

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING/WORK SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING
OUTSTANDING FOOD SERVICE ACCOUNT BALANCES; CELL TOWER LAND LEASE PROPOSAL; AND
RESOLUTION TO ALLOW PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS TO CARRY GUNS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY AT ISU**

**POCATELLO/CHUBBUCK SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 25
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Board Room at the Education Service Center
Tuesday, July 15, 2014
4:30 p.m.**

BOARD MEMBERS/SUPERINTENDENT PRESENT:

Janie Gebhardt, Chair
Jackie Cranor, Vice Chair
Paul Vitale, Clerk

Jim Facer, Assistant Treasurer (Excused)
Dave Mattson, Member
Mary M. Vagner, Superintendent

OTHERS PRESENT:

Bart Reed, Director of Business Operations
Rocky Schutjer, Site Acquisition Coordinator, Rage Development LLC
Steve Chatterton, Director of Public Safety, Idaho State University
David Alexander, Office of General Counsel, Idaho State University
Rena Johnson, Board Secretary

Welcome, Call to Order and Statement of Purpose

Chair Gebhardt welcomed everyone and called the Special Meeting/Work Session to order at 4:31 p.m. She said the purpose of the Special Meeting/Work Session was to discuss the outstanding food service account balances, the cell tower land lease proposal and to consider a Resolution to allow ISU Public Safety Officers to carry guns on school property at ISU.

Cell Tower Land Lease Proposal – Mr. Reed

Mr. Reed said included in the packet was a proposal from Rage Development to lease land from the District at Chubbuck Elementary for the placement of a monopole site. He said an email detailing the process and the vendor's experience was included in the addendum. He said he and Mr. Schutjer looked at three different locations for a monopole site and found a suitable location away from the residential area. He said the location was shown on the map that was included in the packet. Mr. Schutjer said he was representing T-Mobile. He reviewed the steps that needed to be taken if the Board decided to move forward with the process. He said T-Mobile had received many requests for better cell service in the Chubbuck area and usually looked at using existing cell towers but were unable to find any existing towers in a suitable location. He said the existing cell towers were too far from the area that was experiencing bad reception, or were too close to other T-Mobile towers. He said one of the biggest challenges in the process was going through the local Planning & Zoning Commission. He said school properties typically had large acreage and worked very well for a monopole site. He said if the Board was interested in moving forward T-Mobile was proposing to rent the property for \$1,500 per month. He said cell phone service providers were discovering that as cities matured the residential areas had the weakest coverage and partnering with local school districts offered a reasonable solution without impacting residents. Mr. Reed said the District would not be selling or deeding the property, but would be leasing the land for a monthly fee. He said the area identified at the school was 18' x 20'. Ms. Cranor asked if it was at the back of the playground. Mr. Reed said yes. He said he and Mr. Schutjer looked west and north of the school but there was an irrigation canal that ran too close. He said the location at the back of the playground would be less intrusive to the residents. Ms. Gebhardt asked if the monopole would make any noise that might interfere with the classroom. Mr. Schutjer said the 80 foot monopole did not make any noise and the cabinet placed next to it which housed antennas and the generator did make some noise but was minimal and would not interfere with the classrooms. He said the generator was for backup only. He said the generator would run and cycle once or twice a month for about 30 minutes and would not be a constant disruption. Ms. Gebhardt asked if the cell tower signal would interfere with internet service within the school. Mr. Schutjer said it would not. He said all wireless carriers operated on federally licensed frequencies and the District's wireless range operated on a completely different

frequency. Ms. Cranor said her only concern was how the neighborhood residents felt about it and asked whether or not Rage Development met with residents. Mr. Schutjer said part of the planning process included requesting permission from the City which would hold public meetings and solicit input from residents prior to granting permission. He said he would provide the proposal to the City and residents within a certain perimeter of the site. He said he believed the notice would be provided to any resident within 300 feet of the school property that housed the monopole site. Ms. Vagner said Mr. Reed could work with the administration at Chubbuck Elementary to set up a presentation to the Chubbuck PTA in September after staff returned. Mr. Reed said the practice was becoming more prevalent and did not believe the proposed site would impact the school in any way and would meet the needs of T-Mobile and residential customers. Ms. Cranor agreed it was probably the best location in that area. Mr. Reed said even if the Board approved moving forward it still had to be approved by the City of Chubbuck. Ms. Vagner said if the Board agreed to move forward, following approval by the City of Chubbuck, the administration would come back to the Board for final approval of the Lease Agreement at a future Board Meeting. Mr. Reed said the District already had a cell phone tower on school property at Pocatello High School which had been there for the last ten years. Mr. Schutjer said the Lease Agreement was an option agreement which meant that if things did not work out for either of the parties, the Agreement could be terminated at any time. Mr. Reed said the Board would be asked to accept or reject moving forward with the proposal during the Regular Board Meeting under Old Business.

Resolution to Allow ISU Public Safety Officers to Carry Guns on School Property at ISU – Ms. Vagner

Ms. Vagner said included in the packet was a proposed Resolution to Allow ISU Public Safety Officers to Carry Guns on School Property in Albion Hall at ISU. She said last month Mr. Chatterton and Mr. Alexander spoke to the challenges of campus safety at the last Board Meeting and ISU had since authorized their public safety officers to carry guns on campus. She said the administration had continued to work with Mr. Chatterton regarding increased safety precautions in Albion Hall. She said the Board had the authority to allow certain individuals other than peace officers to carry weapons on public school property. She said the Resolution acknowledged the fact that public safety officers were not peace officers, spoke to ISU's Campus Cubs program and spoke to the Board's responsibility to maintain safety and acknowledged the changing times. She said the administration recommended the Board allow ISU's public safety officers to carry guns on campus effective immediately following adoption of the Resolution. She said the District did not currently have a Lease Agreement with ISU for the programs that were housed on ISU's campus. She said an Agreement would be developed and would include a hold harmless provision relative to guns on campus. She said the administration would work with ISU to expand the Campus Cubs program to include the District's programs. Mr. Alexander said he read the Resolution and it contained everything ISU needed to move forward. He said ISU's main concern was to allow their officers to go anywhere on campus without having to worry about breaking state and federal laws. He said the Resolution prevented a situation where ISU's public safety officers could be arrested by an SRO. He said if the Board adopted the Resolution it would be shared with the City of Pocatello, the Prosecutor's Office and the Pocatello Police Department so everyone would be aware of what ISU's public safety officers were allowed to do. Mr. Chatterton said the Campus Cubs program was very interactive and would be a good program to expand to include the District. Ms. Vagner said she would be interested in including the District's 18 – 21 year old program because it would provide real life experience for those students. Mr. Chatterton said ISU's Crime Prevention program collaborated with Campus Housing and Neighborhood Watch to conduct training and discuss current trends in crime prevention and reached out to young adults and families and the District's 18-21 year program could be included in that process. Ms. Vagner said the Lease Agreement between the District and ISU would be brought to the Board in August. She said she believed keeping those programs at ISU was a good decision and the District was grateful to have the location available. Mr. Alexander said guns were still prohibited in the locations where the District's programs were housed with the exception of ISU's public safety officers. Ms. Vagner said the Board would be asked to consider adopting the Resolution during the Regular Board Meeting under Old Business.

Options Regarding Outstanding Food Service Account Balances

Mr. Reed said included in the packet was a memorandum listing options for addressing the issue of outstanding food service account balances. He said the Board and administration had discussed the District's charging policy on numerous occasions. He said in the past the District used to use a paper ticket system for school lunch but since then had gone completely electronic and was a better system for accountability. He reviewed the guidelines from the USDA that were sent for School District consideration for 2015-16. He said the direction from the USDA was that if the food service department wanted to allow charging the debt had to be carried by the District's General Fund. He said when the administration came to the Board at the beginning of the 2013-14

school year to discuss the charging policy the balance was at \$5,000. He said the Board authorized a charging balance of up to \$15,000. He said the current practice was to not refuse a meal for elementary students but only for high school students with a negative balance of \$10. He said the administration believed that high school students were responsible enough to know what their school lunch balance was and whether or not they were over the charging limit. He said with the current practice in place the outstanding account balances had grown to over \$17,000 which exceeded the \$15,000 limit set by the Board. He said the USDA guidelines suggested District's utilize a robust notification program which it had done including sending emails, making phone calls to parents, text message alerts and mailing letters home. He said the food service staff used to give student flyers to take home to their parents but were no longer able to do that due to "overt identification" rules. He said the question now was where to go from here. He said the first option was to continue with the current process, the second was to enforce the \$10 limit for both high school and elementary students and the third was to implement a no charging policy. He said most parents kept their student's accounts funded and only needed occasional reminders. Ms. Cranor said it was something of a coincidence that the amount of outstanding account balances was almost the same amount that the District would get from T-Mobile if it moved forward with leasing the property at Chubbuck Elementary. She said she wondered if the District could use the rent to offset the outstanding balances. She said she was still concerned about the growing amount of the debt and thought the District should implement some kind of cap at each school. Mr. Reed said the amount of debt could easily grow to over \$30,000 if the current practice was allowed to continue. He said the outstanding fees prevented students from receiving a diploma. Ms. Cranor asked if the District could pay off the outstanding balances using the rent money from T-Mobile and then implement a cap at each school which would be responsible for any further balances. Ms. Vagner said if the Board moved forward with the proposal from T-Mobile it could consider using the rent to wipe the food service debt clean and then move forward with a \$10 limit. She said it placed responsibility back on families without putting anyone too far behind. She said on the other hand the District would be enabling families to not meet their responsibilities and covering their debt with tax payer dollars. Ms. Gebhardt said she understood but did not want to see kids go hungry. She said one of the suggestions from the USDA was to push families to fill out the paperwork for free and reduced meals and she heard it was happening but was hard to know how often. She said the federal Community Eligibility Provision did not address the secondary schools. She said she wanted families to be accountable but the District had high poverty in its community and wondered how the District would make sure that students were not suffering. Mr. Reed said the District's free and reduced percentage was around 52%. He said two or three years ago the District had allowed charging with no limits and reached \$30,000 of outstanding balances very quickly which created the need to set the \$10 charging limit. He said the District had begun refusing meals at that time in an effort to keep the debt under control. He said he believed the debt was far more manageable with a cap. He said students that were on a reduced meal plan could eat for three weeks before reaching the \$10 limit. He said the food service department was flexible in working with families and understood that every situation was unique. He said the food service department did a great job contacting families that qualified for free or reduced lunch and encouraged them to apply. He said the free and reduced program was also facilitated by direct certification which meant that if a family qualified for other federal services like food stamps they automatically qualified for free lunch at school and the family was not required to fill out an application. He said the District recently learned of the Community Eligibility Provision which began July, 2014 and allowed Districts to provide free meals for school "communities" that had an average direct certification rate of 40% or greater. He said a community could be any group of schools as long as they met the 40% requirement. He said the administration found that the District could combine all of the elementary schools as a "community" and would meet the direct certification requirement with a percentage of 41%. He said that meant that every elementary student in the District would qualify for free lunch. He said once the District applied the provision was good for four years at which time the District would have to reevaluate its direct certification rates. He said the secondary schools would not be able to be included because the direct certification rate would drop well below 40%. He said the District might be able to add one of the middle schools and one of the high schools and still meet the 40% requirement. He said the timeline for application for the 2014-15 school year had too short of a turnaround time for the District to apply this year, so if the District was to consider implementing the Community Eligibility Provision it would have to be for the 2015-16 school year. Ms. Vagner said this was a community value discussion relative to entitlement and the administration would bring the discussion to the Board in the fall for public discussion. She said the administration brought the topic to the attention of the Board at this time because it was relevant to the current discussion surrounding outstanding food service account balances and the impact to the General Fund. Ms. Gebhardt asked if migrant, homeless and runaway students were included on the direct certification list. Ms. Vagner said they were. Ms. Cranor said she just wanted to make sure that children weren't going hungry because the debt was not their fault. She said maybe if a student was refused lunch the school could

send a Community Resource Worker to visit the family. Ms. Vagner said the schools and the food service department were diligent about working with CRWs to assist families in applying for free and reduced lunch or for creating a payment plan for the family. Mr. Vitale said there were many resources available to families in the community and capping the charging amount was not unreasonable. Mr. Reed said the food service administration recommended implementing a \$10 charging limit for all students and he agreed. He said food service workers were very compassionate and worked very hard to make sure families were notified of free and reduced opportunities and payment plans. He said most of the complaints the District received were regarding too many notifications. He said families received several notifications before ever hitting the \$10 limit. Ms. Cranor said if the District set a cap on charging she would like to make sure it was enough to cover at least one week of full priced meals. She said she agreed there was an entitlement issue. Ms. Gebhardt said on one hand there was irresponsibility and on the other there was a genuine lack of resources. Ms. Vagner said she had hoped that the debt would be closer to \$8,000 around this time but unfortunately due to the excessive debt the administration was forced to have this conversation. Mr. Reed said it was always easier to have a practice in place at the start of the school year so that expectations were clear and communicated in a timely manner rather than changing practice mid-year. Mr. Mattson asked why the Board should consider forgiving the debt. He said he believed the District should carry the debt over to the following year and implement the \$10 cap. Mr. Reed said the Board would be asked to consider any action regarding outstanding food service account balances during the Regular Board Meeting under Old Business.

Adjourn

Chair Gebhardt adjourned the Special Meeting/Work Session at 5:27 p.m.

APPROVED ON:

19 August 2014

BY:

Janie Gebhardt
Chair

MINUTES PREPARED BY:

[Signature]
Secretary, Board of Trustees

ATTESTED BY:

[Signature]
Clerk