

ATWATER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT
MINUTES
CITIZENS' OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
APRIL 11, 2006

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Jim Murphy at 5:08 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge was lead by Jim Murphy

III. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Committee members present: Dorothy Bizzini, Jim Murphy, Audrey Sumpter, John Thompson. Also present was Melinda Hennes, Superintendent, Marisa Ploog, CPA, Assistant Superintendent, Allan Patterson, Director of Facilities and Transportation, Jim Murphy, Audrey Sumpter, John Thompson. Members absent were Nelson Crabb and Barbara Dockery.

IV. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE

None

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 10, 2005. ACTION

MOTION by Audrey Sumpter, **SECOND** by Dorothy Bizzini to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2005 COC meeting. **MOTION CARRIED** by a vote of 3-0. **ABSTENTION** by John Thompson.

VI. FACILITIES PROJECT UPDATE

A. Update on Aileen Colburn Modernization

Allan Patterson stated that there were two items holding up the completion of the modernization of Aileen Colburn.

- carpet
- 3-4 missing data jacks taken out of classrooms

Allan stated that the money for the project would be held until the contractor met his obligation

Jim Murphy asked if the clocks were in sync. Allan stated that they were.

B. Update on Bellevue Modernization

Allan explained that there had been negotiations with the general contractor and the electrical contractor regarding completion of a few items. Jim Murphy asked if the raised receptacles in the floor had been taken care of. Allan stated that they had been taken care of but that there were also data jacks missing at Bellevue that had been contracted to be replaced the week of April 14.

C. Discussion of Thomas Olaeta Modernization

Jim Murphy asked about the Thomas Olaeta modernization. Marisa Ploog said that the plans had just been approved and that we are waiting for our stamped plans to be returned to us so that we can submit them to the State for the funding of the project. Marisa explained that there are more applications for funding than there are funds available. She said that we will continue with the application process which will place us in line for funding. Therefore, the District feels that it would be more prudent to wait until the next Bond election is passed to support the project. Jim Murphy asked if the failure of the bond election to pass would cause the District to scrap the project. Marisa explained that it would just defer us. Jim Murphy asked about the cost difference with regard to waiting vs. going ahead now. Superintendent Hennes explained that the State would pay 60% of the inflated cost and that the project would take approximately 2.5 million so the Board decided it would be too risky to go ahead with it at this point in time.

VII. COMMENTS FROM COC MEMBERS

Jim Murphy asked how the postponement of the building of the new school would affect growing enrollment. Superintendent Hennes explained that we would lease portable classrooms if necessary.

Audrey Sumpter asked which school would accommodate the new development on Bell Drive. Allan Patterson explained that those students would attend Mitchell K-6.

The enrollment issue was brought up by Jim Murphy. He asked if we were currently hurting for space. Marisa Ploog explained that we were watching enrollment closely, based on enrollment projections from the school sites, through the remainder of the 2005/06 school year. She stated that particular attention would be paid to the attendance area schools to which overflow students would be returning. In some cases, overcrowding in some areas at the beginning of the 2006/07 school year might be to overflow students to other schools that have available space.

Audrey Sumpter asked about boundaries using Shaffer School as an example. Jim Murphy stated that the middle of Juniper Avenue was one of the boundaries for Shaffer School and Thomas Olaeta. Superintendent Hennes stated that when we populate the Avenue One School, boundaries would be looked at and possibly changed. She stated that forty per cent of the school districts in the State of California were in declining enrollment. She explained that the state population is increasing but that the student population is mobile. The student movement results in growth for some districts and declining enrollment for others. In other words, communities are ageing. Audrey Sumpter asked which school the students living in the new development on Bell Drive would attend and Allan Patterson informed her that those students would attend Mitchell K-6.

Marisa Ploog brought up the land that is in Atwater but actually in the Merced City School District. Superintendent Hennes took us on a mental drive to the location. This particular piece of land lies on the east side of Buhach Road, south of the ballpark and canal, north of Avenue Two. John Thompson stated that he hoped the Board would stay ahead of the developers as far as purchasing land with regard to the inner city enrollment declining and moving to retirement communities. Superintendent Hennes assured him the District was looking well into the future.

Jim Murphy asked about the area of land near Joan Faul Park. Superintendent Hennes stated that there was in fact a 10-acre parcel that the Board members wanted to become a soccer area, etc. She stated that there were community members who wanted an aquatic park. However, the prevailing wage laws must be enforced so the cost to build the aquatic park would be beyond the feasibility of local donations to build. She stated that it would be on May's Board Agenda.

VIII. ADJOURN

MOTION by Dorothy Bizzini, **SECOND** by John Thompson to adjourn.

MOTION CARRIED by a vote of 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 5:30.