



City of Goodyear

Meeting Minutes

City Council Work Session

Mayor Georgia Lord
Vice Mayor Sheri Lauritano
Councilmember Joanne Osborne
Councilmember Joe Pizzillo
Councilmember Wally Campbell
Councilmember Bill Stipp
Councilmember Sharolyn Hohman

Meeting Location:
Goodyear Justice Center
14455 W. Van Buren St.,
Suite B101
Goodyear, AZ 85338

Monday, August 24, 2015

5:30 PM

Goodyear Justice Center

1 CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Lord called the Work Session to order at 5:35 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

MOTION BY Councilmember Pizzillo, SECONDED BY Councilmember Hohman, to EXCUSE Councilmember Campbell and Councilmember Stipp from the meeting. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes 5 - Mayor Lord, Vice Mayor Lauritano, Councilmember Osborne, Councilmember Pizzillo, and Councilmember Hohman

Excused 2 - Councilmember Campbell, and Councilmember Stipp

Staff Present: City Manager Brian Dalke, City Attorney Roric Massey, and City Clerk Maureen Scott

3. AGENDA ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

- 3.1 [15-5648ws](#) Superintendent Andy Rogers will present an update to the Mayor and Council on the state of the Liberty Elementary School District, and will also discuss potential issues and policies impacting the City of Goodyear's public, private, and community education partners. (Lauren Valencia, Assistant to the Council)

Mayor Lord introduced Dr. Andy Rogers, Superintendent of the Liberty Elementary School District. She stated that the opening of Las Brisas Elementary School was wonderful, and that the parents and children were very excited. Dr. Rogers said there were 300 students and approximately 500 families at the ribbon cutting event.

Dr. Rogers indicated the Liberty Elementary School District has three schools in the City of Goodyear; however, all six of the schools have Goodyear students because they are an open enrollment school district. Four years ago, the governing board decided to look at choice and open enrollment as features of the school district. When a family comes in to register, they are

able to choose which school they wish to attend in the district. Each school is challenged to come up with an identity or signature program which the family gets to choose from for the children. Transportation is provided and the district is divided north and south with the Gila River being the half-way point. Children are transported to any of the three schools north of the river, and the same for the three schools south of the river.

The Liberty School District's Mission is to provide world-class education for each and every student regardless of their circumstance. Dr. Rogers indicated that this is a very ambitious mission and speaks to what the school district is about. Liberty is about the children, each and every student, and giving them a world-class education.

The Vision of the school district is to prepare students to achieve at high levels and leave eighth grade ready for success in high school and beyond. They will have the academic, social, creative and communication skills necessary to engage in academic and career pursuits that will reflect individual accomplishment and contribution to their community. This Vision statement is part of the Strategic Plan that was adopted this summer. The District surveyed staff, families, and community members with on-line surveys and received hundreds of responses, and the Strategic Plan was developed from this input. The survey was conducted over a series of weeks, one or two questions at a time. They found people were willing to give their input as long as it didn't take a lot of time and was user friendly.

The Strategic Plan consists of four areas: Student Achievement (highest priority); Quality Teachers; Strategic Use of Resources; and Innovation and Choice. Dr. Rogers indicated that the biggest challenge today, that every school and school district faces, is to get and keep high-quality teachers. There are currently 3,000 vacant positions in the State of Arizona. Dr. Rogers said the Liberty School District has every position filled going into the school year, which is a big accomplishment. He indicated the school district budget was cut by 25 percent about seven years ago and very little of the funds have been restored. The amount the school district receives per pupil is less this school year than they received in 2007. The cuts that were made at the State level have not been restored. They are forced to look at other revenue sources. Liberty School District converted three of the schools to charter schools, and generated \$2.4 million dollars additional revenue for the district.

The signature program for each of the Liberty Elementary School Districts schools are:
Liberty Elementary - Center for Agriscience Education
Estrella Mountain Elementary - Authorized International Baccalaureate (IB) School-Primary Years and Middle Years Program
Rainbow Valley Elementary - Covey Leader in Me School
Westar Elementary - Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (S.T.E.M.), and would like to add Arts
Freedom Elementary - S.T.E.M.
Las Brisas Academy - Visual and Performing Arts, and Dual Language Immersion (Spanish) program

Dr. Rogers indicated that every school has designated Tuesday as Tour Day, when families can tour any of the schools in the district. Families tour the schools, visit the classrooms, and have

all of their questions answered.

Council Discussion:

What is the status of the suit with the State? Dr. Rogers indicated that four years ago he anticipated getting the funding from the Inflation-Factor Lawsuit within a year or two. The current status is the same. The judge has ordered this into mediation, and negotiations are on-going. There is no timeline on the lawsuit.

What is the explanation of an Override? Override is a term that they are required to use, which is asking the local taxpayers to increase their taxes to go directly into their local schools to have higher quality schools. It is a local tax to supplement the State budget. An Override has become a source of funds for the schools just to maintain their basic programs.

How do we get the public behind the school system? Schools continue to offer band, art club, school newspaper, drama club, and sports. Teachers and administration are available after hours and weekends and are not paid for this time, in order to offer these extra activities to the children. Administrative services and supplies are important tools that are required and should not be cut. Dr. Rogers indicated that the people of Arizona always support schools. He said that we have to continue to force the issue by saying that people want good schools in their community, in their state, and we have to continue to fight the good fight to honor the will of the people. He indicated the district capital budget has been cut 85 percent this year and that this is the sixth year in a row that the capital budget has been cut. Council indicated that information needs to be provided through social media as well as newspaper. Companies have decided not to come to Arizona because of the quality of the school system. It has to be a priority at the State level to fund education.

4. INFORMATION

None.

5. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Mayor Lord adjourned the Work Session at 6:05 p.m.

Maureen Scott, City Clerk

Georgia Lord, Mayor

Date: _____