

Governing Council Retreat MINUTES - FINAL

July 22, 2017

9:08: Meeting Called to Order
Pledge of Allegiance

Dennis motioned to approve the agenda, Brianne seconded

Mike welcomed everyone present: Dennis Walsh, Brianne Watkins, Adrian Morris, Mike Timmons, Denise Gilson, Mary Cox and Kim Schaffer

Discussion of why we survived fiscally this year: The county allowed CVCS to use loan money towards expenditures on the new buildings.

The meeting is to refresh memory of financial challenges and the scale of shortfall in 2019 FY
Where are we now and potential challenges.
Remainder of time is devoted to strategies to help us financially.

Karen Bailey Bowman has already helped by working out a deal to replace transformers that will save CVCS at least \$8,000 a year.

Additionally, Karen is considering some solar energy funds.

Mary, we are at our max of what we can receive through the funding formula with only 170 students unless the state can drastically increase the unit value. We discussed at the last GC meeting what 10 more students would do for us:
10 more students are not 10 times the value of a students. There is a unit value. These students would be plugged into the middle school. If these 10 were turned into units may become 18 program units. Multiply this by the unit value, so this moving figure could potentially get us \$70,000. This would help, but the district's enrollment is declining and if that is happening, they are not likely to give us the money.

The attack on the small school size adjustment by the legislature. We currently get 25.5 units. That is \$100,000 in our budget. The talk is of Phasing this down over 5 years would be a hit every year. The district will most likely be impacted as well. Be prepared for this continued focus needs to be on our radar. Not even scaling back is okay.

Small school size adjustment would be worth talking to Gail Armstrong about. We can always hope for the price of gas to go way up 😊 Until the state recovers, we won't easily recover.

Dennis: An option would be to go to a state charter so we don't have to give the district the 2%. Mary: State charters give 2% to the state.

Discussion of how much we would spend on food and transportation if we were a charter. Also does the district give us what we are supposed to. Mary said IDEA we really do get what we need.

Mike asked if anyone knows any of the state education committee members. Are there any questions on the underlying budget issues?

5b: LPA Reductions by PSCOC

Mary questioned what the reason for the proposed reductions to the LPA grant.

There has always been a caveat to the grant that if there were more participants, then the \$ amount for the reimbursement could go down.

This grant is primarily for charter schools. But Mary believes when Zimmerly was under construction, the district was getting this money.

When we finished the MPR, we fell to the bottom on the capital funding list which is statewide.

Dennis: County will have this loan paid off in 2 ½ to 3 years, if worse comes to worse, we may be able to refinance with the county

Mary: Another part of this is to access the bond money. We must make sure we get a fair share of this from the district. Typically, we have received 500,000 for a 4-year period.

Karen: No statutory requirement for disbursement

Mary: The state does expect charters to be put into their master facilities plan. This could put the district in danger of receiving fewer or not funds the next bond cycle.

The last bond election, the district put out the proposed uses of how the money would be used and CVCS was not in this. This is unusual. The SCS board has been adamant to follow the plan.

We have not seen anything about what it will be used for.

The PSCOC has a question asking if the school is on the plan.

We will make an appointment with the new superintendent explaining how we have received money in the past and present this so we can have assurance that we will receive the money.

For years, it was used to save for the facilities. The bond money is where we had saved \$850,000 for the new buildings. In fact, we requested and received the bond money early, so we could use it to begin construction.

The district knows that if they have unhappy tax payers they could be voted out.

Karen: How will we approach the next PSCOC meeting because of her lesson learned at the last meeting. Kim and Mike will attend. The 20% reduction is on the agenda. Joe Guillen was the PSCOC member that had some very intense and detailed questions.

A little reduction in the LPA wasn't too impactful in the past...

Mike: The PSCOC should align this with the bond calendar to make sure everyone has an avenue to use. Karen: This is not the SEG rule where everything is equal for each student. The tax base of Los Alamos is different than that of Socorro. The consequences should not impact those poorer counties.

Our focus at the meeting is what would happen to the school:

Mary: We would have to find \$25,000 somewhere else. WE do not have this in our operating budget. How sympathetic will they be to use the bond money? Yet if we do, we have nothing to do anything. There is no option to use the operational funds.

What is our strategy for the August meeting?

Find out the formula for the 20% funding reduction.

Denise said the CVCS template idea would be helpful. We would need to write and send these as well as have copies of these at the August 11th meeting that Kim and Mike and possibly other GC members will receive.

Denise where would 20% come from?

Mary: Lay off an EA or

After the cash balance reduction and SEG cuts, we had only \$40,000 cash balance in FY2017 compared to the \$100 balance last year.

The cushion is not to be counted on. We lost

We are limited in staff that we could cut. Most are mandated positions. The PE teacher is also impacted now because we use it to meet our budget, before we are approved for our LPA money.

The importance of the PE program the children,

In this letter, we want to focus on the loss of getting upwards of \$100 K

Dennis Budget is 1.2 million. (\$1,253,000 So an 8% reduction) What is hurting us is losing the cash balance, which will continue to go down.

5c Strategies to reduce costs in school operations

Thanks to Karen for what she has done with Socorro Electric Coop to reduce funding
Karen said she found out that Santa Fe Public Schools received the Solar Grant and James Brown at the Sun Power Solar suggested reducing the transformer sizes to take away the demand costs.

This can limit the buildings on the line along the back of campus (Blue Bldgs. and music room and Teal C/D)

PE Teacher:

Kirsten isn't doing just an elementary program, she is teaching middle school PE. How much time does she spend on Middle school? Ask the district how they fund their middle school.

Kirsten teaches 8th grade health, mid school PE and elementary PE.

Solar Panel Project may be on hold because it is not for charter schools. Regina will discuss this with us later. Roof top panels

Albuquerque Academy has been doing solar, off the grid energy for years.

Mary, if we cannot get the bonds, that is another place to advocate for use.

Karen: Drill a well. We have 2.3 acres. Something to look at. State engineer said it was possible.

SWCD can match some funding for watering.

Reduce of sewer costs for summer. We have a very high sewer bill in the summer for the MPR. Water costs have not gone up a lot in the past several years.

Costco having a sale on shade blinds for 2 of the classrooms that face west. UV film to reduce heat is another option.

Entry near art room may be another place for this.

Swamp Coolers for MPR are not sufficient in the summer (Mary)

Regina Wheeler Solar Power Project: positive Energy Solar Presentation on what it would take for CVCS to become solar operated. Power Point. We would have to join with the city or County for a joint application since we cannot apply for the funding as a charter school alone. It was suggested that the county be approached first since we are already teaming with them for the new buildings.

The question was raised by Karen whether we should pursue this through the schools or the county. If we pursued this through a 20-year loan, it would not add anything to our bill except an exceptional cold winter.

Denise suggested we ask the district just to make sure and extend the offer to them first.

Dennis: It would be an investment for them. Discussion that ensued suggested we meet with Superintendent Hendrix to present the idea that we team through the district.

Mike is happy to talk with the superintendent about this.

Action Items for the next month by Admin and GC Members

Template for CVCS letter to the PSCOC members on a Google Doc

Send a template

Request Superintendent attend the next meeting, August 16th, if not request he meet with Mike and myself.

Attend PSCOC meeting August 11th in Santa Fe (Mike, Kim, Mary. Brianne Watkins will sit in the office for Kim and Mary.

Divide and conquer to discuss cuts to our school. Adrian: Gail Armstrong

Mike will contact: Bill Soules and Mimi Stewart. Senate Education Committee regarding Legislative study committee to determine the optimum size for a charter school.

From the point of view of the citizens of NM that it isn't helping draw people to New Mexico.

Mary will contact Rhiannon and Mike regarding funding for PE and the district's Facility Master Plan.

Adrian: CPR class on the 15th at 8 am
Kirsten could attend?

Kim is on the agenda for the Socorro SWCD meeting on August 14th at noon to thank them formally for the help they provided

We need to look at developing our own facilities long term plan
Refrigerated air for MPR, etc.

Aug 10th Adrian will represent for the GC at the Parent Orientation. He will have sign-ups for GC committees

Parent request will be sent out for help moving brick Monday and Tuesday next week

Motion to adjourn: Karen
Adrian 2nd

Adjourned at 12:42 pm

FINAL