

**Visalia Unified School District
Board of Education
MINUTES**

**OPENING
BUSINESS**

The May 19, 2011 Special Board Study Session was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by President Bill Fulmer in the Board Room at the VUSD Educational Office Complex, 5000 West Cypress Avenue, Visalia. A quorum of the Board was present.

ATTENDANCE

	<u>Arrive</u>	<u>Leave</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Tim Chaney	4:00	5:45	
Rodney Elder	4:00	5:45	
William A. Fulmer	4:00	5:45	
Larry Jones	4:00	5:45	
Donna Martin	4:00	5:45	
Jim L. Qualls			X
Charles Ulmschneider	4:00	5:45	
 Dr. Craig Wheaton, Superintendent	 4:00	 5:45	

Staff Members

Robert Gröeber, Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services
Cindi Costa, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources Development
Pam Ryan, Administrative Assistant, Superintendent's Office

**REGULAR
SESSION**

The Board convened the Special Board Study Session at 4:00 p.m. Jim Qualls was unable to attend because of his work responsibilities. Rodney Elder led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT/
PUBLIC
INTEREST
ANNOUNCE-
MENTS/
STATUS
REPORTS/
ACTION (as
applicable)**

**GENERAL PUBLIC
COMMENT**

There was no general public comment at this time.

**BY-TRUSTEE
AREA
BOUNDARIES**

Superintendent, Dr. Craig Wheaton, began the Special Board Study Session by stating that this Study Session also includes the Visalia Educational Forum meeting that was normally scheduled at this time. Paula Vlazakis and Doug Bartsch, the co-chairmen of the Visalia Educational Forum, are holding a committee meeting working on names for the new elementary school.

Superintendent Wheaton stated that as a result of presenting information on the by-trustee area elections and the proposed plans that the district is considering to various community groups and getting their input, he scheduled a Special Board Study Session for tonight.

Public, Board Member, and Superintendent Comment

Robert Montion, Louie Montion, Mike Fierro, and Jose Palomo voiced their concerns for Latino representation on the VUSD Board, Cabinet, and administration.

- Robert Montion distributed material and made a presentation on their redistricting concerns and the risk of litigation that the district may incur.
- Recommended getting second opinion, talk to potential litigants now, and that there should be consideration of three Latino majority areas to minimize the risk of litigation.

Superintendent Wheaton

- Asked the group if they have a map representing their recommendation

Robert Montion

- Stated that he needed two weeks to develop such a map designed by the people who might sue the district

Board Member Tim Chaney

- Time is of the essence and wants to do the right thing

Board Member Bill Fulmer

- Tulare County Elections Office has given VUSD June 1, 2011 as a final date to give them the plan so that it will be on the November 8, 2011 ballot. This is not VUSD's deadline; it is the County's deadline.

Board Member Larry Jones

- If the district waits for the 2013 election to change trustee areas, there will still be three people elected in Area 5 and at high risk of litigation; so the district is at risk either way.

Robert Quiroz, demographer working with the Latino group

- Stated that he was contacted yesterday by someone from the Department of Justice inquiring about Visalia Unified School District
- Told their staff attorney that he had met with the Superintendent and people in the community and were working on redistricting plans

Superintendent Wheaton

- Stated that the district's attorney and demographer will be in attendance at the May 24 board meeting
- Board is determined to do this right and within the timeline that has been given to them so that there can be district elections this November and not wait until 2013

Carol Clarke, Mt. Whitney High School teacher and the VUTA representative on the By-Trustee Area Boundary Committee

- Stated that to obtain a second opinion would delay this implementation until the 2013 election which would be in violation of the timeline of the law
- If the district were to elect board members under the current boundaries without redistricting, it would certainly be sued
- The balance should be done under population proportionally and not registered voters
- If you create districts in which you create supermajorities, whether they be for a protected class or a non-protected class, you would be in violation of the California Voting Rights Act
- Cannot create artificial majorities in areas

Dr. Robert Aguilar, an original member of the By-Trustee Area Boundary Committee, past VUSD administrator and past VUSD Board member

- Stated that the group presenting tonight said they were here to help the district to not get into legal problems
- Asked what could be done so that the money can stay with the students and not pay attorney fees
- Do not threaten of lawsuit but help make it right

Juan Guerrero, past VUSD Board member

- Before he left the School Board, recommended to Superintendent Carrizosa that the district should be working with demographers that are most likely to sue the district
- Recommended requesting a waiver or extension from the Tulare County Elections Office

Mike Fierro

- Voting rights is just one issue; also concerns about the drop-out rate; Sequoia High School, and others
- School Board is a servant of all the kids not just certain kids

Visalia Educational Forum

David Elizarraz, VUSD parent

- Discussed his concerns regarding student safety, bullying, gang and drug prevention policies

Other Public Comment

Rosalinda Vetia, parent of students that graduated from VUSD and now a grandparent

- Has heard from friends in the community that they feel there are not enough teacher's aides and community aides that can work with the students that are behind in their work before they are failing
- These types of students that are failing and give up are in danger of getting into trouble and being expelled

Superintendent Wheaton concluded the meeting by stating that the district's attorney and demographer will be present at the regularly scheduled board meeting on Tuesday, May 24. They have been working on alternative plans based on the prior recommendations he has heard. If the work on the area boundary maps cannot be finished at the May 24 meeting, there is time before June 1 for another special meeting to approve an area boundary map.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.


NEXT MEETING

The next regularly scheduled Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 24, 2011, at 5:30 p.m. in the Board Room at the VUSD Educational Complex located at 5000 West Cypress Avenue, Visalia (unless otherwise posted).

Respectfully submitted,



Rodney Elder
Clerk



Craig Wheaton, Ed.D.
Superintendent