

STANFIELD SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

Minutes

Wednesday, August 30, 2017

6:00 pm

District Office Conference Room

AGENDA ITEM I – CALL MEETING TO ORDER, FLAG SALUTE, and WELCOME GUESTS: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by **Scott Morris**, Board Chair. Other Board Members present: **Elizabeth Sperr**, **Karen Johnson**, **Terry Monkus**, and **Jan Mills**. Administrators: **Shelley Liscom**.

AGENDA ITEM II –PUBLIC INPUT:

Marleen Masterson asked do we have more than one person meeting with the auditors? **Scott Morris** responded that we used to have it that way, but now we have a committee that meets with our auditors: two from the Board, along with the Superintendent and Business Manager. There is better accountability now.

Member of the Public asked how did this happen and why did it happen so many years ago? What staff will be held accountable for it? How much of a percentage will the increased be? Why was the message so vague that was sent out by the District? **Scott Morris** responded our audits are the previous school year. So this past audit was for 2015-2016 school year. This was when we were notified of the error in levying the proper taxes for the school bond. We did not know about it until this school year. The previous Business Manager didn't tell anyone or levy the correct amount of taxes. We should have caught this a year ago. The auditors and tax assessor recommended that we send a notice out in August giving taxpayers a heads up of an increase in the bond portion of their school taxes. We agree that we should have communicated it better to the public. **Shelley Liscom** responded we will try to communicate better and more concise information to the community. **Scott Morris** mentioned that the person responsible for this has retired and therefore there is nothing more to be done regarding that.

Marleen Masterson how are the payments on the bonds made? **Kris James** responded that the District pays the bill as it comes into from the taxes that are levied.

Marleen Masterson asked if you made the mistake why do we have to pay for it? **Scott Morris** responded that the District looked into absorbing the cost, but it was too large and it would negatively affect programs we offer for our students.

Kris James shared a few examples of how the tax increase would look like. If you were to multiply the bond portion of the school taxes by 1.78, it should give a close idea of how much your school bond tax will go up per year. This is only on the bond portion of your school taxes. For most people it will be around \$100 annually.

Member of the Public asked if going forward do you have a better process for checks and balances, so something like this doesn't happen again? **Scott Morris** responded that we have an Audit Committee who meet with the auditors as they give their exit meeting.

Marleen Masterson questions why the communication wasn't also in Spanish. We have a large population who had to have their children or a friend translate the information to them. We really

should be addressing to our entire community. **Scott Morris** responded saying we will be doing a better job at that as well.

Cecili Longhorn mentioned that the note sent home came across very negative. It was as if you were blaming the taxpayers for not paying their taxes. **Kris James** responded that, that was not our intent. We were simply trying to give the community a heads up. Cecil did say that when she called the District Office with her questions and concerns, they were very nice about it.

Member of the Public stated that the Stanfield community is a great community to move into and live. We just don't want this to be a negative or to hinder future needs of the District regard bonds. **Elizabeth Sperr** responded that we need to be true partners with our community. We are working here towards that end. If we don't levy the correct amount of taxes, it will impact our children and the programs the District is able to provide. Our General Fund simply cannot absorb this amount of money.

Kris James mentioned that this bond expires in 2019 and thus we needed to levy the appropriate taxes to pay off that bond by the expiration date. We have learned we can spread that over two years instead of one, as we were initially told by one of our auditors.

Member of the Public, Rosa, asked the Board why the District needed a Resource Officer. Is there a problem we are not aware of, i.e., drugs, bullying, etc.? I was shocked to learn about this without prior communication about it. I think we should have known about this. What is the need? **Scott Morris** responded that it is a joint effort between Echo School District, City of Stanfield, and Stanfield School District to put another police officer on our streets and split the cost. There was no prior need, we just thought it would be a good idea.

Member of the Public voiced her appreciate for the Resource Officer and her presence to put the police in a better light amount students and make them more comfortable around them.

Shelley Liscom responded that several months ago our Police Chief came to a Board meeting and did a presentation about the Resource Office and the duties they were thinking would help benefit the schools and city. We did not know until just before school that she was starting. She helped with traffic control at the high school, which was a great benefit and making things run smoothly.

AGENDA ITEM III – ACTION AGENDA: **Scott Morris** read the Action Agenda item:

- A. **Karen Johnson** moved and **Jan Mills** seconded the motion to approve the resolution to adopt and levy taxes. Motion passes 5-0-0:

AGENDA ITEM VI –ADJOURN: The meeting was adjourned at 6:47 pm.


School Board Chairman

 9-13-17
Debbie Dever, Recording Secretary Date