MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES NEGOTIATING TEAM held at the District Office, 240 South 11th Street, St. Maries, ID 83861 on Wednesday, July 1, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

TRUSTEES PRESENT:  Board Chair Jody Hendrickx and Trustee Peter Dirlam

TRUSTEES ABSENT:  Sandy Kennelly, Mark Reynolds, and Jody Terrell

STAFF PRESENT:  Business Manager Danette Cordell, Board Clerk Karen Robinson, David Atchison, Kristin Burns, Sharon Cox, Kathleen Davis, Kelly Johnson, Vicky McMaster, Jenifer Miller, Holly Jo Shea, Koreena Stowell, Christie Trott, and Tonya Vonk

OTHERS PRESENT:  St. Maries Education Association Negotiators – Monique Huddleston and Jacqueline Johnson

Todd Martin – Patron

Agenda Item I – Open Session:

The meeting was called to order on July 1, 2020, at 5:02 p.m., at the District Office, 240 S 11th Street, St. Maries, Idaho, by Chair Hendrickx.

St. Maries Joint District No. 41 (District 41) Board Chair Hendrickx and Trustee Peter Dirlam represented the District. Business Manager Danette Cordell participated to provide information, and Board Clerk Karen Robinson took the minutes for the meeting.

St. Maries Education Association members Monique Huddleston and Jacqueline Johnson represented St. Maries Education Association (SMEA) during negotiations.

District 41 distributed DRAFT minutes from the June 23, 2020 Negotiations meeting at 5:02 p.m., for SMEA’s review. SMEA reviewed said minutes and indicated they were acceptable. A copy will be filed with the meeting’s records.

At 5:05 p.m., Chair Hendrickx distributed the District’s response to SMEA Proposal 4 related to Leaves. Discussion ensued and clarified that the District’s response is that sick leave absences will be calculated in .50 hour increments for a regular contract day. It was noted that staff sick leave tracking was corrected for those staff members who took sick leave during the COVID19 soft closure. A copy will be filed with the meeting’s records.

At 5:07 p.m., Chair Hendrickx distributed the District’s Proposal C related to Salaries and Benefits. A copy will be filed with the meeting’s records.

At 5:08 p.m., Chair Hendricks distributed a sheet which provided comparison between the District’s Amended Proposal B, SMEA’s Proposal 3, and the District’s Proposal C. A copy will be filed with the meeting’s records.
At 5:11 p.m., Chair Hendrickx distributed a copy of the June 23, 2020 Proposal B (Amended). It was clarified that the District is offering both Proposal B (Amended) and Proposal C to SMEA for their consideration.

The SMEA negotiators reviewed the same.

Danette Cordell responded to SMEA’s questions related to insurance and insurance options.

SMEA requested discussion related to the enhanced professional rung. District 41 indicated that it was not a negotiated item, with SMEA indicating that they believe that any topic can be negotiated if the parties agree to negotiate the same.

Discussion ensued related to the proposed wording for “vertical salary movement” and payment of the same to certificated staff. It was clarified by the District that if funds for salary movement are distributed by the State Department of Education, those funds will be passed on to certified staff members.

SMEA requested to caucus at 5:15 p.m. Chair Hendrickx, Trustee Dirlam, Mrs. Cordell, and Mrs. Robinson exited the meeting at 5:16 p.m., to allow SMEA to conduct their caucus. The referenced exiting parties returned to the room at SMEA’s request at 5:25 p.m.

SMEA requested to discuss SMEA Proposal 4 related to sick leave documentation. Discussion ensued as to tracking sick leave for a normal contract day vs tracking sick leave for shortened contract day as was with the soft closure for COVID19. SMEA will submit language to clarify their proposal at the next negotiations meeting.

Further discussion was held related to the Advanced Professional Rung, and SMEA’s request for that to be considered as an option in the Negotiated Agreement since Leadership Premiums will not be available during the 2020-2021 school year. The District advised that there is no State funding for the Professional Rung, and that if such funding were to become available, it would be passed through the salary schedule. SMEA would like to negotiate the areas that might be considered as part of Professional Rung compensation.

SMEA brought forth further discussion related to insurance costs and ways to offset those insurance costs. Chair Hendrickx advised that through reduction of staff, the District could identify funds to offset the insurance increases. Clarification was made that cost of the insurance increases to all staff is approximately $82,000.

Discussion also ensued related to State funding, State holdbacks, possible federal stimulus dollars, financial emergency declaration, the District’s approved budget, reduction in staff, and staff furloughs. SMEA believes they have provided a list of identified areas to cut funding to support their request to maintain the District’s insurance status quo. Discussion ensued related to the District’s decision to not utilize one-time funds as a funding source for ongoing financial commitments, such as staff insurance.
Discussion ensued that the Administration and classified employees receive similar benefits as are afforded to certified staff through the Negotiated Agreement.

SMEA requested that they would like their members to be able to participate in the negotiations process to provide staff comments which is not allowed under the currently-agreed Negotiations Protocol. The District committed to providing SMEA with the necessary Board Policies which provide guidance to audience participation and to relocating the next negotiations meeting to the Multi-Purpose Room at St. Maries High School to allow for Social Distancing due to COVID-19.

Mrs. Cordell requested clarification from SMEA as to what they mean by a “double hit” to certified teachers. SMEA indicated that it appears to SMEA that insurance would be reduced and staff members would lose their jobs. Clarification was made that reduction of staff members would be through attrition other than the 2 FTE certified positions that were reduced through the budgeting process. Additional certificated positions would not be cut as contracts have already been signed with certified staff members for 2020-2021. Attrition would be that some positions which have been vacated by resigning/retiring staff would not be filled, and staff members could be reassigned as deemed appropriate to cover such things as required special education paraprofessionals.

The next negotiation’s meeting was tentatively set for Tuesday, July 7, 2020 at 5:00 p.m., at the District Office.

There being no further business for which the meeting was called, the meeting adjourned at 5:48 p.m., Wednesday, July 1, 2020.

/s/ JODY HENDRICKX  
Jody Hendrickx, Board Chair

/s/ KAREN M. ROBINSON  
Karen M. Robinson, Board Clerk