

MINUTES

8/ A work session on Excise Tax was held on December 8, 2008 in the First Floor Conference Room of the District Administration Center. Chair Nancy Bigley called the work session to order at 4:30 p.m.

Board members present included Chair Bigley, Laurie Adams, Al King, Jonathan Light, and Garry Weber. Others identified in attendance included Nancy Golden, Brett Yancey, Tom Lindly, Keith Hollenbeck, Jeff DeFranco, Alison Covey, William Lewis, Karen Lewis, Judy Burton, Bethel School District Superintendent Colt Gill, and OSBA Legislative & Public Affairs Specialist Expert David Williams.

- **Excise Tax**

Brett Yancey introduced Colt Gill, Bethel School District Superintendent, who had already implemented the Excise Tax option in his district, and David Williams, Legislative and Public Affairs Specialist for the OSBA, who was considered one of the experts in construction excise tax.

David Williams commented that OSBA was instrumental in crafting this legislation in 2007, noting this was the first new taxing authority for school districts to be able to raise revenues in over 100 years. He described it as a tax on new square footage construction in school districts that was locally determined, within the guidelines of the bill.

Mr. Williams noted the bill outlined the maximum amount that could be assessed on new square footage up to \$1.00/ square foot residential or \$.50/ square foot non-residential with a per building permit cap of \$25,000 overall. He continued that the tax was paid for by the builder at the time of the permit issue, although probably passed on to the eventual purchaser of the property. A district board could choose to assess any variation below the \$1.00 or \$.50 amounts. He said that minimum and maximum exemptions were spelled out in the bill, noting that some districts had chosen to exempt smaller projects, e.g., up to 1000 square feet, in order to avoid taxing remodel additions.

Mr. Williams explained that annual increases to the assessment amounts were allowed, based on a national construction cost index. In response to a question by Garry Weber, Mr. Williams said he was not sure if a district first used the tax after a 5-year period, whether they would begin with the current \$1/ \$.50 tax rates or the higher rates established for the current year, but that he would find the answer. He clarified that there was a provision near the beginning of the bill that would be repealed after ten years, barring any other local government—cities and counties—from implementing a construction excise tax during the initial ten years.

Mr. Williams explained the steps for implementation of the excise tax: 1) identify who and how to collect the tax, normally the local agency that issues building permits; 2) adopt a long-term facilities plan; 3) enact the tax by resolution, including all the mechanics of the tax; and 4) involve the community. He noted that local government could retain no more than 1% for administration of the tax collection, although the school district could agree to pay any amount above that out of general operating funds.

Mr. Gill added that counties and cities were not obligated to administer the tax, so that administrative fees were an important part of the discussion. He commented that with Lane County the agreement made for the first year was 1% for administrative fee plus additional collection cost fees of up to 2% to cover actual costs of administration, plus amounts to cover credit card fees and returned checks. For the City, fees had been 12-14% initially. He said that in June 2009, there would be a meeting to discuss actual administrative costs.

Mr. Williams agreed that the school districts were vulnerable in these negotiations with local governments,

and that problems would be settled in the courts.

He explained that allowable expenditures were complimentary to bond funds, and would include pretty much anything with a user life of more than one year. The funds could even be used to pay down existing bond debt, he continued.

Mr. Williams remarked that by July 2008, the number of districts having implemented the excise tax was in the mid to high 40's. Because 40% of the districts contained 80% of the student population, more than half the students in the state had been covered with this tax so far, he said. In Lane County, the districts that had instituted the tax were Oakridge, South Lane, Bethel, Fern Ridge, and Siuslaw.

Colt Gill reported that when the construction excise tax was announced, Bethel School District had just finished a long-range enrollment study and local construction assessment, showing 560 new homes, 230 duplexes and 150 family unit apartments coming in within six years, after which the district would be built out. He said the Bethel school board communicated with the local community about the tax and what the funds would be used for, which was mainly furnishings and technology. He noted that anticipated revenue was between \$800,000 and \$1.3 million over a six-year period.

Mr. Gill continued, saying the district had contacted all the housing developers to talk about the tax, and noted that one of the developers was asking that the district retract the tax because of the current general economic downturn. He said that the general community had responded positively about the tax, feeling that new residents moving into the district should help pay for additional school construction. Mr. Gill explained that there were many details about such things as who would be the district liaison, an appeals process, refund processes, and development of new forms. He noted that the forms used by Bethel and Oakridge were available on a county website and could be adjusted for other districts to use.

Mr. Gill also noted that no funds had yet been collected, and that both the County and City had declared they would not enforce the tax collection, so that the issue of collection still needed to be addressed.

Responding to a question from Ms. Adams about why this funding channel was adopted by Bethel School District, seeing that the funds collected were not major amounts, Mr. Gill said that every other avenue for funding for new school construction had been exhausted. He also noted that the City and County had worked together on the issue at the time Bethel was adopting the plan, since it was a new issue for everyone.

Brett Yancey remarked that some investigative work had been done prior to bringing the issue to the Board, learning that the County had given an amount that would have been potentially available to Springfield Public Schools in 2007, which was in a range between \$73,000 – \$178,000 for the County. He said the City had given a square footage amount available citywide, which included River Bend and many other areas, of 300,000 square feet. He mentioned that exempted properties from that number was unknown and would require viewing each permit to determine exemption status. From collaboration with Mr. DeFranco, Mr. Yancey offered a combined estimate range of \$100,000 to \$350,000 or \$400,000 annually, dependent on economic times and other issues.

Mr. DeFranco added that the opportunity would change over the next few years as areas completed their development. Garry Weber noted there was a possible 6-year window for good use of the excise tax, if the economy turned around soon, and that \$1.2 million would be helpful for developing technology in the schools.

Mr. Yancey said that Portland had raised \$400,000; Hillsboro had raised \$354,000, while Beaverton had raised only \$82,000 because less building was occurring there.

Mr. DeFranco clarified that the excise tax funds would not build new schools for the District, but could help with facility maintenance and perhaps procurement of property for new schools. He said this could be a revenue stream that would help acquire property in Southeast Springfield where enrollments were increasing. He noted that projects were surfacing, such as breaking water mains, which were unforeseen and needed funding. As well, he said, because of the challenging economy, needs for additional funds were greater and over a few years the excise tax funds could have a substantial impact, raising potentially \$800,000 to \$1 million. He noted the bill was originally brought forward with bipartisan support and was endorsed by the Oregon Home Builders Association.

Superintendent Golden noted that in talks with Superintendent Russell she had learned that Eugene schools were working first on a \$17 million levy, and would look into using the excise tax later. Mr. Williams added that a number of districts had waited until after the November election because of bond issues and not wanting competing messages.

Mr. Williams clarified about the cost inflator that it would be applied to the limits in the bill, so that in theory a higher rate might apply. Mr. Yancey remarked that political pressure could be less now in poor economic times than it would be in a more booming economy. Mr. Williams responded that builders would probably complain in either good or bad times. Mr. DeFranco added that the current timing was good for getting the tax into place to be ready for more opportune times.

Mr. Williams remarked that 99% of taxpayers would never pay this tax, but it would be paid only by those getting a building permit. He added that an alternate government agreement had been crafted that was geared mostly toward smaller districts where the builder would write a separate check made out to the school district that would simply be mailed to the school district. This process alleviated the fee administration problem.

Ms. Adams noted that Springfield had an advantage of being set up already to collect for Willamalane. She also expressed that the local Realtor Association would be absolutely opposed to this tax.

Mr. DeFranco mentioned it would be a one-time political hit, which was an advantage. Jonathan Light added that the District was currently being negatively impacted by the economic downturn, noting that a positive argument would be that the immediate impact would be minimal.

Mr. Yancey noted that a theoretical reason for an appeal would be where a home fire necessitated replacement of the home. Mr. Williams said that many districts were developing language around how to sift out hardship issues. He noted that there was yet no resolution regarding replacement square footage.

Mr. DeFranco suggested that some district staff could meet with Mr. Williams and other colleagues to learn what other boards had done and what best practices had been developed in terms of addressing exemption issues and details of how the excise tax process had been moved forward. Superintendent Golden added that a proposal could be brought back to the board, following the research.

Mr. Williams clarified that potential changes in the legislation might take until May of 2009, adding that his main issue would be modification of the bill to be clear that issuance of a building permit was contingent on payment of the tax.

It was agreed that a proposal would be brought to the board following group research on how other districts had dealt with the excise tax.

- **Questions Regarding Tonight's Agenda**

Laurie Adams commented that three resolutions were on the board meeting agenda: Resolution 1 was to amend the constitution to clean it up, and Resolution 2 to establish rules of OSBA access to endowment principal. Resolution 3, she added, was already familiar to the board. Regarding the second resolution, she wanted to be caught up on the endowment.

Mr. Williams clarified that when the health insurance trust fund was shut down, the reserve fund was transferred to OSBA to be held in its endowment. He said the OSBA board created an endowment committee to decide how the money would be held, and what would be the access points to getting at the principle or interest.

Ms. Adams asked what the OSBA budget was annually, saying \$50 million seemed to be a huge endowment. Mr. Williams responded that the annual budget was maybe about \$4 million. He said the insurance trust earlier provided approximately 60% of OSBA's operating revenues, and that was in the \$2.5 million range. He thought the goal of the endowment committee was to maintain the level of service that OSBA provided without buying down the corpus of the reserve. He said that membership dues were in the 12% range of the budget. Mr. DeFranco found an online account showing the annual budget for 2007-08 to have been \$5.1 million. It was noted that if the endowment was to be shut down altogether, the OSBA would be in trouble.

Chair Bigley adjourned the work session at 5:52 p.m.

A Regular Meeting of the Lane County School District No. 19 Board of Education was held on December 10, 2008.

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER AND FLAG SALUTE

The Springfield Board of Education meeting was called to order in the boardroom of the Administration Center at 7:02 p.m. by Board Chair Nancy Bigley and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Attendance

Board members in attendance included Laurie Adams, Nancy Bigley, Al King, Jonathan Light, and Garry Weber. Others identified in attendance included Nancy Golden, Logan Lewis, Cassidy Peterson, Alisha Whitehurst, Sal Echeverria, Torii Phillips, Marshall Curry, Kyle Barley, Brett Yancey, Dawn Strong, Jeff DeFranco, Karen Lewis, Tom Lindly, Keith Hollenbeck, Matt Coleman, Sara Ticer, Judy & John Svoboda, Yvonne Atteberry, Alison Covey, Laura Pavlat, Sheryl Ott, Chris Reiersgaard, Judy Burton, Lesa Haley, Sara Ranjbar, Ed Mendelsshon, and representatives of Boy Scout Troop 171.

2. WORK SESSION SUMMARY

• Excise Tax

Chair Bigley asked Garry Weber to give a summary of the work session. Mr. Weber explained that in the past couple years, school districts around the state had been taking advantage of a funding option made available through the state legislature, which was an excise tax on new construction. He noted that David Williams from the Oregon School Boards Association had come from Salem to present the board with considerations about the possibility of enacting the tax in the Springfield area, for both commercial and residential new construction. As well, Bethel's Superintendent, Colt Gill, had presented pros and cons about his district's implementation of this tax. Mr. Weber remarked that over the next few months the board would consider this issue.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Bigley called for public comment. There was none.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

A. November 10, 2008 Board Minutes

B. Personnel Action, Resolution #08-09.018

Dawn Strong recommended that the Board of Directors approve the personnel action for licensed employees as reflected in Resolution #08-09.018 as listed below:

Change of Contract Status

Linda Berg

Motion: Laurie Adams, seconded by Jonathan Light, moved to accept the Consent Agenda. The motion passed unanimously, 5:0.

5. ACTION ITEMS

A. 403(b) Plan Document Adoption Agreement, Resolution #08-09.019

Brett Yancey recommended that the Board of Directors approve the 403(B) plan documents adoption agreement as presented and as required by the Internal Revenue Service. He noted that the IRS was looking for more accountability and responsibility from the employer side, so that the district now had oversight responsibilities, including such things as explaining to employees their rights concerning any changes being made.

Motion: Garry Weber, seconded by Laurie Adams, moved for approval.

Al King declared a possible conflict of interest.

The motion passed unanimously, 5:0.

B. Property Line Adjustment Between School District and Relief Nursery, Resolution #08-09.020

Jeff DeFranco recommended that the Board of Directors approve the property line adjustment and declaration of private joint-use access easement with the Relief Nursery. He noted the reason for the property line adjustment was for the nursery to build a 14,500 square foot facility and parking lot, requesting to move the property line 105 feet to allow the construction. In return the nursery would deed to the school district a 40-foot strip of land at the north end of their property connecting to and allowing access to 42nd Street. Mr. DeFranco stated that the district's property appraiser's opinion was that the values of each side of the trade were equal, noting that the value of the district's property would be increased by 30% or greater because of the access to 42nd Street.

Al King noted that Superintendent Golden was on the board of directors for Relief Nursery and had kept herself recused from these negotiations.

Motion: Al King, seconded by Garry Weber, moved for approval. The motion passed unanimously, 5:0.

C. 2008 OSBA Officers and Resolutions Election, #08-09.020

Nancy Golden recommended that the Springfield Board of Directors vote for one candidate for each of the positions of Secretary/Treasurer, Vice President, and President-Elect; take action on Resolution 1, Resolution 2, and Resolution 3; and direct the superintendent or designee to submit this vote at OSBA's E-Voting Center no later than midnight on December 15, 2008.

Mr. Weber recommended deferring to Laurie Adams, since she served on the Legislative Policy Committee for OSBA, and to consider each resolution separately.

Motion: Laurie Adams, seconded by Garry Weber, moved to nominate Dave Krumbein for Secretary/Treasurer; Scott Pillar for Vice President, and Beth Gerot for President-Elect. The motion passed unanimously, 5:0.

Resolution 1: Amends the OSBA constitution with housekeeping changes that reflect the adopted OSBA governance model.

Motion: Laurie Adams, seconded by Jonathan Light, moved for approval. The motion passed unanimously, 5:0.

Resolution 2: Amends the constitution and establishes the rule of OSBA access to endowment principal.

Motion: Laurie Adams, seconded by Garry Weber, moved for approval.

Mr. King remarked that he would present a protest vote against Resolution 2. He noted that this resolution resulted from OSBA's removal of \$45 million from their new insurance program, which he understood caused a higher benefits cost to districts around the state. The resulting impact, he believed, was less affordability for health insurance for participants in the program. He commented that Springfield Public Schools had not been involved in the decision since the district had its own insurance plan.

Ms. Adams noted that the district had no standing then to vote no on the resolution, to which Mr. King responded that she was correct and he was simply offering a protest vote. Mr. Weber added that the OSBA endowment committee had noted that the principle of the endowment fund would be protected.

The motion passed with 4 in favor and Mr. King voting in opposition.

Resolution 3: Adopt the recommended 2009 OSBA Legislative Policies and Priorities.

Motion: Laurie Adams, seconded by Jonathan Light, moved for approval. The motion passed unanimously, 5:0.

6. REPORTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Student Communication

• Thurston High

Logan Lewis reported being very proud of the school's football team, which made it all the way to the championship game, and ended the season in second place. He thanked Springfield High School for their supportive effort in dressing in black and red colors that Friday. He also noted their canned food drive had been very successful, having collected 7,777 pounds of food between the two schools. Thurston won the competition between the two schools, so that Marshall Curry had to shave his head, as agreed. Logan further reported a project called Tree of Joy where each classroom supported a child from an elementary school with toys and other things needed by the family for the Christmas season. He noted that Thurston's theater class was presenting *Wrestling Season* on Thursday and Friday, and the choir would present their show on December 18 and 19, 2008.

Cassidy Peterson reported that Thurston's seniors won the powder puff game with a score of 15-12, after having been considered underdogs. She said that freshman elections had gone well, with an all-time high of eleven candidates running for office, with four winning seats in the leadership class. As well, three class representatives had been added to the leadership class.

• Springfield High School

Kyle Barley reported that Springfield also had a Tree of Joy that was begun the week before and that about ninety students from seven elementary schools had been supported. He said that gifts would be delivered later in the week. He noted that the next day there would be an assembly regarding the new OSAA rules for the student section for which the leadership committee had made a video about encouraging more positive types of cheers rather than negative ones directed at the opposing teams. He explained that the ruling disallowed any comments, cheers or actions directed at the opponents, and held a fine of \$125.

Marshall Curry reported that the choir concert would be presented the next night, December 9, 2008, at 7:30 p.m., that the orchestra concert would be Thursday, December 11, 2008, and the band concert would be Monday, December 15, 2008. In addition a dinner theater would be presented January 9-10, 2009. He also pointed out that fellow SHS Mike Travess was selected as Oregon's Wendy's High School Heisman state finalist.

- **Academy of Arts and Academics**

Torii Phillips reported that two big events were coming up the next Wednesday, December 10, 2008, which were an open house at 6:30 p.m. consisting of gallery exhibits of student art completed in arts core and academic classes which would be displayed throughout the whole building, and also Artebration, beginning at 7:30 p.m. She also said there was now an advanced choir class offered since a teacher was found. She noted that a craft fair had sold their crafts at the school the week before.

- **Gateways High School**

Sal Echeverria reported that breakfast and hot lunches with a greater variety had been added to their meal service, which was a great improvement over having only sandwiches available. He thanked board members for their support in helping to make this happen. Chair Bigley noted that hearing feedback from the students allowed the board to know what was needed.

Alisha Whitehurst reported that Gateways' 5th annual holiday dinner would be presented Thursday, December 18, 2008 from 12:00 – 1:30pm. She invited board members to attend, and noted that guests would include parents, family, children and surrounding businesses. She explained that staff and community members donated food, which would be cooked at Springfield Middle School.

B. Financial Statement

Brett Yancey provided an overview of the 2008-2009 Revenue/Expenditure Report as of November 30, 2008. He noted that it was very similar to the one presented a week earlier at the Budget Committee work session. On the revenue side, he said, was projected a decrease in local property tax receipts due to a weak economy and high unemployment, as well as a reduction in state school fund support and reduction in school improvement funds. The latter two, he noted, were tied to the governor's reductions announced in mid-November.

Major reductions were necessary due to the decreased revenue forecast, he continued, in terms of supplies, materials and capital outlay, as outlined last week. Approximately 25% had been cut from school supply allocations, and the majority of the rest of the cuts had come out of the central office department budget, with reductions in such things as computer replenishment and replacement. In addition, all contracted services were being cut back or eliminated, and discretionary budgets for central office had been significantly depleted.

C. New Schools Construction

Jeff DeFranco noted that the new Springfield Times newspaper had done a story on the new welcome walls at the elementary schools. He introduced the 2008 annual report for the public on bond progress, which chronicled the progress of the new schools and highlighted the four basic bond projects for the coming

summer—a heating and ventilating system, crime prevention fencing at Hamlin Middle School and substantial ADA upgrades at Springfield and Thurston High Schools.

Mr. DeFranco continued with a slideshow showing construction progress at the elementary schools, including structural steel work, pour-back concrete work around where the tilt-up concrete walls were erected, steel decking for the roofing and insulation, and concrete piers for play areas at both schools. He reported that the asbestos abatement contract for existing schools was out to bid and that the fixtures, furniture and equipment (FFE) planning was taking place at both schools. The final current piece, he noted, was planning for the transition out of the existing schools, allowing for packing and salvaging of valuables before demolition and asbestos abatement processes, working within a tight schedule. He planned to bring a proposal for addressing the transition issues to the January board meeting.

Responding to a question by Garry Weber regarding the FFE, Mr. DeFranco said that Virco had done the design and legwork and had been involved in all planning meetings, at no cost to the district. He had found the company to be very service-oriented, noting they had provided similar service for the Arts Academy. Mr. Yancey added that Virco would provide room-by-room floor plans with all the furniture and cabinetry laid out.

In response to questions by Mr. Light, Mr. DeFranco clarified that the original asbestos abatement estimate was approximately \$500,000 per school and it looked to be coming in close to the budgeted amount. He noted that overall construction costs were pretty well on schedule and that there was a shared goal with Facilities, Finance and principals that any saved resources would revert to bond basic projects.

Mr. Weber commented regarding any construction contingency remainder, that he would like to have a report to the board perhaps in March reminding the board of any priorities that had been set for those funds. Mr. DeFranco remarked that there were two primary outstanding projects that could be done at the eleventh hour, the electronic reader board and new playground equipment. He reminded the board that the date for substantial completion of the new schools was June 12, 2009, with continuing work over the summer to September 1, 2009, so that it might be a little later than March that such a report could be made. He noted that some of the playground equipment could be recycled, while other portions could not be moved. If new playground equipment was prioritized for the new schools, the older movable equipment could be placed at existing schools.

D. Wellness Committee Update

Brett Yancey indicated a report included in the board meeting packet which outlined focus items for the school year, as well as focus items for each monthly meeting. He reminded the board that Chair Bigley served on this committee and that Bobbi Phillips, Nutrition Services Supervisor, led the committee.

E. United Front Requests & Update

Jeff DeFranco reported that Nancy Bigley, as board representative, had attended a meeting with Jim Smith and Kirk Bailey of Smith Dawson and Andrews along with Superintendent Golden and himself a few weeks ago at which current standings for previous funding year requests and potential future funding opportunities were presented.

In terms of current requests, he noted one on the House side, under Labor, Education, Health and Human Services for \$150,000 for the Arts Matter Initiative. He said prospects were not good for the lame duck Congress to pass a budget, though Jim Smith's best guess was that Congress would put a budget together for the President Elect at the time of the inauguration that would include an earmark for the Arts Academy. He noted that even if the initiative was funded, it would be a number of months before the money would be available.

Looking forward to the next year, United Front felt the district's three requests were good—one for Arts Matter, another for a consultant and architectural design of an integrated health and social services center, and a third for energy efficiency audit and planning district-wide. It was recommended that these requests be cleaned up and brought forward again.

He also mentioned having met with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) earlier regarding funding for a science center at Agnes Stewart site for a wetlands study with interpretative signage and instructional time. He said that project might be ripe to bring forward and that he would like some feedback from the board.

Mr. DeFranco noted that President Elect Obama's stimulus package was a big issue at the meeting, and that the local jurisdictions of Lane County were to sign a joint request letter to be sent to Obama, Merkley, Wyden and DeFazio to identify such things as infrastructure funding, saying that the local jurisdiction was in support of this resource and to offer examples of how such resources could be used. He said that a draft was being worked on and would be given to Nancy Bigley to sign on behalf of the school board. As well, he said, it was important for Lane County to make a point on state deficit reduction. These funding avenues could earn more money than would ever come from individual earmarks.

Responding to a question by Garry Weber about where funds from an Obama stimulus package would go in Lane County, Mr. DeFranco remarked that it was hoped to make the funds less restrictive than, for instance, federal highway dollars. He said the funds were meant for projects that were "shovel ready," that at the latest the contract could be let by the end of 2009, and preferably work would be performed in 2009. The hope would be that when the money came to the state, the district would have some political leverage through the offices of Merkley, Wyden and DeFazio, though at this point it was still a mystery as to how the money would be channeled.

Chair Bigley added that besides the projects needing to be "shovel ready," another priority was for them to be "green."

Jonathan Light asked if there had been discussions about additional funding of IDEA or No Child Left Behind. Mr. DeFranco responded that Smith Dawson and Andrews' focus on resource rather than policy, but they did provide a pulse on policy. Their sense about No Child Left Behind was that it could be completely dismantled or it could keep some basic tenets and be redesigned. They asked the district to have internal conversations about priorities for No Child Left Behind reauthorization, if that was to come up, so that a proposal could be ready for Congressman DeFazio and Senators Merkley and Wyden. He said the funding for those programs had not been addressed.

Mr. Light said he was more interested in IDEA, since what had been given was far behind the original promised amount. Mr. DeFranco said there was a sense of a dichotomy in Washington this year, which was that there was no money because of the war and the economy, so that annual spending items would be limited. At the same time, a big economic stimulus needed to be made, so that a lot of money would be spent in areas where jobs could be created.

Al King commented that he thought it would be enjoyable and productive for the district administrators and board to put together recommendations for changes for No Child Left Behind to present to legislators, especially since the district enjoyed high visibility and credibility with the state legislators. Superintendent Golden noted that Senator Wyden had traveled all over the state, and that representatives from COSA to AASA to NSBA had put together recommendations regarding No Child Left Behind. She suggested the board look at what these organizations were recommending and to make sure it was on everyone's agenda and to know when it would be appropriate to add the district's voice, for instance, at the January 5, 2009 meeting with the legislators.

Mr. King and Ms. Adams suggested it would be more appropriate to bring recommendations to the federal delegates. Superintendent Golden recommended then that Mr. DeFranco and Ms. Bigley could take this forward on the federal level. She added that it would be beneficial to research what the other organizations were lobbying for and to present a personalized story about what had worked for the district and what had not. Mr. King noted that he hoped Superintendent Golden would put together feedback for the district from her experience and knowledge gained from meetings around the state, and then the board could determine if anything was missing from a local standpoint that could be advocated for.

Mr. Light agreed that it would be important to understand any new proposals regarding No Child Left Behind.

Mr. DeFranco remarked that what he was hearing as top priorities were economy and energy independence, so that in the first few months it would be important to discuss the economic stimulus package and what it would mean for the district. At the same time, he suggested, background work on No Child Left Behind could be done in order to be prepared when the issue arose. Superintendent Golden added, from her earlier experience in Washington, that she felt it was important to broaden the agenda from those two major areas, and she would make it a priority to work towards creating a story from district experience around No Child Left Behind. Mr. King noted that certified staff and also classified staff should have a voice on this issue.

Mr. Weber explained for the student representatives present that federal money was available to come to the local level. He said that until the system was changed from granting earmarks, where there were special deals available to people who knew how to get them, local people went to Washington to lobby for federal money. He noted that United Front was made up of Springfield Public Schools, Lane County, City of Eugene, City of Springfield, City of Coburg, City of Cottage Grove, Willamalane, and Lane Transit District and that these groups worked as a team to lobby in Washington. Mr. King noted that district representatives often returned from Washington with a quarter or half a million dollars.

F. Board Communication

• Board Goals, Legislative Meeting

Ms. Adams noted that Tricia Yates a representative from OSBA, and also Beth Gerot, as Chairman of a legislative policy committee for the OSBA, would attend the January 5, 2009 meeting. She suggested that the policies adopted at tonight's meeting would be the primary priorities to address with the legislators, to describe the story of how those policies affect Springfield School District. In addition, she felt it important to address the area of technology and also the district's impact from the current rule that children do not legally need to be in school until age 7. Ms. Adams asked that board members call her with ideas before December 18, 2008, as she would be meeting with Mr. DeFranco and Superintendent Golden on that date.

Mr. Weber asked that any appropriate district staff would be invited to the meeting who could assist with good story telling for the district.

Mr. King noted that a bill was being drafted on technology. He said the January meeting would be a good opportunity for the board to offer input in terms of their vision. Ms. Adams added that the emphasis would be around the idea of virtual schools.

Ms. Adams added that she had attended a number of Thurston's games, and that the final championship game was especially wonderful.

Jonathan Light agreed that the championship game was fall football at its best, and suggested that the board send a thank-you to the team, representing the district and schools. He reported having attended a concert at the Wildish Theater performed by a Springfield High School graduate who now earned a living in music in

Los Angeles. He said he loved the downtown Christmas parade and seeing the activity of the Academy of Arts and Academics, with some musicians playing and crafts on display. He reported, as board representative with Superintendent Golden for the Wildish Theater, that at the last meeting policies had been adopted. Next step, he noted, would be to nominate three at-large positions for which suggestions of appropriate area people would be welcomed. Mr. Light thanked Garry Weber for offering his pizza business, Roaring Rapids, to so many educational organizations for fundraising, noting that the next day, December 4, 2008, Pleasant Hill musicians would be performing there.

Al King said that he particularly enjoyed the school games, and found it remarkable that the offensive line and reserve offensive line for the West Albany team had such big and impressive players.

Chair Bigley reported attending a conference in Portland at which the board received an achievement award for participating in different conferences and trainings for school boards. She thanked Ms. Adams for putting the information together to qualify the board for this award. She also noted receipt of a thank-you from the football team for the board's support. She reported that the Board Goals committee had met a week earlier and had discussed goals for mid-year planning, including budget considerations from the levels of the district and school board and after school programs, which would be moving forward. She noted there would be a meeting with 4J district regarding school boundary updates, and that Al King and Laurie Adams would meet with Superintendents Golden and Russell. A calendar item she shared was the Gateways high school dinner on December 18, 2008 from 12:00-1:30.

Mr. King added that the Budget Committee had met, noting the intention was to finish the budget as late as possible because of all the difficult economic news.

G. Superintendent Communication

Superintendent Golden congratulated Marshall Curry for being a finalist to represent the district in the US Senate Youth Scholarship Program. He was chosen as an alternate, so he would participate in case of illness or other reason that either of the top two candidates could not participate.

She reported about the ruling that children attend school by age 7, that she had spoken to a State Department lobbyist, Morgan Allen, who told her that a proposal had been brought forward by Vicki Walker the previous year to lower the age to 6. He said that the proposal had not passed because of a sense of freedom of choice in Oregon where the decision was up to the parents. As well, the home school lobbyists had expressed very strong opposition to changing the age to 6. Superintendent Golden commented that 35 of the states had requirements that children started school at either age 5 or 6, and that she hoped the ruling to lower the age might pass in the next year.

Concerning virtual schools, she said that Ms. Walker would be available for questions during an upcoming meeting. She noted that there were many competing proposals on this issue, some wanting Educational Service Districts (ESD's) to set policy and others wanting policies to be set by the state. What she saw as important was that all the district's students had access to virtual programs directly from the district. She said this was definitely a hot current issue that she hoped would be settled at the current legislative session.

Mr. Weber indicated his hope that policy and legislation would wait for understanding education on the issue. He said there were other states which had already made big mistakes that could be informative for the district to understand. He felt it was time for fact-finding, so that equity and other issues could be dealt with fairly.

Mr. King agreed it would be a mistake to create legislation before strategies were clear. Ms. Adams responded with her concern that the virtual schools issue was snowballing so quickly that there seemed no

time for proceeding slowly. She said students were being lost to other virtual school districts and that advocacy needed to occur quickly.

Mr. Light said he would urge the state board to declare a moratorium on approving any more virtual schools so that the process could slow down until appropriate policies could be created. Chair Bigley agreed that time was needed to make good decisions. Ms. Adams added it would be important as well to have a moratorium on students leaving their districts for virtual programs.

Mr. King noted that the legislature was not prepared to address this issue, but it could be possible for the State Department of Education to come forward with at least a first-run strategy for creating a structure for programs.

Superintendent Golden continued by saying the second reason for the meeting she mentioned was to continue with the idea of a committee to systematically study all the issues around technology. The virtual school issue would be a separate, but related, part. She thanked Ms. Adams for taking on two substantial committees—having been appointed to the Glenwood renovation project, and also fundraising responsibility for the Wildish Theater.

She noted that she had also enjoyed the Thurston games, and that she had enjoyed serving cookies and hamburgers the night before the game. She noted that Springfield had also had a great team this year. She reported seeing robotic teams compete in Corvallis at a beautiful new middle school. Earlier today, she said, she had seen Shakespeare players doing Macbeth with some Springfield High School students. The actors traveled through three states, and were very much impressed with the Springfield theater program.

Ms. Adams noted that it was only a card draw that kept Springfield High out of the play-offs.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

Chair Bigley noted two calendar items: Gateways holiday dinner on December 18, 2008, from 12:00 – 1:30 p.m., and the work session on January 5, 2009, at Superintendent Golden's home at 6:30 p.m.

8. NEXT MEETING

Chair Bigley announced that the next regular board meeting would be held on January 12, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

9. ADJOURNMENT

With no other business, Chair Bigley adjourned the meeting at 8:48 p.m.

(Minutes recorded by Judy Burton)