

Windham School District
Board of Trustees
260th Meeting



Minutes

October 14, 2010
Austin, Texas

WINDHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Doubletree Hotel – Phoenix North
6505 North IH-35
Austin, Texas 78752**

**October 14, 2010
1:30 – 2:30 PM**

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Call to Order

Convene Windham School District (WSD) Board of Trustees (Board)

I. Regular Session

A. Recognitions

B. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Consent Items

1. Minutes of the August 16, 2010, WSD Board Meeting
2. Appraisers for the 2010-2011 School Year
3. Excused Absences

C. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action Regarding Annual Review of WSD Board Policies

1. WBP-07.18, “Performance Evaluations and Professional Development Appraisal System”
2. WBP-07.26, “Employee Grievance Procedures”
3. WBP-11.12, “Windham School District Investment Policy,” and Resolution Adopting the Investment Policy

D. Comments from Former Offenders on the Benefits of Participating in WSD Programs

E. Presentation on Library Automation

F. Superintendent’s Report – Update on Regional Staff Developments

G. Report from the Chairman, WSD Board – Chairman's Fitness Challenge, FY 2011

Adjourn WSD Board

The WSD Board may discuss and/or take action on any of the items posted on this meeting agenda. The WSD Board may also convene into Executive Session on any of these matters when attorney-client privilege is warranted.

**MINUTES OF THE WINDHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

260th MEETING

The Windham School District Board of Trustees met in session on Thursday, October 14, 2010, at the DoubleTree Hotel in Austin, Texas.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Oliver Bell, Chairman
Tom Mechler, Vice Chairman
Leopoldo (Leo) Vasquez, III, Secretary
Eric Gambrell
Janice Harris Lord
J. David Nelson
Carmen Villanueva-Hiles

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Pastor C.L. Jackson
Terrell McCombs

WINDHAM STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Debbie Roberts, Superintendent
Marjie Haynes
Linda Goerdel
Mike Mondville
Allen Bourque

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL
JUSTICE STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Brad Livingston
Bryan Collier
Melinda Bozarth

CONVENED

Oliver Bell, Chairman, called the meeting of the Windham School District (WSD) Board of Trustees (Board) to order on Thursday, October 14, 2010, at 1:37 p.m. in accordance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, the *Open Meetings Act*. During the regular session, the board conducted business from the agenda posted in the Texas Register. A quorum was present and the 260th meeting of the board was declared open.

The Chairman reported the Board was committed to providing the opportunity for public presentations on topics posted on the meeting agenda, as well as public comment on issues within its jurisdiction as provided in Rule 300.1. Persons interested in providing presentations at the meeting were required to complete a registration card and submit it at least ten minutes prior to the meeting's posted start time. As no cards were received prior to the required deadline, the Board would not hear public presentations on posted agenda topics.

RECOGNITIONS

Chairman Bell stated that the Board annually recognizes WSD employees who have dedicated 20, 25, and 30 plus years of service to the State of Texas. These individuals represent the strong commitment of the district staff systemwide. He, along with the rest of the board members and Ms. Roberts, expressed deep gratitude for the continued service of these employees. During the 2008-2009 school year, 23 Windham employees attained 20 years of service, 10 employees attained 25 years of service, and two employees attained 30 years of service. As a symbol of appreciation, these individuals will receive a board certificate along with a personal letter of gratitude.

(Attachment A – Employee Names)

DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING CONSENT ITEMS

Mr. Bell called the Board's attention to the Consent Items on the agenda which consisted of the minutes of the August 16, 2010, meeting, appraisers for the 2010-2011 school year, and the excused absence of Pastor Jackson from the August 2010 meeting.

Mr. Bell asked if there were any comments, objections or amendments to the Consent Items. Noting there were none, he stated the Consent Items stand approved.

DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING ANNUAL REVIEW OF WSD BOARD POLICIES

1. **WBP-07.18, “Performance Evaluations and Professional Development Appraisal System”**

Mike Mondville, WSD General Counsel, presented WBP-07.18, “Performance Evaluations and Professional Development Appraisal System.” The policy was updated as part of the annual review process and required only grammatical changes. He asked that the Board approve the policy as presented.

David Nelson made a motion that the Windham Board of Trustees approve the revisions to Windham Board Policy 07.18 concerning “Performance Evaluations and Professional Development Appraisal System,” as presented.

Janice Lord seconded the motion, which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

2. WBP-07.26, “Employee Grievance Procedures”

Mr. Mondville explained that WBP-7.26, “Employee Grievance Procedures” was also updated as part of the annual review process and required only grammatical changes. He asked that the Board approve the policy as presented.

Leopoldo Vasquez made a motion that the Windham Board of Trustees approve the revisions to Windham Board Policy 07.26 “Employee Grievance Procedures,” as presented.

Mr. Nelson seconded the motion, which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

Mr. Mondville explained there are four additional policies that are a part of the annual review process that are still under revision. Two of those policies will be presented at the February 2011 meeting; they are WBP-07.05, “Contract and Noncontract Employment,” and WBP-07.44, “Progressive Discipline Policy.” The remaining two policies, WBP-07.01, “Employment of Personnel,” and WBP-07.37, “Selection of Personnel” will be presented as soon thereafter as possible.

3. WBP-11.12, “Windham School District Investment Policy,” and Resolution Adopting the Investment Policy

Linda Goerdel, Chief Financial Officer, informed the Board that in accordance with Chapter 2256 of the Texas Government Code, *Public Funds Investment Act*, WBP-11.12, “Windham School District Investment Policy,” is presented for annual review. The only revisions proposed address minor formatting changes and a change in the policy’s date. She asked the Board to approve the policy and the resolution adopting it.

Tom Mechler made a motion that the Windham Board of Trustees approve the revisions to Windham Board Policy 11.12, “Windham School District Investment Policy” and approve the resolution adopting the investment policy, as presented, and that the chairman and the secretary sign the resolution adopting the policy.

Mr. Vasquez seconded the motion, which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

COMMENTS FROM FORMER OFFENDERS ON THE BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING IN WSD PROGRAMS

Debbie Roberts, WSD Superintendent, stated that she was excited to have three former Windham students in attendance to share their experiences in Windham classes and how those classes have helped them transition back into the free world. She added that she learned about each of these three students in very different ways.

Isaac White was identified by one of his WSD teachers as being someone who had taken advantage of the training he received while incarcerated and became very successful in his vocational field.

Ms. Roberts and Marjie Haynes, Director of Instruction, met Peter Worthen while they were touring the food bank in San Antonio. He became an employee of the food bank after he was released from the Dominguez State Jail where he participated in the warehousing short course that WSD offers at the food bank.

Ms. Roberts learned about Tyerre Boyd from his mother with whom she worked with for many years. Ms. Roberts noted there is nothing like a proud mother who sings the praises of her son.

She has visited with each of these former students and has been amazed they did not stop the process of learning after leaving Windham. Upon release, each of them continued to pursue education in some fashion. What they have become is what every teacher would like their students to become - lifelong learners. Continued learning equates to continued success. Ms. Roberts turned the podium over to the gentlemen to share their stories.

Mr. White noted it was very humbling to be in the presence of people who formerly made decisions for him. He stated that when he was 18 years old he made a mistake and was incarcerated in TDCJ. In the process, he found Windham and the programs it offered. He learned the plumbing trade at the Clemens Unit, and he completed the electrical trades' class at the Luther Unit. He was taught the most intricate details in electrical trades, including how to wire an entire house. After his release, he obtained a job as an electrician working for a commercial contractor. He continued his education by graduating as a master electrician from an electrical apprenticeship school in Houston. He has been teaching at that same school for seven years. Mr. White shared some of his work related experiences since being released and thanked everyone for allowing him to be there.

Mr. Worthen stated that he was from San Antonio and has worked at the San Antonio Food Bank as an inventory manager for seven years. He enjoys his job at the food bank. He served a two-year sentence at the Dominguez State Jail after selling drugs and being caught with marijuana. He knew there were only a few things that he could do while he was in jail, and that was fight or learn something. He chose to learn. He attended the Cognitive Intervention Program, graduated from the warehousing short course at the food bank, and attended college courses offered by Palo Alto College. Upon release, he was hired by the food bank as a warehouseman and has been promoted to inventory manager. Since his release, he has also finished his associate's degree, and has received his real estate license. He now sells real estate on the side. He thanked Windham for giving him the foundation and opportunity to succeed. Ms. Roberts added that Mr. Worthen will be earning his bachelor's degree in December.

Mr. Boyd addressed the board, stated that he was from Galveston. In 1994, he was convicted and sentenced to 10 years in prison. He served 95% of his sentence. During his prison experience, he found that his only refuge from the reality of prison was education. He participated in several programs that were available, including two electrical trades and culinary arts. He also took countless self-help classes, life skills classes, and earned 33 college hours while incarcerated. Mr. Boyd noted he is married and has four children. He and his wife owned a daycare center and he has a full time job with the Galveston County Parks and Recreation

Senior Services Department. He is also a full time student at the University of Houston Clear Lake. In addition, he is a youth coordinator for Mercy Community Center where he deals with troubled youth, and volunteers at a TDCJ prison. He thanked Windham for the opportunities they had given him.

Chairman Bell thanked the three gentlemen for sharing their stories with the Board. He commented that there is one thing that you can attain that no one can take from you and that is an education. He also thanked all of the people that had been supportive of the three individuals.

Chairman Bell gave each of the gentlemen a Chairman's Coin for recognition of their achievements. He asked their families to stay after the meeting for group pictures.

PRESENTATION ON LIBRARY AUTOMATION

Ms. Haynes reported that WSD operates 88 libraries within the system, with funding to purchase the books for the libraries provided by TDCJ. Libraries support the educational programs and provide recreational reading opportunities for general population offenders.

In recent years, WSD has taken steps to move toward library automation. Bar codes were placed on each library book during the 2008-2009 school year, and annual inventories were conducted during the 2009-2010 school year using a few hand-held scanners to scan books.

Ms. Haynes noted that Janice Hines, a WSD librarian from the Dominguez Unit, met the executive director of WorkstationCentral at an art exhibit in San Antonio in 2008. WorkstationCentral, Ltd. is a nonprofit association that is dedicated to assisting charities, education institutions, small businesses and other nonprofits with solutions for information management. In support of the mission of WSD, WorkstationCentral began developing a stand-alone library software application, customized to meet WSD's unique needs. The software application is entitled rEvolutionTM.

This software allows library patrons to use their TDCJ ID cards to scan/log themselves into the library system and then checkout and return books through the use of scanning equipment. There is also a library inventory feature in the software.

rEvolutionTM is currently being piloted at five sites within TDCJ. The computer equipment is secured in a locking cabinet and is not connected to the network therefore, no internet access is needed. The rEvolutionTM is the only software loaded onto that computer.

A demonstration of the system was conducted for TDCJ Information Technology and Correctional Institutions divisional staff and no problems or concerns have been raised regarding the use of this equipment.

Ms. Haynes explained how the software works, highlighting the following aspects. The software will alert the librarian if an offender is trying to check out more books than allowed or if his/her library privileges have been suspended. These computers are not networked so the librarians will use a flash drive to import book inventories and unit population data (which fluctuates as offenders arrive or leave the unit). There is also a search feature which allows the librarian to search for books and offenders.

Another highlight of the software is its inventory feature. Each library is required to close once a year to conduct an annual inventory. In the past, manual inventories have taken about three weeks. The inventory component of this new software will enable librarians to complete the annual inventory process in half that time.

WorkstationCentral has developed this customized software at no initial cost to the district. They are willing to donate the software to us but without the required source code, WSD would not be able to support or upgrade the software. As a result, the company has agreed to an annual licensing agreement, to include unlimited technical support and minor upgrades. Ms. Haynes discussed the licensing agreement costs.

The automation of the WSD libraries has been a long-term goal and the WorkstationCentral software will enable WSD to take a giant leap toward meeting the goal.

Mr. Mechler inquired how the equipment was being purchased. Ms. Haynes responded that the thin clients, monitors, and scanners will be purchased as resources allow.

Mr. Mechler asked how the librarians obtain unit information data to put on the flash drives. Ms. Haynes responded that the information is loaded to the flash drive from the TDCJ mainframe computer.

Attachment – PowerPoint Presentation

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Ms. Roberts advised each year WSD conducts four staff development trainings throughout the state (one for each of the four regions). The West Texas staff development was held in Abilene on September 16 and 17, and the South Texas staff development was held in San Antonio on September 23 and 24. The North Texas staff development is being held in Huntsville on October 14 and 15, and the Gulf Coast staff development is scheduled in Clear Lake on November 18 and 19.

A variety of topics have been discussed at the different trainings including conflict resolution, developing emerging leaders, and tools to inspire reading and writing. Ms. Roberts thanked the staff development committees from each region for their work on the staff developments. She also thanked Mr. Nelson for attending the staff development in Abilene, and Ms. Hiles for attending the staff development in San Antonio. The board member’s show of support is so meaningful to the WSD teachers. She added that every time a board member speaks at a staff development, she receives many positive comments from the staff.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN, WSD BOARD

Chairman’s Fitness Challenge for FY 2011

The Chairman’s Fitness Challenge for FY 2011 has officially begun. This year’s challenge will mirror a football games four quarters with the materialization of the Chairman’s Football League (CFL). The first quarter challenge begins October 18th will be titled “Training Camp and Pre-

Season Games.” This will be a four-week event with participants walking miles and converting them to a points scoring system as in a football game. Any physical activity that can be monitored with mileage equivalents can be used to earn points. During last year’s First Quarter Challenge, WSD employees made a notable achievement recording over 8,000 miles in a six week period. Chairman Bell stated that he is looking forward to both Windham staff and the Board’s participation in this event as it helps maintain and achieve positive physical and mental wellbeing.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Bell adjourned the 260th meeting of the WSD Board of Trustees at 2:34 p.m.

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Chairman

* _____

Secretary

*Signature on file.

Note: Attachments can be requested from the Office of Record, Executive Services.