



# J. PAUL TAYLOR ACADEMY

*Recapturing the Joy of Learning - Recapturar la Alegria de Aprender*



**J. Paul Taylor Academy Charter School  
Governance Council Regular Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, September 20, 2017 6:30 PM (MDT)  
402 W. Court Building 2, Las Cruces New Mexico 88005  
JPTA Media Room**

I. Opening items

- A. The J. Paul Taylor Academy Governance Council met in open session on September 20, 2017. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. to conduct a Regular Meeting.
  1. Roll was called by Suzan Martinez de Gonzales: Governance Council members Ric Hernandez, Janet Acosta (arrived at 6:32pm), Martin Lopez (arrived at 6:32pm), Stephanie Haan-Amato, Sherry Booth, Dolores Connor, Carrie Hamblen, and Suzan Martinez de Gonzales were present. A quorum was confirmed. Yvette Turrieta and Arthur Berkson were absent and notified the board of their absences. Eric Ahner, Executive Director, and Gina Trujillo, Assistant Business Manager were also present.
- B. Chairman Ric Hernandez called for any conflict of interest. None was stated by those in attendance.
- C. Dolores Connor read the Mission Statement: *J. Paul Taylor Academy, in alliance with families at the school and community, will offer a rigorous, well-rounded Spanish acquisition, project based instructional program in a smaller school to promote excellence for the diverse students of the Las Cruces area.*
- D. Sherry Booth moved to approve the agenda for September 20, 2017, Regular Meeting Agenda. Stephanie Haan-Amato seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously with affirmative votes from Ric Hernandez, Stephanie Haan-Amato, Sherry Booth, Dolores Connor, Carrie Hamblen, and Suzan Martinez de Gonzales.
- E. Approval of Minutes
  1. Dolores Connor moved to approve the minutes for August 30, 2017 Special Meeting. Stephanie Haan-Amato seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously with affirmative votes from Ric Hernandez, Stephanie Haan-Amato, Sherry Booth, Dolores Connor Carrie Hamblen, and Suzan Martinez de Gonzales.

Janet Acosta and Martin Lopez arrived at 6:32pm.

II. Public Input

- A. Chairman Ric Hernandez called for any public input. There was no public input at this time.
- B. Chairman Ric Hernandez called for any staff input. Mrs. Tamara Alexander read a statement that follows:

*Ladies and Gentlemen,  
The contract that you are considering tonight for Mr. Torres is something that teachers have asked about before. At the time that Mr. Torres was first contracted to advise the Administration Collective Bargaining Team, teachers questioned the need for such and expenditure. It was explained that the Administration Team felt the need for an "Expert" to advise and guide decisions because none of the members on*

*the Administration side had any experience with Collective Bargaining Negotiations. It was pointed out that the Teacher's team also had NO experience with Bargaining. Both sides have had access all along, and continue to have access to the services of Mr. Dennis Teel of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, whose sole job is to advise and guide the decisions of ALL parties in the negotiations of Collective Bargaining, FOR FREE. Our questions and disapproval of the cost of Mr. Torres' services were met with the explaining that a contract for his expertise had ALREADY been signed and had to be honored up until July1, 2017. The Teacher's team feels that the negotiations have been progressing well, though slowly at that, while Mr. Torres' presence in the negotiations has been positive and helpful to all of us, we feel that the discussions have been collaborative and productive enough without his presence. Points of discussion that he has been able to clarify have been things that we could have looked up on our own. It is our understanding that legal counsel has also been secured for a couple of points as the negotiations have progressed. The Administration Team is certainly free to contract the services of any that they deem necessary to be able to make the best decisions on this very important issue, but as the Teachers Team, and also as General Staff of J. Paul Taylor Academy, we are very sensitive to the expenditure of money by the school. The contract for Mr. Torres' services feels excessive in light of the availability of a free resource from the Labor Commission and of the additional services of attorneys. We ask that you reconsider the need for Mr. Torres' services at this time.*

### III. Finance

#### A. Approve July Finance Committee Report

No action was taken on internal control and procurement policy review and the committee descriptions at the last Finance meeting due to time. They did review the Voucher Report for the first time in this format and reviewed all financial reports including operating and activity cash accounts, revenue and expenditure reports and cash reports. The committee recommends these items for approval tonight. They also held an audit of 3 checks and everything was good with those checks.

Janet moved to approve the July Finance Committee Report. Carrie Hamblen seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously with affirmative votes from Ric Hernandez, Janet Acosta, Martin Lopez, Stephanie Haan-Amato, Sherry Booth, Dolores Connor, Carrie Hamblen, and Suzan Martinez de Gonzales.

#### B. Approve Maintenance BARs 535-000-1718-0008-M through 0012-M.

Gina briefly went over each bar and fielded questions.

Dolores Connor moved to approve BAR 535-00-1718-0008-M, BAR 535-00-1718-0009-M, BAR 535-00-1718-0010-M, BAR 535-00-1718-0011-M, and BAR 535-00-1718-0012-M. Janet Acosta seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously with affirmative votes from Ric Hernandez, Janet Acosta, Martin Lopez, Stephanie Haan-Amato, Sherry Booth, Dolores Connor, Carrie Hamblen, and Suzan Martinez de Gonzales.

#### C. Ric Hernandez reminded the board that they must vote on any contract that is over \$25,000 and this year the New Mexico Public Schools Insurance Authority Expense is at that threshold.

Martin Lopez moved to approve the New Mexico Public Schools Insurance Authority Expense, invoice # FY158-00177. Sherry Booth seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously by roll call vote with affirmative votes Motion approved unanimously with affirmative votes from Ric Hernandez, Janet Acosta, Martin Lopez, Stephanie Haan-Amato, Sherry Booth, Dolores Connor, Carrie Hamblen, and Suzan Martinez de Gonzales.

#### IV. Governance

A. Mr. Ahner introduced the reason that the approval of Charter Amendment for Spanish Language Acquisition was needed (this has also been discussed at previous meetings). More details are found in the Performance Framework. It wasn't included before because the school didn't have a way to test Spanish Language Acquisition proficiency. However, we do now have two years of data that this is based off. This has been reviewed with JPTA's LAT team.

Dolores Connor moved to approve the Charter Amendment for Spanish Language Acquisition. Janet Acosta seconded the motion. There was further discussion on changing the wording proficient to fluency. Dolores Connor moved to approve with this modification. Janet Acosta seconded the motion with the modification. Motion approved unanimously with affirmative votes from Ric Hernandez, Janet Acosta, Martin Lopez, Stephanie Haan-Amato, Sherry Booth, Dolores Connor, Carrie Hamblen, and Suzan Martinez de Gonzales.

B. Mr. Ahner led a brief discussion on the approval of the Charter Amendment for Instructional Time. This would change JPTA's instructional time to the state minimum for middle schools. JPTA will meet or more likely exceed this minimum.

Janet Acosta moved to approve the Charter Amendment for Instructional time as presented. Carrie Hamblen seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously with affirmative votes from Ric Hernandez, Janet Acosta, Martin Lopez, Stephanie Haan-Amato, Sherry Booth, Dolores Connor, Carrie Hamblen, and Suzan Martinez de Gonzales.

C. Chairman Ric Hernandez led the discussion of the approval of the Contract for Herb Torres Discussion:

- Eric Ahner stated that it is important to remember that we do not have an expert on union negotiations.
- Martin Lopez feels Mr. Torres has proved valuable services to us. He believes we should keep him on.
- Ric Hernandez also feels that he has been valuable and feels like it would be wrong to terminate the contract toward the end of this process when we are almost done with these negotiations.
- Sherry Booth sought clarification of the roles of Mr. Torres and Mr. Teel.

Dolores Connor moved to approve the contract for Mr. Herb Torres as a Contracted Service Agreement. Sherry Booth did note that she understood where the statement from the staff is coming from. A Staff Member in attendance stated that they feel like Mr. Torres is for the Governing Board and not the teachers, and the teachers do not have someone on their side. It was again stated that they were told his contract would end in July 2017. Ric Hernandez responded that the negotiations are talking longer than expected is a reason that this is before the board tonight. Stephanie Haan-Amato sought clarification on their feeling of no one is on their side, because she understood that what NEA was providing that for them. Janet Acosta seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously with affirmative votes from Ric Hernandez, Janet Acosta, Martin Lopez, Stephanie Haan-Amato, Sherry Booth, Dolores Connor, Carrie Hamblen and Suzan Martinez de Gonzales.

Carrie Hamblen left at 7:18 pm.

#### V. Executive Director Support and Evaluation

A. Executive Director Report was displayed on the board. Eric asked for any questions. Sherry Booth asked about the retention from 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Mr. Ahner will look into providing that data to the board in a future report.

VI. Facility

A. Facilities Committee Report was given by Eric Ahner in Arthur Berkson's absence. He stated they are waiting for a second quote for the next phase of the playground. They are also trying to launch the laying of the Donation Bricks in the front of the school.

VII. Academic Excellence

A. Parent Advisory Council: Stephanie Haan-Amato briefly discussed the meeting that was held on September 13, 2017. There will be a Fall Carnival on October 28<sup>th</sup>. Janet Acosta wanted to express how wonderful the Deis y Seis de Septiembre event was. Praise was given to all who were involved. It was a great event to be transitioned to the evening time. The success of it as a fundraiser for LAT was mentioned.

VIII. Other Business

A. Ric Hernandez called for any other business to discuss.

- Ric Hernandez shared that the school has opened its doors to the Alameda Neighborhood Depot and they have asked for our help in their efforts with a project they are doing for Pioneer Park. They would like us to provide them with any pictures of events in the park so they can use them for their committee. They also asked the school for three attributes or keywords that describe our feelings about the park. Those keywords/attributes from the staff/students were given to them.
- Sherry Booth wants the teachers to know that the approval of Herb Torres' contract should not be perceived any other way than as it is continuation of what has already been put in place. She would not consider approval in the future and would like the board to consider the Teacher's concerns if a future contract is needed.

IX. Closed Session

Chairman Ric Hernandez informed the board that here is nothing else to report/discuss at this time in regard to Collective Bargaining, and therefore there was no need to move into Closed Session to discuss Collective Bargaining Strategies (pursuant to Section 10-15-1-H (5). NMSA 1978).

X. Closing Items

A. Sherry Booth moved to adjourn the September 20, 2017 Regular meeting. Martin Lopez seconded the motion. Motion was passed unanimously with affirmative votes by roll call from Ric Hernandez, Janet Acosta, Martin Lopez, Stephanie Haan-Amato, Sherry Booth, Dolores Connor, and Suzan Martinez de Gonzales. Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Suzan Martinez de Gonzales  
JPTA Governance Council Secretary

Approved October 18, 2017

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Ric Hernandez  
JPTA Governance Council Chair