meeting is scheduled for November 2nd.

E. Treasurer's Report/Finance Committee/Banking Update: Trustee Wiskerchen stated that the finance committee met and went through the annual budget. Time will be spent at the board retreat going over the first fiscal quarter of the year. Trustee Wiskerchen also met with Jim Blandford regarding refinancing, Jim had to go out of town but will be back in a couple of weeks to give the school more options for refinancing. Trustee Waniata stated that this is going to be a slow process. Trustee Wiskerchen presented the financial dashboard for review.

NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED:

B. Board Attorney: Chairperson Herrold asked Joe Borton to attend the meeting; he has been the board attorney for the past five years. Chairperson Herrold stated that there has been some discussion with the board about having a board attorney, there are several other boards that have attorney on them and it would be a good practice to put into place for North Star. Trustee Carroll stated how much he appreciates all of the work that Joe has donated to help get the new school built. Joe Borton stated that he has been working with non-profits for 13 years and he has sat on numerous boards, with and without counsel, so he has seen how having an attorney helps and how not having an attorney can create some issues for the board. He would work on a flat fee basis. Trustee Pipal motioned to approve Joe Borton as North Star's legal counsel. The motion was seconded by Trustee Waniata. Motion passed 6-0.

C. Board Education Slide Show: Chairperson Herrold stated that the slide show has been emailed to the board members and will be addressed in a future meeting.

V. CONTINUING BUSINESS

A. Policy 1000 and 2000: Warren Ririe stated that he could not find the policy information on the website and asked if it could be made more visible. He would like to know what is being proposed for changes. Kathy Pennisi stated that she would like to see the changes from the original by-laws and that changes are made by the state to open meeting law, so it would be better to reference the open meeting laws instead of stating them. Susan Madsen stated that North Star has its own by-laws and that maybe section 1000 should be North Star's current by-laws. Chairperson Herrold stated that policy 1000 would be addressed at a future meeting. Trustee McCarthy suggested approving Policy 2000-2240 because it is the second reading and there were minor changes. Trustee Carroll motioned to

approve the changes in Policy 2000-2240. Trustee Pipal seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

B. Approval of Requisition Payment: Trustee Wiskerchen presented the Requisition Payment. Trustee Pipal motioned to approve the requisition payment for October. The motion was seconded by Trustee Carroll. Motion passed 6-0.

C. PTO Member of the Board: Trustee Carroll asked how we engage the PTO in the board and proposed that the PTO continue to have a place on the agenda, but exclude them from the executive sessions. They would not need to be sworn in because they are not a voting member. Trustee Pipal stated that the board needs to be very selective about executive sessions, but he feels that the PTO needs to be more involved with the retreats and work sessions, it would be very helpful and adds value. Trustee Carroll stated that he would send out the verbiage from the charter, Chairperson Herrold suggested that the discussion continue at the next meeting or at the retreat.

D. Board Retreat: After discussion, the board retreat has been scheduled for November 19, 2009 from 5:30 to 9:30 at North Star.

VII. QUESTION & ANSWER/CONCERN SESSION

Susan Pfeifer stated she had concerns about not having a school nurse. Principal Smith stated that all of the office staff has been trained on all of the special requirements for all of the students. This is a common problem in Charter Schools and Chairperson Herrold also stated that this is a common problem in public schools. North Star is operating within the law; the goal is to have a half time nurse next year.

Kathy Pennisi stated that until the block schedule has been implemented for a year or two there is no way to measure if it is really successful. If the school is committed to going back to a traditional schedule, work needs to be started sooner, rather than later to build the schedule. She would also like the teachers who are going to present at the board meetings be listed on the agenda.

Lisa Szentes commented on the block schedule. She would like consideration given to the parents in evaluating the block schedule. Lisa also commented on the PTO member of the board, year by year the board could decide whether or not to have a member of the PTO on the board. She understands the concerns about having the PTO member at the executive session also stated that the PTO President is more than just a community member.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Herrold asked for a motion for adjournment. After a full and complete discussion upon a motion made by Trustee Pipal and seconded by Trustee McCarthy, the meeting adjourned at 10:11 p.m. will all members voting aye.

The above minutes represent a true and accurate summary of this meeting.

Chairman

Clerk