

OFFICIAL MINUTES FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING OF THE  
ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF  
ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

The Board of Trustees for the Arkansas School for the Deaf and the Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired met for their monthly meeting on October 18, 2016.

**Present:** Mary Weeks, Chairperson; Dr. Doug Watson, Vice Chairperson; Faith McLaughlin, Secretary; Susan Pack, Board Member; Everett Elam, Board Member; James Caton, ASBVI Superintendent; Dr. Janet Dickinson, ASD Superintendent; Beth Smith and Will Gorum, Interpreters; Members of the Deaf Community; Members of the Blind Community, Hillcrest residents

Ms. Weeks called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm. She reminded the members that the next meeting would be November 15, 2016.

Ms. Weeks said before the meeting gets started, Mr. Elam wanted to say a few words. Mr. Elam said he had sent an email out but apparently it did not go through. He said there is a concert on Thursday that he and his girlfriend would be playing in. He said it was a house concert at a ULAR professor's home. He said she was the chair of the Spanish Department and the purpose of the concert is to raise money for study abroad. He said he was inviting all the board members to come. He said he understood that the board was not a place to promote but he thinks that studying abroad is something that helps the deaf and the blind.

**16-J-013 Motion to Approve Minutes**

Ms. Weeks asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the September meeting. Ms. McLaughlin made a motion to approve the September minutes and Dr. Watson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Action Items**

None

**Discussion Items**

**Bike Trail**

Ms. Weeks said there were two groups formed from each school and a representative from each school was asked to speak at the meeting tonight.

Tommy Walker, ASD committee member, said it was their understanding that the City of Little Rock desires to build a bike trail on the south side of the ASD campus along Markham Street. He said the city proposes to take fourteen feet of land including the sidewalk from Markham onto the ASD/ASB campuses. Mr. Walker explained the summary feedback from the ASD committee (8 ASD stakeholders). The committee met on September 4<sup>th</sup> to review and share their opinions regarding the proposed bike trail. All 8 members voted to support the bike trail proposal but did have concerns about the width of the road from Markham Street into ASD in front of Parnell Hall and west of the football field for the safety of the students. They were also concerned about the lack of fencing in front of the ASD campus and thought having a fence inside the ASD property along Markham would improve safety and add to the beauty of the campus. On Friday, October 7<sup>th</sup>, there was an ASD Town Hall meeting with 45 staff members present. They discussed the options regarding the proposed bike trail. 51% (23 of 45) voted to support the bike path. The majority of the staff comments were that it would improve community relationships/interactions, and encourage healthy activities for staff and students. 40% of the 45 voted no in support of the bike path and their comments were mostly concern of safety and security of the students. Comments were that students are number one, injury on the bike path and who would be responsible. 9% voted yes if a fence is put up. They have been informed that no form of compensation would be given from the city so those votes would probably be no.

#### Recommendations:

1. Since all of the ad hoc committee and a majority (51%) of the ASD staff voted in support of the City of Little Rock's bike path proposal, they encourage the ASD/ASB Board to consider supporting the proposal.
2. Based on the comments shared by the ad hoc committee and the ASD staff about concerns with safety, they strongly recommend consideration be given to putting a fence inside on the ASD property line. Doing so would not only improve safety for students but also add to the physical attractiveness of the ASD campus.
3. Also, based on the comments shared by the ad hoc committee and the ASD staff, they recommend consideration be given to widening the road from Markham Street into ASD in front of Parnell Hall and west of the football field.

Ms. Weeks asked if they were talking about the fence going all the way across ASD. Mr. Walker stated there was currently a fence along the east side of the ASD campus and goes just around the corner and connects to the arch that is on the east on campus. The fence would go from the arch across the front of ASD campus and ideally to the end of the Blind School.

Ms. Weeks commented that she had a meeting with the City some time ago now and asked them if they could give any kind of concessions, i.e. the light to cross the street, etc. What she got from the meeting was at this time the city had spent the money for appropriations earlier this year and they did not offer anything to the schools – that doesn't mean that the schools couldn't go back and ask. At that meeting Kathy Webb said the city did not have the money to do any of the things the schools had asked for. Ms. Weeks thought maybe next year they would if they had time to plan. The city said the schools were getting the 14' sidewalk and Ms. Weeks told them that the schools didn't need that and it was not a plus for the schools. Susan Pack asked if the ASD committee was for it but only if there was a fence. Mr. Walker said that was their standing that there needed to be a fence. Dr. Watson asked if they had seen the publicity related to building the bike path around the city. They are spending millions of dollars to build the path but they don't have any money for the schools. It is a very awkward situation for two schools with severely disadvantaged children – blind, deaf. Mr. Elam talked about the ripple effect if something happened at the school.

Mr. Caton had asked Mr. Hill to form a committee of ASB's stakeholders to look at the issue and get their feedback. The stakeholders consisted of ASB staff, Alumni, and Hillcrest neighbors. ASB staff was Lis Geoghegan, Meg Berry and Barbara Cole. The Alumni member was Roy DePriest and the Hillcrest member was Jo Ann Coleman. Each member was assigned the task of reviewing the issue with their respective groups. Their concerns were as follows:

1. The location of the route could result in some security issues for the school due to increased traffic related to Markham trail, and especially the increased traffic in the alley located on the west side of the campus. The Alumni uses the corner of the lot by the alley for the annual Christmas tree sales and parking. It is understood that the trail would cut across that area as it comes out of the alley.
2. There was concern for the safety of the bikers when crossing the school's entrance onto Woolly. There was concern that drivers of vehicles entering Woolly would be distracted and not notice bike traffic.
3. Concern was expressed that it would change the beauty of the landscape due to the cutting of trees.
4. That a bike lane on Markham would be preferred.

In relation to the approval of the route and project, they thought the project would be okay with these concerns being addressed adequately.

It was asked if they were talking about a bike lane on the street and the answer was yes.

JoAnn Coleman (Hillcrest member) said on Kavanaugh they painted a bicycle lane on the street and you have to avoid them. From the standpoint of the people that live on the alley, no one believes they are going to use the alley, but go up to Woodrow or to Kavanaugh. Most people in the neighborhood are for it but they would also be for the idea of making Markham three lanes with a turn lane then you would have room for a bike trail on Markham. The neighborhood would be for what the school is okay with. The problem Ms. Weeks sees is if you put a 14' paved strip across the front of the school it will not be just bicycles that use – possibly go cart or motor bikes. Ty Mathis talked about the meetings he had been involved in with Kathy Webb and the city. The city does anticipate a significant amount of traffic on the bike trail. ASB and ASD are the key piece to making the bike trail work. If the schools say no it puts a stop to all the years and all they have put into this because there is no other route to go. If the schools were such a significant part of the bike trail then then they should have been in on the beginning of the planning. Kathy Webb said that in order for her to do something for the school she would have to axe a project in the Hillcrest area. Mr. Mathis said so the people that live in Hillcrest are more important than the kids. Ms. Weeks indicated that by this time of the year the money has been allocated to different projects and the schools were not factored in that for any money. Discussion followed.

Ms. Weeks said they would now go around to each how each board member feels about the project. Dr. Dickinson said she sees both positives and negatives but if they are not providing a fence she is not in support of it because it goes back to the safety of the students. It could be a great idea but not without a fence. Mr. Pompeo said he had emailed the members about a house that was involved in a meth bust that was about 800 feet from ASD property line. If the fence is there he will support but not without it. Dr. Watson said he would not support it under any condition. Mr. Caton said he loved the community aspect of the project but he could not 100% get settled on a bike trail going through the school – we are an educational facility for these special needs kids. If the city is not willing to give the schools any concessions or provide any incentives then he doesn't know how he could support it. Ms. McLaughlin said she has never been 100% in favor of the bike trail and after listening to all the comments about the safety of the children she is less in favor of it without some compensation. She would say no. Ms. Pack said if the schools were such a key part of the trail then she thinks they could spend some money and do it right. Apparently they are not willing to do that so she says no. Mr. Elam said no. Ms. Tribett said she thought it was terrible that the city was not willing to meet the school halfway. She said even after everything she heard she does actually see that it will affect it one way or another and she says that as a parent that is at the school often. Ms. Weeks said she felt that it should be worth something. Discussion followed.

### **016-J-014 Motion to Table Bike Trail**

Ms. Pack made a motion that the Board votes no on the bike trail due to safety reasons and Ms. McLaughlin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Watson asked for an update on Easter Seals. Mindy said they found documentation where Easter Seals gave up their rights. The next step is to send out Request for Qualification to people to draft the documents for the tear down. Based on their qualifications you pick the one most qualified and then negotiate their fee for drafting the documents. After the documents are drafted then we will start the process with ABA. Will have to find the right architect that has done tear downs and not many have done that because they mostly do renovation or new construction. Going to try to find at least 3 architects that have done tear downs. Hopefully be done in the next couple of weeks.

### **ASB Parent Rep – Jeanne Tribett**

ASB's third annual car show was held September 24<sup>th</sup> with good representation from the "car community" in addition to community, students and family members. The elementary went to the Motley's Pumpkin Patch and had a great time. The track team traveled to the Indiana School for the Blind and competed against other schools in the conference (11 teams) and placed 3<sup>rd</sup> overall. Eleventh grader, Selendria, broke a conference record in the 60 meter dash. The record had been standing for 35 years. Tenth grader T. Lewis got first place in all his events. Fourth and fifth are completing a five week study based on the upcoming presidential election. The Special Olympians are getting ready to compete in bowling on October 24<sup>th</sup>. Picture day was October 11<sup>th</sup>. Fair day is October 19<sup>th</sup> and the kids are really excited. Sixth grade did a science project and presentation on the "Ice Age". Distance Learning classes are going very well and all 18 students are passing and becoming more independent in on-line learning. Homecoming is quickly approaching with the dance and coronation on November 10<sup>th</sup>, the parade on the 11<sup>th</sup> and the wrestling tournament on the 12<sup>th</sup> in our gym with Texas, Missouri and Oklahoma participating. The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual chili cook-off will be on Friday the 11<sup>th</sup> at 4:30. The Thanksgiving lunch will be held November 17<sup>th</sup>. Three staff members (S. Hall, L. Cole & T. Doan) attended the ADE ACT Aspire training on accessibility and the use of their new on-line testing portal..

### **ASD Parent Rep – Harry Pompeo**

Volleyball and football went to Kansas School for the Deaf on October 1<sup>st</sup>. JV volleyball competed very well. Varsity football beat Kansas. October 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> was the GPSD at the Oklahoma School for the Deaf with 8 schools attending. First day ASD was 9-0 and came home with 3<sup>rd</sup> place. Oklahoma School for the Deaf came to ASD this past weekend. Volleyball team beat Oklahoma 3-1, lost the football game 44-22.

The Homecoming queen was C. Owens. JV and Varsity volleyball teams are now traveling to Hot Springs. This coming weekend there will be a volleyball tournament. ASD's last home game will be October 29<sup>th</sup> against Missouri. ASD Special Olympics will also compete in bowling. The academic bowl team will travel to GPSD November 10 – 13<sup>th</sup>. November 6<sup>th</sup> is Silent Sunday. Mr. Elam asked what GPSD stood for and was told it was Great Plains School for the Deaf. Dr. Watson said there was a lot of travel and asked how much of the budget is for athletics. Michael Krenn said they provide the meals and the transportation. Most staff members are stipend and are volunteers. He does not know the exact amount for each event and they are looking at ways to bring down cost. Dr. Watson wanted to know what the budget was for sports. Ms. Terry said she could pull last year and can tell you what was spent. She said it is coded to an athletic cost center. Dr. Watson said on the deaf side they also have intellectual academic bowl – does that count for an education credit. Are they missing a lot of school or do they still get credit for educational work. Mr. Bolen said the academic bowl is not for credit, it is competition. Dr. Watson asked when traveling do the students still have study time. Mr. Bolen said most of the deaf schools have that same amount of travel. He said there were a lot of trips this year but next year it will be reversed and those schools will be coming to ASD and there will be much less travel. Dr. Watson asked if the roof in the gym had been repaired. Mr. Mathis said he was not aware of water coming down.

There being no further business of Joint nature, the meeting moved to the agenda for the School for the blind.

  
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Mary Weeks, Chair

  
Faith McLaughlin, Secretary

OFFICIAL MINUTES FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING OF THE  
ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

The Board of Trustees for the Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired met for their monthly meeting on October 18, 2016.

**Present:** Mary Weeks, Chairperson; Dr. Doug Watson, Vice Chairperson; Faith McLaughlin, Secretary; Susan Pack, Board Member; Everett Elam, Board Member; Jeanne Tribett, ASBVI Parent Representative; Harry Pompeo, ASD Parent Representative; James Caton, ASBVI Superintendent; Janet Dickinson, ASD Superintendent; Beth Smith and Will Gorum, Interpreters; Members of the Deaf Community; Members of the Blind Community

Ms. Pack asked about the teacher certification –what does the 6% mean. Ms. Weeks said she didn't know what education percentage means. Mr. Caton said there were two different increases. He said vision certification is when a teacher has received their teacher of the visually impaired certification based on completing their course work and passing the required tests. He said a lot of the names you see on this report are old and in future reports you will only see the updated names. A lot of these people have had their vision certification for years and received their 6% in the past. The educational differential is additional educational qualifications met, i.e. receiving a Master's degree, they are given a 6% increase. Ms. Terry said it has to be relevant and not part of their minimum qualifications. Mr. Caton thought this information would be helpful to the board so he added it to show the teachers that are getting their vision certifications. Ms. Terry said it was an incentive to get teachers better qualified.

**16-B-019 Motion to Approve Consent Items**

Ms. Weeks asked for a motion to approve the consent items to include the minutes, financial statement and personnel items. Ms. Pack made a motion to approve the consent items and Ms. McLaughlin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Action Items**

**None**

**Discussion Items**

**Report to the Public**

Mr. Caton gave the board an overview and highlights of the Report to the Public which he will give on October 25<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 in the Woolly Auditorium. Mr. Caton thanked Ms. Doan for her help on the report.

Current enrollment is 93 (51 Elementary/42 Secondary). In addition to campus enrollment, the school also serves approximately 81 babies that are in the Birth to Three Program throughout the state. Under achievement and school performance the status is still designated as Needs Improvement and is based on the state assessment data each year. Probably as long as it is based on that particular set of data it will be Needs Improvement status where state testing is concerned. The Every Student Succeeds Act which is more flexible and we are hopeful that it will allow school districts to be able to show student growth in other ways than the annual state assessment. They continue to be in conversations with the ADE in the area of assessment. It is possible that it will reach the point that ASB will be able to use a different assessment to show growth versus what a public school district might use. ASB will continue to advocate for our students. When Mr. Caton was in Kentucky at the annual APH meeting he heard a presentation on the measure of academic progress assessment that is used in some schools in the nation. They have come out with an accessible version for the blind and visually impaired. Distance Learning Program on the Secondary level continues to expand and grow. ASB continues to partner with Virtual Arkansas that offers courses to our students and are often in conversation with them on ways to make the on-line courses more accessible to our students. Both General Education and Special Education programs on the elementary and secondary levels are fully accredited by the ADE. The newest structure to ASB's programs is in grades 6 – 8 for Middle School grades where ASB has started pulling those students out in separate programs to give new emphasis to the Expanded Core Curriculum which is the curriculum specifically related to blindness and visual impairments. Teacher Excellence initiative – this is where the 6% increase comes in that was talked about earlier. Teachers come to ASB and very often are not certified as teachers of the visually impaired. They have 3 years to receive that certification. In the vocational initiative we are continuing to see partnerships with sister agencies, i.e. World Services for the Blind, DSB, Lighthouse for the Blind, to better prepare students for gainful employment and career preparation in the workforce. ASB is starting to have conversation with them about actually having an on campus type center where the rehabilitation specialist will be on campus and will bring equipment to help with skills training. Technology initiative – added a lot of technology to the school. ASB continues to stay on the cutting edge of technology, especially adaptive technology. Facilities Improvement initiative – both schools were given the \$1.5 million from the Rainy Day Fund. ASB continues to lay out their plans for how that money will be spent in the areas of building improvements, safety & security and health. The bulk of the money will be spent on roofing as just about every building is in need of some type of roofing repair or complete new roof.

Ms. Weeks asked about generators. She noticed in Dr. Dickinson's report that ASD was looking into getting some generators.



Mr. Mathis said that ASD was looking into getting them. Their main focus with the Rainy Day Fund is the warmth and safety of the children. They are looking at redoing some roofs, security system and a couple of key generators for dorms. Ms. Weeks said about a year ago there was a power outage and food was lost. With the weather changing as it is, she feels strongly that there is a need for a plan and take a serious look at getting generators. If there are kids on campus you have to have a kitchen that works and a couple of key areas other than the infirmary. Mr. Mathis said ASD was in full support of that and they have met several times to look at key areas. Mindy said ASB had talked about it but as far as the \$1.5 million it is not a part of that money. They gave the Governor a list of what that money would be used for and it mainly stabilizing the buildings. If there is money left over that would be a great thing to do. Dr. Watson asked what kind of cost was involved to protect the food. Mr. Mathis said it could cost as much as a half million dollars for one. The cost can be substantially sizable just for one small building.

Mr. Caton said on the Blind School side the discussion has been when we add another generator it would be in the kitchen area then probably choose one of the dorms to add a generator as a backup. The structural needs that are critical have to be taken care of and that is where the bulk of the money is going. Mr. Elam suggested that the dorms keep bottled water and non-perishable food in case of an emergency situation. Mr. Caton said they do keep bottled water and food in the dorms for such situations.

Mr. Caton said he would finish up the report with some of the other areas they are reaching out to within the state: Birth to 3 Program; Summer Camp, Jump Start, Prison Braille Project at Wrightsville, Low Vision Clinic, Regional Braille Challenge, Braille Boot Camp & Adaptive Technology (monthly for parents to learn skills) and our local Wellness Committee.

There being no further business for Arkansas School for the Blind, the agenda moved to the Arkansas School for the Deaf.

  
Mary Weeks, Chair

  
Faith McLaughlin, Secretary

OFFICIAL MINUTES FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING OF THE  
ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

The Board of Trustees for the Arkansas School for the Deaf met for their monthly meeting on October 18, 2016.

**Present:** Mary Weeks, Chairperson; Dr. Doug Watson, Vice Chairperson; Faith McLaughlin, Secretary; Susan Pack, Board Member; Everett Elam, Board Member; Jeanne Tribett, ASB Parent Representative; Harry Pompeo, ASD Parent Representative; James Caton, ASBVI Superintendent; Dr. Janet Dickinson, ASD Superintendent; Beth Smith and Will Gorum, Interpreters; Members of the Deaf Community; Members of the Blind Community, Hillcrest residents

**16-D-0021 Motion to Approve Consent Items**

Ms. Weeks asked for a motion to approve the consent items to include the minutes, financial statement and personnel items. Ms. McLaughlin made a motion to approve the consent items and Mr. Elam seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Action Items**

**None**

**Discussion Items**

**None**

**Superintendent Report**

Dr. Dickinson said there were a lot of good things going on at ASD. Silent Sunday is November 6<sup>th</sup> and there is a lot of activity in preparing for this event. She invited everyone to attend. Homecoming was last week but it rained and the parade had to be cancelled. Recently they had staff night out at David's Burgers in Maumelle and it was an enjoyable time meeting each other's families. ASD has a monthly parent meeting and have a great group of people. There are three parent coordinators, one deaf, one hearing and one that focuses on new parents. ASD has recently started a weekly email to the parents. Two weeks ago several went to Kansas for a week for intensive instructional coaching and how to elevate and raise the educational needs and standards for the students. They came back and made some changes. She said there were many things happening as indicated in her report. The second week in November CONVO will be back to finish up the safety notification system for every classroom. She said she would be on a flight to New York at 5 am for the NTID job fair to try to recruit additional young deaf professionals to come to our campus.

Enrollment numbers have gone up the last couple of months, almost 30 new students. Last night she had a meeting with the dorm kids and was surprised at all the new faces. The dorm started a Dorm Student Council and she will meet with periodically. The first meeting was last night and it was great to give the students a voice to make suggestions and give their ideas.

Dr. Dickinson gave her Report to the Public at Homecoming on Saturday. It was very online with what Mr. Caton presented. We have many of the same issues. One thing she thought was important was the ACT Aspire assessment would give a prediction score for 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades. NTID and Gallaudet both focus on the ACT scores. Gallaudet will accept students with an ACT score of 18. NTID will accept students with a score of 15 on the ACT. When they looked at the scores from the Aspire they determined they still have work to do to get the scores up in the next 2 to 3 years.

Dr. Dickinson asked if anyone had questions regarding her report. Dr. Watson said he knew they were going to NTID to recruit but he was wondering if NTID offer help for Arkansas. He said there were a lot of students hitting around the 15 score. What could we do here to parallel with what they do there. Dr. Dickinson said it was an excellent question and she would ask about that while she was there.

Ms. Pack said one thing she read in the report about the grants and your new person seems to working hard on that. It is a wonderful way to get some money.

Dr. Dickinson invited everyone to her house for appetizers and visiting.

#### **16-D-022 Motion to Adjourn**

Ms. Weeks made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Ms. McLaughlin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm.

  
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Mary Weeks, Chair

  
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Faith McLaughlin, Secretary