

# MINUTES

## MORGAN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

### WORK MEETING AND BOARD MEETING

**Tuesday, January 13, 2015, District Office 5:00 P.M.**

**Present:**

**Board Members:** Vice President Ken Durrant, Neil Carrigan, Jody Hipwell, Mark Farmer, Ted Taylor, Student Board Member Dietrich Streuber

**Excused:** Student Board Member Chandler Hipwell

**District Staff:** Superintendent Doug Jacobs, Business Administrator D'Lynn Poll, Secretary Denise Rich

**Other Staff and Patrons:** Jenna Bate, Rachel Love, Terry Allen, Heidi Andreasen, Gina Stuart, Bruce Giles, Tim Wolff, Kathy Nelson, Deanne Winterton, Lydia Nuttall, Jennie Earl, MB Haney, Bob Waldron, Cody Birt, Shara Birt, Angi Carrigan, Jarrett Perry, Laura Lee Newton, Melinda Parry, Traca Wardell, Ron Litchfield, Heidi Farmer, Shana Croft, Lory Birt, BreeAnn Johnson, Andrea Smith, Mike Hansen, Adam Francis, Kirk Francis, Nicole Peterson, Amanda Myers, Danell Sorensen, Lars Birkeland, Kera Birkeland, Darren Blackburn, Kami Blackburn, Louize Smith, Shastene Breshears, Ann Millner

**Work Meeting:**

**Welcome:** Vice President Ken Durrant welcomed everyone.

**Parliamentary Procedure Review**

Superintendent Jacobs reviewed Parliamentary Procedure rules with board members.

**Board Review of Utah Core Math Standards for Grade 5**

Jody Hipwell introduced Mountain Green Elementary teachers Jenna Bate and Rachel Love.

Jenna Bate said 5<sup>th</sup> grade math core standards had fewer changes than any of the other grades. The concepts are the same but there is more depth. She said they are developmentally appropriate for 5<sup>th</sup> grade students.

Teachers feel good about the concepts but they don't feel they have adequate resources.

Mountain Green Elementary teacher Kathy Nelson doesn't feel like tests follow the standards exactly.

Ted Taylor said teachers want more training and the Board needs to support them. He attended the USBA Conference and was told online resources are available.

Superintendent Jacobs said more funding for professional development is needed.

### **Update on Building and Growth Plan**

Mark Farmer said the Growth Task Force Committee met last month to summarize their findings. He said they have diverted from the discussion phase and are moving forward to put together a plan that could possibly be ready for the next board meeting.

Ted Taylor has talked to architects and he said it is time to involve them. He said there is a pretty good understanding of what is needed in the district to help solve some of the challenges associated with growth.

### **Board Goals**

Superintendent Jacobs reviewed the five goals that the Board has been working on this past year. He asked if board members wanted to make any changes and he asked for direction.

Mark Farmer said he would not recommend any changes.

### **Transportation Limitations**

Superintendent Jacobs said the transportation/safety committee has been meeting all year discussing concerns and working to find solutions to the issues facing the district.

The direction from the Board at the last meeting was to place some restrictions on transporting students.

Vice President Durrant said the Board felt an urgency to make some immediate changes in bussing policies for students. They set a date of February 2 for those changes to go into effect.

MES Principal Wolff said this is a result of two issues: overcrowded busses and safety of students.

Vice President Durrant said safety of students is the priority.

Transportation Director Ron Litchfield said some busses are at or over capacity. He had to add another bus this year because two routes were over capacity.

Superintendent Jacobs explained that the state reimburses the district for students that live farther than 1.5 miles from the school for elementary students and 2 miles from the school for secondary students. It was decided to transport students based on reimbursement from the state.

Mr. Litchfield said they have approximately 79 students riding buses that do not qualify for district transportation. That is the equivalent of one additional bus. Anytime a bus is added to the fleet many additional expenses are also added.

Superintendent Jacobs said the Board could modify some of the restrictions and look at specifics before the February 2 deadline.

Mark Farmer said he was told by Ron Litchfield that more students have been misplaced this past year in Morgan District than in the seven years he worked for Weber District. He said this is a stark reminder that the policy of accepting notes from students to ride other busses than their designated bus, getting off the bus at different stops and students riding buses that are not eligible to ride has created problems. There needs to be consistency where students are picked up and where they are dropped off.

Mr. Litchfield said notes and inconsistencies are challenges route drivers and substitute route drivers face daily.

Jody Hipwell talked to one driver that said the possibility of doing away with notes to ride other busses would really reduce the worry and concern of bus drivers.

Mr. Litchfield said there is a huge communication gap when notes are allowed. He also said that some hazardous stops have been allowing non-qualifying students to ride and that has become a problem because of overcrowded busses.

Vice President Durrant said the board needs to look at fairness when subsidizing transportation for some day cares and not for others. The decision on day care could wait until the end of the school year to give parents and day care providers time to make different arrangements if needed.

Mark Farmer agreed.

Jody Hipwell said phone calls and notes to school offices asking for special bussing arrangements have got to be eliminated.

The work meeting concluded at 5:55 P.M.

## **Board Meeting**

Vice President Durrant welcomed everyone to the board meeting. Ted Taylor led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and gave the prayer.

Vice President Durrant introduced Ann Millner who is an educator, past president of Weber State University for ten years, and newly elected representative of the state senate. She will be speaking later in the meeting.

## **Oath of Office**

Business Administrator D'Lynn Poll administered the oath of office to newly elected board member Ted Taylor, and re-elected board member Mark Farmer.

## **Consent Agenda**

Jody Hipwell made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mark Farmer amended the motion to approve the agenda, the minutes of the December 2 board meeting and to accept the financial expenditure reports. Neil Carrigan seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

## **Election of Board President and Vice President**

Neil Carrigan nominated Vice President Ken Durrant for president and Mark Farmer for vice president of the Morgan School District Board of Education. There were no other nominations and no discussion. It was unanimous.

## **Public Comment**

Parents Louize Smith, Angi Carrigan, Shara Birt, Traca Wardell, Laura Lee Newton and Ashley Schiffman addressed the board on their concerns about the board's decision to stop transporting children to day care before and after school.

Michelle Warner, a citizen of Morgan, said the Board didn't allow enough time for the change and there should have been a meeting before the decision was made. She said showing facts would have helped county residents understand the reasoning behind their decision.

President Durrant said the Board is not required to address comments made during the public comment portion of the meeting but he felt something needed to be said at this time. Board members based their decision because of several concerns: safety of the students, overcrowded buses because of increasing enrollment, and some funding issues. He said Morgan has changed and is experiencing growth and growth brings problems. He displayed 413 notes from parents asking bus drivers to make special arrangements to take their children to different places other than their designated bus stops. Those notes were from the first of November to the Christmas break.

President Durrant quoted transportation director Ron Litchfield who said that more students have been misplaced this past year in Morgan District than in the seven years he worked for Weber District because at Weber there are no exceptions or special bussing arrangements made for students. President Durrant said bus drivers love the students but safety is their prime concern. When they have to deal with notes requesting special arrangements, it is not fair to them and it becomes a safety issue for students.

Transportation Director Ron Litchfield said there have been approximately 79 students riding busses that aren't eligible to ride which is the equivalent of one additional bus. Many expenses are incurred when an additional bus is added to the fleet.

President Durrant is recommending that the board make a decision tonight to continue transporting students to and from day care until the end of the school year but not allow any more notes asking for special bussing arrangements after February 2, 2015. A decision will be made at the June board meeting whether or not to continue transporting students to and from child care allowing parents enough time to make other arrangements if needed. Student safety is the number one concern.

President Durrant said busses at Mountain Green Elementary are overcrowded due to continual growth. The state is supposed to fund transportation at 85%. They are not. They are funding around 65% putting financial pressure on districts. He said the district has not had the funding to purchase a new school bus for the past three years. The district used to purchase one bus every year and two busses every other year to rotate into the fleet but that hasn't been possible because of funding. This year the district was able to sell some property to purchase two busses. These two new busses did not increase the fleet they just helped replace old busses in poor condition with a lot of miles. Allowing students to ride the bus that are not eligible or taking students to other destinations has got to stop.

He said board members have heard the concerns but they need to do everything necessary for the safety of the students.

Mark Farmer said bus drivers love the kids and they care about the burden these changes may place on parents but here is a high level of concern. Consistent bus schedules are needed.

Neil Carrigan assured the audience that this decision is not political in any way. Safety of the students is the priority. He said the Board wants to work with parents.

Jody Hipwell said she appreciated knowing the concerns of parents. She said this was not a last minute decision but some of these concerns had to be addressed. Nobody realized the pressure this was putting on bus drivers. She said the urgency to enforce a procedure now was to help bus drivers and make sure students are safe.

President Durrant said the Board needs time to work through these issues.

The Board gave direction to Superintendent Jacobs to do away with notes asking for special bussing arrangements but to continue transporting students to child care until the end of the school year at which time this issue will be re-evaluated and a decision made.

## **Superintendent's Report**

### Employees of the Month

Food Service Director Roxanne Rich honored Tina Spens and Cherryl Willie as employees of the month for January. Mrs. Spens is a cook at Mountain Green Elementary School and Cherryl Willie is a cook at Morgan Middle School.

### **Ann Millner, Utah State Senate District 18**

Ann Millner said she is working to get ready for the upcoming legislative session. She asked board members about their concerns.

President Durrant said one problem is the amount of representation the district has at the legislature. Smaller districts are not represented the same as the larger districts. He wants our district to be heard. Transportation funding is a concern. He also talked about the funding issues districts face when the state mandates the implementation of programs but only provide one-time funding. Small town issues are big problems.

Mrs. Millner said she is very aware of the issues and understands the unique situations small, rural districts are faced with. She said we need to be accountable and agree on outcomes. She will talk to senators and help them understand the issues small districts face. She is developing a system that will help legislative information get out to rural districts. She will work hard and she cares about kids and their achievement. She encouraged board members to contact her when they have concerns.

Mark Farmer said Morgan County has a unique situation when it comes to funding. Morgan's property tax base is low and residents bear a high property tax burden. He said we have to have more money come back to us.

Mrs. Millner said when Superintendent Jacobs and board members email her to put "Morgan School District" in the subject line. She said she gets hundreds of emails.

## **Business Administrator Report**

D'Lynn Poll reviewed with board members what Alan Westenskow from Zion's Public Finance had prepared concerning refinancing the district's General Obligation Bonds. Refinancing the bonds could save the district as much as \$1.1 million over the life of the bonds. She said you can only refinance one time.

Jody Hipwell said the board looked at refinancing last year but it would not have benefited the district at that time.

Board members directed D'Lynn Poll to start the process.

## **Discussion Items**

### Report on USBA Conference

Ted Taylor said as a new board member the conference was very informative. He talked about a method of teaching where students are using iPads and writing their own textbooks. He said what students are learning is incredible.

Jody Hipwell said by the time you purchase a set of core textbooks for students you would have spent enough to purchase an iPad for them.

Mark Farmer said teachers are passionate about what is out there and what will work best for kids in Morgan and the Board needs to find a way to support them.

Board members said the USBA Conference was a positive experience.

Superintendent Jacobs said all board members completed the requirements for the Master Boards Award program. Morgan School District Board of Education was recognized as one of eight or nine districts to earn this award.

He also announced that Neil Carrigan has been elected as a representative to the UHSAA board of trustees. This is a three year assignment. Morgan High School Principal Wade Murdock serves on the executive committee for the UHSAA. Morgan will be represented very well.

Student Board Member Dietrich Streuber said the high school students are in the middle of winter sports. They are also preparing for a dance on January 31.

### 2015-2016 School Calendar

Superintendent Jacobs said the 2015-16 school calendar was introduced to board members in December. Secretaries and principals finalized some of the dates. Board members will approve the finalized calendar at the February board meeting.

### Placement of New MHS Marquee

MHS teacher Shasta Breshears and the student body officers updated board members on the new marquee project. They have raised \$24,000. They need another five or six thousand dollars to complete this project. Mrs. Breshears provided sample drawings of marquees. A decision will have to be made soon because the granite will need to be ordered.

Location of the marquee was discussed. It was decided that installing it at the 4-way stop is not a good option. It would be better if it was installed in the same place as the old one but further out towards the street because of possible future expansion on the front of the high school.

Mrs. Breshears said many people have agreed to donate manpower and equipment to help with this project.

Board members gave their approval to move forward.

Morgan High School Principal Wade Murdock thanked Mrs. Breshears and the student body officers. He said they have raised \$24,000 in just eight months.

#### Policy DDA Child Abuse Reporting

President Durrant asked board members to review Policy DDA (Reporting of Child Abuse). This policy will be brought to the board for approval at the February meeting.

#### **Approval Items**

##### Home School Applications

A motion was made by Mark Farmer and seconded by Jody Hipwell to approve the home school applications. Motion passed unanimously.

##### Policy FJ Visitation on Campus

Policy FJ (Visitation on Campus: Students Leaving with Adult during School Hours) was discussed at the last board meeting. A clarification was made that DCFS does have authority to remove a student from school during the school day when they have properly identified themselves as an officer of the Department of Child and Family Services.

Neil Carrigan made a motion to approve Policy FJ (Visitation on Campus: Students Leaving with Adult during School Hours). The motion was seconded by Ted Taylor. The motion passed unanimously.

##### Personnel

Mark Farmer made a motion to approve the following personnel changes:

##### Resignations:

Chris Bice                   MHS   Part-time Custodian  
Heidi Jackson            MES   Special Education Aide (She will be doing her student  
teaching at Morgan Elementary starting January 12, 2015.)

Long-Term Leave Request:

Marnie Christensen MHS Registrar

New Hires:

Anna Phelps	MES	Special Ed Aide/Recess Aide
Emily Peterson	MES	Special Ed Aide
Ken Adams	MES	Instructional Aide
Deshel Hadley	MMS	Special Ed Aide – (Severe Unit)
Treasure Wood	MMS	Substitute Special Education Aide – (Severe Unit)
Linda Skidmore	MHS	Part-time Custodian

The motion was seconded by Neil Carrigan. Jody Hipwell called for discussion on the motion. She asked who the temporary replacement is for the high school registrar and what the policy is for employees returning after a leave of absence. The motion passed unanimously.

Board Meeting Dates for 2015

Mark Farmer made a motion to approve the 2015 board meeting schedule. Board meetings will be held the second Tuesday of each month. There will be no board meeting in July and the December board meeting will be held the first Tuesday instead of the second Tuesday. Jody Hipwell seconded the motion. Mark Farmer called for discussion on the motion and asked if the board could schedule additional meetings or change dates of meetings with the proper notification. Superintendent Jacobs said yes. The motion passed unanimously.

**Board Member School Visit Reports and Committee Assignments for 2015**

President Durrant visited Mountain Green Elementary School during their lunch time. He said it is a well-run school. Policies and the Master Board Award program were discussed earlier in the meeting.

Ted Taylor talked to Morgan Elementary teachers in their study groups. They are concerned about overcrowding and said using portables would help with that problem. Fifth grade math teachers need more resources. More computers are needed for testing. Mr. Taylor said they are doing the best they can with what they have. The Board needs to support the teachers with these concerns.

Neil Carrigan visited Morgan Elementary School. Teachers are concerned about their students. They work hard to keep kids focused and learning. He visited with Principal Wolff and was told teachers were disappointed when Morgan Elementary received a “C” grade from the state. They only missed receiving a “B” grade by one point. Teachers

and principals are not pleased with this type of grading system. Mr. Carrigan said there wasn't a COG meeting this month.

Jody Hipwell said the scholarship board met. They have started getting donations and sending out letters. She talked to Tami Pyfer, education advisor for Governor Herbert, and has invited her to scholarship night at the high school. The DATC is a great school. The Career Path High School is still struggling. The recreation board did not meet this month.

Mark Farmer said bus drivers really care about kids and their situations. He participated in the Reality Town project at the high school and said it is a fantastic real life experience for students. The Morgan Education Foundation did not meet in December. The new president of the Foundation is Diana Windley. He said past president Brenda Crossley did a fabulous job.

### Board Assignments for 2015

Board members will keep the same committee assignments they had last year.

Ken Durrant – Policy Committee

Mark Farmer – Growth Task Force Committee and Finance Committee

Neil Carrigan – Technology Committee

Jody Hipwell – Curriculum Committee

Ted Taylor – Transportation Committee

Additional assignments are:

Ken Durrant – Recreation Board

Ted Taylor – Recreation Board

Mark Farmer – COG (Council of Governments)

Neil Carrigan – Morgan Education Foundation

Jody Hipwell – USBA and DATC

### **Advanced Planning**

Superintendent Jacobs said there is a training meeting for board presidents and vice presidents. He will provide information.

Day on the Hill is scheduled for February 20. Student board members usually attend.

Neil Carrigan made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Jody Hipwell and it passed unanimously. The meeting ended at 8:40 P.M.

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D'Lynn Poll, Business Administrator