



The Helena Public Schools educate, engage, and empower each student to maximize his or her individual potential with the knowledge, skills and character essential to being a responsible citizen and life-long learner.

Board of Trustees – Policy Committee Meeting

Tuesday, April 6, 2021

MINUTES

Attendees

Committee:

Libby Goldes, Committee Chair
John McEwen, Committee Member
Jennifer McKee, Committee Member
Terry Beaver, Trustee

Others:

Tyler Ream, Superintendent
Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent
Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
Stacy Collette, Human Resources Director
Janelle Mickelson, Business Services Director
Gary Myers, Education Technology Director
Jane Shawn, HEA President

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:02pm by Committee Chair, Libby Goldes.

II. REVIEW OF AGENDA

No changes were requested to the agenda.

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

IV. REVIEW OF THE 03.02.2021 POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES

The committee reviewed minutes from the 03.02.2021 committee meeting.

V. PRESENTATION OF POLICIES FOR FIRST READING

A. Policy 5056: Vacation

Ms. Collette clarified vacation cash out was negotiated in CBAs, so this policy only applied to staff not covered by a CBA – independent employees, school and district administrators, etc. Ms. Ridgway added that while this policy was not required, it was recommended.

Mr. McEwen asked how much vacation was lost each year per this policy. Ms. Collette agreed to research this data with the business office.

Ms. Goldes requested budgetary information prior to presenting the policy to the full board. Ms. Mickelson confirmed there was no current data on loss of vacation, but she agreed to work with Ms. Collette to find that applicable data. She added the termination pay budgets for elementary and high school budgets were used to fund vacation pay outs.

Mr. McEwen led a discussion on the possibility of adjusting the policy and the ensuing effects on the budget. Ms. Mickelson and Ms. Collette agreed to research the budgetary effects of revising the early vacation payout prior to the next committee meeting.

The committee agreed to discuss this policy at the May committee meeting.

VI. PRESENTATION OF POLICIES FOR GENERAL REVIEW – FIRST READING

A. Policy 1027: Board Member Conflict of Interest

Ms. Ridgway informed the committee this was an existing policy that had been adopted in 2011 and revised in September 2019; there were no recommended changes to this policy. The committee discussed the definitions of “4th degree by blood” and “2nd degree by marriage.” Ms. Goldes asked if the language was per statute, and Ms. Ridgway replied it was. Ms. Ridgway agreed to clarify the verbiage as requested and bring it back to the next committee meeting.

B. Policy 1030: Resignations and Other Vacancies

Ms. McKee asked for clarification on “no longer registered to vote” in Subsection 4. Ms. Mickelson clarified the language was per statute. Voting status was confirmed by the county election official, along with residency.

Ms. Goldes requested clarification on what qualified as a “good excuse” for missing a board meeting. Ms. Ridgway answered it was at the Board Chair’s discretion.

Ms. Goldes asked if this was state law. Ms. Ridgway confirmed it was.

No changes were requested to this policy.

C. Policy 1035: Board Development and Self-Evaluation

Ms. Goldes relayed a comment from Board Chair Muszkiewicz on whether the committee would like to include requiring the board to conduct an annual self-evaluation. Ms. Ridgway added several AA districts had language in a policy regarding a mandatory self-evaluation.

Ms. Goldes recommended the full board should submit feedback on the language inclusion. Ms. Ridgway agreed to research similar policies at other AA districts and present tentative language at the next policy committee meeting.

D. Policy 1040: Board Member Expenses

The committee discussed what qualified as “expenses” and requested several revisions to wording. Ms. Ridgway agreed to rework policy language and present it at the next committee meeting.

E. Policy 1045: Board – Superintendent Relationship

Ms. Goldes recommended adding legal reference to this policy. No changes were made to the intent of the policy.

F. Policy 1050: Qualifications, Terms, and Duties of Board Officers

No changes were made to the intent of the policy.

G. Policy 1055: Communications to and from the Board

Ms. Ridgway clarified the difference between informal and official communications – official is asking for something. She agreed to check legal references and bring it back to the committee’s next meeting.

H. Policy 1060: Committees

Ms. Goldes relayed a question from Board Chair Muszkiewicz whether the health and wellness committee needed to be noticed and open to the public. Ms. Ridgway answered the health and wellness committee differed from board committees since it was an administrative committee that included one trustee.

Ms. Goldes asked if it was a board decision to have a health and wellness committee or if it was required per law. Ms. Ridgway agreed to discuss it with legal council and bring the policy to the next committee meeting.

VII. BOARD COMMENTS

Ms. Goldes requested the following committee meeting begin with Policy 1065.

Mr. Beaver noted the antiquated descriptions in some policies and recommended making appropriate updates.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Committee Chair, Ms. Goldes, adjourned the meeting at 1:06pm.