

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Chickasha Public Schools
Chickasha, Okla.
Special Meeting
January 16, 2018

The Board of Education of Independent School District No. 1-001, Grady County, Oklahoma, met in special session Tuesday, January 16, 2018, at 5:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the Administration Building, 900 W. Choctaw Ave., Chickasha, Oklahoma.

Members Present

Chris Ludwell
Doug Brown
Julie Badgett Sinn
Julie Hibbard
Ginny Howell
Cindy Schmidt
Laura Martin, clerk and non-member

Members Absent

ITEM 1 - Call meeting to Order

Dr. Ludwell opened the special meeting at 5:30 p.m. Notice of the meeting had been properly announced and posted in compliance with the Open Meeting Laws of the State of Oklahoma.

ITEM 2 - Roll Call

Members present: Ludwell, Brown, Badgett Sinn, Hibbard

Members absent:

ITEM 3 - Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

After the Pledge of Allegiance, the board chose to skip to Item 9 before addressing any other agenda items.

ITEM 9 - Board to accept any resignation submitted since the last meeting of the board

Dr. Ludwell read the following statement:

"A wise man once said that public servants should be persons of fortitude and be able to thrive in a hardy environment. So understanding the privilege of being elected to this office, I was proud of the members of this school district exercising their right to free speech, even if some folks were proclaiming inaccurate, untrue statements. *And folks, there were a whole bunch of untruths.* Let me just correct a few of them.

- Ms. Pontikos was never considered in any way, shape or form for the superintendent position;
- It was never contemplated that upon taking leave Mr. Cash would be paid a salary and benefits, only a stipend for doing finance. If you will remember when he first arrived, we were looking at lay-offs of 19 teachers and staff; and he saved over \$200K and gave raises the same year;
- This Board never initiated suspensions. There were two (2) completely inappropriate events which cause the suspensions and any administrator would have been negligent to ignore them;

- You may not like the SPLC, but students and their parents should not be wrongly afraid of acceptance to college, when I myself read letters from my alma mater stating otherwise. In fact, OU was questioning why these rumors continue to circulate. Nor should any of our student-athletes be concerned of NCAA compliance when you can log on to the NCAA website and see the approval;

"I know that democracy can be messy and when I saw these and other falsehoods being repeated over and over and over again on social media, I was still prepared to give folks the benefit of the doubt. I saw my role to be that of a peacemaker – a person who was trying to bring the various factions of our community together with compromises. However, I was totally unprepared for what happened next. When I sat down with the supporters of the employees, these cowards attempted to **blackmail me, plain and simple**. Without a shred of truth, decency or shame, these folks made it clear that they would spread despicable innuendos and sinister suggestions about me **all the while telling me that they knew these accusations would be completely made up**.

"You know, I've often wondered why Chickasha has stayed around 16K people for the past 50 years with minimal growth, when Blanchard, Tuttle, Newcastle, Mustang and Yukon have exploded onto the scene. The school district is a pivotal part of the economic growth and development of any community. As hard as it is to admit, we have a major problem. A few people want to remain big ducks in a small pond. Why does our school district hold a superintendent for 2 to 5 years when other schools have superintendents for 10, 15, even 20 years?

Well, let me tell you why. No reasonable public servant should have to endure being blackmailed. I, for one, am doing my part for change right now **by standing up to your bullying and outing you; and I intend to do this some more in the future in a more meaningful way**.

"Accordingly, I am hereby tendering my resignation effective immediately in order to disarm these craven cowards and to allow me to remain faithful to the truth, this school district and my honor."

No board action was taken on Item 9.

ITEM 4 - Board to consider and take necessary action to convene in Executive Session to meet with a candidate for possible appointment to serve as a long-term interim superintendent and to discuss the candidate and terms and conditions of employment so that the board can return to open session and consider action regarding the employment of an interim superintendent pursuant to 25 O.S., Section 307 (B)(1).

On a motion from Mrs. Badgett Sinn, seconded by Mrs. Howell, the board voted to convene into executive session at 5:39 p.m. Voting AYE: Brown, Badgett Sinn, Hibbard, Howell

ITEM 5 - Acknowledge return to open session

At 7:55 p.m., the board returned to open session.

ITEM 6 - Executive session compliance statement

The Executive Session Compliance Notice was read by Mr. Doug Brown and is as follows; Jack and Susan Herron, Cindy Schmidt and all present members of the board of education attended the Executive Session. Only the items listed under the agenda item Executive Session were considered and discussed, and no board action was taken.

ITEM 7 - Discussion and possible board action to employ and approve the contract of a district long-term interim superintendent

On a motion from Mrs. Hibbard, seconded by Mrs. Howell, the board voted to approve the employment and contract of Jack Herron as long-term interim superintendent, effective 1/16/18. Voting AYE: Brown, Badgett Sinn, Hibbard, Howell

ITEM 8 - Discussion and possible board action to amend the addendum to David Cash's Superintendent's Contract to discontinue the stipend effective January 31, 2018, and to discontinue any obligation of the Superintendent Emeritus to provide financial services to the school district. Mr. Cash shall continue as Superintendent Emeritus without pay or benefits

On a motion from Mrs. Hibbard, seconded by Mrs. Badgett Sinn, the board voted to amend the addendum to David Cash's Superintendent's Contract to discontinue the stipend effective January 31, 2018, and to discontinue any obligation of the Superintendent Emeritus to provide financial services to the school district. Mr. Cash shall continue as Superintendent Emeritus without pay or benefits. Voting AYE: Brown, Badgett Sinn, Hibbard, Howell

ITEM 12 - Motion to Adjourn

On a motion from Mrs. Badgett Sinn, seconded by Mrs. Hibbard, the board voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:57 p.m. Voting AYE: Brown, Badgett Sinn, Hibbard, Howell

This agenda was posted at 4:30 P.M. on the 12th day of January, 2018, on the east and west doors of the Administration Building, Chickasha Public Schools, 900 W. Choctaw, Chickasha, OK, and emailed to the concerned public. Notice of the meeting was given to the Grady County Clerk at 4:08 p.m. on the 11th day of January, 2018.

Board President

Laura Martin

Chickasha Board of Education

Board Clerk

Special Meeting

State of Oklahoma

Grady County

I, the undersigned Clerk of the Board of Education of Chickasha School District I-001, of Grady County, Oklahoma; do hereby certify that at least 24 hours prior to the meeting, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and Holidays, notice of the date, time, place, and agenda of this meeting was posted in prominent public view at the location of the meeting.

Witness my hand and seal of this school district this _____ day of _____, 2018

Clerk, Board of Education