



West Ada

SCHOOL DISTRICT

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

July 15, 2015

Date, Place & Time	A special meeting of the Board of Trustees, West Ada School District, convened on Wednesday, July 15, 2015, 8:00 a.m., at the District Service Center, 1303 E. Central Drive, Meridian, Idaho
Trustees in Attendance	Chairman Tina Dean, Dr. Russell Joki, Carol Sayles, Dr. Julie Madsen (by phone) and Mike Vuittonet (by phone)
Staff in Attendance	Dr. Linda Clark, Dr. Bruce Gestrin, Barbara Leeds, Trish Duncan, Spencer McLean, Don Lowman, Devan Delashmutt, Ramona Lee, Denise Shumway, Don Nesbitt
Guests	Matt Newton, Matt Forrester, Kurt Lechtenberg, Nick Schafer, Scott Henson, Gary Harvey, Grant Joki

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Dean

Change Order 002A-R001,
Victory Middle School,
Denied

Dr. Bruce Gestrin asked guests to introduce themselves and what position they hold related to the construction and proposed change order at Victory Middle School.

Trustee Joki – the change order does not make sense. There is a note on the paperwork about a “toss up” between the two products. There is talk in town the Lithonia fixtures at MHS have not been reliable. The research made it appear this is a proprietary system, and that only Lithonia can work on the system when it is installed. If we go this direction to standardize, it will eliminate competitive bidding and there would be a one vendor system for multiple projects.

Nick Schafer (electrical engineer) – if that system goes in, it would be proprietary, whatever system we take, that company will have to provide parts in the future.

Trustee Joki – you wrote specifications for something simpler, must have done that believing that system would work. Now you want \$65,000 to purchase a far more complicated system that will be replicated in the future.

Nick – the original system specifications were simpler with less proprietary parts, but still required some specific parts. Whatever is decided for this school would not dictate other construction. Bids would be open to anybody, when they design, they want competitive bids. This is a maintenance issue for the district.

Spencer McLean (maintenance supervisor) – the district has gone with the Enlight system and is in the process of changing fixtures at Joplin to become more efficient and to give teachers easy control. The change order request was made because with it, the maintenance work can be done in-house instead of hiring an electrician. The change is intended to cost the district less over time. The proposal would ease the maintenance costs in the long run and be cost effective. They have talked in depth with the engineer about the project.

Trustee Joki – stated he was familiar with construction and the simpler system would be easier to work on.

Spencer disagreed, stating that tweaking the systems could take months on the simpler system, but would be automatic with the Enlight lighting control system. His experience in the field shows the Enlight system is easier than the ten volt system.

Trustee Joki – the specifications were written and bid, then the district asked to rewrite and there were several iterations between vendors.

Matt Newton (Beniton project manager) – this change considered the cost of upgrading the system and was issued soon after the original bid. Rocky Mountain Electric had not signed the contract. The bids were close and they were in the process of reviewing. In this unique situation, they were able to go to both suppliers, look at the change and have a competitive bid on the change order, which is an advantage to the district. Spencer reviewed the parts and pieces of the change.

Bruce – they did not proposed going with the Cooper system because of the reasons stated above, the Lithonia was chosen at Meridian High and for other district retrofits. It is more cost effective to stay with a product already in other buildings. We want to choose a product district maintenance staff can work on, and not have the added expense to call in outside vendors which easily overshadows the minimal difference in the quote.

Trustee Joki – asked if they had problems with the Lithonia system at Meridian High.

Spencer – yes, there was some set up issues they are correcting for Victory Middle School. The system at Meridian High has to get on our servers so they can talk, and was overdesigned for our purpose. The system does not have access through our fire wall and the result was interference in communication between the two systems.

Chairman Dean – does not have a background in construction and would like to know why this issue is time sensitive.

Matt – the lighting fixture package which includes exterior light poles is dictated by the manufacturer for every light on the project. Construction cannot move forward.

Chairman Dean – Cooper and Lithonia are manufacturers, what is the difference to the end user?

Nick – dimming, Cooper it would be manual; Lithonia it would be automatic and would not have multiple switches.

Chairman Dean – does someone have to be physically on site to access the Lithonia?

Nick – no, it can be done offsite. The proposed system, with the change, at Victory Middle has no network integration. It is a stand-alone system. Maintenance of this system could be done by one of the district's maintenance techs.

Chairman Dean – if we knew they liked this package better, why was it not bid that way?

Nick -The system was built around Enlight, designed as simply as possible so we could get competitive bids. They didn't want to set up a system so proprietary that only one person could bid. It is designed on an open format that any manufacturer of the big four could come in and bid. Trying to get competitive bid from both manufacturers.

Chairman Dean – does it require changes to the drawing?

Nick – no, the only change in cost is the product itself. The cost savings are in energy usage, they use an LED fixture so light bulb replacement is not an issue. They are equivalent systems.

Trustee Vuittonet – appreciates the questions he has heard. We have learned from past construction and systems that have been used. He likes that the Lithonia system is more user friendly, and asked what if they don't approve the change order?

Nick – they would go with the first choice. If they stay with original design, the classroom teacher will not see a difference, the maintenance department will see the change. Changes and modifications will not occur easily, they will have to hire outside vendors to work on the system. With the change, district maintenance staff can do the work.

Trustee Vuittonet – so maintenance is one of the biggest reasons for the change.

Nick – that is why the maintenance department requested the change. They want to improve on what has been done in the past and save the cost of using outside electricians.

Trustee Madsen – based on what Trustee Vuittonet just discussed, she is confused why this was not done a month ago. She asked what was in place in the future to prevent changes to the bidding process.

Dr. Gestrin stated it is important to note that change orders are a regular part of all construction projects. A new maintenance supervisor, Spencer, had come on board with expertise in this area. He was not a part of the original conversations on the school. This request comes from some of our experiences in the other buildings with the same product and how things have worked recently at Meridian High. The change order process sometimes takes months; they what is best and to find the people who know best. This change is what is best for maintenance into the future. It is important for trustees to know how they try to do business from construction to maintenance, they need to have maintenance involved at the beginning. The district hires very few specialty positions so they have to contract. If we go with the base system, would have to use electrician to work on it. The district is trying to do more with fewer people. Personnel costs chew up the majority of the budget.

Trustee Madsen – still feels like we are having an emergency meeting to take care of this. Need to budget time so items don't become urgent and require a special meeting.

Dr. Gestrin – we spend a great deal of time vetting out what is the best answer. He is not comfortable bringing anything to the board until they are satisfied with what will be presented. This item was on the regular meeting and the board tabled the issue to allow him time to look into the questions.

Trustee Madsen – still feel like we are essentially making changes on information that could have been introduced much earlier in the process.

Trustee Joki – appreciates the information, he had questions when he saw the change order. He was unable to tell who the low bidder was and would appreciate it if they can see the history and who is the low bidder on change orders. He felt the signal sent to bidders is that we won't eliminate competitive bidding. If Cooper is the low bid and meets specifications, we should go with them.

Spencer – it is his opinion that if we spend the additional \$3000 for the Lithonia system, it would cost the district less money down the road.

Trustee Vuittonet – over the years, standardization has made it much simpler in the bidding process. We have done it with computers and other items. That system makes it more uniform for maintenance. He was not concerned with this process closing the bidding process, he was more concerned with what the future costs might be for the system recommended.

Chairman Dean – made a clarifying statement, this is hardware and is not changing the contractor on the system and will not shut out local vendors.

Nick -This is not the construction bid, it is a parts change order. It is unusual that the subcontractor has made all of this information available. They have been very transparent in letting us see information that normally isn't seen.

Trustee Joki - he understands the importance of transparency and appreciated Nick's statement. Trustee Joki asked for Nick's opinion on the two products, is it maintenance neutral or is one easier than the other.

Nick - there are some extra parts with the Cooper system. In the Enlight system all devices are smart. The Cooper system has a box in the room that is the brains of the system. Troubleshooting would be done through that box. The whole system goes down if the box goes down. The Enlight system has individual pieces. The bottom line is that with approval of the change order, district staff can do the maintenance; without the change, electricians will be needed.

Trustee Joki - would the simpler system be the same as the Cooper product?

Trustee Vuittonet - from the maintenance perspective, he has confidence in the recommendation from the engineers. He felt like they had made their point and asked for a motion or to call for the question.

Chairman Dean called for the question.

Trustee Vuittonet made a motion to approve the change order as recommended by administration. The motion died for lack of a second.

Trustee Joki made a motion to award the bid to the low bidder on this change order.

Nick stated the question is whether to approve the hardware change.

Trustee Joki changed his motion to deny the hardware change, the motion was seconded by Trustee Sayles. Trustee Sayles voted yes, Trustee Joki voted yes, Trustee Vuittonet voted no, Trustee Madsen abstained from the vote and Chairman Dean voted yes. The motion passed on a 3-1 vote with one abstention.

ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Joki moved, Trustee Sayles seconded and the vote was unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 8:53 a.m.

Chairman

Clerk