

MINNETONKA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT #276
Service Center
5621 County Road 101
Minnetonka, Minnesota

Minutes of September 27, 2021 School Board Special Meeting

The School Board of Minnetonka Independent School District #276 met in special session at 7:35 a.m. on Monday, September 27 in the Community Room at the District Service Center, 5621 County Road 101, Minnetonka, Minnesota. Chairperson Chris Vitale presided. Also present were Board members Mark Ambrosen, Katie Becker, John Holcomb, Mike LeSage and Lisa Wagner. Absent: Superintendent Dennis Peterson, ex officio.

Chairperson Vitale called the meeting to order and asked that everyone stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

1. **AGENDA**

Holcomb moved, LeSage seconded, that the Board approve the agenda as presented. Upon vote being taken thereon, the motion carried unanimously.

2. **SCHOOL BOARD VACANCY—SELECTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBER**

Vice Chairperson Ambrosen recapped the timeline and process the Board had followed for filling the current vacancy on the Board, due to the resignation this past August of Board member Christine Ritchie:

<i>8/16/21:</i>	<i>Announcement of the appointment process and timeline</i>
<i>8/17/21-9/7/21:</i>	<i>Receipt of resumes, letters of intent and written references</i>
<i>9/7/21:</i>	<i>Deadline for submission of applications</i>
<i>9/8/21-9/12/21:</i>	<i>Board Members' individual review of applications and written references</i>
<i>9/9/21:</i>	<i>Special Meeting to decide process of Board due diligence</i>
<i>9/9/21:</i>	<i>Board subcommittee assigned to develop interview questions</i>
<i>9/13/21:</i>	<i>Special Meeting to invite applicants for interviews</i>
<i>9/20/21-9/21/21:</i>	<i>Applicant interviews conducted</i>

9/24/21-9/27/21: *Board due diligence on applicants after interviews, including review of resumes, review of written references and review of interview answers*

9/27/21: *Special Meeting to select new Board Member*

Vice Chairperson Ambrosen then said that the following people had applied for the vacancy and had been interviewed by the Board: David Befort, Paul Gilles, Patrick Lee-O'Halloran, John Odom, Dan Olson, Meghan Selinger, and David Struck.

Board Clerk Holcomb then asked the Board members to identify, in alphabetical order, their top two candidates for the position. Board responses were as follows:

<i>Vice Chairperson Ambrosen:</i>	<i>John Odom and Meghan Selinger</i>
<i>Board member Becker:</i>	<i>David Befort and John Odom</i>
<i>Board member Holcomb:</i>	<i>John Odom and Meghan Selinger</i>
<i>Board member LeSage:</i>	<i>John Odom and Meghan Selinger</i>
<i>Chairperson Vitale:</i>	<i>David Befort and John Odom</i>
<i>Board member Wagner:</i>	<i>John Odom and Meghan Selinger</i>

Becker moved, LeSage seconded, that the Board appoint John Odom to fill the vacant seat on the School Board.

In the discussion that followed, Board members thanked the members of the community who had applied and said they were fortunate to have had such an outstanding candidate pool to consider. Regarding Dr. Odom, Board member Becker noted that he had stated in the interview process that he was an independent thinker, he had a great understanding of the difference between governance and management, and he had a strong understanding of the District's budget. Board member Holcomb said that with 16% of our students being non-white, having a Board member who has those experiences will bring a new appreciation and understanding to the Board of what BIPOC students face. Mr. Holcomb also said that Dr. Odom would bring a wealth of board experience to his role, and would be able to make the tough decisions that every School Board is facing right now. Board member Wagner said that she liked his response about considering all angles of a problem before coming to a decision, and also noted his excellent references. Vice Chairperson Ambrosen cited Dr. Odom's medical background and his experience with running his own medical practice. Chairperson Vitale cited Dr. Odom's positive attitude and his strong belief in the value of a public education. Mr. Vitale also thanked everyone who had applied, and thanked those individuals who had provided letters of reference for the candidates.

Upon vote being taken on the motion to appoint Dr. John Odom to fill the School Board vacancy, the motion carried unanimously.

3. **ADJOURNMENT**

Wagner moved, Holcomb seconded, adjournment at 8:04 a.m. Upon vote being taken thereon, the motion carried unanimously.

John Holcomb, Clerk