

Meeting Mins
Regular Board Meeting
Monday, November 15, 2021 5:00 PM Central

Canutillo ISD Administration Office
7965 Arcraft
El Paso, TX 79932

1. GENERAL FUNCTIONS-OTHER

1.A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at **5:02 pm** by Board President Coronado.

1.B. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the CISD Board of Trustees.

1.C. Texas Pledge of Allegiance

The Texas Pledge of Allegiance was led by the CISD Board of Trustees.

1.D. Roll Call

Trustees Coronado, Hernandez, Mendoza, Payan, Rodriguez, Searls and Trout were present.

1.E. CISD Vision and Mission Statements

The Vision Statement was read by Mrs. Searls and the Mission Statement was read by Mrs. Trout.

1.F. Trustee Ethical Guidelines

The Trustees reviewed and discussed item 1: Student-Centered Focus. I will be continuously guided by what is best for all students of the District.

2. OPEN FORUM-OTHER

Any person wishing to address the Board during the period reserved for public comment at a Board meeting must sign up to be heard, in accordance with District policy BED(LOCAL): Each participant will be limited to **THREE MINUTES** to make comments to the Board. The Board is **NOT** permitted to discuss or act upon any issues that are not posted on the agenda for tonight's meeting.

For further information on those policies, contact the Superintendent's Administrative Assistant.

Speaker #1: Nathan Barnes. Mr. Barnes asked that his comments be read into the record. My name is Nathan Barnes and I'm speaking tonight in objection of the book Gender Queer being in our school library. I'm anticipating the argument in favor of keeping this book is because you believe in freedom of speech and the 1st amendment in general. It's true that pornography is allowed through the first amendment, that's not being disputed, but this availability is for those who are 18 and older. Adults. You can't bring pornography to school; it's even listed as a prohibited item in the district. You can't show pornography to minors. You can't have easy access to pornography for minors. Yet all these things are available to minors in your very district, and you know it. You're now in the unenviable position to defend it and explain why you've allowed porn to be accessible to kids. Good luck on that. Another potential argument in favor of the book is it gives individuals access to resources to help them answer questions regarding their sexuality. If Gender Queer didn't have pornographic images and descriptions of a sexual nature than most would say it's just a book. But it does have those images and descriptions that are

inappropriate, and illegal, for minors to view. Plus, there are resources for those individuals in the library right now that don't have the pornographic images that Gender Queer has. Another argument you might use is that we're all transphobic. A feculent and weak accusation that holds no weight at all. I challenge you to find another book in your library with pornographic images and I'll be for its removal. Not because I'm phobic of any sorts, but because I'm against kids having access to porn. Plain and simple. If Romeo and Juliet had this type of scene in their book, I'd be against the immoral part. Finally, I have a request. Send an anonymous survey to every faculty member and simply ask them how morale is, why it's low or high, and what can you give, or take away, that will improve the esprit de corps. I say this because it's clear that morale is dismal. It's not because the bond failed. It's been like this for a while. You owe it to your staff to find a solution. I've heard horror stories from many sources. One states they drink more wine to cope with the day. One said they see teachers crying in the hallways and faculty lounge on a regular basis. One said they break down and sob on Sunday night because they're faced with the harsh reality of going into work for another week. One said in frustration "it just can't keep getting worse. It's just not possible". Many were looking at finding another job in another district or another field of work entirely. Ask yourselves this. Do you have more faculty and students this year than the past years? If not, then why? Not one said it was because they needed more money. It's true that if the district got the bond money they would have enjoyed seeing an influx of cash. But there's something else that's crushing their spirits. Even some students I talked to said this is the worst year by far. So again, my suggestion to you is to begin a survey and compile the reasons for low morale. But after receiving the suggestions actually listen to them. Hubris gets in our way when we think we're right. If you receive an overwhelming number of responses in favor of one thing to be removed and you ignore it then it's essentially the Human Resources version of, "the beatings will continue until morale improves."

Speaker #2: Breanne Barnes. Mrs. Barnes asked that her comments be read into the record. Good evening, Board of Trustees: I begin tonight asking for this to be on the record and no part to be edited in any way. I come with an overall plea to make things make sense because the hypocrisy is astounding! Almost 3 weeks ago, I came and turned in the documents for this book to be reviewed and removed for its vulgar pornographic material that has absolutely no educational value. I still have not received any update on how that is going except a letter in the mail saying it has been started. I realized after the fact that I shouldn't have even had to go through that process. The library book was not checked out to me by the librarian because as I was told they weren't required to as it wasn't instructional material inside the classroom. The entire review process in the EF Local/Legal is over "instructional materials." There is no particular review process in place for instructional or educational resources such as library books. The legal protocol also states that "the ultimate decision lies with the board." Therefore, board I ask that you take a stand and get this book and any other pornographic material inside of our classroom or libraries off our shelves. Hypocrisy example #1: We talk regularly about wanting parents to be involved in their children's education but this must only be if they are agreeing with what we are doing. When I called to reference this book, I was treated like the enemy! Please make this make sense! We need to have a policy in place for parents and community members to reference materials when we inquire with concerns about them. Let's make this process truly transparent to keep parents involved in their children's education. Hypocrisy example #2: The district places filters on our students' devices at school to keep them from looking up inappropriate material, while they are at school but then we are allowing them to access pornographic material in our own library? Please make this make sense! Hypocrisy example #3: CISD's student handbook has pornography listed as a prohibited

item along with guns, weapons, and fireworks. If students bring it, wear it, watch it, or draw it, there will be consequences for them at school for breaking the rules. Again, it is only ok if we are granting them access to it? What draws the line between appropriate and inappropriate pornographic material? Please, make this make sense! Board, the hypocrisy is appalling! This has nothing to do with LGBTQ community vs. heterosexual community. This is about the difference between right and wrong! Please do what is right for our children in CISD by taking action and voting to have this book, and any others like it, removed! Just a reminder, exposing children to pornographic material is considered child abuse under Texas state law.

Speaker #3: Elizabeth Perez thanked the Canutillo community for taking a stand against half-truths and deceit. She stated the community has spoken by voting against the leadership of the district. She also voiced her concerns with pornography in schools. She also asked that the fear mongering stop.

Speaker #4: Heather Taylor stated that Gender Queer was pornographic, not literature, and needed to be removed from the libraries.

Speaker #5: Calvin Taylor stated the Gender Queer was inappropriate (heterosexual or homosexual it did not matter).

Speaker #6: Eilleen Macias voiced her concerns with the images depicted in Gender Queer and the poor treatment she received from CISD staff.

Speaker #7: Daisy Cisneros voiced her concerns with the book Gender Queer. She asked that the board stop being politically correct and do what is right.

Speaker #8: Rebekah Vasquez voiced her concerns with the pornography found in the book Gender Queer and read a letter from Texas Governor Greg Abbott.

Speaker #9: Maggie Hernandez stated she agreed with the previous speakers regarding the book Gender Queer. She noted our Mission Statement and actions do not align. She asked that the book be removed from the library.

Speaker #10: Raphael Alarcon stated he was in support of all the mothers and fathers against the book Gender Queer and no pornography in any form should be allowed in school.

Speaker #11: Jesus Salgado-Ramos informed the board that a community survey had been conducted regarding the reorganization of the board. The results were the following: Mrs. Patricia Mendoza be appointed Board Secretary, Mrs. Laure Searls be appointed Board Vice-President and Mrs. Blanca Trout be appointed Board President.

Speaker #12: Bernardo Barela discussed the Nov. 12, 2021 COVID 19 Q & A meeting with Dr. Orcaranza and Dr. Galaviz. He stated blaming unvaccinated parents and students for COVID 19 infections was divisive. COVID 19 vaccines are not meant to prevent infection but death or lessen the severity of the illness.

Speaker #13: Alexander R. Aguirre asked that classroom sizes for students with severe disabilities remain small. He stated teachers are more successful when they can dedicate more time with each student individually.

Speaker #14: Albert Castaneda introduced himself to the board as the new CISD Facilities Manager.

Speaker #15: Marnie Rocha addressed the board regarding due process. She asked that fairness be rendered in all areas and a student's rights as individuals should never be violated. Mrs. Rocha stated she was speaking for voiceless students who feel they will be mocked such as transgender, lesbian, and gay students. She stated the learning environment must be inclusive and noted she was not there to defend a book, but neither to burn a book. Instead, she stated she was asking that the book being discussed in Open Forum get due process. She asked that the board not allow the schools and libraries to become the next political battle ground. She also addressed the lack of decorum recently seen at our board meetings. She noted the disrespect displayed by the public against the board of trustees and district administration and asked that the board bring back civility and respectful discourse.

Mr. Coronado confirmed with Dr. Galaviz that Gender Queer was going through the review process. In addition, he confirmed with Mr. Blanco that laws regarding the review process were being followed.

3. BOARD HONORS

3.A. Recognition of November 11, Veteran's Day, a time for us to pay our respects to those who have served. For one day, we stand united in respect for our veterans.
Veterans were honored for their service.

3.B. Recognition of Melinda Bennett Shane, Ph. D., Licensed Specialist in School Psychology in honor of School Psychology Awareness Week.
This item was tabled.

3.C. Recognition of the Canutillo HS Eagles Football Team for winning the 1-5A (DII) District Championship.
This item was tabled.

4. BOARD OF TRUSTEE BUSINESS

4.A. Discussion and action to review and canvass the results of the November 2, 2021 District bond election.
Mr. Blanco gave an overview of the Bond Election and presented the results to the board.

PROPOSITION A

“THE ISSUANCE OF \$177,500,000 OF BONDS BY THE CANUTILLO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT FOR SCHOOL FACILITIES, THE PURCHASE OF LAND FOR SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL FACILITIES AND THE LEVYING OF A TAX IN PAYMENT THEREOF. THIS IS A PROPERTY TAX INCREASE.”

	For	Against
Early Votes (including mail ballots)	302	476
Election Day Votes	277	583
TOTAL	579	1059

PROPOSITION B

“THE ISSUANCE OF \$10,000,000 OF REFUNDING BONDS BY THE CANUTILLO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT FOR THE PURPOSE OF REFUNDING ALL OR A PORTION OF THE PRINCIPAL AND/OR INTEREST ON CERTAIN PREVIOUSLY ISSUED MAINTENANCE TAX OBLIGATIONS OF THE DISTRICT STYLED “CANUTILLO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT MAINTENANCE TAX NOTES, SERIES 2020,” AND ANY REFUNDING OBLIGATIONS THEREOF AND THE LEVYING OF A TAX IN PAYMENT THEREOF. THIS IS A PROPERTY TAX INCREASE.”

	For	Against
Early Votes (including mail ballots)	308	468
Election Day Votes	262	594
TOTAL	570	1062

Both propositions failed.

Mr. Rodriguez asked to make a public statement: It is sad to see that one of my colleagues Laure Searls work against the bond with others in the community. Some of these individuals are listed below. The way this was done troubles me and certain specific issues I feel should be made publicly known. I do give credit to Mr. John Joyner for manning up to some signs that he created even though he didn't follow proper Campaign Finance Laws and Ethics Rules. Several were placed around the community and some in his front yard. Another example is Ms. Perez and Ms. Barnes and I'm sure others dropping leaflets to voters across the district also did not follow Campaign Finance Laws and Ethics Rules. Several witnesses came to us and others provided video of "Ring" doorbells. The hypocrisy of these two are sad especially when they try to preach the good but obviously follow the bad. Here are two examples of that. Ms. Perez at one meeting talks about how the Community of Davenport cannot afford the bond and misleads the community on misinformation that Deanna Davenport was not going to receive anything. At the next board meeting, she asks this board for a five-thousand-dollar stipend. Sad but look like priorities to me. Ms. Barnes who participated in the JFK (Just for Kids Committee) to recommend to the board the bond package. Let me say again because of misinformation in the community this committee recommended to the full board and the board accepted those recommendations. There were some items I didn't agree with, but I respected the process and approved the recommendations. A little time after that Ms. Barnes worked against the bond. Sad but true. The last examples are the signs that appeared all over the community interesting enough they are the same size and style from those that were used by Ms. Annette Brigham, Al Flores, Amber Whitely and Melissa Medlock again these same individuals didn't file proper Campaign Finance Laws and Ethics Rules. Also Ms. Brigham is the one that recommended others to purchase from this vendor in the previous election. I did not file a Campaign Finance Complaint. I let that go because I didn't want to drag Canutillo ISD and this Community through bad press and wanted to move our district forward. So now this time I'm calling on these individuals especially the ones I mentioned to file your report with all expenses and contributions in detail for full transparency. These reports include the costs of the leaflets and signs as well as any other costs associated with the "Vote No" Campaign like stakes, any hardware, gas this is required by law. Look I don't have problem with anyone wanting to campaign against the bond that's what democracy is about, but I do have a problem when you

don't follow proper laws and ethics. The sad part is that the political tactics don't hurt me or my colleagues they hurt the future possibilities of our kids and our community.

It was motioned by Mr. Rodriguez, seconded by Mrs. Trout, and passed unanimously to approve the results of the Nov 2, 2021 District Bond Election.

When Mrs. Searls cast her vote, she stated she did not appreciate Mr. Rodriguez's comments and found them inappropriate.

4.B. Discussion and possible adoption of a resolution protecting the welfare of all students within the Canutillo Independent School District against domestic minor sex trafficking.

It was motioned by Mrs. Searls, seconded by Mr. Rodriguez to approve the Resolution protecting the welfare of all students within the Canutillo Independent School District against domestic minor sex trafficking.

4.C. Discussion and possible action to elect new board officers.

4.C.1. President

It was motioned by Mr. Rodriguez and seconded by Mr. Hernandez to keep board officers the same (no reorganization).

Mr. Sergio Coronado, Board President

Mr. Salvador Payan, Board Vice-President

Mrs. Mendoza, Board Secretary

Vote:

Mr. Coronado-Yes, Mr. Hernandez-Yes, Mrs. Mendoza-Yes, Mr. Payan-Yes,

Mr. Rodriguez-Yes, Mrs. Searls-Abstain and Mrs. Trout-Abstain.

Motion passed.

4.C.2. Vice-President

See comments under 4.C.1

4.C.3. Secretary

See comments under 4.C.1

5. CONSENT AGENDA-VOTING

5.A. BUSINESS SERVICES

5.A.1. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

5.A.1.a. October 21, 2021 Special Board Meeting

5.A.1.b. October 26, 2021 Regular Board Meeting

5.A.2. Approval of the Monthly Financials.

5.A.3. Approval of the Monthly Warrant List.

5.A.4. Approval of the Monthly Donations.

5.A.5. Approval of the Budget Amendments.

5.A.6. Approval of the Quarterly Investment Report for the Quarter Ended September 30, 2021.

5.A.7. Acceptance of the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the Year Ended June 30, 2021.

5.A.8. Approval of the 2022 Board of Trustee Regular Board Meeting Dates.

5.B. *CURRICULUM*

5.B.1. Approval of Memorandum of Agreement between Canutillo ISD and the University of Texas at El Paso for the teacher residency program in partnership with UTEP.

5.B.2. Approval of COVID Rapid Testing Stipends in the amount of \$500 (yearly).

5.B.3. Acceptance of the Academic Language Services Report on English Learners.

5.C. *HUMAN RESOURCES*

5.C.1. Approval of TASB Policy Update 117. **1st Reading**

Approval of the Consent Agenda

It was motioned by Mr. Rodriguez, seconded by Mr. Payan, and passed unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda as presented excluding **Item 5.A.5.**

5.A.5 Approval of the Budget Amendments.

Mrs. Searls had questions regarding a budget amendment in the amount of \$300,000.00 for the purchase of 2 portable classroom at Reyes Elementary. She asked and received the support of Mrs. Trout and Mrs. Mendoza to bring an item before the board to address the overcrowding issues at Reyes Elementary at the next board agenda. Mrs. Searls noted there was enough money in Fund Balance to pay for an additional wing at Reyes Elementary. It was motioned by Mrs. Searls, seconded by Mrs. Trout, and passed unanimously to approve item 5.A.5 Approval of the Budget Amendments.

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at **6:21 pm** by unanimous consent.

Presented to the Board of Trustees for approval on **December 14, 2021**. The minutes reflect all agenda items in the order as originally posted and do not necessarily reflect the order in which they were discussed.