



**MINUTES
CITIZENS' OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
SOCORRO ISD
DISTRICT SERVICE CENTER/ MEETING ROOM C
MAY 18, 2009 | 6:00 PM**

MEMBER PRESENT

Karen P. Blaine, Board President; Mary Benham, Interim Superintendent; Herb De La Rosa, Chairperson; Victor Valdivia, Co-Chairperson; Cathey Kaiser, Member; Linda East, Member; Paul Guerra, Member; Joe Keith, Member; Lorenza Fraire, Member; Irene Chavez, Member; Thomas A. Eyeington, Assistant Superintendent for District Operations; Daniel Escobar, PR Specialist; Mr. Gonzalo Becerra, TSTA Organization Development Specialist; Adriana Aguirre, Staff Accountant; Gracie Tovar, Administrative Specialist II; Grace Rubio, District Operations Clerk

MEMBER ABSENT

Susan Hill, Member; Enedina Serna, Member; Rafael Hernando, III, Member; Robert Valles, Member; Mary Ann Devine, Member; Troy Hicks, Member

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Chairperson Herb De La Rosa.

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Herb De La Rosa welcomed everyone to the Citizens' Oversight Committee and had everyone introduce themselves.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. De La Rosa asked the members to review the minutes from March 30, 2009 Citizens' Oversight Committee. Mrs. Fraire mentioned that she had some questions regarding the minutes. On the Citizens' Oversight Committee Meeting held on September 29, 2008, she understood that the Committee agreed that the minutes would be compiled with questions that the Committee members asked and answers to the questions. She added that the minutes provided to the Committee for March 30, 2009, did not state that information. She mentioned that there were several questions that she asked that are not reflected on the minutes. She would like the questions and answers added to the minutes.

One of the questions that Mrs. Fraire asked was regarding Options High School and KEYS Academy, that the schools were put together being that it was not part of the bond. Ms. Benham and Mr. Eyeington mentioned that they did tell her Options and KEYS were part of the original bond. Her biggest concern is that the Committee is held accountable for expenditures and in order to publicly talk to people, that they can believe the Committee, and or, could go back to the minutes.

Ms. Blaine recommended that administration provide an addendum to the March 30, 2009 Citizens' Oversight Committee Minutes to add the questions and answers.

Mr. Eyeington added that at the Citizens' Oversight Committee held on September 29, 2008 there was some discussion where Mr. Baskind addressed minutes. Ms. Blaine mentioned that if official minutes do not usually have questions and answers, then it can be added as an addendum. If that is what the Committee wants and needs as a record of what is talked about.

Mr. De La Rosa mentioned that he feels that the Citizens' Oversight Committee needs to be public record as much as possible.

Ms. Fraire mentioned that the Committee decides and votes on issues. She would like to know who follows through to see they get done.

Ms. Blaine mentioned that she needed more clarification on what type of things. Ms. Fraire mentioned the Citizens' Oversight Committee minutes. Ms. Blaine mentioned that there needs to be more communication. She added that this is the reason why administration was present. There could be something that a committee member could ask for that would take an overwhelming amount of time on the part of administration. Administration might need to say we need to take this back to the Board for direction, because this Committee is appointed by the Board. Or maybe there is a question that this falls out of the Committee purview, as far as the responsibility of this Committee. So if there is per chance a disagreement, like if this is your responsibility or not, that could come back to the Board for question. She added that she intends to be present at the meetings. Ms. Fraire mentioned that she would like to make her question more precise. Whose responsibility was it to ensure that the minutes were written in the manner that the Committee had agreed upon? Ms. Blaine mentioned that she has not been to the meetings, so she is not quite sure whose responsibility it is to keep the minutes. Mr. Eyeington mentioned that it was District Operations responsibility to keep the minutes. Ms. Blaine added, if administration is keeping the minutes and it did not happen, then she would think that the chair of the committee and the liaison with administration get together and say we actually decided on this. Maybe it was not clear after Mr. Baskind gave his interpretation so maybe it was not clear of whether to do it or not to do it. Ms. Fraire mentioned that it was discussed by all members at the September 29th meeting. Eight members voted in favor. She added that they did not need the whole minutes typed out, but they did agree on specific questions and answers. For example, Ms. Fraire had concerns regarding Options High School and KEYS Academy being together. She recalled that Mr. Valdivia brought up a point, which is not mentioned in the minutes, but she feels it is crucial for the Committee so that they make sure that they are here for the kids and that they are adhering to what is being said and being done for the kids. She does not feel that this is helping in achieving the Committee's goals. She would like to have an answer to her question. Who is responsible to ensure that the needs of this Committee are going to be met? If it needs to be taken to the Board, she would like the Board to designate someone to make sure it gets done. Mr. Eyeington mentioned that it is ultimately his responsibility. Ms. Blaine responded that it would not have to go to the Board to designate somebody. Administration is responsible to respond, but there may be an instance where it is outside the responsibility of the Committee. This could have to come to the Board. Ms. Fraire mentioned that she would not go to that extreme. She mentioned that she is being precise on her question.

The reason she is asking is she is very concerned with KEYS and Options being together. Ms. Blaine mentioned that this is in the bond. She added that they were not going to keep on going back to this because the Committee's responsibility is to make sure the bond money is being spent the way the bond was decided, unless there is a modification made by the Board.

A motion was made by Ms. Fraire and seconded by Mr. De La Rosa to table the Citizens' Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes for March 30, 2009 until Administration adds the questions and answers. The motion carried with a 5 – 1 vote. Ms. East voted no and Mr. De La Rosa and Mr. Valdivia abstaining.

Mr. Valdivia asked to be able to clarify a point. He mentioned that on the situation that Ms. Fraire was talking about the alternative school, the attorney did answer the question. The attorney mentioned that they had already contacted the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and received a response, so the school district was clear. He added that the Committee should not have any more concerns over Options and KEYS. The attorney also mentioned that the way the minutes were done before were okay. This is the reason that he abstained. He added that amendments could be added if the information was needed.

CITIZENS' OVERSIGHT CHARTER

Mr. Thomas Eyeington, presented the Citizens' Oversight Committee Charter at the April 21, 2009 Regular Board Meeting. The Board approved the revised charter with recommendations by the Board on member's responsibilities and meeting calendar. A copy of the changes was presented to the Committee for their information.

A motion was made by Mr. De La Rosa to except the Citizens' Oversight Committee Charter as presented. The motion carried with a 6-1 vote. Ms. Fraire voted no and Mr. De La Rosa abstained.

UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THE 2004 BOND PROGRAM EASTLAKE HIGH SCHOOL

Project is 60% complete. Project is scheduled to be completed by the first of the year in January. School is scheduled to open in 2010.

OPTIONS HIGH SCHOOL

Options High School Phase I has been completed. Options High School Phase II with the KEYS Academy is under construction. Project is 20% complete.

PEBBLE HILLS 9TH GRADE CENTER – FUTURE HIGH SCHOOL

Project is 41% complete. Project is moving a little ahead of schedule. School is scheduled to be completed by March 2010. The district is also looking at the second phase, which is the fine arts and athletic facilities. Both facilities are under design.

Mr. De La Rosa asked if the second phase of this project was approved as part of the 2004 Bond Program. Mr. Eyeington mentioned that the 9th Grade Center was a combo school. The district did not really need a combo school.

The district needed to alleviate the growth within the El Dorado Feeder Pattern. The district then decided to build a 9th Grade Center. Ms. Kaiser mentioned that this was a recommendation that was brought to the Citizens' Oversight Committee. Mr. Eyeington agreed. At that time there was only a certain amount of money allotted for this project. After the September 29, 2008 Citizens' Oversight Committee, Mr. Eyeington presented to the Board a recommendation of reallocation of funds from the 2004 Bond Program. The recommendation consisted of four million going into the second phase of the 9th Grade Center – Future High School. This would add the gym and the fine arts. Four million would go into the KEYS Academy to complete that project, which was the original 2004 Bond Program. \$1.2 million would be set aside for land banking.

Ms. Fraire asked if KEYS Academy was originally part of the 2004 Bond Program, why was administration adding more money. Mr. Eyeington mentioned that there was no escalation cost built in the 2004 Bond Program for construction.

Mr. De La Rosa asked if the Board had already approved the four million dollars for Pebble Hills 9th Grade Center – Future High School. Mr. Eyeington mentioned that the reallocation of the remaining 2004 Bond funds were approved by the Board on the Special Board Meeting scheduled September 30, 2008.

FINANCIAL REPORT ON 2004 BOND PROJECTS

Mr. Mary Benham, Interim Superintendent, provided and explained the 2004 Bond Program financial summary to the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.