

SONOMA COUNTY COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION  
Sonoma County Office of Education – C&I Conference Room  
5340 Skylane Boulevard, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES - UNADOPTED**  
January 10, 2011

Chairperson, Mary Schafer, called the meeting of the Sonoma County Committee on School District Organization to order at 5:30 p.m. and led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was held at the Sonoma County Office of Education in the C&I Conference Room.

MEETING

Jeanne Bassett Fernandes, Vernon Calsy, Larry Haenel, Rick Massell, and Mary Schafer. Jeremy Brott arrived at 5:37 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Kathy Hayes, and James DeWilder

MEMBERS ABSENT

Denise Calvert, Jerry Johnson, and Patti Springer. SCLS Representative, Frank Zotter, arrived at 5:37 p.m.

STAFF PRESENT

1. ACTION ITEMS

Mr. Johnson explained that we did not receive a quorum of absentee ballots in the re-election of Mr. Brott and Ms. Hays, but the committee can appoint them to the committee within 70 days of the date of vacancy. Ms. Schaefer introduced Sandy Elliott who is seeking appointment to represent Supervisorial District 4, replacing Mr. Bunting who did not seek re-election in November. Ms. Elliott previously served on the Geyserville School Board for eight years. On motion by Ms. Bassett Fernandes, seconded by Mr. Haenel, the motion carried to appoint Mr. Brott, Ms. Hayes, and Ms. Elliott to the Committee.

*1.1 Appointment of New Members*

Mr. Johnson administered the Oath of Office to Jeremy Brott, and Sandy Elliott. Due to Ms. Hayes' absence she will be administered the Oath of Office at the next scheduled meeting.

*1.2 Oath of Office*

On motion by Mr. Massell, seconded by Mr. Brott the motion carried to select Ms. Bassett Fernandes as the County Committee Chairperson.

*1.3 Selection of Committee Chairperson*

On motion by Ms. Elliott, seconded by Mr. Massell, the motion carried to select Mr. DeWilder as the County Committee Vice Chairperson.

*1.4 Selection of Committee Vice Chairperson*

On motion by Mr. Calsey, seconded by Mr. Brott, the motion carried to approve the agenda.

*1.5 Approval of the January 10, 2011 Agenda*

On motion by Mr. Massell, seconded by Ms. Schafer, the motion carried to approve the minutes.

*1.6 Approval of the March 22, 2010 Minutes*

None

2. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

3. INFORMATION & DISCUSSION ITEMS

Mr. Johnson started out by saying that the Committee should set a goal to meet more frequently, as we have strayed from our set schedule, and the bylaws should be revisited. He said the Committee is supposed to meet between October 1 and December 1 for its organizational meeting. Mr. Johnson added that as we look at the meeting schedule for this year, we should meet before Thanksgiving, which would be the obligatory annual meeting. Two meetings a year should be sufficient, one in the fall and one in the spring.

*3.1 Process of Electing County Committee Members*

Mr. Johnson described the absentee ballot process and stated we have not been receiving a quorum of returned ballots. Ms. Shafer said Boards are confused as to what they need to do, and to the selection and duties of the voting delegates. Ms. Elliott added that it's hard to vote for candidates they don't know, even though bios are included with the ballots. At the District Boards' annual reorganization meeting they are supposed to choose a voting delegate and alternate voting delegate. Mr. Johnson said staff could develop a letter of explanation to the Boards. And it was agreed upon that the election process should be started as early as October 1.

3.1 *Continued*

Mr. Zotter stated that the Census data will be available in April 2011, and the redistricting of County Board Trustee Areas has to be completed by March of 2012. As a result of the Census, the number of people is divided by the number of Board members and then areas will be re-defined. If it were re-defined where two Board members are in the same district, they would stay with their current seat until term expires. In response to Mr. Massell's question about "at large" districts, Mr. Zotter said that you make yourself more vulnerable to voter rights challenges if you make all "at large" seats. Ms. Bassett Fernandes asked if it was the County Committee's responsibility to change voting areas. Mr. Zotter said the County Board would come to this Committee and then would have to go to the voters. It was agreed that the redistricting process for our County Board should begin in April; and an outside consultant would draft the areas to be in a redistrict plan.

3.2 *Redistricting due to the 2010 Census*

Mr. Johnson gave a brief history on this item. He said he spoke with both of the current superintendents and they said they have not held any discussions in regards to continuing to pursue consolidation. Ms. Calvert talked about Monte Rio's Basic Aid status and stated that the issue of consolidation probably wouldn't be resurrected until both are basic aid. The consolidation is still on hold at the State level until we notify them otherwise. Discussed the Grand Jury and that it regularly looks into consolidating our smaller districts. Data shows that some districts might lose money by consolidating. Also discussed the effects of consolidating in regards to salaries, administration, staffing, etc.

3.3 *Update on Guerneville and Monte Rio Consolidation*

Mr. Zotter reported that not much has occurred since our meeting in March 2010. He said most of the districts in Southern California are "at large" and the VRA preserves the idea that this is the way to protect voting rights. Monterey County got hit on the federal side because they have a large Hispanic population and Hispanics were not being voted in. Ms. Calvert added that in the case of Madera, the County Committee and the County Office were sued; but it was found that they were not responsible for getting the information out to districts.

3.4 *Voter Rights Act Update*

Meetings were scheduled for Monday, May 2, 2011, at 5:30 p.m.; and Monday, November 14, 2011, at 5:30 p.m.

4. NEXT MEETING DATE AND TIME


Ms. Bassett Fernandes adjourned the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted,



Denise Calvert, Secretary  
S.C.C.S.D.O.



Jerry Johnson, Consultant  
S.C.C.S.D.O.