

Paso Robles Joint Unified School District
Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees
December 7, 2021

MINUTES

A. OPEN SESSION

1. Meeting Protocols Under COVID-19

The meeting protocols were read in both English and Spanish.

2. Attendance/Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m.

Present: Mr. Christopher Arend, Mrs. Dorian Baker, Mr. Chris Bausch, Mr. Lance Gannon, Mr. Tim Gearhart, and Mr. Nathan Williams

B. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Trustee Arend led the pledge of allegiance.

C. ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Interviews and Provisional Appointment of a Trustee

Two groups of six applicants were interviewed for the provisional appointment of Trustee. The applicants were previously given a list of twelve questions, six of which were asked. Each Trustee asked one question, the same question for both interviews.

The interviewees were as follows:

9:00 a.m. – Kenneth E. Enney, Seth Fidalgo, Adelita Hiteshew, Kim Lachance, Cristina Mathers, and Caitlin Vierra.

12:30 p.m. – Tom B. Baker, Jim Cogan, Claire McClure, Rex Thornhill, and Frank Triggs.

Each interviewee was given two minutes to introduce themselves and share their reasons for applying for the position.

The Trustees asked the same one question each to all interviewees and all interviewees answered:

Dorian Baker: “Identify a recent board decision that you felt strongly about, and describe how you would balance community concerns, student needs, state and federal law, staff consideration, and your personal values and beliefs, in order to determine how to vote on the issue.”

Lance Gannon: “What is your opinion of a potential school closure or consolidation in Paso Robles and would you support it?”

Chris Bausch: “What is your opinion of enforcing masks, testing for COVID-19, and potential vaccine mandates for the district?”

Chris Arend: “What is the most pressing problem for the PRJUSD and how should it be addressed?”

Tim Gearhart: “Please describe the Board’s role in District finances.”

Nathan Williams: “This is a non-partisan position. What does that mean to you?”

The Board went to break after the first group from 10:36 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Before breaking, the Board was notified that Christopher Prieto had withdrawn that morning.

The second group began their interviews at 12:30 p.m.

The interviewees were given the same time to introduce themselves and answered the same questions.

At the end of the interview, the Board took a short break at 2:08 p.m. and resumed at 2:20 p.m.

D. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR THIS ITEM

In-person public comment was received from Yessenia Echevarria who spoke of her desire to support and represent Latino children in our schools.

In-person public comment was received from Camille Katz who spoke in favor of a candidate selection that accurately represents our community.

In-person public comment was received from Rosemary Bourgault who asked for a board choice of somebody that wants to help the children and will not get involved in division and politics. The Board then allowed an additional ten minutes of time for any call-in public comment, to allow the total of 20 minutes of public comment for the item.

Call-in public comment was received from John Wittworth thanking the Board for their hard work and effort in making a good choice.

Call-in public comment was received from Desiree Harris regarding the selection of a school board member. Asked the board to consider which applicants could be a responsive board member.

An anonymous caller was allowed by President Arend. He asked the Board to choose somebody with similar beliefs as Jim Reed.

In-person public comment was received from Randall Jordan who also asked the Board to choose somebody with similar conservative beliefs as Jim Reed.

Deliberations began with President Arend asking the Board to create a short list, the top two candidates each member had.

The list was as follows:

Jim Cogan (2), Adelita Hiteshew (2) Cristina Mathers, Seth Fidalgo, Caitlin Vierra, Kenneth Enney (2), Frank Triggs (2), Rex Thornhill

President Arend suggested the Board discuss the top four candidates that had two votes each. He also suggested Cristina Mathers as a fifth candidate. The Board continued this first round of discussion. After discussion, the Board agreed to a straw poll to get the number of candidates down to two; described as giving a thumbs-up for no more than two candidates when each name is called, not a binding formal motion. The results of the poll were Cogan (2), Hiteshew (3), Triggs (4), and Enney (3). Triggs was moved to final consideration and set aside.

Round two was a similar straw poll with now one thumbs-up per Board member for the remaining three. The results of round two were Cogan (0), Hiteshew (3), and Enney (2). Trustee Baker did not vote.

The Board discussed the final two choices of Frank Triggs and Adelita Hiteshew.
A motion failed 2-4 to choose Adelita Hiteshew as Provisional Trustee to the Governing Board
(motion by Nathan Williams, second by Tim Gearhart; Noes: Arend, Baker, Bausch, Gannon).

A motion passed 4-2 to choose W. Frank Triggs as Provisional Trustee to the Governing Board
(motion by Dorian Baker, second by Chris Bausch; Noes: Gearhart, Williams).

E. ADJOURNMENT

A motion passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 3:58 p.m. (motion by Dorian Baker,
second by Nathan Williams).

Chris Bausch, Board Clerk

Chris Arend, Board President