

Berkeley Unified School District
Personnel Commission Meeting Minutes

June 4th, 2020 – 4:30 pm

1. Call to Order

The meeting was conducted via Zoom meeting #883 0204 1054 and was called to order at 4:33 pm.

2. Roll Call & Establishment of Quorum

Chairperson Carter and Vice-Chairperson Goldstein were present, and a quorum was established.

3. Public Comments

None.

4. Approval & Adoption of Agenda

Vice-Chairperson Goldstein made a motion to approve the meeting agenda; Chairperson Carter seconded the motion,

Approved, 2-0

5. Approval of Meeting Minutes

a) April 9th, 2020, Regular Meeting Minutes

b) April 16th, 2020, Special Meeting Minutes

Vice-Chairperson Goldstein made a motion to approve the April 9th and the April 16th meeting minutes; Chairperson Carter seconded the motion,

Approved, 2-0

6. Reports

a) Union

Linnette Robinson, BCCE President, expressed her concern over recent nationwide events and her frustration with supportive words that do not adequately consider the impact on affected populations followed by actions that revert to classist and racist practices that perpetuate inequity. She shared her hope that everyone was doing better despite the recent world events. She expressed concern over recent comments from BUSD Superintendent, Dr. Brent Stephens that considered layoffs as a means of bridging budget shortfalls. She maintained that classified employees would be most affected by this, and suggested that hiring freezes should be put in place for management positions. She observed that the numbers in the budget drafts brought forth to board meetings did not make sense in the context of re-opening scenarios for student education and asked the Personnel Commission to look into this and support Classified staff because the current Classified Director functions in a “dual-hatted” role, supporting Human Resources, and cannot be unbiased in her decision-making.

President Robinson requested a timeline for the district-wide compensation and classification study that the Union had previously requested so that position reclassification activities could proceed timely. She emphasized the need for consistency in the comparable salary surveys utilized by the Classified Director for purposes of position reclassification.

President Robinson asked for clarity on the status of a union member who was placed on administrative leave in late January 2020 but has received no further information since that time.

b) District Reports

None.

c) Commissioners Reports

Vice-Chairperson Goldstein said that she has not been able to attend school board meetings recently, and, with limited time to review the hours-long playback for each meeting, she is hampered by the lack of posted minutes for board meetings over the past several months. She expressed her disappointment and concern that the District has not sent a representative to update the Personnel Commission for the past several meetings regarding the plans for staffing and operations under COVID-19 restrictions and going forward under the 20-21 budget, particularly in light of the fact that the Commission has heard several reclassification requests, as well as rumors about future layoffs. Chairperson Carter said that he has reached out to Superintendent Stephens to establish better communications between the District and the Commission and to get an update on the school reopening and summer instructional plans. He reported that he has been told that, thus far, there is no definitive plan.

d) Personnel Director

i. New Hires and Examinations administered in the month of May 2020

Secretary Sanders reviewed examination results for the month of May.

7. Conference Items

a) Establishment of New Classification- Adult School Program Specialist

Secretary Sanders reported that a new position was approved at the board meeting on May 27th, 2020. Vice-Chairperson Goldstein asked about other comparable positions at the same compensation range for this new classification. Secretary Sanders identified comparable positions including: Computer Technician I, School Administrative Assistant III, and Nutritional Education Program Specialist. Mildred Scherr, Administrative Assistant II at the Berkeley Adult School (BAS), said that this position was not adequately studied in the previous [2013] compensation and classification study and it is unique within the District. Her research of similarly titled roles in neighboring Districts has led her to conclude that the BUSD position is more complex than the peer group, with varied duties including: HR, budget analysis, benefits administration, payroll and timecard administration and STRS reporting. Secretary Sanders said that she met numerous times with the employee, her colleagues, and the BAS Principal to evaluate the duties and create the job description.

Vice-Chairperson Goldstein made a motion to approve the Adult School Program Specialist classification; Chairperson Carter seconded the motion,

Approved, 2-0

b) Request for Re-Classification- M. Scherr

Secretary Sanders said she compared the proposed salary with other positions in similarly situated Districts, including San Leandro, West Contra Costa, and West Alameda, to inform her recommendation for placement at Step 4 to facilitate a 5 percent compensation increase. She noted the appropriateness of this reclassification for Ms. Scheer given her significant involvement in

coordinating several processes for BAS, and for her work in advising the Principal on the budget. Chairperson Carter made a motion to approve the reclassification for Mildred Scherr; Vice-Chairperson Goldstein seconded the motion,
Approved, 2-0

- c) Establishment of New Classification- Classified Professional Development Coordinator
Secretary Sanders said this position was approved by the board as part of a BERRA requirement approved by Berkeley voters on March 3rd and that the role mirrored the certificated position in the District. She reported that most of the comparable positions she identified in other school districts were certificated positions, but found similar classified roles in city and county comparables. Vice-Chairperson Goldstein said she was thrilled to see this position established but also expressed concern that it would be vulnerable to possible budget-balancing staff furloughs or layoffs. In response to Chairperson Carter's questions, Secretary Sanders advised that the position would be based in Educational Services and does not manage staff.

President Robinson stated that the position came into fruition only after several conversations about it with HR Director, Brent Daniels and that substantial Classified staff professional development funds have been sitting in the budget for years. She advised against hiring a current Manager in the role, favoring instead selection from the rank and file who better understand the training needs of the Classified service.

Chairperson Carter made a motion to approve the new Classified Professional Development Coordinator classification; Vice-Chairperson Goldstein seconded the motion,
Approved, 2-0

- d) Personnel Commission Meeting Schedule for 2020-2021
Secretary Sanders presented the proposed dates for the 20-21 Personnel Commission meetings. Vice-Chairperson Goldstein made a motion to approve the yearly meeting schedule; Chairperson Carter seconded the motion,
Approved, 2-0

8. Closed Session (1 matter)

- a) Legal Matters - Government Code § 54954.

The Personnel Commission went into closed session at 5:27 pm.

9. Report from Closed Session

The Personnel Commission came out of closed session at 6:27 pm. Chairperson Carter reported that no actions had been taken.

10. Public Comments

None.

11. Next Meeting

The next regular Personnel Commission meeting will be held on July 9th at 4:30 pm via Zoom.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:31 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Approved at the Personnel Commission meeting held on
7/9/2020 via Zoom*

Kimberle Sanders
Secretary, Personnel Commission

Date

Approved,

Timothy Carter
Chairperson, Personnel Commission

Date