

Board Special Meeting

2445 – 3rd Avenue South, Seattle WA 98134



Oversight Work Session: Facilities
Work Session: Board 2014-15 Annual Evaluation
Tuesday, November 10, 2015, 4:30 PM – 7:30 PM
Auditorium, John Stanford Center

Minutes

The Board Special meeting was called to order at 4:34 pm. Directors McLaren, Martin-Morris, Peaslee, Peters and Patu were present. Director Carr arrived at 4:47 pm.

Oversight Work Session: Facilities

Director Peaslee turned the meeting over to the Associate Superintendent for Facilities and Operations Flip Herndon. Dr. Herndon introduced Bruce Skowyra, Director of Facilities, to make the presentation.

S.W.O.T Analysis slide: Regarding the increased building use and its impact on the custodial department, Directors asked to be reminded what the change in the Building Rental Policy was that was contributing to substantially increased use and the subsequent necessity (opportunity) to update the cleaning schedules of the buildings. Directors discussed the impact of the rental waiver policy that had taken effect approximately one and a half years prior, following the extensive process that had been conducted through the Audit & Finance Committee, benchmarking building use against other districts, concluding with a rewrite of the 'Building Use' Policy and Procedures. Mr. Skowyra explained that the Custodial Department hadn't yet been able to fully adjust the building cleaning schedules due to this increased use, since the buildings were scheduled for deep cleaning during the summer months and now most buildings are in year-round use.

Directors asked about the Staffing Levels/Service Levels noted in the Weaknesses section of the slide. Mr. Skowyra gave examples, citing the ability of the grounds crew to each adequately maintain approximately 40 acres of land per grounds employee, and the limited hiring of temporary summer gardeners to assist for that short time period.

Directors asked about the potential failures of major systems that posed a Threat/Risk to the district. There was discussion about the aging boilers in a few buildings, the cost of replacing entire systems in these schools, not piecemeal by components, and the concern about the ability of the department to supply the staffing levels that would be needed for a big storm cleanup.

Directors commented about the Threat/Risk of the aging workforce. It was noted that this is not unique to this Department but is true across many Departments in the District, and the Directors mentioned that they hoped the Human Resources Department was taking proactive measures to identify critical staffing needs in many departments and to

identify skills to be replaced. Mr. Skowyra added that his Department was proposing the implementation of an Apprentice Program in the Crafts and Trades to allow our own students to receive training to join the skilled work force after graduation.

On the Accomplishments slide, Directors commented on the photos that displayed the range and quality of the restorative and replacement work that the Maintenance crews were accomplishing. Further discussion suggested that photos like these appear on any documents to the public regarding the Levies and to promote the good work that was happening across the district, reflecting the wise use of taxpayer's dollars.

On the Facilities Organizational Chart slide Directors noted the many years of expertise in the profession among the members of the upper level of the leadership team of the Department, and asked about the succession plans and the need to be able to backfill for that level of talent among the leaders. Mr. Skowyra answered that there is an emphasis on promoting the tradesman and forepersons to become the Supervisors and Managers in the Department and that there is work to develop internal succession among the staff.

At this point the staff in attendance for the presentation were introduced and everyone applauded the large turnout of department staff at the special session meeting.

The Benchmarking slide drew many comments and discussion from the Directors, regarding the factors that impact the staffing levels, the ratio of departmental budgets to overall district budgets, variances in labor costs, climate, funding sources, and local historical factors in different districts. Discussion centered on the desire of the Directors to see more in-depth benchmarking details for more comparative analysis against other similar school districts, noting that data on the number of buildings in districts and the average age of the buildings as an example of more details that would help inform the statistics. Mr. Skowyra noted that we had moved from an approximate backlog of \$500 Million in deferred maintenance a few years ago, accomplishing over \$300 Million of that backlog to date, and that other districts would have different levels of building maintenance issues.

Directors asked questions regarding the Benchmarking Slide of Maintenance Costs for Seattle Public Schools compared to the costs from Council of Great City Schools data. The slide represented only general fund critical maintenance and general fund major preventative maintenance costs for the district, and was based on the 2% replacement value of the property (50 year replacement cycle).

On the Key Internal and External Controls slide, Directors asked questions regarding the Facilities/Custodial databases that contain personal employee information outside of the SAP HR data system. Directors expressed concern about the Facilities Department maintaining its own HR personnel data and files.

The Board Special Meeting recessed at 5:54 pm and Director Carr left the meeting.

The Board Special Meeting reconvened at 6:09pm.

Work Session: Board 2014-15 Annual Evaluation

Directors Martin-Morris, McLaren, Patu, Peaslee and Peters were present. Director Blanford was at a conference, and was unable to attend. Director Carr was unavailable to stay for this meeting.

Director Peaslee reviewed the indicators from the evaluation instrument, the background of the 2014-15 evaluation, and the tools for the Board to look at. She noted that they will discuss each goal for Director feedback and then go through lessons learned. She noted this evaluation is in alignment with Board Policy No. 1820, Evaluation of the Board.

Theresa Hale outlined the agenda for the meeting, the expectations, and the timeline for the meeting. Erinn Bennett noted that Ms. Hale will take notes on the themes of the feedback from the Directors.

Goal 1-A: Ms. Hale noted that Goal #1 had two parts and was separated as Goal 1-A and Goal 1-B, which will be discussed separately. She described the goal and desired outcomes as listed on the slide for Goal 1-A. She noted the rubric for the performance indicators and the baseline ranking and target for the goal. Ms. Hale noted that in looking at the survey responses from Directors, the overall outcome was “proficient,” and then asked for Director feedback. Directors noted the fundamental difference between basic and proficient is in the annual review process being consistent, and fulfilling practices required by law. Directors noted the accomplishments toward this goal, and the areas for improvement. Directors recalled meetings and training, but were unsure of specific trainings on ethics and whistleblower policies. It was noted that Andrew Medina provided internal audit and ethics procedures training opportunities with the Board and that the Internal Audit Annual Report and Ethics Report will be presented at the November 18 Board meeting. Directors noted that Mr. Medina had met with several of them individually to talk to him about their own experiences and events that might lead to an audit, or would require an audit. Ms. Hale discussed the themes that were offered by Directors for Goal 1-A.

Goal 1-B: Ms. Hale noted this was related to collaboration with the community and staff. She noted the implementation plan, the reset meeting, development of talking points, and information on the website. She noted the rubric for the performance indicators and the baseline and target ranking, and then asked for feedback. Directors noted that staff has done an exceptional job on this goal, and kept Directors connected to the work they are doing. They noted that it’s been a tangible process to align the Board’s attention to the strategic plan and keep focused on those goals. Directors noted that when the community brings issues to the Board, that Directors could frame the issues to show alignment to the work on the strategic plan. Directors noted the process to engage the community at meetings for Bell Times, Levies, and Growth Boundaries, and noted what staff is doing in terms of public engagement. Ms.

Bennett noted that Supt. Nyland has suggested in his goals that there be a Director lead for each Superintendent SMART goal, and that would be a good opportunity for that engagement. Directors discussed further engagement opportunities in which Directors could participate. Directors noted that it is effective when Directors are there to back up staff conducting community engagement, to bring staff and Directors together with the community. Ms. Hale reviewed the themes of the feedback from Directors. Charles Wright pointed out the area of execution, and clarity on the roll out plan for many items, and the ability to hit these targets and the readiness to execute.

Goal 2: Directors and staff discussed this goal in reference to being fiscally responsible in monitoring of the budget. They noted the many components and the meetings involved. Ms. Hale noted the baseline and target for this goal. She noted that through the survey, all ranking responses were proficient. Directors noted that the variance analysis and fiscal impact is evaluated at monthly Audit & Finance (A&F) Committee meeting. Directors discussed the language in this goal around “creating” and suggested that it’s more that the Board “monitors.” Ms. Bennett noted that the new Board will take this into consideration, and that when they create their goals, it is something that can be looked at if they decide to keep this goal. Directors noted that in point 3, referencing monthly statements being understood by all Board members, and discussed whether Board members outside of the A&F Committee understand the statements. Directors noted that the statement comes through the Operations Committee as well. Ms. Hale reviewed the feedback themes from Directors on Goal 2.

Goal 3: Ms. Hale noted that this goal is related to delegation of responsibility to the Superintendent. She read through the rubric and the slide. She noted the baseline and target rankings. Directors noted that there is always room for improvement, but noted that the Board has come a long way in the past year on understanding the roles and efforts on recognizing matters of opinion. They noted that there should be a strong focus on governance moving forward, as when people come to the Board, usually from an activist background, and there isn’t enough in-depth training on how to use governance tools to bring about the changes they want to see. Ms. Bennett asked for feedback in relation to the SMART goal. Directors suggested that there should be regular check ins to recollect and reflect. Directors asked what happens to the notes being taken this evening. Ms. Bennett noted the themes captured will go into a narrative, and be distributed to current Directors. Then at the November 18 Board meeting, it will be brought for introduction and action, as there is no Executive Committee meeting until after the new Board is sworn in. Directors and staff discussed the timeline of taking action. Ms. Bennett noted that this is a review of the Board’s performance in the last year. Ms. Hale discussed the timeline of putting together the draft narrative and the timing of receiving feedback.

Goal 4: Ms. Hale discussed this goal and detailed the rubric and the ratings involved in this goal. Directors noted their experiences with trying to understand what kind of coordination was possible in order for the Board to have fruitful relationships with underserved communities. Directors noted that they need to work with staff to figure out ways to engage with the populations that are less inclined to show up at meetings or

send emails. Directors suggested working with school community coordinators, who directly engage with the parents, in an environment that fits for those communities. Directors noted the resources needed to accomplish the criteria listed in this goal, in a broad, meaningful way. Ms. Bennett pointed out that this is a great lessons learned item. Ms. Hale provided an overview of the themes that were stated during feedback.

Goal 5: Ms. Hale provided an overview of this goal. Directors spoke to the training on this goal, and that there is a lot more that could be done in this area. Directors discussed the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Superintendent SMART Goals and the proposed amendments on the language. Ms. Bennett noted the work session that Eric Anderson led in regards to Goal1-B, which addressed these training elements. Directors noted that there has been a lot of talk, and there is a policy, and plans are made, but that there isn't as much action. There is clearly engagement and a lot of work going on in the classrooms about MTSS and RULER. Ms. Hale summarized the themes from Director feedback. Directors noted a need to grow in cultural responsiveness to all students, in an inclusive manner, while not diluting the focus on any particular group.

Ms. Bennett noted the section on lessons learned, and that these lessons have been captured as the meeting has gone on. She noted the newly formed Board will receive the lessons learned feedback. Ms. Bennett outlined a few options for next steps, and the approval process for the narrative of tonight's meeting. Directors discussed all three options and noted their preferences. The majority agreed to schedule an Executive Committee of the Whole meeting on November 19, after the Operations Committee meeting. Ms. Bennett thanked Theresa Hale for her work on the organization of this evaluation.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.