



On The Board

The Salinas Valley Federation of Teachers

21 West Laurel Drive Suite #61 Salinas, CA 93906-3434 Telephone: 831.442.8234

E-mail: president@svft.net

Board Highlights from November/December 2014

Reported By J.J. Campos

Habemus Papum!...er Board President!

And you thought getting a Pope elected was tough! We learned several valuable lessons at the December 9th Board meeting. One: Never assume it's going to be a short meeting. Two: Never assume it's going to be a long meeting. Three: Always drink enough coffee just in case. But I kid. It was that time of year again when members nominate each other for typical Board positions such as Clerk, President, Vice President etc... positions that most would agree are really just symbolic in nature. Apparently not. Apparently, their symbolic nature carries more weight than we realize. Lemme break it down for you. In a typical vote, the Board needs 4 votes to pass a measure, bond, etc... Problem is, the nomination process felt a lot like the movie Groundhog's Day. You know, the one where the same thing is repeated indefinitely? We had Trustees Lila Cann, Patricia Padilla-Salsberg and Kathryn Ramirez pitted against Trustees Phil Tabera and Evamarie Martinez, with a constant vote of 3-2. ☺ It kind of went like this:



Kathryn Ramirez: I nominate Lila Cann for President.

Tim Vanoli: Do we have a second?
Patricia Padilla-Salsberg: I second.
Tim Vanoli: All in favor?
Salsberg/Cann/Ramirez: AYE
Tim Vanoli: All those opposed?
Martinez/Tabera: NO

AND NOW REPEAT..... (12 TIMES TO BE EXACT!!)

And that was just for the President's seat! ☺

It took approximately 7 attempts to get the Clerk seat in order, but no one was budging. Trustee Lila Cann mentioned it was the first time since she could remember when they had faced such dysfunction and that they had typically supported each other. Enter SUHSD attorney Lou Lozano, who advised the Board to take a 5 minute recess. (It was actually 20). Lozano worked the room and advised Board members on each side of the ring to help facilitate a reasonable solution. Not sure if it was an Olive Branch, but a proposal was brought forth that Trustee Evamarie Martinez be nominated for Vice President AND Clerk position (that's right, two positions) and Lila Cann, be nominated as



Board President. We're not sure what was cookin' in the kitchen, but the smoke from the scuffle filled the air, making everyone wonder what the problem was or furthermore, what was at the root of it. The whole thing took an hour to resolve and we're not sure it was the way to go. Finally, and I DO MEAN, finally, we ended up with Trustee Lila Cann earning the Board President spot and Trustee Evamarie Martinez as Vice-President/Clerk. We still stand by our claim that ours is a unique District, which prides itself on its civility and professionalism. Hopefully, student learning continues to be the basis for every decision our Board makes, always above any petty squabbles, but still...there's some cause for concern.

Hurry, Hurry

With the recent passing of former Trustee Jim Reavis, Superintendent Tim Vanoli added that it had been quite some time since our District was faced with the prospect of replacing a Board member's position, not to mention the fact that our good friend, Trustee Cheryl Larison has been too ill to attend recent meetings. Vanoli continued by informing the Board that it had 60 Days to do one of two things: 1) Choose a provisional Board member, or 2) hold a special election. We'll spare you the details, but holding an election would cost us a lot of money. The logical choice is to seek out a provisional seat but that makes sense **ONLY IF** you have a Board that can come to an agreement, and after witnessing the officer nomination process, it was certainly not a good indication of it. Mr. Lozano added that if the Board failed to choose a provisional appointee within 60 days, the SUHSD would **STILL** be left with the bill as the law mandates a special election be held. In other words, it behooves us to seek out a provisional appointment. Not to worry, our Board went with option #1 and as of that



moment, the clock is tickin'. Coincidentally, this would be good segue into our next piece....

Pick A Good One

Long-time SVFT leader Phil Moore addressed our Board in what he termed as his "last time in doing so". His visit was simple in that he recommended that the Board forego any lengthy decision-making process to name the future middle school and high schools our district will be building in the not too distant future. Specifically, he recommended they be named after renowned activist Dolores Huerta and Andy Matsui, a patron and scholarship benefactor with an extensive history of sponsoring a great many college candidates in our District, and in the community at large. Phil Moore has an extensive history and rapport with our Board in year's past, and we're sure they will make special consideration of his comments in earnest. Thank you Phil for your comments, for your hard work and your dedication.



We Remember

Our Board took another opportunity at the November 18th meeting to honor and remember former Trustee Jim Reavis with a moment of silence. SVFT President Steve McDougall said a few words remembering Mr. Reavis and pointed out that it was he, who on 3 separate occasions that he could remember championed for change in District leadership.

It was Reavis who would take that walk down the hall behind me. He would do it with dignity. Change for what's best for the District...the District became better each time. His leadership will be missed. I hope we can find someone to fill those shoes.

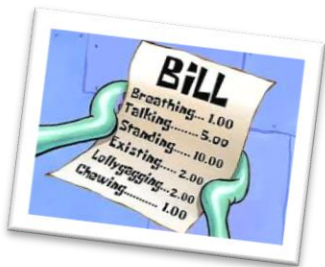
SVFT President Steve McDougall



Trustee Patty Padilla-Salsberg weighed in to say she “missed seeing him here” and that he would always make an effort to attend meetings, despite his health. Trustee Cann added that she had known him since she was a little girl when he was building houses in Bolsa Knolls and that “he always did what was right, whether the vote was popular or not.” Trustee Ramirez mentioned that having served with him the longest despite things not always being smooth between them, these past few years they had worked well together. Board President Martinez said she was “privileged to be with Mr. Reavis in his last moments. I have fond memories and he will be greatly missed.” Finally, Superintendent Tim Vanoli described Mr. Reavis as a “great steward of resources for a long time” and that “Mr. Reavis didn’t say much, but when he did, people listened.”

Briefly

CSEA Vice President Guadalupe Ruiz-Gilpas spoke to the Board regarding testing fees that some Classified employees, who serve as bilingual support personnel, had to pay. The fees can run upwards of \$200 and Ruiz-Gilpas pointed out that bilingual services, such as translating for non-English speaking parents was important.



She insisted that the District should foot the bill for these exams, would be hard pressed to find qualified talent, and “shooting itself in the foot” if it didn’t. She ended with the statement, “Translating is not a luxury, it’s a necessity.” Life is expensive enough as it is... Compende? Si? We hope they do. ☺

Tech Plan Update

Associate Superintendent Dan Burns addressed some concerns about any “special attention” one school might get over another, with respect to technology.

First and foremost, he mentioned that cabling cost for a given school is where the greatest variation in spending is found. The difference in costs between sites facilities are different at Salinas High School, which is older in comparison to EAHS... It’s based on age of cabling. Thus, Salinas High is, in fact, more expensive. Trustee Ramirez voiced the greatest concern over said spending variation and Burns was happy to address it by stating, “nobody is getting more equipment, it’s (the expense) based on cabling.” Ramirez responded by reminding Burns that our teachers need “21st Century skills. “Why don’t our teachers have laptops and why do we expect our teachers to have their own equipment?” Ramirez added she was under the impression that part of a previous Bond passage would be that all teachers would receive equipment such as laptops. Burns replied that infrastructure needed to be addressed first, and was critical to ensuring that students received those skills.

Additionally, he noted that with the addition of 6000 Chromebooks, the SUHSD was nearly at a 2:1 ratio (2 students for every computer). Overall, Trustee Ramirez wasn’t fully satisfied with the response at which point, Burns said he would be happy to address her concerns privately.

Pat Young Trophy Case

Alisal High School teacher Albert Mazzuka made a brief, but inspired presentation regarding the late Pat Young, former Woodshop Instructor at AHS. Mazzuka credited Young for having brought what was formerly a disorderly Woodshop program up to “world class standards”. Among his students’ many projects, stands a remarkable trophy case at the Alisal High School campus that took them approximately 3-4 years to build. Mr. Mazzuka kindly asked the Board that they approve naming the trophy case in his honor for his over 22 years of service as an instructor, as well as a coach for AHS. Mr. Young had a great rapport with students with his no-nonsense approach to



teaching. They respected and loved him for it surely it translated into all facets of his professional career. He will be missed. Luckily, our Board took the right step and approved it in the Consent Agenda and, as a small token of appreciation for his many years of service, Mr. Young's legacy will be in full view for many years to come.

That Was Fast!

I'd like to end this edition of EOTB with a few kind words to my friends and colleagues throughout the SUHSD. This is year two in my position as head writer of EOTB...oh, wait a minute...I mean, the ONLY writer for the EOTB ☺ and so far, it's been an absolute joy. I'd like to thank all three of you (ha ha!) who read my rants and let you know I appreciate your patience with me as I continue in my quest to make every edition a little more interesting for those of you who can't attend Board meetings. You're busy, we know. We'll continue to try and keep it fun and light. As we head into another Winter Break, we wish you and yours the happiest of Holidays. Next time we see each other, it will be a new year, (they sure fly by don't they?) and we'll all be back revitalized, full of energy and with newfound hope. I leave you with a most unfortunate encounter between my two nephews and a man who needs no introduction... Have a Screamin' Winter Break...Get It? Screamin'? ☺ See you in 2015!



Happy Holidays

