

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONDUCTING CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS  
AND TAKING ACTION TO SELECT A TRUSTEE FOR THE ZONE #4 SEAT**

**POCATELLO/CHUBBUCK SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 25  
Education Service Center Board Room  
Tuesday, September 18, 2012**

**BOARD MEMBERS AND SUPERINTENDENT PRESENT:**

Janie Gebhardt, Chair  
John Sargent, Vice Chair  
Jackie Cranor, Clerk

Jim Facer, Assistant Treasurer  
Mary Vagner, Superintendent

**Convene Special Meeting for the Purpose of Conducting Candidate Interviews for the Trustee Seat in Zone #4**

Chair Gebhardt convened the Special Meeting at 4:01 p.m. She said the purpose of the Special Meeting was to conduct Candidate Interviews for the Trustee Seat in Zone #4 and to Take Action to select a Trustee for the Zone #4 Seat. She said the Board would take turns asking Candidates the interview questions and the Candidates would alternate answering the questions.

Mr. Sargent asked the candidates why they were interested in serving on the Board of Trustees and if the candidates were aware the appointment to the seat was for three years. Marianne Donnelly said she was aware of the three year commitment. She said she was interested in the position because public education was the number one issue for her. She said she had served on the Board and was aware of the expectations. She said she believed she could still make a contribution on the Board. Peter Vik said he was aware of the three year commitment. He said he had been interested in the opportunity for about a year when he heard about the Zone #3 seat opening. He said when the Zone #4 seat opened up it reawakened his interest and wanted to make sure the School District had the basics it needed to provide a quality education for children. He said he believed in the importance of preparing students for a college career and brought a University perspective to the Board. He said high school was not the end of a student's training but was the beginning of their professional life. Paul Vitale said he was aware of the three year commitment. He said he had worked for the School District in the past and had a long history of family and children attending schools in the District. He said he was interested in serving because he was concerned about the future of education and wanted to do everything he could to help. He said he hoped to help strengthen education in the state and make it possible for everyone to experience a good education. He said education was the road to success for all citizens.

Mr. Facer asked the candidates what experiences they had that helped them prepare for this position.

Mr. Vik said he was currently a professor at Idaho State University and had been for 16 years and was previously at the University of San Diego. He said as a professor he worked with a range of students including those in the honors program and students coming straight out of high school. He said he was very involved with the graduate program and had students at various levels of training. He said he was a clinical psychologist and had conducted studies in the area of adolescence which got him interested in the high school to college transition and how the change affected behavior. He said these experiences helped him realize the importance of preparing young people early and he joined the Bannock Youth Foundation to help young teens get the help and preparation they needed to be successful. Mr. Vitale said he was a retired social worker and had worked for the District in that capacity before retiring. He said he was a member of the Bureau of Indian Affairs for many years and was aware of the problems minority students faced at school with attendance. He said he had been on a variety of professional boards and felt these experiences had prepared him for this position. Ms. Donnelly said she first became involved with the School District in the 1960s. She said her first experience in campaigning was in support of the District's Supplemental Levy and she continued to be actively involved ever since. She said she served on the Board of Trustees for ten years and worked to try and improve state funding in that time. She said she had an understanding of District operations and knew what the expectations of the Board and Superintendent were and the roles of each and how to work as a partnership to achieve the best outcomes for students with the resources available.

Ms. Cranor asked the candidates what they saw as the strengths of the District and what challenges it faced.

Mr. Vitale said he viewed the District's teaching staff as its strength. He said the staff and administration of the schools were strong and child centered. He said the challenges were the funding issues and how the District would be able to maintain the level of service and commitment to children and staff and how to maintain morale in the

face of the current political horizon. Mr. Vik said the District's human resources are its strength. He said he knew many teachers and employees. He said the Board had a large commitment to deal with challenges and said he believed there were untapped resources in the community. He said the University was a big resource. He said the economic health of the community was on the upswing and tapping into all available resources to prepare students for post-graduate life was important. He said the lack of funding was a frightening challenge. He said charter schools and private schools were a drain on state resources and was a concern. He said he was very concerned with the Luna laws. He said he researched the implementation of technology on large scales into the classroom and there was not a good history. Ms. Donnelly said education is a human centered business. She said a major strength was the sense of teamwork and common purpose and direction that the administration and Board had worked hard to build over the last five or six years with the implementation of the Strategic Plan. She said it kept the District focused so when tough decisions had to be made there was strong guidance and values to help the District remain focused on those priorities. She said the challenge the District was facing was a lack of funding and the attempted substitution of technology for teachers which threatened education in the state.

Ms. Gebhardt asked the candidates what skills they brought to the Board and how they would contribute to the Board's ability to address the many challenges in difficult economic times.

Ms. Donnelly said one skill or quality she had acquired was a thick skin and the ability to analyze information and calmly work through tough issues in a non-partial way. Mr. Vitale said he was a skilled listener. He said he was able to listen sympathetically and passionately and to act on what he had heard. He said he had the ability to work with a variety of people. Mr. Vik said he was able to think critically and was able to understand an issue from multiple perspectives before making a decision.

Mr. Sargent said Board Members contributed many hours of service to meet the demands of Board work and asked the candidates if they were flexible and available to meet the needs of the District.

Mr. Vik said he might be the least flexible of the candidates but was able to make arrangement with the University if needed. He said he was more available in the afternoon as he taught classes in the morning. Ms. Donnelly said she was completely available and had no other major time obligations and knew how much time it took to meet the demands of Board work. Mr. Vitale said he was retired and had anticipated putting in many hours on the Board and was ready to do that.

Mr. Facer asked the candidates if they would consider or commit to running for election if appointed as the new Trustee.

Ms. Donnelly said she would serve the three year term but could not commit to running for another four year term that far down the road. Mr. Vik said he would consider running for election closer to the deadline if he felt he was making a positive contribution on the Board. Mr. Vitale said he would consider it but would also wait to commit to anything until he was sure he was a good fit for the Board.

Ms. Cranor asked the candidates if they had any questions for the Board.

Mr. Vik asked the Board Members if they would share a little more about themselves. Ms. Cranor said she represented zone #1 and was a retired school teacher. She said she was appointed to replace a Trustee that resigned and was only supposed to serve for one year, and then the laws changed and her term turned into four years. She said her desire to serve on the Board was based on her love of education. Mr. Sargent said he was born and raised in Pocatello and had four children who grew up and graduated from Pocatello schools and attended Idaho State University. He said the District did a good job educating his children. He said he worked for Electric Wholesale in town. He said fitting in Board work was a challenge for him but his work was very accommodating. He said all of the Board Members worked to try and cover for each other. He said he was asked to run when a vacancy opened up on the Board and his term also went from one year to four years. He said he most enjoyed visiting the schools. He said there had been some hard decisions to make over the last few years in order to maintain a balanced budget. He said overall his experience had been good and had learned a lot about what a Board can and cannot do. He said the Board did not have a lot of freedom but were able to work with a lot of really good people on the Board, administration and in the community. Mr. Facer said he had been on the Board for about six months. He said he also grew up in this community and all of his family had gone through District schools as well. He said he was recently retired as an electrician and someone suggested he run for the vacant seat. He said it was already a great experience working with these Board Members. He said he enjoyed learning about the School District and knew there was still a lot more to learn. He said Board work definitely kept you busy but was a fulfilling experience. Ms. Gebhardt said she returned to Pocatello 12 years ago to become a Pastor. She said she was concerned about what was going on with education and how children were assessed and how schools would know if a student was at risk. She said she felt strongly about the need to ask those questions and

ran for a Board seat. She said it was a delight to work with the Board, Superintendent Vagner and the staff that were very devoted and talented individuals. She said she saw how hard teachers worked every day and how much they care about children. She said being on the Board was a commitment to making sure children had everything they needed.

Mr. Sargent asked the candidates what changes they would implement to benefit children with flat or declining funding.

Mr. Vitale said he would recommend looking at every program offered and prioritizing the most essential programs with academic programs being first. He said programs that prepared young people for the future should be maintained at the highest level. He said he would look at eliminating extra-curricular activities first or offering them in a different way. He said he realized the importance of extra-curricular programs and that they helped many students stay interested in school but he believed they would have to be looked at first before cutting the essential academic programs. Mr. Vik said he agreed with Mr. Vitale in terms of prioritizing for success and thought the Board should sit down and ask the really hard question of what children really need to succeed. He said for some the priority might be vocational, university or work force but sitting down and determining those difficult priorities and eliminating the items on the bottom of the list would be a critical approach. Ms. Donnelly said she had experienced all of the nasty decisions that had to be made over the last few years and noted that people tend to point to athletics first which the Board had considered a few times but overall had determined that the amount of savings was not worth the damage that would be caused by eliminating those programs. She said another option the Board may have to consider was increasing class sizes which was not ideal but maintaining balanced opportunities for children was also important. She said there were also foundations that could provide some help but knew the future would not be easy.

Ms. Cranor asked the candidates if they considered themselves team players and how each would react if they had a strong opinion about something and did not get the outcome desired.

Ms. Donnelly said she understood that part of the Board very well. She said whatever the decision ended up being she felt she could go along with the final decision. Mr. Vik said he worked at ISU and was familiar with not getting his way. He said overall everyone had the same ultimate goal. Mr. Vitale said he had worked as a team member and knew it was a give and take and he could accept the majority rule and come to consensus.

**Take Action to Select a Trustee for the Zone #4 Seat**

A motion was made by Mr. Sargent and seconded by Mr. Facer that based on the assessment of the Board, Paul Vitale would be selected as the Trustee for the Zone #4 Seat. The voting was unanimous in the affirmative.

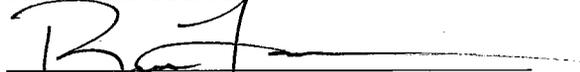
**Adjourn**

A motion was made by Ms. Cranor and seconded by Mr. Sargent to adjourn the Special Meeting. The voting was unanimous in the affirmative. The Board adjourned its Special Meeting at 4:51 p.m.

**APPROVED ON:**

OCTOBER 16, 2012

**MINUTES PREPARED BY:**

  
Secretary, Board of Trustees

**BY:**

  
Chair

**ATTESTED BY:**

  
Clerk