

LINCOLN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Directors- Work Session
Tuesday, May 2, 2017
Newport High School
Newport, Oregon

Minutes

PRESIDING: Ron Beck, Chairman

Present: Ron Beck, Chairman; Amanda Remund, Vice Chairman; Liz Martin, Karen Bondley, Kelley Ellis- Directors

Also Present: Tom Rinearson, Superintendent; Laurie Urquhart, Secretary

Call to Order- Establishment of a Quorum

Chairman Beck convened the meeting and called the session to order at 6:30 p.m. with a quorum of all five board members present.

Discussion on Superintendent Succession Plan

Chairman Beck noted he will be out the week of May 8-12, then back for a bit, and then out from May 20 to June 10. He said that Superintendent Rinearson would lead the conversation regarding a superintendent succession plan.

Mr. Rinearson said he wanted to talk with the board before developing a plan. "There are several options; tonight should be about talking together," he noted.

Chairman Beck said he would like to start with a timeline, but appreciated the luxury of a conversation. He asked Mr. Rinearson about his own options. "I really like my retirement, I will need to know why you'd like me to stay on, if you do. What do you want to accomplish as an organization next year?" asked Rinearson.

Mr. Beck said "You were our last superintendent, and were available..." Director Bondley said "You know us," to which the superintendent replied that he did, which could be both advantageous, or not. "I think Steve and I believe in the same things, but our management styles are 180 degrees different. I feel some urgency to get things laid out."

Director Martin expressed appreciation that Mr. Rinearson came on-board. "I think we are at a time when we really need your leadership style, both for the board and the community. It is my hope that you stay on until we hire someone. I would like to have you here for at least six months. I don't want to rush into anything."

Director Bondley said she would like Mr. Rinearson to stay on as the interim superintendent. Vice Chairman Remund commented “You know how the district is run. I see many positives in having you stay.”

Mr. Rinearson said he has some trips planned over the coming year. “Hiring season for superintendents is typically between January and March. Right now is not the time; the candidate pool would not be good.”

Chairman Beck asked if Rinearson thought it would be best to use the services of a search firm, or do it in-house. Mr. Rinearson replied that the last search, done by Greg McKenzie’s firm, was completed when Mr. McKenzie had a great many searches on his plate. “There are ways that a lot of the work can be done internally. You have plenty of time. Some of you have discussed the need for a Communications Coordinator. That person can help with the search. Firms will charge you to access their advertising structure,” he added. “I think there are ways to do it internally and use the effort as professional development for our folks.”

He said the timeline for a search is usually about two months from when it is advertised. Applications come in, a screening committee reduces the number to a manageable one, then confidential first interviews are held. The number of candidates is then reduced to between two and four, and the process becomes public. Typically the candidates visit and interact with the various communities in Lincoln County. He noted it is good to see how a candidate interacts with the community.

Chairman Beck said there could be a risk if community members have a different opinion of the best candidate that is different from the board’s. Director Martin said she heard many comments after the last search that the board did not gather enough community input. Mr. Rinearson said the community piece should include a statement that it is only one piece that will help inform the board; this will allow understanding if a different candidate is selected.

Mr. Beck said a committee of the board could be created, comprised of about 25 members. He said a budget reduction task force was created long ago to help identify possible budget cuts. Mr. Rinearson reminded the board that if the board appoints a committee, it is subject to all of the public meeting laws (public notice, minutes, etc.). He also said there would be much facilitation needed for a large group of people.

The Superintendent noted there are six directors in the district at present, “more than when I started 13 years ago.” He said his own thought process is that the workload should be examined to “see what we can take off of the table and what we are duplicating; what can we stop doing. Some work may go away, but this is a very busy time of year no matter what.”

He said two things need to occur the first part of the coming fiscal year, whether he is here or not: “The board needs to do a lot of work, especially considering there will be a new member. And second, I think a team should be formed to look at every department. Where are all of those groups? Where would they like to be in three years? This team would gather information about the needs the next superintendent will have to deal with.”

“I would have the team examine what needs to take place, get community input, list skills and talents the next superintendent will need, then present that to you. They could develop a list of interview questions the board could use. Then in December or January, you can decide if you want to look internally or do a full search. I think this will provide great professional development for people thinking of being a superintendent.”

He also urged the board to take the time needed to identify the right person. “If you don’t get the candidates you want, give yourself the freedom to have an interim for another year.”

Chairman Beck mentioned communication from the D.O. in the past, and said he felt like “I was getting what I wanted. But was I hearing it all? Or was I not challenging what I was told?” Mr. Rinearson said there is always a transition time in leadership, and a grieving process. He said most superintendent contracts are for 235 work days, which would accommodate the hours allowed by PERS.

Mr. Rinearson said he will not be at the October board meeting due to prior travel plans.

Director Martin said she would like to discuss an extension for Superintendent Rinearson. He suggested a new contract, beginning July 1st. Director Bondley concurred, and agreed that starting some in-house work is a good idea.

Chairman Beck asked the board for consensus to work with Mr. Rinearson on a new contract, which they reached. With Mr. Beck’s travel plans, he asked that Vice Chairman Remund work with Mr. Rinearson to develop a contract.

Mr. Rinearson suggested the board have a standing agenda item for the superintendent succession plan. Chairman Beck said he would appreciate knowing who Tom is considering to do the internal work; Mr. Rinearson said he would share that information after he talked to the employees he is considering.

Director Martin said that with a new board member, a board retreat is even more important.

Vice Chairman Remund asked about the hiring process, generally. Mr. Rinearson said the Superintendent makes recommendations to the board; the superintendent is ultimately responsible. He suggested this topic be added to a summer work session.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Chairman

Superintendent