

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE
BATTLE RIVER REGIONAL DIVISION #31, HELD ON APRIL 25, 2002,
COMMENCING AT 9:33 A.M.**

PRESENT

JUDY FITZMAURICE-JOHNSON
BRENDA HERDER
MICHELE MULDER
GERRY OBERG
GWENDA POYSER
BILL SEARS
WAYNE THRONDSO (left the meeting at 4:23 p.m.)
PATRICIA ZENIUK

ABSENT

ALSO PRESENT

WARREN PHILLIPS, Acting Superintendent of Schools
STEPHEN SMITH, Acting Chief Deputy Superintendent (joined the meeting at 10:20 a.m. and left at 12:07 p.m.)
BILL SCHULTE, Secretary-Treasurer
SYLVIA LAUBER, Recording Secretary

G. POYSER IN THE CHAIR

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

#92/02 P. ZENIUK – That the following items be added to the agenda:

New Business

19. Capital Plan
20. Good Faith agreement
21. Education Commission

In-Camera Session

5. Financial Statement

CARRIED

REQUEST FROM EDBERG SCHOOL COUNCIL – DAY OFF IN LIEU OF STAFF MEETINGS

#93/02 B. SEARS – That motion #64/02 be lifted from the table.

CARRIED

#64/02 W. THRONDSOON – That, given the possible concern with busing with respect to staff meeting days, and in order to maintain continuity in the Division, the Board denies the request from the Edberg School Council to change the staff meeting day from the third Tuesday of every month to one Friday every month.

CARRIED

VISION STATEMENT – THREE-YEAR PLAN

Dr. Phillips, Acting Superintendent, reviewed a draft Vision Statement that is to be included in the Division's Three-Year Plan. Suggested amendments were made by Trustees. The Vision Statement will be revised and placed on the agenda for the regular meeting of the Board on May 9, 2002.

POLICY STATEMENT, ASBA ZONE 4

Chairman Poyser questioned Trustees with respect to an issue for possible policy development for ASBA Zone 4. The issue of provincial bargaining was discussed. It was suggested that local issues can, and should, be discussed by local groups, however perhaps money issues should become a provincial bargaining responsibility. Concern was expressed about provincial bargaining in that local issues may be lost and some are tied to funding. The Board did support putting the debate forward on the floor and the ASBA Zone 4 Director for Battle River Regional Division #31 will take this as an issue to the Zone 4 meeting on April 29, 2002.

Trustee Mulder noted that the Sparsity and Distance report is being finalized and will be used as a lobbying tool when complete.

PRESENTATION – SIFTON SCHOOL COUNCIL AND CHARLIE KILLAM SCHOOL COUNCIL (10:00 a.m.)

Chairman Poyser welcomed Gerald Pilger, Chair of the Sifton School Council, and Paula Marientette, Treasurer of the Sifton School Council, and Joanne Miske, Chair of the Charlie Killam School Council, to the meeting and invited their presentations.

Mr. Pilger served as spokesperson for the Sifton School Council and noted the following:

- It has been his feeling that if the junior high school program was removed from the Sifton School the School would gain nothing and lose everything; that the direction the Board is taking is in direct opposition to what parents wish; that the Board thinks he is a "red-neck" who lives in the past; and that Sifton School parents feel that the Board does not care and will do whatever it wishes.
- On March 28, 2002 he attended a Board meeting as an observer when the principals of the Sifton, Charlie Killam, CCHS, and PACE Outreach Schools were in attendance and outlined what they think their schools would experience if the proposed re-alignments occurred.

- He listened when the Charlie Killam School principal indicated that a two-grade school is not a good thing. He listened when the CCHS principal said that his school cannot afford to lose the grade nine students. He listened when the PACE Outreach School principal said that capping enrolments is not good because there are many students who do not fit into the program at CCHS. He listened when the Sifton School principal invited the Board to provide more space at Sifton School to enable the junior high school program to remain there. He listened to the questions the Trustees posed to the principals.
- Mr. Pilger then offered an apology to the Board for some of his past thoughts because at the meeting on March 28th, he became aware that the Board really does believe what it is doing is in the best interests of the students.

Mr. Pilger continued his presentation by outlining many statistics and research done in the United States that supports K-8 schools. He responded to the items that were noted at the January 29, 2000 public meeting that listed quality reasons for supporting sending the junior high school students to Charlie Killam School. Mr. Pilger reiterated that what parents want is the intimacy, basics and control that is available in a smaller school setting. He noted that he understands that the Board believes that what it is offering is better, but he believes that what is now in place is great and all research he can find supports that going to a two or three grade school is wrong and will hurt kids. The Sifton School parents, kids and community disagree with what the Board is asking them to do. It is not beneficial to move students into a school that is under construction or has only two grades. Mr. Pilger noted that there is a core group of parents who are prepared to fight a transfer in any way possible to them as they will not be forced into a decision that they believe to be wrong. He does not agree with the middle school concept or a separate junior high school.

Joanne Miske, representing the Charlie Killam School Council, noted that the issue before the Board is a multi-faceted one that involves a large number of stakeholders. Most important among those stakeholders are the students. In her address to the Board, Ms Miske noted that the Charlie Killam School Council supports Charlie Killam School becoming a grades 7-9 school with some portion of the grade nine students in attendance. Ms Miske noted the following:

- There exists a strong spirit of community in the school. The staff has worked hard to develop this.
- There are excellent program offerings – sports (including recreational and rep sports, giving all students an opportunity to be involved if they so desire), fine arts (band, art, French, and drama).

It is the belief of the School Council that reconfiguring the junior high program and placing grades 7-9 in Charlie Killam School would benefit students in the following ways:

- It would allow the students an opportunity to further develop their “junior high” years, allowing them a greater sense of belonging as they will remain at Charlie Killam for a longer period of time. It

becomes 'their Junior High school'. It allows them more time to develop a variety of skills before moving on to the high school as they remain the focus and do not end up as an adjunct to a greater academic entity. They will retain their own unique identity and the growth and development that comes with that.

- There are many students that simply need more time to mature before going on to cope with the social and academic complexities of a composite high school environment. Allowing students a third year in a junior high school environment would allow students that extra time to mature, and they will be better prepared for the impending transition.

Ms Miske noted that from an administrative point of view, Charlie Killam School has been functioning in a "state of limbo" for some time. The enrolment was depleted with the closure of the elementary program, and the potential has been limited due to restrictions imposed by the reduced enrolment. It has become increasingly difficult to offer all the services needed to provide the students a guarantee of the best education possible. It is difficult to plan, make decisions, and develop long-term goals when the School is in a continuing phase of uncertainty. However, in spite of some daunting circumstances, the staff and administrators are continuing to give genuine quality education for the students at Charlie Killam School.

Ms Miske concluded by noting that the parent council and staff at Charlie Killam School believe that this School offers students the greatest potential for a well-rounded, quality education. Students can experience the many social and academic opportunities in being part of a larger junior high school, as well as the many valuable lessons to be learned from being involved in such a community. Charlie Killam School is uniquely qualified to offer this to all junior high students. Ms Miske urged the Board to reconfigure the junior high program, placing a portion of that program at Charlie Killam School.

Dr. Phillips expressed his appreciation for the studies which Mr. Pilger presented, however expressed caution in reviewing American studies as there is a tendency to define small in different ways.

Mr. Pilger noted that he defines small as 300 or less.

Dr. Phillips continued by noting that student achievement in Battle River Regional Division #31 has been increasing for the past six years with the Division being above the provincial norm. He further noted that the percentage of students going on to post-secondary institutions from Battle River Regional Division #31 is 10% above the provincial. Looking at the jurisdiction as a whole, student achievement is good and getting better. This happened at a time with a two-grade junior high school program and Dr. Phillips believes will improve with a three-grade junior high school program. He further stated that the school as it is being envisioned for Charlie Killam School will still fit into the definition of a small school.

The presentation concluded with questions from the Trustees to the delegation.

SIFTON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

#94/02 W. THRONDSO - That the following program closure occur at the Sifton School as of June 30, 2002,

<u>School Name</u>	<u>Level(s)/Grades to be Closed</u>
Sifton School	Grades Seven (7) through Nine (9) inclusive

and further that the junior high school students at the Sifton School be directed to attend Charlie Killam School.

Trustee Thronpson requested a recorded vote.

<u>For the motion</u>	<u>Against the motion</u>
Judy Fitzmaurice-Johnson	Gerry Oberg
Wayne Thronpson	Brenda Herder
Bill Sears	Patricia Zeniuk
Michele Mulder	
Gwenda Poyser	

CARRIED

The delegation left the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

MEETING RECESS

The regular meeting recessed at 11:30 a.m. and reconvened at 11:46 a.m.

MODERNIZATION OF CHARLIE KILLAM SCHOOL

#95/02 M. MULDER – That plans proceed for the preparation of the Charlie Killam School to accommodate Sifton and Charlie Killam grade nine students as part of a junior high school program effective with the 2002-03 school year.

CARRIED

MEETING RECESS

The regular meeting recessed at 12:06 p.m. and reconvened at 1:42 p.m.

Finance Manager, Imogene Walsh, joined the meeting at 1:42 p.m.

IN-CAMERA SESSION (1:43 p.m.)

#96/02 W. THRONDSOON – That the regular meeting recess to allow the Trustees to meet in-camera, and that all persons except Trustees, Acting Superintendent Phillips, Secretary-Treasurer Schulte, Finance Manager Walsh, and Recording Secretary Lauber be excluded.

CARRIED

Ms Walsh left the meeting at 2:57 p.m.

The in-camera session recessed at 3:56 p.m. and the regular meeting reconvened at 3:56 p.m.

MEETING RECESS

The regular meeting recessed at 3:56 p.m. and reconvened at 4:06 p.m.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT – POLICY IC ‘ATTENDANCE AREAS/ TRANSPORTATION

#97/02 B. SEARS – That the Board approves policy IC ‘Attendance Areas/ Transportation’ as amended.

DEFEATED

Trustee Throndsoun left the meeting at 4:23 p.m.

CAPITAL PLAN

#98/02 B. SEARS – That the Board accepts the recommendation of the Facilities Committee and ranks the Capital Plan projects in the following order of priority: Charlie Killam School, Camrose Composite High School, Hay Lakes School, Hardisty School, Bawlf School, Sparling School and Bashaw School.

CARRIED

GOOD FAITH AGREEMENT

As ASBA President, Trustee Mulder excused herself from the discussion on the Good Faith Agreement.

#99/02 G. OBERG – That the Board endorses the Good Faith Agreement signed by the Alberta Teachers’ Association, the Alberta School Boards Association, and the Government of Alberta.

CARRIED

INFORMATION ITEMS

Chairman Poyser noted that a letter was copied to the Board from Pembina Hills Division commending Michele Mulder on the leadership she provided ASBA through the past turbulent months. Another letter sent to the Chairman of the Holy Spirit RCSR #4 from the President of ASBA was copied to the Board. This letter noted that ASBA has not taken a position with regards to the *Education Services Settlement Act* (ESSA).

EDUCATION COMMISSION

Trustees discussed the possibility of hosting a number of public meetings to seek input from community members for a presentation to the Education Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

All items of business being complete, and there being no dissent, Chairman Poyser declared the meeting adjourned at 4:51 p.m.

GWENDA POYSER, CHAIRMAN

WILLIAM SCHULTE, SECRETARY-TREASURER

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