

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE  
BATTLE RIVER REGIONAL DIVISION #31, HELD ON APRIL 26, 2001,  
COMMENCING AT 9:33 A.M.**

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**PRESENT**

LORNE ENRIGHT  
MICHELE MULDER  
GERRY OBERG  
GWENDA POYSER  
JACQUIE SCHAFFTER (left the meeting at 2:27 p.m.)  
BILL SEARS  
WAYNE THRONDSO  
ROXANE WOLOSHYN

**ABSENT**

**ALSO PRESENT**

PAUL DOLYNNY, Superintendent of Schools  
WARREN PHILLIPS, Chief Deputy Superintendent of Schools  
SYLVIA LAUBER, Recording Secretary

**M. MULDER IN THE CHAIR**

Chairman Mulder welcomed Mr. Dolynny, Superintendent of Schools, back to the Board room after a medical absence.

**ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

#68/01 G. POYSER – That the Board approve the additions to the agenda as noted on the distributed agenda sheet.  
CARRIED

**POLICY GBK/IFCG 'SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT'**

#69/01 W. THRONDSO – That the Board approve policy GBK/IFCG 'Smoke-Free Environment' as presented.  
CARRIED

**PRESENTATION – BRYAN BOULANGER**

Chairman Mulder welcomed Bryan Boulanger to the meeting and invited his presentation.

Mr. Boulanger indicated that he has a nine-year old son who attends Charlie Killam School and that he, himself, is a member of the Charlie

Killam School Council. Mr. Boulanger noted that he is present this morning as a representative of the parents with children in the elementary program at Charlie Killam School.

Mr. Boulanger indicated the purpose for his presentation to the Board is to ask that it set aside its motion to transfer the Charlie Killam School elementary program to Sifton School for the following reasons:

- When this proposal was presented to parents at Charlie Killam School approximately a year and half ago, it was with the understanding that the Charlie Killam School elementary program would be transferred to Sifton School, and, in turn, the junior high school program from Sifton School would be transferred to Charlie Killam School.
- At a meeting in February 2001, the Charlie Killam School Council was advised that the Board's decision to transfer the Sifton junior high program was premature, and as such, a decision had been made to set the motion aside. It is Mr. Boulanger's understanding that the Board wanted to wait until the renovations had been completed at Charlie Killam School before transferring the junior high program from Sifton.
- At a public meeting held at Charlie Killam School a week later, the Board announced the following goals:
  - "achieve reasonable class sizes for the elementary students in the Charlie Killam School attendance area.
  - Ensure Sifton maintains a viable elementary program; ensure school utilization rates are as close to 80% as possible in all schools.
  - Provide at least two alternatives for grade 9 students in Camrose."
- At the public meeting in April 2001 held at Camrose Composite High School, the Board reaffirmed its desire to provide the two alternatives for grade nine students.
- It was apparent to parents of students at Charlie Killam School that the Board had capitulated and was prepared to retain the junior high program at Sifton School as one of those alternatives.
- The issue then is, where does that leave the Charlie Killam School elementary program?

Mr. Boulanger, on behalf of the parents with elementary students at Charlie Killam School, proposed the transfer of the elementary program be set aside until:

- The grade nine question has been conclusively determined. Before the children are moved, ensure that there is a need to do so.
- Wait until Alberta Infrastructure announces exactly how much money it will be providing for school upgrades.
- Once funding has been announced, request that the Board provide parents with an accounting as to how and where this money will be used, and provide specifics on how the funds would be used to upgrade Charlie Killam School to make it a "premiere" junior high school.
- Consider attrition as an option to the elimination of the elementary program at Charlie Killam School. In three years the elementary

program would no longer exist at Charlie Killam School. This would therefore preempt the need to displace elementary students currently attending this school. With the transfer of approximately 60 students, so too goes approximately \$300,000 in funding.

Mr. Boulanger concluded his presentation by noting that the re-organization of the elementary and junior high school program impacts on all levels of public education in the City and County of Camrose, and requested that before the Board proceeds with the movement of children from any of its schools or programs, it produce and present a clearly defined strategic and implementation plan. This has not been done to date. Mr. Boulanger requested the grade nine question be settled first, then proceed with a re-evaluation of the elementary programs at Charlie Killam and Sifton School.

Chairman Mulder noted that the parents are asking that the motion be set aside and that the elementary program at Charlie Killam School be closed by attrition. This is something the Board has considered. It is important that everyone be cognizant of the requirements of the School Act and related legislation with respect to program/school closures.

Mr. Boulanger replied that parents requested that attrition be one avenue to be explored. He feels however, that the primary issue at this time is the grade nine program as it appears that the elementary position is predicated on the grade nine program.

Mrs. Mulder ask if Mr. Boulanger could explain the statement about the feeling by parents that the Board had capitulated. Mr. Boulanger's response was that that was the feeling of the parents who attended the public meeting in February. These parents felt that the Board had capitulated to the pressure by the Sifton parents to not move the junior high program from their school, and that the Board made a subsequent decision to not do so at this time. The parents at the Charlie Killam School were working with the understanding that the one school would be an elementary school and the other one would be a junior high school and could accept that. However, that changed and the parents did not know why or how.

Trustee Thronson noted that the idea of "us vs. them" feeling is still present to some extent. The elementary program at the Sifton School is a good program. Students going to Sifton School from Charlie Killam are going to a good school. The assumption that the move of the elementary program is predicated on the grade nine issue is somewhat flawed. What really started the concern was the decline in enrolment of elementary students at Charlie Killam School. Grade nine is an issue, but the two are not necessarily tied. As well, Charlie Killam has experienced uncertainty in the past couple years as to what's happening and as a result some students have moved to other schools. In the minds of some people the decision has been made even though the motion has not been brought forward and debated. This proposal would place more students in Sifton School which leads one to believe the elementary program at that school would be stronger.

Trustee Thronson noted that some parents have approached him with the idea of an amendment that would keep the grade six program at the Charlie Killam School for next year, with the argument by parents that Charlie Killam is then a three-grade school and minimized the impact of the current grade five students. Mr. Boulanger was asked for his comment on this proposal.

Mr. Boulanger responded that as a parent is he quite prepared to accept compromise and is not opposed to the suggestion. He does not feel it is all or nothing, however he feels that this Board has to present and communicate a plan to this community on how it is going to proceed on all fronts. Uncertainty and poor communication have led some parents to have an almost defeatist attitude – there has been no ECS program at Charlie Killam School for some time and at the end of the day some students at that school are going to be displaced. There is a sense that today this is an issue for these students. Information that is being imparted to parents is that “they don’t want you there”. His son feels that the is not going to be wanted at Sifton School.

Trustee Thronson noted that when Trustees met with the School Council at Charlie Killam School possible ways of easing the transition were discussed, which were difficult to implement “pre-today” because the decision had not been made. However, Mr. Boulanger’s comment is well taken. The move to Sifton School could be eased by the implementation of the transition ideas.

Mr. Boulanger questioned Trustees if time has run out to introduce this new element of transition as we are now in the last two months of the academic program for this year. He doesn’t have all the answers, but wonders if the Board has run out of time to implement comprehensive transitions to meet the needs of these students.

Trustee Thronson noted there is time if everyone works towards that. Sifton School will be experiencing an administration change in the next school year. The current principal is doing an excellent job at the Sifton School, however the administrative change and the students from the Charlie Killam School moving to the Sifton School could ease the transition for intermingling of the two elementary programs as one school.

Mr. Boulanger agreed that could happen, however what remains is still a sense of one school being “gutted” (not his word, but one that is being used) to benefit the other school. Charlie Killam School is losing upwards of 60 students which the Sifton School receives and there is no reciprocation, financial or otherwise, to the Charlie Killam School.

Mrs. Mulder noted that the term “gutted” has been used before, but the basis for whatever decision comes from this debate is for program excellence for students. The Charlie Killam elementary program is in decline and grades have had to be combined. More parents have indicated that this is unacceptable. In any closure situation, that thought process happens – it’s not taking money out of here to give to another, it is to provide program opportunities that may not have existed prior to the move.

Mr. Boulanger agreed and noted that others have used those words and they are not his, however the perception is still out there. This perception likely would not be there if this had proceeded in the manner expected by the Charlie Killam parents there would be a premiere elementary program in partnership with a premier junior high program. The words 'one campus, two schools' were used and this doesn't appear to exist anymore.

Mrs. Mulder noted that the Board is working through the process.

Trustee Sears thanked Mr. Boulanger for his comments, noting that he agreed with Mr. Boulanger on many points in his presentation. Mr. Sears posed the question that in an ideal world how would Mr. Boulanger envision the schools in the City of Camrose.

Mr. Boulanger noted that he is a pragmatist and a realist. He noted that there are two buildings 200 meters apart that are perfectly capable of accommodating the numbers of students currently attending. Pragmatically he would look at improving the elementary program at one school and pursue the development of a junior high program at another. Or perhaps a middle school or junior high at Charlie Killam as it is clearly the larger school with an extra gym. Facility modifications are expected. That was the expectation of the elementary parents and that was more palatable. He would agree that the motion in February did not define a timeline. He suggested that the junior high program issue be settled first and then determine what it takes to accommodate that. He appreciates there will be opposition to that. Personally he is quite prepared for compromise and will accept the decision.

Trustee Sears raised the question that if the elementary program is located at Sifton School and the junior high program is located at the Charlie Killam School, would you see a need for an alternative grade nine program.

Mr. Boulanger indicated that he is not an expert and has listened to the debate. On the grade nine issue, pragmatically make it neat and tidy. There is a need to have some kind of ownership in the program, a need to look at the funding issue and to understand other issues. At the end of the day, the Board should put a plan on the table stating that this is the way it is going to be, this is the funding being afforded to the Board for upgrading and the timelines. At this time, it is not clear what is going to happen to the Charlie Killam School.

Mrs. Mulder noted for clarification purposes that the funding that comes from Alberta Infrastructure comes specifically to the site and cannot be used elsewhere. Part of the problem facing the Board is that there is still no indication from Alberta Infrastructure when they will be informed that funding for modernization of Charlie Killam School will be forthcoming.

**MOTION WITH RESPECT TO CLOSURE OF THE CHARLIE KILLAM ELEMENTARY PROGRAM**

#70/01 W. THRONDSO – That, effective with the commencement of the 2001-2002 school year, the following program level reduction occurs at the Charlie Killam School as of June 30, 2001:

<u>School Name</u>	<u>Level(s)/Grades to be Reduced/Closed</u>
Charlie Killam School	Grades one (1) through Six (6) inclusive.

**FIRST AMENDMENT TO MOTION #70/01**

#71/01 W. THRONDSO – That motion #70/01 be amended to change the level(s)/grades to be reduced/closed to read “grades one (1) through five (5)”

DEFEATED

**SECOND AMENDMENT TO MOTION #70/01**

#72/01 W. THRONDSO – That motion #70/01 be amended to change the level(s)/grades to be reduced/closed to read “grades one (1) through five (5)” and further that an addition to the motion be made that states that commencing with the 2002-03 school year the grade six (6) program be closed.

CARRIED

**AMENDED MOTION #70/01**

#73/01 W. THRONDSO - That, effective with the commencement of the 2001-2002 school year, the following program level reduction occurs at the Charlie Killam School as of June 30, 2001:

<u>School Name</u>	<u>Level(s)/Grades to be Reduced/Closed</u>
Charlie Killam School	Grades one (1) through five (5) inclusive;

and further that with the commencement of the 2002-03 school year, the following program level reduction occurs at the Charlie Killam School as of June 30, 2002:

<u>School Name</u>	<u>Level(s)/Grades to be Reduced/Closed</u>
Charlie Killam School	Grade Six (6).

CARRIED

**DIRECTION OF STUDENTS FROM CHARLIE KILLAM SCHOOL TO SIFTON SCHOOL**

#74/01 J. SCHAFFTER – That, commencing with the 2001-2002 school year, students from grades one to five inclusive from the Charlie Killam School attendance area be directed to attend Sifton School; and further that, commencing with the 2002-2003 school year, students from grade six from the Charlie Killam School attendance area be directed to attend Sifton School.

CARRIED

**MEETING RECESS**

The regular meeting recessed at 11:00 a.m. and reconvened at 11:14 a.m.

**DATE FOR TRUSTEE PLANNING SESSION**

Trustees scheduled a planning session for May 23, 2001 commencing at 5:00 p.m. and for the regular Committee meeting day on May 24, 2001.

**STROME SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING**

Trustees were informed that they had received an invitation to attend the School Council meeting at Strome School on May 7, 2001 at 7:30 p.m.

**WRITTEN PROPOSALS FOR CONSIDERATION – CAPITAL PLAN**

In order to ensure all school councils have had an opportunity to make their views and/or concerns known to the Board, school councils will be invited to submit written proposals to the Board of Trustees for consideration when the Capital Plan is revised.

**MEETING RECESS**

The regular meeting recessed at 11:54 a.m. and reconvened at 1:01 p.m.

**HAY LAKES SCHOOL COUNCIL – KEITH LYSENG**

Chairman Mulder welcomed a delegation of four persons representing the Hay Lakes School Council to the meeting and invited their presentation. Keith Lyseng served as spokesperson for the delegation. Mr. Lyseng noted the following:

- This presentation was being made on behalf of the parents and students in the Hay Lakes School.
- Dialogue began when the School Council was told that the Board made a submission to Alberta Infrastructure with no prior consultation by the school board or the consultant hired to prepare the report.
- This presentation will address five major issues: utilization factor for Hay Lakes School, projections for growth in the Hay Lakes School area, student programming in Hay Lakes, student results and parents' views.

Mr. Lyseng noted the following with respect to the utilization factor:

- Disagree with the calculation used as the data was prepared from an outdated floor plan.
- The calculation provided by the School Council is a 72.38% utilization rate based on the updated floor plan and the new utilization formula. This may increase as Alberta Infrastructure is determining whether the space currently leased to the ECS class can be excluded. The 72.38% includes the ECS space, but not the students enrolled in the ECS program.
- Therefore the utilization rate at the Hay Lakes School is well above the 65% favored by the school board and is close to the school board goal of 75%.

Mr. Lyseng presented the following with respect to growth in the Hay Lakes School area:

- The Capital Plan assumes a decline in school population for the County of Camrose and the City of Camrose.
- Hay Lakes residents commute to work in Edmonton, Sherwood Park, Nisku and Leduc.
- The Village, whose population was not even considered in the Capital Plan, is experiencing solid revitalizing growth with the most current census showing a 7.6% increase in population from 1991-96.
- Currently all vacant lots have been sold and the Village is purchasing 18 acres to meet the demand for new housing. The development will create 57 lots over the next 8-10 years.
- The population of Hay Lakes and any potential growth was not factored into the Capital Plan, since the census data used by Group 2 did not include the village itself.
- With respect to the claim about teacher shortage, with Hay Lakes location within commuting distance to Edmonton, Hay Lakes has often attracted teachers who live in and around Edmonton, thereby putting Hay Lakes in a much better position than Camrose in attracting these teachers.
- Regarding the actual student numbers in Hay Lakes School, all classes including ECS have enrolments of twenty or greater except grade seven. Early registration numbers show the ECS enrolment for the 2002-02 school year to be at least 22 students.
- The closure of the high school will have a negative impact on the growth and viability of the Village of Hay Lakes. The closure will likely mean a drop in the property values in the village and drastic reduction in the viability of the Village's plans for expansion. The current attraction to Hay Lakes is for younger people commuting to Edmonton and surrounding area. Very few will be attracted to a village that buses their high school students in the opposite direction.

Student Programming in Hay Lakes

- In Hay Lakes School the enrolment has stabilized over the last couple of years and appears to be on the increase.



- Programming has not been reduced for a number of years and with changes in technology and packaging, programming has in fact provided more opportunities for students.
- Options such as Distance Education, Career and Technology Studies, and the Green Certificate Program provide options for students.
- Hay Lakes School provides all three fine arts programs plus a second language and offers work experience with local businesses for between 10 and 15 students annually.
- Students interested in trades who do not feel their course needs can be met are encouraged to attend Camrose Composite High School and busing is provided by the school board. This choice is supported by the parents at Hay Lakes, however question if the school board will provide busing for Camrose students who wish to attend Hay Lakes School.
- Hay Lakes is very successful in programming and community satisfaction, and are always willing to work with the school board and Hay Lakes School to improve programming by considering other options.

#### Student Results

- Hay Lakes has excelled at producing students that have been recognized by multitudes of scholarships and awards.
- Statistics provided by the school show that Hay Lakes students' achievements have always been at least above the average for the School Division.

#### Parents' Views

- Parents at Hay Lakes area take the position that a full ECS – 12 program must occur at Hay Lakes.
- It is up to the Board to decide if this should be the current school, a new school, or a modernized school.
- To bus high school students from Hay Lakes to Camrose may be an economically viable decision for the Board, but it is not an acceptable option for the parents.
- Parents fully support the ability for students and parents to choose what is the best mode of education for their situation, be that the Camrose Composite High School, the Christian School or Hay Lakes.
- The vast majority of the residents in the Hay Lakes School area are pleased with the current situation.
- In Hay Lakes School there is an opportunity for everyone to have his or her identity, to participate in sports, band, or other activities that give them exposure to activities they may participate in throughout their life.
- Busing to a large school such as Camrose Composite means lost opportunities for Hay Lakes students, even with the increased breadth and depth of courses referred to in the background information for the April 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- Parents understand that other school divisions such as Buffalo Trail, Ponoka and Rocky Mountain House have chosen not to close any rural schools even though some are falling well below their critical enrolment.

- Why would the Board close a viable high school that is excelling in results and meeting the programming needs of students? It is apparent that this is a choice rather than a need – a choice parents will not accept.
- Throughout the process the school board members have never provided their thoughts, positions or reasons.
- The Capital Plan was completed by a consultant and was the start of consultation.
- The Board has held meetings and workshops, but never suggested a position or reasons that could be debated publicly.
- Will the Board commit to either answering the concerns of Hay Lakes parents directly, or allow all interested parties in the School Division to review the next draft Capital Plan prior to it being submitted to Alberta Infrastructure?
- Parents strongly encourage the Board to consider what is best for students.
- They realize that with targeted funding funds do not come easily, however eliminating a successful and viable high school program at Hay Lakes School to make other programs more viable does not benefit Hay Lakes students.
- The Hay Lakes School Council is willing to work with the School Board and the Hay Lakes school administration to consider options such as adding to the school through alternative schooling. There may be additional options that would augment the current school curriculum and still meet the needs of an ECS to grade 12 school in Hay Lakes.
- Will the School Board work with the School Council regarding enhancing the programs within the Hay Lakes School?

Mr. Lyseng requested a written response by May 5, 2001 to the concerns put forth in his presentation.

Chairman Mulder thanked the delegation for coming and commended Mr. Lyseng on the presentation. Mrs. Mulder noted that a written response will be forthcoming.

Mrs. Mulder indicated that the Board would provide transportation from other areas to Hay Lakes School if there was a program need. This would also be true for families that move from one area to another during the school year and request their children be allowed to ride a bus to complete their school year in the school in which they started.

Mrs. Mulder informed the delegation that the new utilization formula is not determined as yet. In a conversation with personnel from Alberta Infrastructure on April 25, 2001 she was informed that the new formula is still under discussion and when she pressed for an answer as to when it would be available was told that is not known. There is apparently another area of the formula being considered so a definitive answer as to when it will be ready was not given. Mrs. Mulder noted that Board concern has been expressed to Alberta Infrastructure with respect to the outdated floor plans of the Hay Lakes School.

Mrs. Mulder indicated that the Board is planning to set aside time to work through the next steps with respect to the Capital Plan.

A member of the delegation questioned what the target date is for the submission of the new plan.

Mrs. Mulder responded that the Board does not have a date for submission of a revised Capital Plan. There is no information out with respect to the utilization formula and no information with respect to funding for the first project in the Capital Plan. The Board wishes to continue discussion with communities and to ensure that people have time for input.

Mrs. Mulder was questioned if the decision for the Hay Lakes School is based on the acceptance of the Capital Plan by Alberta Infrastructure.

Mrs. Mulder responded that what is at Alberta Infrastructure is a proposal for Hay Lakes. If the funding became available for the first two projects (Charlie Killam and Camrose Composite High School) the Board would then have to make a decision to proceed in the fall following policy. Even though the proposal for the Hay Lakes School appears in the plan, it doesn't mean that what is proposed will proceed. The Board is cognizant of the fact that the release of the study and report caused great anxiety and anger in the communities. There is no timeline for the project. Based on the trend from the past five years, the declining enrolments are very much a concern for the Board.

Trustees were informed they can meet with the Village Council at any time to obtain information.

Trustees were requested to view each community individually.

Mrs. Mulder assured the delegation that every presentation and every letter received is taken quite seriously.

The delegation left the meeting at 1:26 p.m.

### **SUMMER GAMES 2002**

#75/01 J. SCHAFFTER – That the Board contribute \$25,000 to the Camrose Games Society for the construction of a track and field facility with the stipulation that the facility be built at Camrose Composite High School.

CARRIED

### **STUDENT ACTIVITY WAIVER**

#76/01 G. OBERG – That the Board approves the Student Waiver, Indemnification and Consent Form as presented.

CARRIED

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Negotiating Committee

Members of the Negotiating Committee will be attending a province-wide meeting for trustee negotiators and their administrative personnel in Edmonton on April 30, 2001.

Negotiating Sub-Committee

Trustees Woloshyn and Thronson reported that they met with the contract bus drivers on April 25, 2001.

**DIRECTOR OF MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS**

Mr. Pat Spelliscy joined the meeting at 2:04 p.m. to present guidelines for air quality in schools and the report of air quality at the C. W. Sears School, Allan Johnstone School, and Hay Lakes School.

Mr. Spelliscy was asked a question with respect to provision of playground equipment. He noted that playground equipment is not provided by the Division, however the maintenance crews do repair or remove playground equipment when needed.

Mr. Spelliscy reported that the review of the foundation of the Hay Lakes School shows that the foundation is structurally sound.

**IN-CAMERA SESSION (2:16 p.m.)**

#77/01 W. THRONSON – That the regular meeting recess to allow the Trustees to meet in-camera, and that all persons except Trustees, Superintendent of Schools Dolynny, Chief Deputy Superintendent of Schools Phillips, and Recording Secretary Lauber be excluded.

CARRIED

The in-camera session recessed at 3:28 p.m. and the regular meeting reconvened at 3:28 p.m.

**BAWLF ECS SOCIETY**

Dr. Phillips informed Trustees that he had a telephone message from the Bawlf ECS Society indicating that their Board is prepared to accept the Board's offer to assume the ECS Society as a Board-run ECS as outlined in the letter sent to them. A formal letter will follow.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS CONTINUED**

Capital Plan

The members of the Capital Plan Committee will be attending a site meeting at Forestburg and Sedgewick on May 2, 2001. It is likely that

that the Sedgewick School modernization project will go to tender the first week of May.

Communications/Public Relations Update

The next meeting of the Communications/Public Relations Committee is scheduled for May 2, 2001 at which time the adult stories from the 'Telling Stories Out of School' competition will be judged.

Canadian School Boards Association (CSBA) Congress

Mrs. Mulder noted that the Canadian School Boards Association Congress will be held in Calgary this year and encouraged Trustees to attend.

Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) Reports and Information

Chairman Mulder and Trustee Poyser reported on their attendance at the ASBA Zone 4 meeting held in Rocky Mountain House on April 23, 2001.

Trustees were informed that the ASBA Zone 4 Edwin Parr award banquet is scheduled for May 28, 2001. Trustees congratulate Lisa Gallon on her nomination for this prestigious award.

Ribstone Child and Family Services

Chairman Mulder informed Trustees that she has been invited to sit on the review panel to interview and select new Board members for Ribstone Child and Family Services.

Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) Liaison Committee

The next meeting of the ATA Liaison Committee is scheduled for May 1, 2001 at 6:30 p.m. at the Norsemen Inn.

**ADJOURNMENT**

All items of business being completed and there being no dissent, Chairman Mulder adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.

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MICHELE MULDER, CHAIRMAN

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WILLIAM SCHULTE, SECRETARY-TREASURER

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