

NEGOTIATION MINUTES  
APRIL 22, 2019  
TROY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

District Members: James Fry, Negotiator; Wendy Fredrickson, Brad Malm, Superintendent; Theresa Priebe, Clerk  
TEA Members: Alison Bohman, Negotiator; Crystal Tibbals

The meeting began at 4:05 p.m.

James Fry stated thank you for meeting with us.

Alison Bohman stated thank you!

James Fry stated I guess we can just open it up for any discussion. Is there anything new from our last meeting that you guys have discussed with your group or anything?

Alison Bohman stated nothing that we discussed with our group. Yeah, I don't know if you want to jump right into salary increase.

James Fry stated we talked about the other stuff before, right?

Alison Bohman stated right.

James Fry stated I think we're.....Emergency Leave policy—that will be policy things the Board will look at and the Association Leave. And then, I think we got clarification on the Advisorship Stipend, so we were, our biggest thing on that was—we had discussed something after that and we just wanted to make sure that again all concerts were just teachers that were obviously there and the dances and stuff, right?

Alison Bohman stated yes.

James Fry stated okay.

Alison Bohman stated yes, yes.

James Fry stated and the premium money is just an in and out. As soon as we get it, we'll move it to you guys or whoever's eligible for that. So, yeah, I think we could go right to.....we also talked about the steps and lanes with, we said the 3.5 with steps and lanes and then I know you guys had your numbers. So,

Alison Bohman stated okay.

James Fry stated you want to discuss—you guys were at, I think, get this right 3.4 and then a 5 is what you had said.

Alison Bohman stated that was kinda the discussion point. Yeah, the money from the State with an additional 5% for to try to catch up with other school districts.

James Fry stated we had also talked about the number of days and stuff like that. We had given you that. So, is there any clarification you guys need on anything?

Alison Bohman stated yeah, looking at this a little bit more (handout). When I first got it that day, when we were still discussing and stuff, I just want to make sure I'm understanding. So, this is where we currently are on this column with all the other school districts.

James Fry stated yes, this is the average daily, right?

Alison Bohman stated uh-hum.

James Fry stated correct. Right Brad (Malm)?

Brad Malm stated that's the average daily rate. The third column over is the average daily rate if we go by our current base salary. We know we have to pay \$38,500, but that's based on, this column is based on our current base salary, all their current base salaries. (Referring to a handout given at 04-02-19 meeting).

Alison Bohman stated right.

Brad Malm stated that first column there.

Alison Bohman stated correct. Okay. And then with some quick calculation, we know you guys proposed a 3.5% increase. Which if we did that, that would get Troy's base, calculating base at \$32,357—daily rate of pay \$181.79. Which you know if you compare then again with the other school districts, it would, and this is assuming they don't get a raise, you know, it would put us about currently where Whitepine is now without a raise, without them getting a raise. So that was one thing we were looking at. We calculated a 6% increase—okay where would that put us in regards to other school districts and that put us at \$186.18 per day, which is just about right where Whitepine is right now without a raise. So, those were some different figures that we were looking at.

James Fry stated so, did you figure that with the 178 to the 185 (days)? That is us here with 178?

Alison Bohman stated yes, with the 178 days.

James Fry stated so that 3.5 and this is the 6.

Alison Bohman stated uh-hum.

James Fry stated right.

Alison Bohman stated uh-hum.

James Fry stated okay.

Alison Bohman stated and this is what Whitepine would be at if they got the 3.4% increase from the State this year. That would put them at \$192.00 per day.

James Fry stated okay.

Alison Bohman stated we haven't heard back from any school districts. A lot of school districts haven't started this process yet.

Crystal Tibbals stated or it's too soon. Because typically we get emails if they start settling and things start working out.

James Fry stated so why don't we take a little bit, like 10 minutes, and if we can borrow this sheet...

Alison Bohman stated yeah, check my numbers.

Crystal Tibbals stated we were just kinda crunching numbers, you know, getting ready to come and talk about stuff, like okay, because like we talked, we totally hear your concerns. We get it. We get the big picture with not knowing what's happening with the funding formula and not, you know, so we're just looking to what numbers look like.

James Fry stated okay. About 10 minutes. Will that work?

Alison Bohman stated yes.

Teams went to caucus at 4:10 p.m.

Team returned to the table at 4:26 p.m.

James Fry stated so we looked it over and we want to discuss some different points as well. When we look at these numbers, they were right.

Alison Bohman stated oh, good.

James Fry stated but we also need to look at our hired staff compared to what other districts have. We know that we're 1.25 teachers over what the State allocated for; we're 6 classified over, which classified, even though they aren't negotiated for, we've always given that...it's bumped all the way down.

Alison Bohman stated we really appreciate that by the way and they really appreciate that.

James Fry stated well, we appreciate what they do. I think just like our discussion was, it makes everybody's job easier. They do so much stuff which was also one of the reasons that we discussed one of them going to training and just, you know, just work through that as well because it's important for us too to bring up their educational level and training as well. We also know that medical is going up 6.6 (%) this year, and Persi is also increased. So, there's a bigger package that we look at other than just hourly rate. We look at the benefited package for insurance and your retirement and all that. The other thing that I think we have to compare a little bit is the things that we've brought in with the Emergency Leave and those. No other districts have those. We brought those in because we truly do want what's best for the employees. So, some of that though is a cost. It could be a cost to the District because if ten employees was to have that, I mean that is a cost that is going out. So, that's something that we look at too because it's basically a, in a sense, I guess an unfunded liability to the District. That we have to pay it, it's not like we can go "No we're not going to do that". So, that's different stuff that we're

looking at here too. So, when we bring in the 3.5, if you look at it, I guess I don't want you to think that I came in and was just trying to say this where we're at. I had, I'll actually show you my notes. I had 2.5 written down and I thought, you know what, I can come in and say 2.5 and we can start this game. I didn't want to operate that way. I just wanted to be very upfront and I wanted to be very transparent that here's, this is where we're at, here's where what we've budgeted for. So, I wasn't I guess, I don't play the game very well. I just wanted to be very transparent and let you know right up front 3.5. The other thing I wanted to show you, and I think you may have a copy of this, but this is the history of years of where we've been as far as percentages. And there were some where obviously none. But if you look at like the last three years, we went from 1 to a 2 to a 3 and now at 3.5 (%'s). The other thing that I think I have to take into account is a little bit of history with is our community as a whole. I think I would be derelict in not looking at what impact does this have on those who are on fixed incomes and everything. We obviously want, I would love to give you the world but we.... Washington found out they don't have the world to give either and they're in a major, major mess. I don't ever want to get to the point where we're have to do what Washington's doing because the funding's not there.

Wendy Fredrickson stated I think they lost the balance and that's not what we ever want to go away from.

James Fry stated yes. So, like I've said, we've budgeted the 3.5. We feel that's a place that we are still very stable and strong at and that's where we would like to hold.

Alison Bohman stated okay so one thing I would like to point out on this is, is since and I would have to go back and look at the exact year, but I think it started, the whole career funding ladder funding from the State, once they give out the 3.4% this year that will be a 12.5% total that they've given for teacher salaries. If you add up what we've gotten, even if you look at if it goes back to 16-17, that would be a 6% that we've gotten so far.

James Fry stated so you're saying over. Explain the 12.5 to me.

Alison Bohman stated that's how much the State has allocated for teacher salaries since, I think it's been the last three years, I would have to go back and double check that and that would include this year, the 3.5% this year. But even

James Fry stated 3.4.

Alison Bohman stated or 3.4. Even if we got the 3.4% this year that would only put us at roughly 8 or 9%.

James Fry stated but let me ask you something for clarification. Don't we also start beyond what the State salary, I mean, what you're talking about is if you were to start, they give you that based on a starting teacher, correct?

Alison Bohman stated sure.

James Fry stated and don't we already pay above what a starting—what the State allocates?

Alison Bohman stated well, our starting base right now—no, it's not.

Brad Malm stated well, we pay what is in code. We pay the 38,500.

Alison Bohman stated uh-hum.

James Fry stated 38,500.

Brad Malm stated yeah.

Alison Bohman stated it had been 35,800, but it's changing next year to 38,500.

James Fry and Brad Malm both stated right.

Alison Bohman stated but when we run our calculations on a percent increase, it's based upon on this number currently 31,263 and it's not based upon the 35,800.

Brad Malm stated right.

Alison Bohman stated or going up to 38,500.

Brad Malm stated the career ladder has eight steps. The final step is \$50,000. So, we pay more than \$50,000. So, we're not getting all of that money.

Alison Bohman stated sure and we understand that.

Brad Malm stated the other thing that Mr. Fry points out is that we do have more classified than we're allowed. So, we get so much money for classified and we hire 6 more which is good, but we have to pay that. We have 1.25 (teachers) that we pay. We don't get money for so it's not that all the money we get covers all of our costs which is pretty elementary I'm sure you know that but that's just the facts.

James Fry stated so

Alison Bohman stated so what I'm hearing is the District is holding to the 3.5%.

James Fry stated well, we know that the State is saying 3.4. I think in good faith we're saying 3.5, which is a little above. Not much, but it's still a little above.

Alison Bohman stated right.

James Fry stated with what the State has allocated and that holds us in a very foundationally strong place as a District, which has been our goal. We could go all the way back to previous negotiations when Dana (Hoskins) and I, when I first started, we're talking about trying to shrink that gap between what the State pays and what we pay to make ourselves even stronger. So, it's not what we're trying to do here. What we're trying to do here is we're budgeting for the increases plus the unknown of what the new pay scale, whatever that thing is going to look like that I think really kinda hurts all of us because we really don't know what it's going to look like. So, we're holding firm at 3.5 and if that means that we need to go to a mediation of some sort, I would rather not do that, I'd rather, I think we've built relationships, you know, but really if we get to a crossing point where we can't move beyond or move one way or the other, then I think that's the next route that we would look at. But like I said, I don't

want to go there and I don't think you want to go there. I think, you know, we've worked over the last three years to try to come up with reasonable negotiations and reasonable relationships to where we can come to a conclusion.

Alison Bohman stated and I understand that and I too agree that you know, if we can avoid mediation that would be the best outcome for both sides. I don't know if you were involved in the one year we had to go down that path. It's a

James Fry stated I was very new to the Board.

Alison Bohman stated it's not a pretty process and it hurts relationships and we want to avoid that, but we also want to make it known that, you know, we're still negotiating. We're still moving. We're still adjusting numbers and we've got the District coming and saying we can't or you won't adjust numbers. You won't keep moving. You won't keep negotiating. That puts me in a very awkward position because like I said, I want to keep the relationship but I also....I guess if we want to keep that respectful relationship then I would want to see the District also keep moving and so we could compromise. We could come to that happy medium ground.

James Fry stated and that's why I said, I could have come in and said the 2.5 and started and I could have said 2.5, we used to say 2.5 and then talk about bonuses and all that stuff. I mean, I could have come in and done that. This time I decided to come in, because of our relationship, to just be very transparent in the beginning this is what we're looking at. This is what we've looked at. This is what we believe will keep the District very healthy and so I think that was the reason I went that way. I didn't come in with a low ball number which you see, I guess we've seen it all. You've seen it happen. You see it actually throughout negotiations everywhere. You get the high, you get the low and then you work to the middle. You would have been in shock with me as I was with you when you said the 14.5 if I would have said 1%.

Alison Bohman stated but I don't think you should have been shocked by the 14.5 because we had been in discussion about that. You know, the way it was presented on the proposal was, let's keep this discussion going, let's look at a 3-year plan, knowing that we could negotiate for one year and that's why it was worded like that and I think we made that clear when we were talking about it. I am a bit shocked right now that what I'm hearing is that you're not willing to move now. I mean, now we've even thrown in the word mediation out there.

James Fry stated I just said that it would be one of the steps coming forward if we cannot continue to move on anything.

Alison Bohman stated but I am moving.

James Fry stated well, you went from the 14.5 to the 8.

Alison Bohman stated okay. Give me a counter.

James Fry stated well, we would have to stop and discuss that. But like I said, if I would have come in with a 2.5, I would have given you a counter. I would have went to 3.

Alison Bohman stated so am I hearing we need to stop so you can discuss a counter.

James Fry stated well, I don't know if there's going to be a counter. I mean, we can go back and discuss some things but I also told you where I came in right at the top end of that because like I said, I was being very transparent. And that may be shocking to people, but that's kinda the way I operate a lot of times. Here it is. And, I guess to me, like I said there's a much bigger picture here than just 3.5. There's a bigger with benefits and with all that stuff we have to figure in.

Alison Bohman stated sure.

James Fry stated as well as, like I said, with the additional staffing that we support because we believe in that. That's why I think it makes this school as good as it is with the whole team that we've created and the job you guys have done. It's no different than last year when the Board decided to give the bonus because of the grades. We wanted to show that we appreciate how that's transferred and came around. But I also have to look at what is fair but also what the District can expand to.

Alison Bohman stated I'll point out one more time before we ask for a counter again even if we got the 3.5%, this is if Deary gets nothing, we're still \$5 less a day than what they currently are. That's with your 3.5% increase. I guess it depends on where Troy School District wants to be within the region 2 schools, but you know, that would be concerning because, like I said, we don't know where Whitepine's going to end up.

James Fry stated right.

Alison Bohman stated this year. We don't know.

Brad Malm asked should be go back?

James Fry stated yeah, let's take another 10 minutes. Can I take this again?

Alison Bohman stated yes.

Teams went to caucus at 4:41 p.m.

Teams returned to the table at 4:57 p.m.

James Fry stated so, we did some quick checking and Whitepine is right at their certified staffing level, they're not over and they're under on their classified.

Brad Malm stated no, they're not under. They are under certified because they use IDLA.

James Fry stated yeah, yeah. So, that does play a little bit of a role when you look at just total costs. The other thing that still has us concerned, and I would hope it would have you concerned, would be the funding formula that we still don't know about. But in the future we did discuss we would like to have a Board workshop to discuss the difference that you guys are talking about from where we're at to where you want to get to. I think that we need to have a discussion with the Board in the future to work out a process for that. The other thing I want to clarify, and I hope you take this for the way that I mean it. I mentioned mediation. I know mediation, I know that a lot of people think "oh, because we went to mediation that would hurt our relationship". I would hope that wouldn't hurt our relationship. I would hope that you would think no different of me or Wendy as a District representation as we would think of

you. Because to me, mediation is we can't come to an agreement—no different than a marriage if you had to call in a counselor to help figure things out. I guess, to me, I'm not going to think any different if we go to mediation. I don't want you to think there's an adversarial role.

Alison Bohman stated I know that's not your goal. I have that relationship and I understand that. But, I'm just saying that the experience in the past and even if that's not our intention going into mediation, it just....I mean, even like the picture it creates in the community—"Oh, the school board and the teacher's union couldn't reach an agreement on their own and what's going on up at that school—why did they have to call in..."

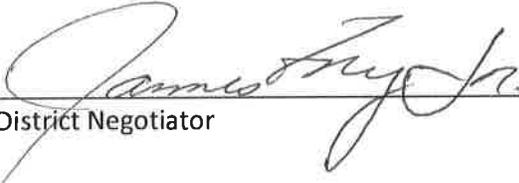
James Fry stated I wish there were community members here honestly. I wish we had twenty community members here and ten teachers here, but we don't. It would be interesting to see what the community's reaction would be, but of course you can't play that out. I mean I know what their reaction was at 1.3 million on a levy. That wasn't good. So, I don't want to get back to a point where you have the two sides of support and not support battling against each other either because these are public. These are open to the public now. I don't want to get there. But, we still believe that until we know the funding formula, we need to hold at 3.5.

Alison Bohman stated okay. So then, what we're going to have to do is we're going to have to get some financials from the school district. So, we will have to contact IEA to do that and I believe that after we send the request, the District has ten days, ten working days to get those together and then we'll need about another probably another five working days, so we're looking at least fifteen days out for the next meeting.

James Fry stated so let's look at a calendar.

The next negotiations meeting was scheduled for Monday, May 13, 2019 at 4:30 p.m. at the Troy Elementary School Library.

Meeting adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

  
District Negotiator

  
TEA Negotiator