

Union Gap School District Board Minutes
Special Meeting, June 7, 2017
7:00 p.m.

Present: Margarita Soto, Chairman
Dianna Grunlose
Maria Rosas
Dan Olson - arrived late
Nicole Rivera

Kurt Hilyard, Superintendent
Stefanie Jespersen, Business Manager
Lisa Gredvig, Principal

Call to order: Chairman Margarita Soto called the special meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The flag salute was given.

Board Discussion: Chairman Margarita Soto opened board discussion about filing the Superintendent position. Current Superintendent Hilyard has resigned and accepted a position with the Ocosta School District. Superintendent Hilyard has strongly recommended the board hire Lisa Gredvig, current principal, as his replacement. Chairperson Margarita Soto gave each board member an opportunity to voice their thoughts and opinions on how they should go about hiring a replacement.

Nicole Rivera voiced that she thinks they need to fill the position as soon as possible with an interim Superintendent.

Maria Rosas said that the best fit for the Superintendent position is someone who knows the school, students, teachers and families.

Diana Grunlose said that as elected board officials they needed to take their time and not rush. She believes that they need time to gather information to select the best option for the community. Diana listed three options that she wants the board to consider: hiring an interim Superintendent, doing a full search for a permanent Superintendent, and doing a search for an interim Superintendent and then another search in January for a permanent replacement.

Dan Olson said that he wants to go out to ad to select a replacement. He emphasized that this is an important decision and the board needs to consider the appearance of fairness. He wants to take time and do what's right for the community and search for an interim superintendent.

Chairman Margarita Soto said that over the past week she has done some research and made some phone calls to WSSDA to get some input on how to address this type of situation. She believes that the board does need to take time in making a decision, however, it is extremely important to have representation and leadership after current Superintendent Hilyard leaves the district. She emphasized that it is particularly important to have a Superintendent while construction is going on. She thinks the best option for all parties involved is to hire an interim for one year and then do a search in January for a permanent replacement. This will ensure the district continues smoothly without any interruptions.

Without discussion amongst the board, Chairman Margarita Soto called for any public comments.

Public Comment: Eighteen members of the public had turned in a form to address the board during public comment. Chairman Margarita Soto announced that they would be limiting each person to 2-3 minutes in the interest of time. All eighteen members of the public were given 2-3 minutes to address the board. One member of the public, Wayne Hawver, presented a petition to hire Lisa Gredvig as Superintendent that was signed by a 90% of the Union Gap School District staff.

Continuation Of Board Discussion: Chairman Margarita Soto opened up board discussion again.
Board Member Maria Rosas said that we are here for the kids and that she thinks having someone in the role of superintendent who knows the students is best. She also mentioned that she wanted the teaching staff to stay.
Board Member Nicole Rivera said that they need to look at all aspects of how this decision will impact the district and its students. She wants to serve the community by offering the best education possible to the students. She urged that by breaking up the current environment in Union Gap or by leaving the

superintendent position vacant while they conduct a search would not be best serving our students. She believes that they should appoint an interim Superintendent. She said that Lisa Gredvig has such a positive relationship with the staff and students and that even her peers at other school districts speak highly of her.

Board Member Diana Grunlose said that she appreciates everyone coming to the meeting and speaking. She emphasized that as elected officials they have a responsibility to deliberate and discuss this decision. She said that we are at a very important crossroads and we shouldn't buckle and not take time to make this decision. She wants the board to take time to consider all the options and discuss the direction we want to take. She emphasized that they need to serve the community members.

A member of the public responded to Diana Grunlose and said that the students and parents already know and have a relationship with Lisa Gredvig, and that if the board decides to hire an outside person as Superintendent the students will not respond well. They went on to ask why they would put the district in jeopardy when there is such an exceptional candidate inside the district.

Diana Grunlose responded saying that they needed to do what is best for the community.

A member of the public responded to Diana Grunlose and said that some parents with students and community members of Union Gap are staff in the room.

Another member of the public voiced that everyone in the room is here for the students. She emphasized that there is currently a teacher shortage and other districts that pay more than Union Gap, but they decide to stay in this district because of the great leadership and environment. She believes it's in the student's best interest to hire Lisa Gredvig.

Board Member Diana Grunlose responded and said that the board needs to come to an agreement together in a private discussion.

A member of the public emphasized again that Union Gap would be very lucky to have Lisa Gredvig take on the role of Superintendent. She urged the board that time to make a decision is now, and that it can't wait until later.

Another member of the public spoke up and asked why the board needs to even look outside the district for a Superintendent when such a great candidate is sitting right in front of them.

A member of the public voiced their concern if the board should not choose to offer Lisa Gredvig the Superintendent position that they would face backlash from the community. Board member Nicole Rivera agreed that there would be backlash.

A member of the public commented that if the board does not hire at least an interim superintendent then it would be the ESD coming in to run the district. They also noted that the reason the board is receiving such an emotional response from the staff is that they feel the board is wanting an option other than Lisa Gredvig as superintendent.

Principal Lisa Gredvig clarified that she wants to be the Superintendent of Union Gap School District. She does not want to be Superintendent at another district. Lisa continued and said that if they don't come together as a board then she doesn't want to take the job, which is a very difficult thing for her to say.

Barbara Groth, Special Education Director, said that there is a severe teacher shortage and our teachers are constantly being recruited by other districts that offer higher pay. She continued and said that our staff stays because of the administrative leadership in Union Gap.

Another member of the public mentioned the numerous awards and distinctions that the district has earned while under the current leadership. They expressed their frustration with the board if they choose to not hire Lisa Gredvig as Superintendent. Staff member stated that Grunlose was making this issue a personal one.

Board member Diana Grunlose responded and said that it is not a personal issue with hiring Lisa Gredvig as Superintendent. She emphasized that there are some things that the district could be implementing that other

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districts are doing such as community involvement and leadership activities. She mentioned Trout Lake and Thorp School Districts.

Melissa Bulter, Physical Education and Leadership teacher, welcomed Diana's ideas for her leadership class.

Board member Maria Rosas argued that it is a very clear decision for her to make to put Lisa in the Superintendent role.

Board
Action:

Board member Nicole Rivera moved to appoint Lisa Gredvig as interim Superintendent for the 2017/18 school year, and that if the board feels she is not suffice for the position they can start the process to look for a Superintendent in January 2018. Maria Rosas seconded the motion.

Dan Olson had a question and asked if Lisa Gredvig had signed her Principal contract for 2017-18 yet. Lisa Gredvig replied that she had not.

Diana Grunlose wanted more time to discuss with the board and to address Lisa Gredvig's qualifications in a closed session prior to a vote on the motion. Several members of the public asked that they take action tonight in the interest of the students and school district. Diana Grunlose replied that the only way they can discuss the qualifications of Lisa Gredvig was in a closed session. Superintendent Kurt Hilyard verified that statement.

Executive
Session:

Chairman Margarita Soto called for an executive session at 8:26pm. All members of the public, Superintendent Kurt Hilyard, Principal Lisa Gredvig and Business Manager Stefanie Jespersion were asked to leave the room.

Call Back
To Order:

Chairman Margarita Soto called the special meeting back to order at 9:10pm.

Continuation
Of Board
Discussion:

Chairman Margarita Soto announced that the board had come to a consensus.

Board Action:

Nicole Rivera withdrew her previous motion. The withdrawal was seconded by Maria Rosas.

Nicole Rivera made the motion to appoint Lisa Gredvig as interim superintendent for the 2017/18 school year; the board will begin the process to hire a Superintendent in January 2018. The motion was seconded by Maria Rivera. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjourn:

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Chairman

Secretary