

**MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 13, 2014  
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

November 13, 2014

**1. Opening Items**

**1.01 CALL TO ORDER**

The special meeting of the Board of Trustees was called to order at 11:01 a.m. at the Washoe County School District's Central Administration Building, 425 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada.

**1.02 ROLL CALL**

President Barbara Clark and Board Members Estela Gutierrez, John Mayer, Barbara McLaury, Howard Rosenberg, and Lisa Ruggerio were present. Interim Superintendent Traci Davis, Student Advisory Board Representative Logan Carlson and staff were also present.

**1.03 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Logan Carlson led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**1.04 ACTION TO ADOPT THE AGENDA**

It was moved by Trustee Rosenberg and seconded by Trustee Gutierrez that **the Board of Trustees approves the agenda as presented.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: Pass (Yea: Barbara Clark, Estela Gutierrez, John Mayer, Barbara McLaury, Howard Rosenberg and Lisa Ruggerio.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries

**1.05 PUBLIC COMMENT**

Kimberly Thomas expressed support for Dr. Angela Taylor to be selected for an interview by the Board of Trustees for the vacant District E seat. She had moved to the area about a year and a half ago after her husband accepted a coaching position at the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). Her son was a senior at McQueen High School and Dr. Taylor had provided a lot of support to her family since moving to the area. She had seen Dr. Taylor volunteer and work in the community with a number of organizations. While Dr. Taylor did not have children in the District, she worked tirelessly for the children in the community. Dr. Taylor was always willing to attend sporting events and celebrate even small successes and goals of the children she knew.

Dr. Taylor always provided sound advice to the children, whether academic or social advice. Dr. Taylor was also willing to purchase the fundraising cards students were selling, even if she did not need them. Dr. Taylor's reputation on the UNR campus was stellar and she was often described as a woman of integrity who worked hard at whatever the task was. She was reliable, trustworthy, balanced, and bright. She was also an excellent listener and able to get along with people from different backgrounds and age groups. She was flexible while at the same time willing to stand on principles. Ms. Thomas had seen students rush to Dr. Taylor to tell them of accomplishments because they considered her a mentor or because they valued her opinion. Dr. Taylor had been an excellent villager to the youth in the community, always willing to assist them. The students and families of District E would benefit greatly from having Dr. Taylor as their representative.

Janett Weber thanked the Board for their service to the District. She was also present to provide support for Dr. Angela Taylor. She believed that Dr. Taylor was the best candidate for the job. She had 3 college-aged children who were products of the Washoe County schools. She and her husband volunteered regularly at the schools and understood the concerns of both the teachers and the parents. The District was currently at a cross-roads and Dr. Taylor would be the best person to help with the changes that needed to be made. Dr. Taylor's personal story, being the daughter of a single mother on welfare, gave her a unique perspective on the challenges faced by many students in the District. Dr. Taylor was a shining example of the power of education to transform lives. Dr. Taylor had over 20 years' experience in education and a presence in the community. She was very positive and task orientation. She was also well liked in the community and knew how to navigate difficult situations with tact and grace. Dr. Taylor would be an asset to the Board and would work tirelessly to move forward in a positive and professional manner.

Reverend Glenn Taylor, Sr. thanked the Board and Interim Superintendent Traci Davis for allowing him to speak. He provided support for Dr. Angela Taylor. He agreed with the comments by the previous speakers. He had known Dr. Taylor since she moved to Reno and played basketball at Hug High School to her career as a coach at UNR. She had also been his administrative assistant at his church. The impact Dr. Taylor had made in the community was immense. She would make a wonderful addition to the Board.

Chuck Johnson mentioned that on November 4, 2014, in the only contested election of a member of the Board who had been involved in the "Pedro Martinez debacle," the public spoke loud and clear. A relatively unknown political newcomer defeated the sitting Board of Trustees President by a nearly 2 to 1 margin. The public had expressed their displeasure in not only the Board's President and their lack of trust in all Trustees who created the highly controversial situation. The actions of the Board would not be forgotten in the future as some members were probably hoping for. At the current

meeting, the Board intended to filter down the applicants of those who wished to fill the seat of Mr. David Aiazzi. The finalists were to be interviewed and a replacement selected at a meeting scheduled for November 18, 2014. The newly elected Trustees would not be seated until January 2015. In view of the strong message sent to the Board on November 4, 2014, he wondered if it was fair to the District, students, and new Trustees, to have the current Board select a new member. He believed the current Board should delay the selection of a new Trustee until the new members could be sworn in. Delaying the decision until the new Trustees were sworn in was the right thing to do for the District and would be a step in the right direction to help restore public confidence in the Board of Trustees as a whole. The Board had the power to reschedule a decision date and he had not found any statute that mandated a specific timeline for the selection of a replacement. District E would not go unrepresented because there was an at-large Trustee that also represented the area. He urged the Board to do the right thing and reschedule the timeline for the selection of a replacement.

Joe Crowley provided his support for Dr. Angela Taylor. He had known Dr. Taylor since she was a student at Hug High School. Dr. Taylor had a sterling record in all fields she had been involved in and had shown leadership capabilities since she was president of the student body at Hug High School. As a basketball player at UNR, because of her leadership and academic success, Dr. Taylor was offered a part-time position in the sports information office. Once she graduated, she was offered a full-time position and worked her way up to Senior Associate Athletic Director. She continued to move forward at UNR before going into private industry by starting her own company with a colleague. Dr. Taylor was able to work well with other elected officials as evidenced by being able to secure funding for additional women's athletic programs from the Nevada Legislature. Dr. Taylor was a winner no matter how one defined a winner.

Nathan DuPree offered his support for Dr. Angela Taylor. He had met Dr. Taylor shortly after moving to the area to attend UNR. She was passionate about helping children and always wanting to do the right thing for them. She wanted to make sure children were on the right path to be able to succeed in life. Dr. Taylor would hold events for children to help them and make sure they had the tools necessary in life. He was always impressed with her willingness to provide advice and opportunities. Dr. Taylor's interests were about the students and making sure they would succeed.

Carol Hines provided support for her son, Brady Hines. She was a former teacher and had worked with members of the Board. Her son was unable to attend the meeting because he was training Special Forces candidates in North Carolina. Brady was not someone who normally put himself out in public; in fact, she had not known he received 2 Bronze Stars until she read it in the paper. He was a product of the Washoe County School District, graduating from McQueen High School. After attending college for a while, he decided that he would join the Army, like his father and grandfather.

Brady had met with leaders of countries around the world and negotiated with them. He had been deployed everywhere, except Iraq, and knew how to negotiate and deal and reach a resolution that was beneficial to everyone. His impacts had been felt around the world and he would make a difference for the Washoe County School District. He was passionate and dedicated and would work toward enhancing the education of the students with a respect for everyone. She encouraged the Board to look closely at what he would be able to bring to the group.

Sandra Rentas provided support for Dr. Angela Taylor. She moved to Reno in 2002 to pursue a Master's degree and met Dr. Taylor at UNR. Dr. Taylor was always willing to take risks and try something new. Dr. Taylor had developed a program with UNR and the District to encourage minority students to attend college by having them experience what college was like. She also had community leaders open their homes to underprivileged students so they would be able to talk to the students about education over a meal. Dr. Taylor had always shown integrity, values, and a passion for people, especially students. She was an example and mentor for all students.

Araceli Martinez provided support for Dr. Angela Taylor. She had worked at UNR for 10 years at the Center for Student Cultural Diversity, which provided programs and services for all students to be successful academically and personally. Dr. Taylor had been an advocate and supporter of the Center as the Associate Vice President and continued to provide support after leaving UNR. Dr. Taylor wanted to ensure all students had equal access to education and had worked to implement programs to encourage students to look at college as an option, no matter their background. Dr. Taylor was a role model to colleagues and students alike.

## **2. Items for Presentation, Discussion, Information and/or Action**

### **2.01 REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF THE APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE REPLACEMENT FOR TRUSTEE DAVE AIAZZI, BOARD OF TRUSTEES, DISTRICT E; AND, SELECTION OF CANDIDATES TO BE INTERVIEWED AT THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES ON NOVEMBER 18, 2014**

Randy Drake, Chief General Counsel, explained that Trustee David Aiazzi announced his intent to resign as a member of the Board of Trustees on August 7, 2014. Trustee Aiazzi later informed the Board that his final day would be November 4, 2014. On October 14, 2014, the Board began the discussion on the process to fill the vacancy in preparation for Trustee Aiazzi's final day. The process would be conducted in accordance with Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 386.240, which dictated the requirements for the candidates and posting of the vacancy. The Board directed applications be accepted between October 17 and October 27, 2014. He reviewed the application process and documents that were to be included. The District received 17

applications by the October 27, 2014, deadline and the applications were delivered to the Trustees and posted on the District's website on October 28, 2014. At the October 28, 2014, Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees, the Board decided to conduct 2 meetings, one to review the applications and the second to interview the candidates and select the replacement. The current meeting was set to review the applications and select the finalists to be interviewed at the November 18, 2014, Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees.

President Clark indicated the Trustees were to come to the meeting with their individual top 5 candidates identified. Mr. Drake mentioned that staff had developed ranking sheets that the Board could use to determine who they would be interested in interviewing and staff would compile the results. The ranking sheets were a list of all applicants that an individual Trustee would be able to rank or check as someone they would like to interview. The Board would then determine the number of candidates they would be interested in interviewing. A discussion was held on the number of candidates that should be ranked by each Trustee. It was determined that the Trustees would begin the process by checking as many candidates as they wanted to begin to narrow the number of candidates.

The ranking sheets were handed out to the Trustees, and then collected by staff for tabulation.

President Clark opened the meeting to public comment and indicated that if any Trustee changed their opinion because of public comment, the Board would destroy the current ranking sheets and re-vote.

Charyce Bailey expressed her support for Dr. Angela Taylor. Dr. Taylor had a passion for helping and working with children. Dr. Taylor had helped raise funds for students to tour historically black colleges and had always been willing to make time to help any student.

Ondra Berry thanked the Board for all their work because he knew it was difficult to be a public official. He provided support for Dr. Angela Taylor. He believed Dr. Taylor would add the most value to the Board because she would be able to fill the gaps in experience and knowledge he felt were currently missing. Dr. Taylor was a great leader in the community and had a variety of experience that would add value to the Board. She was a role model for many and would be able to help make sure additional students were able to graduate. Dr. Taylor would bring a philosophy of "service above self" to her work if chosen as a member of the Board. She also had a passion for education and a love for the community.

Carlos Ledone thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak on behalf of himself. He reminded the Board that they were a representative body and that they should look to

the community that was represented in District E when considering who they were interested in interviewing. He recommended the parents, teachers, and community members from District E be consulted and that the Board consider those candidates who had been involved with the District before the vacancy announcement was made. He wanted to make sure any candidate would represent the entire community and not just certain areas in District E. He wanted to make sure the Board worked with the various communities within the District to ensure all students succeeded. He was a first generation college student so he knew what was required of teachers and others to inspire students to attend college. He would love to be part of the Board of Trustees because they were a group passionate about children's success.

Darcie Smith thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak on behalf of herself. She was interested in being a part of the Board of Trustees because she was a former teacher in the District. She would be able to bring the perspective of a teacher who worked with children who were struggling to the Board. She was impressed with all the qualifications of the other applicants for the vacancy; however, she felt the addition of an elementary school teacher was needed. She would add reasonable comments to the decision-making process.

Bishop Luthor DuPree provided his support for Dr. Angela Taylor. He had watched Dr. Taylor grow-up in the community and seen her be a role model for many children, including his own. Dr. Taylor would bring a new mindset and focus to the Board of Trustees. He would echo all of the other comments made by others who had spoken before him regarding Dr. Taylor.

Trustee Mayer requested the previous ballots be destroyed and a new ballot be filled out by the Trustees. The other members of the Board agreed. The ranking sheets were destroyed and the Board filled out new sheets which were then collected by staff and tabulated with a member of the media acting as a witness to the process.

*President Clark recessed the meeting for 12 minutes while the votes were tabulated.*

Mr. Drake stated that the tally of the ranking sheets had been performed twice to assure the numbers were correct. The results were as follows:

- 2 candidates with 6 votes
- 1 candidate with 5 votes
- 2 candidates with 4 votes
- 2 candidates with 3 votes
- 1 candidate with 2 votes
- 4 candidates with 1 vote

He mentioned that it would be up to the Board to determine the number of candidates they would want to interview. A discussion was held on the number of candidates to interview and decided the number should be 5 since there were 5 candidates with the

most number of votes. Trustee Gutierrez indicated that previous discussions concerning the number of candidates to interview would be 5, so it seemed there was agreement on the number.

It was moved by Trustee Rosenberg and seconded by Trustee Mayer that **the Board of Trustees will interview no more than 5 candidates for the vacancy for District E.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: Pass (Yea: Barbara Clark, Estela Gutierrez, John Mayer, Barbara McLaury, Howard Rosenberg, and Lisa Ruggerio).

Mr. Drake announced the 5 candidates that would be interviewed at the November 18, 2014, Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees in alphabetical order: Carlos Ledone, Diane Nicolette, Darcie Smith, Jean Stoess, and Angela Taylor.

President Clark thanked all the applicants for their interest in the position and the time and effort they took to submit the application materials. She was encouraged that there were so many who were interested in putting their names forward to become part of the process. She moved the conversation to the process the Board would use to conduct the interviews.

Trustee Gutierrez wondered if the interview questions would be provided to the candidates ahead of time and how the process would work in an open meeting. Additionally, the Board would need to determine the number of questions to be asked and how long each candidate would be allotted for the interview.

Trustee Ruggerio mentioned that she had requested the Office of the General Counsel contact the Clark County School District because they had recently gone through the process. Mr. Drake explained that the last time Clark County went through the process, they interviewed 4 finalists. The candidates were asked to voluntarily leave the room to allow the individual interviews to proceed. Each candidate was allotted 3 minutes to provide an opening statement and then provided questions the Trustees would ask. Because the meeting was open, no one could be excluded from the meeting, but the Board could request the candidates leave the room.

Trustee Mayer proposed the candidates be provided the questions before the meeting and that each Trustee would be allowed to submit one question for the process. He liked the idea of allowing the candidates 3 minutes to introduce themselves.

Trustee McLaury felt the questions should not be provided ahead of time. It would allow the candidates to "speak from the heart" and allow the Board to determine the candidates current knowledge regarding the questions. In the past, a copy of the questions was left on the table for the candidates to review because they would get nervous and could easily forget to answer part of a question. She wanted to be able to

see the "real" person and how they would respond to questions they could not prepare for.

Trustee Ruggerio agreed with the process outlined by Trustee McLaury. It was a fair process because part of the job of a Trustee was being able to answer questions when they were posed. It would also be a similar process that candidate forums used during elections.

Trustee Mayer noted that since the Board had the written responses to questions from the application, the Trustees would be able to see how the candidates were able to answer questions on the "spur of the moment."

Trustee Gutierrez indicated that 5-6 questions from the Trustees might be too many. She wondered if 4 in-depth questions would be better. She added that she had read that in similar situations, the texting of the questions to the other candidates had occurred so they would need to consider that as well.

Trustee Rosenberg felt that it would be better to come to the meeting prepared to ask as many questions as possible because some candidates would answer the questions faster than others.

President Clark also believed that the questions should not be provided to the candidates ahead of time. She recommended that each Trustee submit a question to Legal so they could be reviewed. The Trustees would have the option to ask follow-up questions during the process if a candidate mentioned something that sparked further inquiry. She also felt the questions should be available to the candidates at the table to review if necessary. It was a process similar to what the Board had done when interviewing for the superintendent position.

Trustee McLaury mentioned that about 30 minutes should be provided for each candidate. The time would allow the candidates an opportunity to provide an opening statement and closing remark, which would also allow them to become more comfortable during the process.

Trustee Ruggerio clarified that the process would be to have each Trustee and the Student Representative submit a question to Legal that would be reviewed to ensure there was no duplication; the candidates would be allowed time for a brief introduction and closing comment; the interview would last approximately 30 minutes; and the Board would ask all candidates to leave the room voluntarily and that in good-faith they would not exchange texts or messages with members of the public who may be watching the other interviews.

President Clark added that the Board should allow approximately 15 minutes in between interviews for the room to be reset and another candidate time to re-enter the Board Room.

Mr. Drake summarized the process for the Board based on the discussion: each Trustee and the Student Representative would submit a question to the Office of the General Counsel by Monday, November 17, 2014, by 10:00 a.m. He would review the questions with President Clark for redundancy and clarity and if there was an issue, he would contact the Trustee for clarification or another question. The questions would then be prepared in a written format so the candidates would have the questions in front of them for the interview for reference. A conference room would be prepared for the candidates and the Board would request the candidates voluntarily gather in the conference room and not participate in the meeting prior to their interview. Each candidate would be allowed time for introductory and closing remarks, with the anticipation each interview would last approximately 30 minutes. The Trustees would break for 10-15 minutes in preparation for the next interview.

President Clark asked how the interview order would be chosen. It was determined the names of all the candidates would be placed in a container and drawn by random order.

Trustee Mayer wondered when the person would be sworn in. Mr. Drake stated that the person could be sworn in after the vote, but generally a more formal process was completed at the next Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees.

President Clark added that if the person were sworn in at the December 9, 2014, Regular Meeting, they would have the opportunity to invite their family and others to attend.

Trustee Ruggiero wondered what the process would be after the interviews. Mr. Drake mentioned that the selection should be similar to the process the Board used for the election of officers where someone would be nominated and a roll call vote taken. Discussion would be able to occur before a motion was made or before a vote taken.

It was moved by Trustee Gutierrez and seconded by Trustee Rosenberg that **the Board of Trustees approves the process for candidate interviews as follows: each Trustee and the Student Advisory Board Representative will submit one (1) question to the Office of the General Counsel no later than 10:00 a.m. on Monday, November 17, 2014; President Clark and the Office of the General Counsel will review the questions for redundancy and work with the individual Trustees if there is a concern or problem with a question; the questions will be prepared and provided to the Trustees at the November 18, 2014, Regular Meeting; the candidates to be interviewed will be asked to recuse themselves from the meeting as the questions will not be provided to**

**the candidates in advance, though the questions will be available during the interviews as a reference; each candidate will be allotted three (3) minutes for an introduction and three (3) minutes for a closing remark; each interview will last approximately 30 minutes, with a 10-15 minute break between candidates; finally, the replacement will be selected through a nomination and roll call vote.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: Pass (Yea: Barbara Clark, Estela Gutierrez, John Mayer, Barbara McLaury, Howard Rosenberg, and Lisa Ruggerio).

### **3. Closing Items**

#### **3.01 PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment at this time.

#### **3.02 NEXT MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT**

The next Regular Meeting would take place on November 18, 2014, beginning at 12:00 p.m. in the Board Room at the Central Administration Building.

#### **3.03 ADJOURN MEETING**

There being no further business to come before the members of the Board, President Clark declared the meeting adjourned at 12:31 p.m.

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**Barbara Clark, President**

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**Lisa Ruggerio, Clerk**