

Citizens for Federal Way Schools

Meeting Minutes

March 30, 2011

Meeting began at 6:30pm with a welcome from president Teri Hickel. Introductions were made around the room. Teri re-iterated that the purpose of the Citizens committee was to support Federal Way Schools on a district wide basis and to introduce members to support services and programs available within our schools and within our community. Teri indicated that this committee is a 501 C(4) which is a political action committee that can promote school campaigns. Our organization is going through a current shift to meet the needs of the new superintendent and the district as a whole. We are currently looking for a secretary to fill Kelley Tanner's position. If anyone is interested, or knows of someone who is interested, please have them come forward. Treasurer's report shows a current balance of \$7,350.98. The largest contributions are from Federal Way administrative staff contributions via payroll deductions. This is such an important means of funding for the organization and through these contributions, CFFWS members are able to focus on passing funding measures while staff and administration can focus on their job of teaching and learning.

Superintendent Rob Neu stepped forward to discuss some district outreach programs. The first are the Focus Forums which offer an opportunity for community outreach. Two have already been held and two more are scheduled. The next is focusing on budget and will be on April 19th and the second will be on May 17th with a focus on standards based education.

In addition, the board in implementing a new outreach program they refer to as "Grapevine". This will begin at our next CFFWS meeting on June 1st. Each member of CFFWS has been asked to bring a friend to the next meeting so the board can hear hopes, concerns and suggestions. This will be an opportunity for the community to sit and talk to them in order to adequately represent the entire community and not just those families that are actively involved and vocal. These will be unfiltered and unplugged conversation. Once this group has met, they will ask the friends of the CFFWS members to attend one more meeting where they bring a friend and so on and so on. This way a large group of community members will be able to have direct contact with the board on an ongoing basis.

Kim Wolff directed folks on how to sign up for Twitter. Currently there are only 4 followers. This is an excellent way to communicate within the group and send out quick updates and reminders. Go to the website www.yesforFWSchools.org to the resources tab where there is a PDF document that shows how to set up a Twitter account and keep up to date on the group's activities. It was suggested that Kevin Wolff plan a quick session before or after the next meeting to walk the group through the set up process.

Sally McLean stepped forward to explain the current budget situation. She brought with her the notes from the March 2nd CFFWS budget meeting. Several ideas were presented at that meeting, all of which are still under discussion. The purpose of the March 2nd meeting was to indentify what was most important to committee members, what could be done differently and what could we do without. Sally is projecting an \$8 million deduction and hoping there is no more than that. We are still waiting for the House and Senate budgets. Once that is combined with the Governor's budget, there will be a 4th and final budget. The legislature is scheduled to adjourn on April 24th and initially Rob was scheduled to present the budget to the board on April 26th but that date has been changed to May 10th.

There was a request from members of the committee to create a graphic showing revenues and expenditures in an easy to understand format. There will be a public budget forum on April 19th 6-7:30 at FWHS.

Sally also reviewed upcoming funding measures. The plan is to run an EP & O levy in Feb 2012. That would run as a replacement levy and fund years 13, 14, 15 and 16. The last EP & O levy was run in Feb 2008 which authorized collection for years 09,10,11,12. There are still some unanswered variables based on what the legislature decides about levy funding formulas. The one good thing is that the district has been able to refinance bonds during this recession to reduce interest payments by \$3M. The other measure under consideration is to run another bond or capital levy. The only school construction left in Phase 1 if FWHS.

Mark Davidson came forward to give some background on how the school board operates within our district. He reviewed the school board and election process. There are 5 directors for our district and a map of the areas of representation was displayed. The directors serve 4 year terms with a rotating system of elections on alternate years.

There are 3 director positions up for election, Director 2 – Suzanne Smith, Director 3, Amye Bronson-Doherty and Director 5, Tony Moore. August 16th is the primary and the general election is slated for November 8th. Ballots are all mail in now which save the district a substantial amount of money. The filing date is in May and there is no cost to file but once an announcement has been made to file, PDC requires funding information be filed with the state. Board hires only 1 person in the district – the superintendent. The supervisor hires the additional flow of personnel on down. Our district has between 20,000 and 21,000 students and is the 8th largest in the state. The board operates as an elected body and majority rules. Individual board members can no make individual promises as all decisions are made as a whole as a board. After the election in November, boundaries for the director positions will be redrawn. This is only a re-boundary for director positions and not for school boundaries.

Rob Neu came forward to discuss the new policy governance which takes the board out of day to day operations. He complimented the board and told the membership that they were an excellent board and truly empathetic and knowledgeable. The voters should be proud of the folks they elected to represent them.

Policy Governance is build on 4 main goals

- 1) Have all students become global citizens by graduation
- 2) Have all students pursue rigorous academic classes
- 3) Have all students assume responsibility for personal growth
- 4) Engage parents of all students

Under each of those 4 main goals are 16 “commandments” or rules of engagement.

Each board member (with the exception of Ed Barney who was not present) took a few minutes to discuss their role on the board and how it has affected them as well as whether or not they were planning to run again for their position. Board members emphasized the wonderful partnerships they have with the district staff as well as parents, the board felt strongly about the advocacy for outstanding education and their intentional approach for student success.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm with the opportunity for folks to stay and talk with board members if they so wished.