

## ***Special Meeting Minutes***

***February 5, 2013***

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The Wilson Creek School Board of Directors met on Tuesday, February 5, 2013, in a special meeting at 5:00 pm in the school library. Present were Board Chair Paul Friend, Board Vice Chair Ron Lesser, Board Members Daryl Kimble, Rita Kane and Susan James, Principal Brenda Welch, Rich McBride of the North Central Educational Service District (NCESD), Business Manager Kellie Ribail, and District Secretary Kaci Anderson.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Board Chair Paul Friend called the meeting to order at 5:01 pm, and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America. Paul thanked Rich for attending.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Motion made by Rita Kane, seconded by Ron Lesser, and carried to approve the agenda as provided.

**DISCUSSION OF SUPERINTENDENT POSITION:** Paul Friend started the discussion by stating the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the different options and different ideas for filling the superintendent position. He specified that the discussion would be regarding the job position, not specific people and/or candidates. Paul added that if an executive session was needed, it would be held toward the end of the meeting; he then introduced Dr. Rich McBride, superintendent of the NCESD.

Rich McBride thanked the board and guests for attending, and thanked Wilson Creek School District staff for assistance in preparation for tonight's meeting. Rich described Wilson Creek's superintendent vacancy from two perspectives, given the timeline and circumstances: (1) short-term coverage (ensure staff, school/district, board has necessary coverage) and (2) long-term (given that it's February, what are the district's long-term options?). Rich explained the following:

1. **Short-term:** NCESD's intent, as Rich said he previously shared with Paul Friend, is to make sure there is a very strong safety net beneath the Wilson Creek School District. The day-to-day workings as a district almost always require superintendent expertise. To get a that safety net in place in the short-term, the board/district needs to consider what amount of time would be adequate – one day a week, two days a week? That decision would require input from staff, the principal and the school board, and tonight's meeting will help determine this.

Rich asked about the "unknowns" – what things need to be taken care of, if someone were to come in part-time? For example, bonds, levies, accreditations. WCESD needs to identify those issues in order to find an appropriate candidate – someone who has the right skill set to work through the end of the year. Rich said, some things are certain that will have to be completed this school year, including: 2013-2014 budget, principal evaluation (must be completed by someone with superintendent credentials), board meeting coverage.

Rich estimated the cost per day for a part-time superintendent would be approximately \$650.00 - \$750.00 per day, depending on the candidate. Things like benefits and mileage are factors, but there would be no vacation or sick leave, etc. He said short-term, part-time superintendents are typically appointed by the ESD, therefore are ESD employees with contracts that end at the end of the school year.

Rich posed the question: What do other schools this size do? He said it varies. Some districts smaller than Wilson Creek have a superintendent on-site 3 days per week, while some districts larger than Wilson Creek also have a superintendent on-site 3 days per week.

2. **Long-term:** Rich said a key decision the board, staff and community would have to make is whether the superintendent's position is full-time or part-time. A full-time position is typically a 2+ year contract, and that person is involved in school and community events. A part-time superintendent might live outside the community and may be less involved. Rich said he contacted some search firms and specifically mentioned Dennis Ray of Leadership Northwest, who told Rich that there is some demand for superintendents for small/medium-sized districts. Rich said Dennis also assured him there is enough time, though the district would have to work diligently, to have staff and community meetings regarding superintendents and to conduct interviews.

Rich estimated it would cost from \$7,500.00-\$8,000.00 up to \$10,000.00-\$15,000.00 to conduct a search. Rich suggested that, when choosing a search firm, to reach an agreement where the firm would do an additional search at no cost to the district if an appropriate candidate isn't found. Rich added that if a suitable candidate isn't found through a search firm, the district can still fall back on the ESD to appoint an interim superintendent.

Rich said the disadvantages of contracting through the ESD instead of doing a full search is that it may put the district "on hold," meaning day-to-day operations would continue but key initiatives (levies, bonds, remodeling, etc.,) may be put off. Rich suggested doing a search, then defaulting back to the ESD if the candidate pool doesn't work for Wilson Creek.

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Rich then opened up the meeting to questions and input from the board.

- There was discussion on whether a part-time or full-time superintendent would be appropriate for Wilson Creek. Contracting for part-time services through the ESD for the remainder of the 2012-2013 school year would give the district time to see if part-time would meet the district's needs.
- Board members expressed desire to get staff input so they know the board is supportive of their needs and to get a feel for what staff would like/need in a superintendent. Rich replied that, for the short-term, because spring is busy, there is not a lot of time. He said that there would be a better opportunity to get that input in the long-term.
- The board asked what work needs done by a superintendent so they know how much assistance is needed. Brenda Welch replied that the school improvement plan expires in 2013, and that while the school's accreditation is good for 2009-2015, there is a midway point that needs finished and is a "huge process." Rich said that a recent retiree would be good help for those items, as well as Teacher/Principal Evaluation Pilot (TPEP). Brenda agreed that TPEP is an important item as well. Rich asked if there was a levy – Wilson Creek School is currently operating in the first year of a two-year levy, so Rich confirmed that in spring 2014 levy work would need done. Other important issues mentioned were that financial/fiscal experience in a superintendent is important, and enrollment/overcrowding/classroom size are key issues the district is currently facing, as well as coverage at board meetings. The board said they are flexible on which night of the week to hold the monthly board meeting, to work with superintendent candidate.
- Paul Friend welcomed input from guests. Kellie Ribail said the district will be audited this year, but the audit is not yet scheduled. She added she has support from the ESD. Kellie also said knowledge of and experience with grants would benefit the district.
- The board questioned the length of "a day" when paying an ESD-contracted superintendent \$650-\$750/day. Rich answered that an appointee would be at school at least while school is in session, and of course attend board meetings, and would be instructed that they would be on call to answer questions even while not at school.
- Board members agreed that the district needs someone on-site for two to three days per week, with some flexibility.

**Motion made by Rita Kane, seconded by Daryl Kimble, and carried to contract with North Central Educational Service District 171 for Interim Superintendent Services for the balance of the 2012-2013 school year (through June 30, 2013), and to authorize the Board Chair and Vice Chair to negotiate an appropriate contract arrangement not to exceed three days per week.**

- The board agreed that they want to see how a part-time superintendent works out before moving forward with the search for a full-time/long-term superintendent.
- The board asked if Rich knew what long-term superintendents were available at the moment. Rich replied that they would probably be looking at young candidates early in their career – this might be their first or second superintendent position. He added that occasionally an experienced superintendent might be found who prefers a rural setting.
- The board stressed that the community values having a "hands-on" superintendent – someone who lives in-district and is involved in school and community activities.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** The Board went into executive Session at 6:18 pm and returned to regular session at 7:13 pm.

**RESULTS OF EXECUTIVE SESSION, IF ANY:** Motion made by Rita Kane, seconded by Susan James, and carried to approve the payment of a one-time stipend in the amount of \$6,000.00 (\$1,500.00 per month for four months) to Brenda Welch, for additional duties in the absence of a superintendent, to be paid in February payroll.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 7:18 pm. The next regular board meeting is on Tuesday, February 26, 2013, at 6:00 pm in the district library.