

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
August 18, 2014

I. CALL TO ORDER

The special board meeting of the Board of Trustees of Moscow School District No. 281 was called to order at 6:30 PM, August 18, 2014 by Dawn Fazio, Chair, pursuant to Idaho Code Sections 33-506 and 33-510. The meeting was held in the auditorium of Moscow High School, 402 East 5th Street, Moscow, Idaho.

Chair Fazio started by thanking district personnel for their diligence and building staff for all of their hard work this summer during the construction. She said there had been some unforeseen circumstances occur which brings us to this meeting. She also stated that this is a meeting of the board in public but is not a public meeting however public input will be considered. This is a difficult topic, with emotions running high and this is something that needs to be dealt with.

II. DETERMINE QUORUM

Fazio asked the clerk to determine if a quorum of the Board was present. Packard responded that five trustees were in attendance and a quorum was present. Trustees present were Dawn Fazio, Chair, Zone 4, Kim Campbell, Vice-Chair, Zone 3, Jim Frenzel, Zone 1, Eric Torok, Zone 2, and Margaret Dibble, Zone 5.

Staff members present were Dr. Greg Bailey, Superintendent, Deb Adair, Business Manager/Treasurer, and Angie Packard, Clerk. There were over 150 people in the audience.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Discuss Possible Calendar Change Due to Construction** – Dr. Bailey began by stating that the unforeseen events that have caused this meeting and that a delay to the start of school is not what was anticipated when these projects began.

He then introduced Curt Hobbs, Waynco Construction, general contractor; Lawrence Rose, Cameron Golightly, Jonathan Gallup, with Design West Architects; Micah Chappell, Moscow City Building Inspector; and Lorne Barr, MSD Building Grounds Maintenance Supervisor, the special guests that were in the audience. As Dr. Bailey began his presentation, he shared some construction pictures that were taken that day. He stated that the major issues are the bathrooms in all the schools and the science lab at the high school. He noted that the bathrooms in all the schools had major problems that had to be dealt with once the projects began. He continued with the photo presentation that showed different stages of the construction. Additionally, there will be a lot of clean up when the projects are completed and Dr. Bailey said that the custodial staff, under the direction of Lorne Barr, has been doing a fantastic job keeping up with all the dust.

At this time, Dr. Bailey stated that with all the delays, he is recommending that the start date for school be September 8, enabling eight extra days for bathrooms for boys and girls to be completed to the level that meets inspectors requirements to open school. He also noted that construction personnel have not been as active as he liked and would like to see more evening and weekend work. He then went through five possible options on how to make up the eight days.

- Option 1 – Day for Day: Add three days from Thanksgiving Break (November 24-26, with a 1:30 release on November 26); utilize the May 22 “Snow Day Make-up”;

add two days at the end of the school year (June 4-5) and an additional two days to be determined. These two days could be removing October 3 and January 5 which are Professional Development Days for teachers. Dr. Bailey said that if staff and families have already scheduled time for vacation during Thanksgiving that personal days for staff and student absences would be waived.

- Option 2 – Minutes for Days: Add two minutes to every school day per day missed. Eight days missed would equal to 16 minutes added per school day.
- Option 3 – Delete Days from the Calendar: Kindergarten = 5 days over; Grades 1-3 = 16 days over; Grades 4-5 = 6 days over; Grades 6-8 = 13 days over; and Grades 9-12 = 3 days over.
- Option 4 – One Year Moratorium on the start of Friday Collaboration Time: It takes 8 collaboration days to equal one school day. There are 31 days scheduled for collaboration time. Seven plus days would be gained if the same start and ending times are kept but eliminate the collaboration time. Additional reductions would be needed to gain time back.
- Option 5 – Combination of the above options.

Dr. Bailey then went on to explain that one of the major concerns was not having enough workers on the job sites and when it became apparent that the work would not be completed in the time allowed, that the start of school would need to be delayed. He again stated that he will be recommending to the Board an eight day delay to the start of school and utilizing option 1. This would result in the first day of school being September 8 and staff would be returning on August 29. He further noted that one of his greatest concerns is having a safe learning environment for all of our students. He did say that it was asked if porta-potties were an option and it was determined that this is not a good mix with elementary students and even the city said no to that option. He further stated that he understands delaying school by eight days is a hardship for our families and that once all projects are completed this will be a great asset for our children.

Chair Fazio asked Dr. Bailey to restate his recommendation. He noted that his recommendation is to delay school for two weeks (which is eight days as each week has only four days due to the original start day of school and Labor Day) and to make up the eight days by using Option 1. Dr. Bailey also noted that there will be daily meetings with the general contractor to assess the progress of the projects.

Questions from the Board:

Torok asked Dr. Bailey what the contract minimum is needed for staff to return on August 29. Dr. Bailey deferred to Mr. Chappell, Moscow City Building Inspector, who stated that each building must have a minimum of one female and one male bathroom, per level, before occupancy can take place.

Dibble stated that there are a lot of people here and noted that she would like to hear from the audience. Dr. Bailey then reviewed some questions that he has seen on Facebook and that he has received. Campbell also stated she would also like to hear from the audience and would also like to have a brief report from the general contractor and the architects.

Campbell then moved to amend the agenda to include brief reports from the general contractor and architects and for audience comments. Dibble seconded the motion. The motion was then amended to include a time limit of 2 minutes per comment within a 20 minute time frame. The motion passed 5-0-0.

Fazio then asked Mr. Hobbs, the general contractor, to begin. Mr. Hobbs introduced himself and stated his apology for meeting everyone under these circumstances. He then stated that this project became more than what was expected. He said that getting working bathrooms in each building will be the focus so that school will be able to start on September 8 and staff to return to the buildings by August 29.

Cameron Golightly, Design West Architects, stated that there were some unforeseen situations when renovations began on the bathrooms at all the schools that have caused delays. As the buildings are very old there was no way to really know what would be encountered when the demolition began. He said they will continue to help out in any way to make the opening of school as easy as possible.

Torok asked Mr. Hobbs what assurance he could give the Board to meet the August 29 deadline for staff to begin work. Mr. Hobbs stated that they will now focus on getting the bathrooms together and they are now at a point to be able to start putting things back together in the bathrooms. Frenzel asked if he would have enough man power to get things completed and Mr. Hobbs stated that he would.

Fazio then gave the guidelines for accepting public comments. She asked those who wish to make a comment to move forward to the front row at this time, state your name for the record and keep to a brief comment or question with a 2 minute time frame.

Public Comments:

1. Jon Meyer – what is the contingency in case the buildings aren't ready for occupancy. He has two children that are severely handicapped and depends on the school to provide services for them. He noted that with only 12 days' notice, it is not sufficient time to arrange for additional services and what will the school do to support them.
2. Kent Evans – why only make accommodations for Thanksgiving for those families that have flights and not those that are driving.
3. Tanner Pickard – as a member of the class of 2015, the last day of school has been circled for four years and adding two days at the end of the school year would not be a good choice. He would like the Board to consider adding minutes to each day instead of at the end of the school.
4. Greg Hearn – stated that he is a lawyer and doesn't believe for one minute that this was unforeseen. He then stated that he sees option 5 as the most viable option. He further stated that there should be a penalty assessed on the contractor and contingency plans should to be in place right now.
5. Jodi Opheim - also concerned about the delay start of school and is concerned on what to do for her child for day care.
6. Liz Brandt – wanted to know why the projects aren't on time, with nothing being said about what specifically caused them to be delayed and this is now putting most of the burden on teachers and the community. She would like to see the collaboration time used to make up the days.
7. Li Tau – are the delays universal or only at the middle and high school and could elementary start on time.
8. Cyndi Faircloth – days being added back into the schedule and how this affects the secondary level as far as quarters and semesters are concerned. Maybe add back the October days.
9. Unknown woman (could not understand name) – try to maintain the schedule as it is. Four minutes added back to the day doesn't add up to two days for teaching.

10. Shawn Ringo – lives near Lena and acknowledges unforeseen conditions have risen but understaffing of construction personnel is not a viable excuse and is unacceptable. Aren't there performance bonds built into construction contracts and the district should look into this.
11. Kelsey Hebert – how would her pay be effected by a September start date, how will students who need special services be taken care of and do away with the early release on Fridays.
12. Christy Disparty – feels that no information has been given as to what the actual delays are and why the time frame was not adequate. Also, Adventure Club is not a viable option for some parents because of the cost and what the district could do to help pay for day care.
13. Cindy Bechinski – hears the pain from the parents but wanted to express her appreciation to the Board and the Superintendent as this is not easy for anyone. She feels for each family but the schools are not ready for students to come back.
14. Mike Smith – I want to thank you for ADA accessibility. As it was difficult for Mr. Smith to continue, Dr. Bailey told him he would talk to him after the meeting.
15. Ladene Edwards – concern for the minute for days proposal and adding four minutes is not enough time to teach anything further and is concerned with the quality of teaching.
16. Shenghan Xu – when she heard about the delay she went to McDonald and checked out the building and also came early tonight to check out the high school. She also stated that adding four minutes does not help in delivering a good lesson. Would like to see using the collaboration time and teacher work days to make up the instructional time.
17. Monica Wright – spoke about the day care concern and the cost to the parents. Also asked if the teachers are able to get into their classrooms at all yet.
18. Pat Carter – no discussion as to which replacement days could be used for teaching days in the beginning of the year. He said the October days and the January day would be more feasible to use for instructional days.

Chair Fazio thanked everyone for their comments. She then asked Dr. Bailey if he had any answers to any of the questions. Dr. Bailey responded that he would like to look at Adair's notes first and then would respond. Fazio then said that in the construction contract there is a penalty built in for any delays but it isn't much. She also noted that all of the schools are affected so it would not be possible to have some start ahead of the others. Fazio further stated that there are ramifications from the state if schools start at different times within the district.

Dr. Bailey then stated that any contingency plan will be based on the options and comments made tonight but only one option can be used. As to the questions about the delays, he noted that he believes this was due to the lack of personnel working for the sub-contractors. Dr. Bailey also noted that he does not see the district paying for day care as this is the responsibility of the parents. He did state that he would work with those parents who have children with special needs. Adair then stated that many of the questions dealt with the options. Dibble asked about the comment related to graduation and Dr. Bailey stated that graduation would take place as scheduled on June 5 and stated that there is no easy solution to any of this. He then addressed the accommodation for those who have flights and stated that he would work with families on scheduled vacations during Thanksgiving break. Additionally, just closing one or two schools is not an option as all the bathrooms in all the schools are not ready. Dr. Bailey also stated that beginning school with only one or two schools affects ADA (average daily attendance) which our funding is based on from the state.

Campbell noted that the Board has had time to think about this situation and while this is unfortunate, we are not here to place blame but to consider what changes to the calendar will be best for our students' learning.

Dibble noted that many of the comments were about the collaboration time and it may seem to be the easiest to change something new but she is extremely reluctant to change this as it is needed very much at this time for not only our teachers but for our students.

Frenzel asked Dr. Bailey to elaborate on the possibility of adding four minutes to the day and why it wouldn't benefit our students and why he didn't recommend this. Dr. Bailey stated he could look at this and see if it might work but needs to make sure that our contractual agreement with staff is met by adding two workdays at the end of school or adding minutes to the day.

Fazio asked if Dr. Bailey was changing his recommendation and he stated that he was not but would look at possibly using October 30 and January 5 for the additional two instructional days or adding minutes but needs to look at all other options as he is reluctant to remove all Professional Development days for staff. It was noted that October 30 is a conference day and Dr. Bailey thanked the person who corrected this as it should be October 2.

A patron in the audience asked about going to school on President's Day or MLK day and Ms. Dibble responded that we are obligated to take off certain holidays as mandated by state law and those days are not available to use as instructional days.

There was further discussion among the board members and superintendent on what his final recommendation would be and then Chair Fazio asked if the Board was ready to entertain a motion.

RESOLUTION 15-17

RESOLVED: That the Board of Trustees of Moscow School District No. 281 hereby delays the start of school until September 8, 2014 and have staff return on August 29, 2014 and

FURTHERED RESOLVED that instructional days to be added to the calendar are: three days from Thanksgiving Break, November 24-26, 2014, with a 1:30 release on November 26, 2014; May 22, 2015, which was a teacher workday/snow make up day, June 4-5, 2015 at the end of the year and two additional days at the superintendent's discretion. The two work days for staff will also be at the superintendent's discretion.

Campbell moved the Board approve Resolution 15-17, seconded Dibble. Fazio asked if there was any further discussion. Dibble commented that working out the additional two days for students needs to be worked out quickly as parents want to know this right away. Frenzel thanked everyone for coming and that this has been a very difficult decision which will not make everyone happy but we are trying to do what is best for our students and community. Campbell said while there isn't a good solution, she acknowledges that this is a hardship for the families and trying to work out day care is a concern and while we can't pay for day care, we will work on helping to find solutions. Fazio then called for a vote. The motion passed 5-0-0. She thanked everyone for their patience and cooperation.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:05 PM.