



MINUTES

Governing Board Work Study Session

**Tuesday, September 28, 2004
6:00 to 8:00 p.m.**

Desert Sonora Elementary

301 North Carlisle Avenue
Somerton, Arizona

Attending Board	Scott Omer	Martha Camacho	Luis Heredia
Absent Board	Dale Phillips	Leticia Yopez	
Attending Public	Cathy Witmer Rose Arevalo	Judith Bobbitt Elizabeth Merino	Bob Klein

1.a. Call to Order

Board President or Board Clerk

In Mr. Phillips absence, Mr. Omer called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

1.b. Budget Presentation

Ms. Witmer

Ms. Witmer began by explaining that the USFR Chart of Accounts packet takes separates expense codes and give descriptions of how funds are used. When looking at an expense code, they are written in sections (###-###-####-####-###), each section is a different code.

The sections in the Chart of Accounts packet were copied in different colors to distinguish between: Yellow/Funds, Blue/Programs, Salmon/Function, Green/Objects, Gold/Units, Pink/Courses. Review of this packet will familiarize the Board with coding, which in turn will give them a better understanding of Vouchers being presented for approval at meetings.

In addition, to the coding structure, explanations of how money can be used are at the end of each section. The last blue section shows the list of authorized funds and transfers. The last yellow section shows how capital funds can be use. Correct use of this system assures minimal journal entries.

The next thing Mrs. Witmer explained was the Capital Outlay Funds Description packet that shows the 04-05 Proposed Capital Budget. Funds needed for construction of the new facility may be found by reviewing this budget and developing the 2005-06 budget. Unrestricted funds can be carried over, if they're not spent the prior year. There are \$230,000 of unexpended funds that the District has from the former Capital Facilities Board. The funding can be split for schools that were being constructed during that time, those are Desert Sonora and Tierra Del Sol. As staff researches this in more detail, they will bring information to the Board. In addition, Mrs. Bobbitt has asked Spencer Smith for his opinion, to make sure funds are used appropriately.

The District has completed all \$1.6 million deficiency projects. The District wants to keep the building funds interest accruing in order to replace air conditioning units and other high end replacements, as needed. The money can only be used for major renovations, not new construction. Renovation would include all air conditioning units or the entire carpet on a campus, not just a room of carpeting, etc. Mrs. Bobbitt mentioned that the Governor said there are rumors that legislators is trying to do away with full-day kindergarten programs and severely limit funds for school facilities. The Board agreed that the District must move ahead and do the best it can with upcoming construction.

Mr. Klein was checking the State Facilities Board (SFB) website and noticed they posted an opportunity to apply for capital funds for full day kindergarten. He will review the information and advise as appropriate. Mr. Klein explained that SFB allows so many square feet per project and inflation makes material costs skyrocket, it's hard to make ends meet. The Funds available for full day Kindergarten may only be for furniture, fixtures, and equipment. If that's the case, it may relieve other funds for another piece of a project. The Board was frustrated that the SFB doesn't understand that Districts are doing their best with available funds. Mr. Omer mentioned that if a building is started, it has to be completed and funds have to be found to take care of completion.

Mrs. Bobbitt mentioned that she will be compiling information to substantiate the possibility that Gadsden is proposing construction on land that is currently within Somerton School District boundaries. In addition, the District has had discussions with the high school district to see if they are willing to join Somerton District in requesting SFB funds to purchase a block of land for either an elementary, middle, or high school.

Mrs. Bobbitt explained that because the Administration will be housed in the pink building while their new facility is built, Mr. Klein suggested constructing a restroom near Desert Sonora's playground, that students would use after the administration moves to their new facility. Ms. Fernández was pleased, because the new restrooms would be convenient for students on the playground.

Mr. Omer asked that a projection of new faculty be considered when developing budgets. Mrs. Bobbitt said that administrators are basing staffing on projected enrollment. She hopes to have a two or three year plan in place. Title I funding is available but there are always restrictions and strict criteria to follow. The District was lucky to have received the current \$300,000 increase from Title I.

Mrs. Witmer is keeping close watch on growth. October 12 is the 40th day and February 1 is the 100th day. Title I's criteria specifies that only highly qualified staff receive Title I funds, they cannot hold emergency certification and if placed in a classroom for reading, they have to have a reading background.

Mrs. Bobbitt attended a workshop at the Law Conference that Chuck Essigs facilitated. Mr. Essigs said that the Arizona State Retirement System (ASRS) is facing problems as the baby boomers move toward retirement age. This past year was an incredible year for retirees, because many were able to buy back years at low rates. This may not be the case in the future, and employers may have a higher rate in calculating retirement for employees.

Mrs. Bobbitt said she sent a note to Mr. Bill Rhodes to check if AEA is looking at the possibility of Supt. Horne taking 301 funds to pay additional high school tutors for students that are not passing. The problem is that many people believe this is allowed in statute and Mrs. Bobbitt is not sure. Ms. Merino, SEA Representative, who was present, said she would follow up with Mr. Rhodes. Mr. Omer felt the AIMS is not an appropriate measure for student achievement to be judged on. Portions of the AIMS would be difficult at the graduate level.

Mrs. Witmer mentioned that funds are based on a fixed amount for ADM. The District has not seen much growth in the past. The upcoming year may be different. Mrs. Bobbitt said that everyone is predicting a very difficult year for in regards to funding. Legislators are working with people in the public that believe all students should be home schooled.

Mrs. Witmer also presented a template for a presentation that can include Somerton budget information. The presentation takes about two hours. Mrs. Camacho felt the presentation was worthwhile and the Board asked for it to be done in segments. When 301 monies are presented, the Board asked that each area be examined in detail. The Board appreciates the budget sessions and know this will be very helpful in creating the 2005-06 budget. There was no further discussion.

1.c. Adjournment

Board President or Board Clerk

Meeting adjourned a 7:32 p.m.

Signature of Board President/Clerk

Date