

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD
OF THE HERMOSA BEACH CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Administrative and Education Center
Hermosa Valley School, Multipurpose Room
October 17, 2008**

CALL TO ORDER: President Widman called the meeting to order at 7:35.

MEMBERS PRESENT: In attendance were Board members Lance Widman (president), Linda Beck (clerk), Lisa Claypoole, Barb Zondiros, and Greg Breen.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Linda Beck moved approval of the agenda. Lisa Claypoole seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

BOARD ACTION:

Superintendent:

Discussion/Action on the Superintendent
Selection Process

Hermosa Beach City School District (“HBCSD”) had contracted with The Cosca Group (“TCG”) to assist in the identification and hiring of a Superintendent. Drs. Don Brann and Frank Cosca of TCG presented a summary of their work to date and an outline of the steps in the process.

- On September 17, the HBCSD Board met to identify District strengths and weaknesses; desired characteristics in a Superintendent; and groups whose input the Board would seek in identifying candidates for the Superintendent position.
- On October 1-3, Dr. Cosca met with groups that the Board had identified for the purpose of soliciting input on the same three criteria: District strengths, District concerns, and Superintendent characteristics.
- The purpose of tonight’s meeting is for the Board to review the criteria listed by members of the community, and to choose those criteria that will be incorporated into a brochure to be distributed to potential applicants and to referral agencies.
- The next step, preferably in late October, will be for TCG to draft the brochure and for the Board to review and approve it. TCG will then wheel into action with its network.

Dr. Cosca briefed the Board on his meetings with the various school constituencies to solicit input on the strengths of the District, the concerns facing the District, and the characteristics desired in a superintendent. Dr. Cosca stated that he only acted as scribe in these meetings, and did not interject or facilitate other than to clarify comments that were made. In summary form, his comments were:

- The groups he spoke with expressed no negatives about the Board. Dr. Beck commented that negatives were out there and questioned if the groups had been broad enough in scope. Dr. Cosca reiterated that there were no negatives from the groups he spoke with.
- There is a remarkable consistency between the Board and the community as far as the strengths and weaknesses of the District, and the characteristics desired in a Superintendent. He commented that he found it especially interesting that most folks agreed that the District needs to work on communication, which begs the question of whether we have a communication problem.

- Teachers did not attend the meetings, and Dr. Cosca asked Hermosa Beach Educators Association President David Carver for suggestions on improving teacher turnout. Mr. Carver responded that teachers were not that interested in being involved in the process.

The Board and Drs. Cosca and Brann then spent a bit of time speaking about retention of Superintendents, since several commentators had suggested that the Superintendent's office in HBCSD seemed to have a revolving door. Dr. Brann commented that available research showed that a Superintendent in our area, other than in a district like Los Angeles Unified School District ("LAUSD"), typically stayed at a position for about 6 years. Dr. Cosca commented that it behooves HBCSD to provide adequate pay so that the superintendent does not stray. Mr. Breen asked whether compensation was the primary determinant of longevity, and commented that other factors were likely more important. Dr. Cosca cited the example of Dr. Brann and stated that Dr. Brann had remained at Wiseburn for 20 years and was also highly paid among superintendents. Dr. Brann commented that his primary motivation was his ability and desire to make a continuing contribution to the community in which he grew up. Dr. Cosca stated that his group strove to make long term placements of superintendents, and cautioned the Board not to underestimate pay as a factor in longevity.

The Board then discussed characteristics, citing effective working relationships, breadth of curriculum, ability to learn from others, ability to reconcile differences, building of consensus, visibility, child-centered philosophy, passion, among others.

Dr. Cosca then asked each member of the Board to vote on strengths, weaknesses, and characteristics, selecting from the list of characteristics developed by the Board and the community. The summary of that polling is as follows:

Strengths:

- Outstanding teachers and staff
- High API scores
- HBCSD is an anchor in the community
- Large active parent support base
- Award winning schools
- Graduates succeed in higher education and life
- Tremendous community involvement

Areas of concern:

- Improve communications
- More community cohesion/ mend relationships
- Classroom and campus space – enrollment growth
- Board/ staff/ administration relations
- Continuity of superintendent tenure
- Mending relationships
- Open and honest in all above areas

Characteristics:

- Strong, sincere communicator
- Effective problem solver
- Diplomatic
- Believe in community of Hermosa Beach
- Child-centered
- Team builder

A follow up meeting to discuss the contents of the brochure will be held Monday or Tuesday, time and date to be confirmed after participants have a chance to check calendars.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 9:15 upon motion by Barbara Zondiros, seconded by Linda Beck.

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS/ EVENTS:

The following is a schedule of meetings/events for the Hermosa Beach City School District:

October

10/17 **Special School Board Meeting, Hermosa Valley MPR, 7:30pm**
10/18 & 19 PTO Family Portraits Fundraiser
10/20 **School Board Meeting; HB Council Chambers 7:30pm – NOTE DATE CHANGE**
10/20 – 10/24 Minimum Days at Both Schools due to Parent Teacher Conferences
Red Ribbon Week
10/24 Annual PTO Halloween Carnival, Hermosa Valley Field, 4:30pm
10/29 Valley Vision & Hearing Screenings

November

11/03 School Site Council; Valley MPR 3:30pm
11/07 Flag Ceremony
11/10 & 11 Veteran's Day Holiday, No School
11/12 **School Board Meeting, HB Council Chambers 7:30pm**
11/13 Holiday Boutique, View MPR
11/17 PTO Meeting, Valley Library 3:30pm
11/24-11/28 Thanksgiving Holiday Break, No School

President

Clerk