

**CONEJO VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING**

**JANUARY 28, 2008  
MINUTES**

**MEETING**

The Conejo Valley Unified School District Board of Education met on Monday, January 28, 2008, at the District Office Board Room at 1400 E. Janss Road, Thousand Oaks, CA.

**ROLL CALL**

Present were Board members Dorothy Beaubien, Dolores Didio, Mike Dunn, and Dr. Timothy Stephens, and Superintendent Mario V. Contini. Pat Phelps was not present.

**CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE**

President Beaubien called the Special Meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. Mrs. Beaubien led the Pledge of Allegiance and read the announcements.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Mrs. Didio moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Dr. Stephens. Motion carried 4-0.

**ACTION**

Mrs. Didio moved to install a high speed fiber optics network with Sunysis, Inc., seconded by Dr. Stephens. Nine speaker forms and nine written statement forms were in opposition to the purchase and installation of a high speed fiber optic network; and two speakers from Verizon spoke to the issue of the bidding process.

Dr. Baarstad spoke to Verizon about their Request for Proposal (RFP). Verizon stated that the RFP did not mention the Media Distribution Facility (MDF) to the school site. The other two vendors gave specific reference to this portion of the RFP, including monthly tariffs, initial networking costs. Sunysis did not provide that much detail, but their cost is to install the network and take it to the (MDF). Verizon stated that their proposal did not include connection to the MDF, however, Verizon will see if they can pull through existing conduit at no cost. The only cost is when they have to install additional conduit. Verizon offered to supply an estimate as soon as possible. Dr. Vollmert stated that in meetings with vendors last year (when the RFP was being developed), an engineer from Verizon walked through and provided a report of what construction was needed at each of the schools. But that information was not included in the proposal in response to the RFP. Verizon stated that they understand that they did not provide this information at that time, but would be happy to now. Dr. Baarstad stated that given the complexities of the RFP process, it would have been better to have supplied that information at the time of the RFP. The other two vendors clearly understood the RFP and responded accordingly. Dr. Baarstad explained that companies like Sunysis and AT&T understand that the upfront capital costs can be amortized and if they are amortized into a monthly cost over some initial period the contract, then we are eligible for e-rate discounts on those additional capital costs. The bid from AT&T was higher for 18 schools than Sunysis was for 32 schools. AT&T bid included an underground conduit, under streets and sidewalks, which is very expensive. Sunysis goes underground, if there's above-ground conduit, they'll string above ground. Their strategy is to do it in the most cost-effective way. In the Verizon bid, we would be tapping into the existing fiber-optic network, but we would not have our own private fiber. Sunysis would be stringing a fiber optic network for our own use and it would be our own. We really don't care. We want the performance for the network. Dr. Baarstad addressed the issue of "the rush" for this bid. We have to have the contract signed by February 7 in order to

be eligible for e-rate and California Teleconnect Fund (CTF) discounts for the first year of the contract. The RFPs were sent out in early December; responses were received early January. We were doing our due-diligence and then the Governor sent out his proposal about budget cuts. We met with school site principals and district office personnel and put this information to them: we will have to come up with \$300,000 for this service, and cut something else out of the budget rather than to limp along another year with the old system. The group agreed unanimously that we need to go forward with this. We can delay this for a year, and go through this process again. There will be some expense in keeping the old system going. One of our concerns is buying equipment for an obsolete system.

Mrs. Didio asked about the ownership of the fiber optics. Dr. Vollmert stated in essence, we would pay a tariff on it if Verizon owns it. Mrs. Didio asked about curriculum needs that use high-speed fiber optics; Mrs. Cosaro stated that in Social Studies in the elementary level, there is an instructional path in reading materials, an active path, and a digital path, which is an important part of the adoption. The teachers cannot stream the videos because there is not enough bandwidth. Mrs. Didio asked if we adopt state textbooks we may not be able to use the materials unless we have better technology? Mrs. Cosaro stated, that is right, as the curriculum moves into the 21st century, we need the technology that we do not have at this time. Mrs. Didio asked for the bottom line: what it would cost if we stay where we are vs. going on with the new technology at \$300,000/year with discount? If we stay where we are, and have a breakdown, what would that cost us? What would we lose in instructional options?

Dr. Stephens stated that it is disappointing to hear that we are the only district in the County still operating on a frame relay system, and not high speed. He stated it seems prudent to allow Verizon to submit their package, including the information received today. Dr. Baarstad agreed – and said he was irritated that Verizon has made this offer at this time, and not during the bidding process. However, we need to look to every opportunity to save money wherever possible. It would require that we have another special meeting. What we have been concerned about was having a discussion with the Board at the last moment, and then if we're provided a contract that doesn't represent our intent, there would be a chance of contract disputes and negotiations. Dr. Stephens asked for a PowerPoint presentation to show the information in comparative studies for the Board to make a decision.

Mrs. Beaubien asked if the money has been set aside for this year? Dr. Baarstad replied yes, it's in the budget, but if we don't do this we could save \$300,000/year for the next five years. Mrs. Beaubien asked if we choose not to do this at this time, what is the cost to us for keeping what we have? Dr. Vollmert stated about \$180,000/year for the T1, and we could spend over \$100,000/yr for the next few years replacing equipment to keep an antiquated system going. Mrs. Beaubien asked if it was imperative that the digital materials were available to the curriculum; Mrs. Cosaro stated we did not have to use it to meet content standards, however, in the high school courses, it would be beneficial to have the infrastructure to support the curriculum.

Mrs. Didio stated that she feels that people think if this contract is not signed, that it may help to keep schools open. Dr. Baarstad stated that in September, after staff presented projected budget and enrollment information, the Board's decision was to close two schools in 2009/2010 as part of a strategy to handle budget deficits. The Board's feelings in September was it was better to close two small elementary schools and temporarily disrupt the education of 650 and 700 students than to run a second-class instructional program for 22,000 students. Getting by with what we have now would make us a very second-class school district regarding technology.

Mr. Dunn stated he had some good news that he got off the internet. T3 seems to be another option that is available. It's true, we need to upgrade our technology. T3 lines could get 45 megabytes per second as

opposed to 1.5 megabytes we have now or the 100 megabytes proposed by Verizon and Sunysis. T3 would be a good compromise. Dr. Vollmert stated that this was one of the options discussed with Verizon in September. The response was that you still need fiber optics connections. Mr. Dunn asked if we go to T3, what exactly will be the costs? The Verizon rep stated that he would have to get quotes. The DS3 lines do need to be in place, though, but there are other options.

Mrs. Didio withdrew her original motion.

Mr. Dunn moved to table Item #1, Approval of the Agreement for Fiber-Optic High Speed, and this will be discussed again in the future, seconded by Mrs. Didio. Dr. Stephens requested that a date and time be included in the motion. Mr. Dunn restated his motion to table Item #1, Approval of the Agreement for Fiber Optic Network with Sunysis, and reconsider this item on at the Special Meeting on Monday, February 4, 2008, at 6:00 p.m., seconded by Dr. Stephens. Motion carried 4-0.

**ADJOURNMENT**

President Beaubien adjourned the Closed Session at 6:00 p.m.

February 5, 2008

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Date

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Clerk

February 5, 2008

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Date

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Superintendent