

No. \_\_\_\_\_



# UNITED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT AGENDA ACTION ITEM

**TOPIC** Board Minutes

**SUBMITTED BY:** Karen Winch **OF:** Board Secretary

**APPROVED FOR TRANSMITTAL TO SCHOOL BOARD:** June 20, 2007

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the United ISD Board of Trustees take action to approve Board Meeting minutes:

May 16, 2007 – Regular Board Meeting  
May 22, 2007 - Special Called Meeting

**RATIONALE:**

State law requires the Board to prepare and keep minutes of its open meeting. Govt. Code §551.021. The minutes are public records available for public inspection and copying upon request to the Superintendent or his designee. Govt. Code § 551.022

**BUDGETARY INFORMATION**

No Budget Impact

**BOARD POLICY REFERENCE AND COMPLIANCE:**

This is in compliance and in accordance with Board Policy BE and BE (LOCAL).

Regular Meeting  
The State of Texas  
United Independent School District  
The County of Webb

May 16, 2007

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of United ISD was held Wednesday, March 28, 2007, in the United ISD –Student Activity Complex, Fine Arts Building, 5208 Santa Claudia Lane, Laredo TX 78043. The meeting was called to order by Vice President Pat Campos at 7:00 p.m.

**In attendance**

Roberto J. Santos, Superintendent of Schools

**Board of Trustees**

John M. Bruce – President - absent  
Ricardo Molina – Vice President  
Juan Molina – Secretary  
Pat Campos – Parliamentarian  
Francisco "Pancho" Gonzalez – Member  
William "Bill" Johnson – Member  
Juan Roberto Ramirez – Member – arrived 6:40 p.m.

**I. Roll Call, Establish Quorum, Call to Order**

**A Regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of United ISD was held Wednesday, May 16, 2007, beginning at 6:30 PM in the United ISD - Student Activity Complex, Fine Arts Building, 5208 Santa Claudia Lane, Laredo TX 78043.**

**I. Roll Call, Establish Quorum, Call to Order**

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

**III. Announcement by the Board President calling the meeting of the United Independent School District to order. The record showed that a quorum of Board Members was present, that the meeting was duly called, and that notice of the meeting was posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code Chapter 551.**

**IV. Employee/Student Recognitions**

- A. Noemi Lara, Salinas Elementary - Walmart *Teacher of the Year*
- B. Alvaro Guel, Centeno Elementary - Walmart *Teacher of the Year*
- C. Bertha de la Cruz - HEB *Teacher of the Year* - HEB Excellence in Education Award

D. The Board recognized students from across the district who had competed at state-level competition.

**V. Closed Session:** The Board adjourned into closed session at 6:44 p.m. pursuant to the following sections of the Texas Open Meetings Act:

**A. 551.071 Consultation with Board's Attorney**

**1. Consultation with Legal Counsel re: Partial Settlement in the matter of Cause No. 2005-CVQ-000521-D4; United Independent School District v. Satterfield and Pontikes Construction, Inc.; In the 406th Judicial District of Webb County, Texas**

**2. Consultation with Legal Counsel re: Student/Parent Complaint**

**B. 551.074 Discussion of Personnel or to Hear Complaints against Personnel**

**1. Internal Auditors Duties and Responsibilities**

**2. Superintendent's Duties and Responsibilities**

**3. Consider Appointment of Athletic Director**

**4. Consider Appointment of Principal for Salinas Elementary**

**VI. The Board reconvened from Closed Session at 8:24 p.m., the Board took appropriate action on items, if necessary, as discussed in Closed Session.**

**A. Appointment of Athletic Director**

Mr. Santos made a statement that Administration would like to re-advertise and repost the position both inside and outside the District.

Motion: So move.

Moved by: Ramirez

Seconded by: R. Molina

Discussion: None

In Favor: Bruce, Johnson, J. Molina, R. Molina, Ramirez

Opposed: Gonzalez  
(Campos not in attendance for vote.)

**B. Appointment of Principal for Salinas Elementary**

Mr. Santos addressed the Board saying his recommendation for Principal at Salinas Elementary was Abraham Rodriguez.

Motion: So move.

Moved by: R. Molina  
Seconded by: Gonzalez  
Discussion: None  
In Favor: Unanimous

**C. Approval of Partial Settlement in the matter of Cause No. 2005-CVQ-000521-D4; United Independent School District v. Satterfield and Pontikes Construction, Inc.; In the 406th Judicial District of Webb County, Texas**

Mr. Juan Cruz, UISD General Counsel, addressed the Board saying the recommendation was to approve the partial settlement with respect to Hagen Electric and Howland Engineering in the matter of Cause No. 2005-CVQ-000521-D4; United Independent School District v. Satterfield and Pontikes Construction, Inc.; In the 406th Judicial District of Webb County, Texas as discussed in Closed Session.

Motion: So move.

Moved by: Campos  
Seconded by: J. Molina  
Discussion: None  
In Favor: Unanimous

**D. Action in re: Student/Parent Complaint**

Mr. Cruz addressed the Board saying the recommendation was to deny the student-parent complaint based on information as discussed in Closed Session.

Motion: So move.

Moved by: Campos  
Seconded by: Ramirez  
Discussion: None  
In Favor: Unanimous

**VII. Superintendent's Report**

Board members had no questions to ask regarding the Superintendent's Report.

**VIII. Consent Agenda Items**

Mr. Johnson stated that the Business and Instructional Committees had met the previous week and were recommending approval of the following items:

**A. Approval of Monthly Disbursements**

**B. Approval of Budget Amendments**

**C. Approval of Tax Refunds**

**D. Approval of Awarding Bids, Proposals and Qualifications**

**E. Board Travel for the Month of June 2007**

Moved by: Johnson  
Seconded by: R. Molina  
Discussion: None  
In Favor: Bruce, Campos, Gonzalez, Johnson, J. Molina, R. Molina  
Abstain: Ramirez

**IX. Items for Individual Consideration**

**A. Board Minutes**

- 1. Special Called Meeting - 4-10-07**
- 2. Regular Board Meeting - 4-18-07**

Motion: So move.

Moved by: Ramirez  
Seconded by: J. Molina  
Discussion: None  
In Favor: Unanimous

**B. Donations**

Mr. Santos read the donations totaling \$21,228.73 into the record and graciously thanked the donors for their contributions to the District.

Motion: So move.

Moved by: Campos  
Seconded by: Johnson  
Discussion: None  
In Favor: Unanimous

**C. First Reading of Policy DP (LOCAL): Personnel Positions**

Mr. Cruz advised the Board that no action was necessary as this was a First Reading of the policy.

**D. Naming of New Elementary School in Ponderosa Hills: Radcliffe and Sue Killam Elementary**

Motion: So move.

Moved by: Campos  
Seconded by: Gonzalez  
Discussion: None  
In Favor: Unanimous

**E. Official Canvassing of May 12th Bond Election  
Recuento Oficial de la Elección de Bonos del 12 de mayo de 2007**

Norma Farabough, Tax Assessor/Collector read the May 12, 2007 bond election results into the record. She reported there were 2416 in favor and 4485 against.

Juan Cruz said the recommendation was to accept the returns as presented.

Motion: So move.

Moved by: Johnson

Seconded by: R. Molina

Discussion: None

In Favor: Unanimous

Mr. Bruce read the following statement regarding the bond election.

*As President of the UISD Board of Trustees, I would like to state a few comments regarding the bond election held this May 2007 by the school district. First, I would like to apologize to the UISD community for the failed bond election. In particular, I do believe that the District needed to take more input before going out for the bond issuance from out own employees and parents which I resolve that we do for the next bond election. The District employees worked hard to get the message out regarding the facts of the District's bond program, but I feel we need to do a better job next time.*

*To the people that supported the District's bond efforts, I would like to thank you. I do want to apologize to Ed Ramirez and Minnie Dora Bunn Haynes, two outstanding members of our community, who are private Individuals that do not deserve to be personally attacked for supporting the school district. Public officials like us board members do seek elected office and understand that personal attacks come with the territory, but these two individuals are not public officials and should not be attacked on a personal basis. On behalf of UISD, thank you Ms. Haynes and Mr. Ed Ramirez for your tireless efforts on behalf of the children of UISD>*

*I would like for everyone in the UISD community to begin to work together for the benefit of our students of the district. Personal differences should be put aside regarding bond elections. Bond elections are not school board elections, and the two should remain separate. I think a frank and professional dialogue needs to occur between all members of our community regarding the failed May 2007 bond referendum and the future bond programs for UISD. As such, I have asked Mr. Santos to schedule a public comment Special Called Meeting next Tuesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, in this auditorium at 6:30 p.m. where the Board will do nothing but take comments from the public regarding the bond projects for UISD. In particular, we need to know why people voted against it when, if ever, we should go out for a bond project and, if so, which projects should be included in the bond election. The Board needs to hear from everyone*

*especially the Vote No Committee members and media that can attend and participate to offer solutions in a professional and respectful manner. There are many things that could have been done better – I think we all know that – but we can't look back and ponder what happened, we need to look to the future for the benefit of our children.*

*I ask our community to join the Board next Tuesday evening to give their opinion to the Board of Trustees regarding the bond referendum, past and future, for UISD. Let's unit together for the benefit of our children because working alongside one Another, we can make a bigger difference for our children and grandchildren. Thank you.*

#### **F. Approval of Bid #003-2007 Banking Depository**

Mr. Hector Cavazos, Purchasing Manager, advised the Board that staff was recommending that the Board approve Laredo National Bank as the Bank Depository for 2007-2009 biennium. The committee making the recommendation consisted of Laida Benavides, Sam Flores, Hector Cavazos, Belinda Salazar, Jose Manuel Garza and Felipe Jimenez. He also thanked Estrada-Hinojosa for assisting in preparing the tabulations.

Motion:            So move.

Moved by:        Ramirez

Seconded by:    R. Molina

Discussion:       None

In Favor:         Bruce, Campos, Gonzalez, J. Molina, R. Molina, Ramirez

Abstain:          Johnson

The Board took a short break at 8:41 p.m. and returned at 8:48 p.m.

**X. Public Comments: Comments are limited to three minutes per speaker. The Board Parliamentarian will be the timekeeper and will inform the speaker when they have one (1) remaining minute. No more than three (3) persons will be allowed to speak on any side of an issue. Should there be more than three (3) people who wish to speak on a particular issue they need to select not more than three (3) representatives to speak for them. Comments on policy or agenda items will be heard in open session. Complaints and concerns against employees or regarding students shall be directed through the appropriate channels. The presiding officer or designee shall determine whether a person who wishes to address the Board has attempted to solve a matter administratively. If not, the person shall be directed to the appropriate policy, as noted in BED (LOCAL), to seek resolution before bringing the matter to the Board at a subsequent meeting. Pursuant to 551.042 of the Texas Government Code, no Board Member or Administrator may respond to a member of the public, unless such response is a recitation of District policy or a statement of specific formal information.**

Blanca Balboa. Ms. Balboa introduced herself as the President of United TSTA/NEA. She said they were there to help the District.

Lorraine Squires. Ms. Squires introduced herself as Treasurer of United Education Association. Ms Squires said they were there to work with the Board and work together as a community. She commented that it takes a village to raise a child and maybe the Board might consider their request they have been making for the past year to move the public comments to the beginning of the meeting.

Rolando Gonzalez. Mr. Gonzalez addressed the Board saying his comment was this that last Saturday, the taxpayers were heard loud and clear. He said it was time to replace the current superintendent. Mr. Gonzalez said Mr. Santos doesn't go to the media and does not have a plan to prevent the enrollment of students who do not reside in the United States. He said two weeks ago, a good friend of his has passed away. Mr. Gonzalez said the Superintendent should have provided assistance under the ADA, but that he did nothing to help his friend. Mr. Gonzalez repeated his comment that the Board should terminate the contract of the superintendent.

Mr. Bruce concluded the meeting by asking the audience to meet at the SAC next Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.

### **XI. Adjournment**

There being no further business before the Board of Trustees, the Regular Meeting of May 16, 2007 was adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

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John M. Bruce, President

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Juan Antonio Molina, Jr., Secretary



Special Called Meeting  
The State of Texas  
United Independent School District  
The County of Webb

May 22, 2007

A Special Called Meeting of the Board of Trustees of United ISD was held Wednesday, May 22, 2007, in the United ISD –Student Activity Complex, Fine Arts Building, 5208 Santa Claudia Lane, Laredo TX 78043. The meeting was called to order by President John Bruce at 6:30 p.m.

**In attendance**

Roberto J. Santos, Superintendent of Schools

**Board of Trustees**

John M. Bruce – President  
Ricardo Molina – Vice President  
Juan Molina – Secretary  
Pat Campos – Parliamentarian  
Francisco "Pancho" Gonzalez – Member  
William "Bill" Johnson – Member  
Juan Roberto Ramirez – Member

**I. Roll Call, Establish Quorum, Call to Order**

**A Special Called meeting of the Board of Trustees of United ISD was held Tuesday, May 22, 2007, beginning at 6:30 PM in the United ISD - Student Activity Complex, Fine Arts Building, 5208 Santa Claudia Lane, Laredo TX 78043.**

**I. Roll Call, Establish Quorum, Call to Order**

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

**III. Announcement was made by the Board President calling the meeting of the United Independent School District to order. The record showed that a quorum of Board Members was present, that the meeting was duly called, and that notice of the meeting was posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code Chapter 551.**

**I. Call Meeting to Order**

**II. Establish Quorum**

**III. Pledge of Allegiance**

**IV. Public Comments: Board shall receive public comment regarding UISD Bond Election**

## **V. Discussion regarding UISD Bond election**

Mr. Bruce thanked the members of the audience who were present and said the Board welcomed the public's comments and discussion. He said they were asking those present if they believed that the District should go forward with a future bond election.

Kemel Shrek. Mr. Kamel Shrek introduced himself saying he works in LISD and that the Board knows the points he would bring up because he had written several letters to the editor. He told the Board that they should not use the idea that those who voted against the bond were not supporting children. He said he wants to drive a Mercedes, but cannot afford it. He said he could not buy a Mercedes on credit because then his children are going to pay for what he has. The speaker said in raising \$400 million on a bond, then we have to pay for 30 years, and it is going to take many many years to pay.

Mr. Shrek said the taxpayers are fed up with the taxes. He said they just got their appraisals. He also commented that he felt the District needs to be transparent. He said the Board said the taxes will go down, but they will not go down. Mr. Shrek said UISD needs to form a committee from the grassroots of the community, not people who are a handpicked group of people on the Blue Ribbon Committee. Mr. Shrek reiterated that the tax needs to be presented in an accurate way. He asked that the Board not tell us our tax is not going to go down because it is going to go up. He added that the District people don't need to hide. In addition, he said we do not need separate 9<sup>th</sup> grade campuses. He said we need a high school on Mines Road, and we need to save the taxpayers money by consolidating. Mr. Shrek commented that the Board should have done the town meeting before.

Jaime Gonzalez. Mr. Gonzalez introduced himself as a UISD taxpayer and one of his concerns is that he was listening to all this with Susan Carlson and Mr. Zuniga talking about bringing taxes going down. They never told the public that the appraisal district had to bring up the appraisal 10%. We're bringing the tax rate down, but the appraisals will go up. You all don't mention that. Then, we come back to building 9<sup>th</sup> grade campuses. You want your high school campuses to be successful in athletics. When United started, it was a small school. You build that school, and it builds up. It started gradually and now it is a full school. The swimming pool you want to build, I don't think it is needed. Right now, we are serving fifty students. The coach is getting a full teacher salary just to teach swimming. There are no swimming classes for our students. Those are some of my concerns, and I thank the Board for listening to me.

Hilario Cavazos. Mr. Cavazos introduced himself as a taxpayer and long-time educator. Mr. Cavazos said that one of the reasons the bond failed is because of the lack of the public forum. You need input from the community. That's one thing that turned off voters. Where were the teachers on the Blue Ribbon Committee, the blue collar workers? He said he didn't have anything against business people, but there needed to be teachers and grassroots people on the committee. Mr. Cavazos said the arena is very expensive to maintain, and he felt we need to go back to the basics. The speaker commented that if Homeland Security wants to use the school pool, let them pay for it. He said he'd been in a portable building for the past fourteen years, and there was no problem with that. Mr. Cavazos asked where was the leadership for the bond. He reiterated that they should have included teacher unions. Mr. Cavazos said the District had said the taxes won't go up. He added, however, that he had his right here, and it went up. Let's go back to basics.

Rene de la Vina. I'm here speaking as a taxpayer, and I'm also a special education teacher for thirty years. Mr. de la Vina said the majority who voted against the bond said they would have voted for it if you'd stuck with the schools and classrooms. He said if the District brings it back in November, he is sure it will pass. He said the Board needs to also change your public comments to the beginning of the meetings. Mr. de la Vina commented that one of the board members told him that the reason we put the public comments to the end of the meeting was because the taxpayers and voters don't care. The speaker said they do care. The ladies are not comfortable leaving that late to their cars. If someone becomes disrespectful to a Board member or his family then kick them out. You're a good board, but you need to be more transparent. The speaker concluded by saying that the Board may not like what we say when we come up here on public comments, but that's what you do as a board member and elected official.

Marcial Jovel. Ms. Jovel addressed the Board saying the most important thing is to bring public comments back to the beginning of the meeting. You must stop creating new positions and hiring political friends. Ms. Jovel said there was one position that was created for over \$50,000 per year which could have been used to give teachers money to purchase things they need. Ms. Jovel said having volunteered all her life at my children's schools, you can find children writing letters to the editor or asking Women's City Club for assistance. Ms. Jovel said this type of nepotism has been praised by Donald Trump, but he can give it away because it's his money.

Ms. Jovel then commented on the 9<sup>th</sup> grade campuses. She said in the first place, you are proposing such a drastic change based on only one study which was conveniently in favor of the plan. She said she, for one, has an opposing view. Ms. Jovel recounted a personal story saying she remembered her daughter coming home sad the first days of her freshman year because they were all called "fish." However, she said they all survived. The speaker pointed out that the students will have to be shuttled back and forth. What about the time in transportation? What about the stress on our drivers fighting traffic and using gas? She concluded by asking the Board members to present the plan to the community members.

Dyanira Ramirez. Ms. Ramirez said that as a parent, she is for building more schools because her daughter attends a school that is very overcrowded. She said she feels that when that school was built, if the District knew where the school was, why didn't they build it correctly? Ms. Ramirez said she didn't think the money was spent appropriately and that her concern is that the bond money would not be used appropriately.

Rose Cruz. Ms. Cruz said that one of her biggest obstacles to the bond is that J. B. Alexander's 9<sup>th</sup> grade campus was going to be three miles away on Loop 20. She commented that in the morning, Loop 20 is a madhouse, and it is going to get more congested. This bond issue is to be for bricks and mortar. If we have one school built a year, then we are only reimbursed for that one school when it is built. Ms. Cruz said most people don't realize that UHS is costing us, I think it is on your website, as \$28 million but it is now costing up to \$58 million. She said they had been told they would be saving money by building prototypes. However, Ms. Cruz said it is still costing more. She said the Board needs to start being honest. Don't spin the truth. Also, there were a lot of misconceptions. A lot of people do not realize that this bond election needed to be put together 60 days in advance. She said by not having the public comments at the end of the meeting, it shows you don't care about what people think. Ms. Cruz said you need to be stewards of this community's monies.

Berta Torres-Hernandez. I am the mother, and I am very concerned about my son. I am always looking at the education of my child. She asked the Board to put the public comments at the front of the meeting. In that way you can get people to help. You must respect the community. We want to work together, but you need to put public comments at the front.

Grace Rodriguez. I'm happy to say I voted no to the bond. She said she was for the schools, but not for the arena. The speaker said her children go to a school that is overpopulated. Ms. Rodriguez said she had heard they are bringing in portables. When there is an elementary school built, she said the Board needs to take into consideration that Laredo is growing and will keep growing. She said she hoped they build the schools big enough and ready to accommodate the growth year after year.

Jaime Mendoza. Mr. Mendoza addressed the Board saying the problem he had with the bond issue was more the 9<sup>th</sup> grade campuses. He said if you have facts you had written down, that you could give to the voters more information. He said all they had was that if you don't vote for the bond, you don't care about the children. Mr. Mendoza said he wished there had been an open discussion to tell the community where you were coming from and to answer why there is a 9<sup>th</sup> grade campus. Mr. Mendoza asked if there were studies to back this idea up? The speaker commented that if it works so great, don't you think more districts would have done it? He said Freshmen drop out because they are coming into a new environment. Mr. Mendoza said he was not here to criticize but maybe the students could have something where they can learn a vocational trade, so they won't be focused on science and math. Mr. Mendoza said some students come in speaking just Spanish, and they have a hard time trying to adjust.

Mr. Mendoza said he knows LISD is different, but asked if it wouldn't have been better if you had come out with the facts, and they are written? He asked where are these eight schools going to be built? The speaker asked if when you come up with the fact that there is overcrowding, will the new Nye or UHS help some of the overcrowding. I don't know if you all came up with fuzzy math. Why didn't you do some of the town hall meetings beforehand. Mr. Mendoza said he would have voted for the schools.

Mario Zaragoza. Mr. Zaragoza said he wrote a letter to the editor concerning the bond. TEA does recommend the core curriculums. I know you had focused on student enrollment. I feel there is no need to have an administrative complex because there is no increase in projected administration. The speaker said he congratulated the Board for having this public forum, but again, he asked the Board to please consider the school facilities that target Language Arts, Science, Social Studies and Math.

Juanita Martinez. Ms. Martinez said all she had to say is that we are here for children. She said she hoped this time we project the correct number of children, and said she was sorry about the schools in the south. As a taxpayer no longer in the District and no longer the parent of a child in the schools, I don't know what's going on unless someone calls me up or I get it in the mail.

Memo Castro. Mr. Castro said he has been involved in United as a parent in the past three years and has seen the needs of the programs. I think the problem we all have is not the taxes we pay, but the tax appraisal people. It is not the taxes, it's the appraisals. I don't live in a plantation, but I don't hold that against them. The evil we have here today is the appraisal district. You have politicians who say they will help. We need to come together to hold them to that. At one time, Governor Perry held it to 3%. I voted no because of the swimming complex. It may be something we can work with the City. How much do we pay the LEC for graduation? I hear it is \$10,000. In this world we need to be competitive. He said he believes if we come together and find who is the real culprit is, we can come together.

Maria Contra. Ms. Contra said the schools have nothing special for the students. She said they want something for them. The speaker commented that we need to be unified.

Melissa Martinez. Ms. Martinez said, she wants to talk with you. It is a call for you. It is not a time for you to pontificate to the members of the community. It is a lack of respect for the

members of the community...the respect to listen. Ms. Martinez asked why the Board doesn't pay attention. She said you need to have respect for the people. This "no," is a wake up call for all the administration of this school district. She asked that the Board be more inclusive of everyone.

Dr. Javier Cantu. Dr. Javier Cantu introduced himself as a family physician. He said he was a former teacher and a UISD taxpayer. I'm here to show you my perspective and to give suggestions for future growth. The bond election was wasteful. He said there is a need for traditional high school and elementary schools. But before I or any other taxpayer can support a bond:

- 1) Will you commit to a bond committee that includes a broad spectrum?
- 2) Will you account for \$50 million of additional revenue that could purchase a high school without the need for a bond?
- 3) Would you cut the administrative staff and their salaries?
- 4) Will you open your budget for citizens and use the taxpayers as a reference?
- 5) Will you open your board meetings and return public comments to where they belong?

Dr. Cantu said he became concerned about the bond election when he heard it was the biggest election in the poorest city in Texas. The governor keeps saying he wants to give us relief, but every week, Odie Arambula keeps talking about the many people who are losing their homes. I think he is saying it to get one of your board members to say maybe we need to provide relief to our taxpayers.

Jesus Flores. The little bureaucracy in your school district has gotten out of hand. All these top paying jobs and the assistants to the assistants. We don't need a pool. We would really appreciate if you'd start cutting the fat. I will not vote for any bond until you start cutting the fat

Emilio Martinez. I am a local attorney and investor in Laredo. I was educated in Laredo. Everyone is playing three card monte with how taxes are being raised. The appraisal district is out of control. The truth is that they do not set taxes. You set the taxes. I think this was a message sent not only to you, but to the entire political class of Webb County. I perceive that the citizens ...the County, the City, and don't let me get started on LISD. If we think our taxes are too high, then the governing body is responsible. If it is happening that pressure is being put on you to raise taxes, then we need to know.

If there are kids who are disrupting classes then we need to get them out of there. If nothing is done, it's because we don't want to.

Blaca Balboa. President of United TSTA/NEA to clarify, it is a teachers' union. Why did the bond fail? United TSTA has been coming to the Board for over a year to address these concerns, but we have been ignored. The ratios are too high. Many lower grade teachers teach 24 students and you cannot pass a bond while students are overflowing in the classrooms. The supplies are not there. How often do teachers spend money out of their own pockets? UISD did not give the local teachers a raise, and the District ignored them again. The salaries are not keeping up. Ask for a bond when teacher morale is at an all time low? I think not. Paraprofessionals are working at an all time low. How can you pay anything on \$11,000 a year. The way to pass a bond is priorities: Lower ratios, higher salaries for teachers and staff. United TSTA/NEA says the focus should be on the children. Please help the teachers do their jobs.

Marisa Martinez. I'm here to tell you I voted no to the bond. It was over-inflated, and we're not addressing the issue. You want to build a football system. We're not getting back to the basics. Just to get our kids to school is costing us. This community tends to vote for bonds. This is a

new day. I see most of you are glassy-eyed. You still have to come back to us when you ask for a bond. Asking the opinion when you hold public comments at the end of the meeting? I am for the education of the children. I want the entire world to see our children. We need to get down to the basics.

Ignacio Gutierrez. I come here as a parent and taxpayer. I have kids going to high school soon. He said his only concern is the four freshman schools ...that's the only reason I voted no. Right now the Mines Road is the second largest growing area of town. They need a high school, and I hope there is a different structure to the bond the second time around.

Victor Garcia. Mr. Garcia said he was retired from the service. I used to work in the schools in Alabama and Georgia and never paid taxes like I pay here. With my experience in the Army, I would like to ask the question. I know every school district has their own transportation. How much does one bus cost? When I lived in Germany, transportation was excellent. They use public transportation to move the students. I don't see why we must spend so many millions of dollars when we have the solution. . We cannot ignore what has happened in the past. If you want to invest the moeny, invest it wisely.

Mr. Bruce asked that they take a short break and adjourned at 7:39 p.m. The Board returned at 7:53 p.m.

Luciano Mancera. Mr. Mancera said the reason he did not vote for the bond election was because he thought the amounts were exorbitant. You never told us how you arrived with each item and the cost for each item. For example, the square footage of the buildings. I have lived in UISD for many many years and have seen schools built at all stages. But all this time, the aptitude of students has not improved at all. For example, 60% of the students need to take remedial courses at the local LCC. So I do not see where high cost buildings are going to improve a student's aptitude. If you can come up with how you came up with the numbers, then I may vote for it. Everything has a positive and a negative.

Hilario Cavazos. One person mentioned about the Appraisal Board. It's true. Custodians...how are they going to pay their taxes? When are we going to cap it. The salaries do not keep up with inflation. We're probably going into a recession. We need to do something and need tax relief or we're going to have people out in the street.

A lot of people were turned off because of the negative comments made by people. Portable buildings, no teacher raises...a lot of people you had speaking for the bond were turning off the voters. One of the priorities should have been teacher salaries. I think they keep the students in line. I'm a special ed teacher myself. If you want to get this bond through, give the teachers the salary they deserve. I think that is one of the things that turned off the voters.

Blanca Balboa. We've been on this subject for a long time. Please, again, bring the public comments back to the beginning of the meeting.

Deyanire Ramirez. Right now, I spoke as a taxpayer. Right now I'm speaking as a parent. I voted no. I personally think you all don't know how much work the teachers have. I think they do a great job. If you all care so much about the children, don't you think the teachers should have an assistant? When my daughter was in pre-kinder, there was no one in her class. That day, I called Mr. Santos to leave a message because I was very concerned. Anything could have happened.

I thought you had an open door policy. If they don't like to deal with the issues, what they ask is to go to their assistant, their assistant, their assistant. I see administration needs to have an

open door policy. Many, many people, don't even go or ask to be here. It is very negative how the people work here. The administrators are too closed-minded to understand.

Marcia Jovel. Thank you for letting me talk this evening. We have to talk about the bond. Members of the Board of Trustees, you have to stop giving jobs to your political friends and we should have salaries for the teachers. Ms. Jovel repeated her original comments in Spanish.

Emilio Martinez. One things you must understand is that when a couple buys a home for \$100,000 and they finish paying for that house, they would have paid an equal amount in taxes. One of the things I saw during the break was a harmless conversation of people who can help you. It's like the TXDOT who held hearings. And like the Homeland Security who were supposed to come. They wanted to trumpet to their constituents. You have a great opportunity to reconnect with the community or you can be like the Texas Highway Dept. who comes to the meetings and already have their minds made up.

Berta Torres.-Hernandez. For a long time, I have tried to communicate with the Board of Trustee. The point is the amount projected. Give the attention to the education. You are very busy, and the Superintendent doesn't even know the problems the teachers have and the administrators have. It is too much money.

Mr. Bruce told those present that the Board wanted to thank everyone for their participation. He said we know that mistakes were made and we acknowledge that. A lot of the things said are doable, and all will be taken under advisement. This is only the first of many of these meetings that will be held. He said there are people in this room who will be asked to participate on the Blue Ribbon Committee. For right now, the questions you asked will be translated into English and Spanish and all the questions that were raised today will be answered. We will be having them on a more regular basis.

## **VI. Adjournment**

There being no further business before the Board, the Special Called Meeting of May 22, 2007 was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

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John M. Bruce, President

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Juan Antonio Molina, Jr., Secretary