

Council Meeting of
April 21, 2009

Honorable Mayor and Members
of the City Council
City Hall
Torrance, California

Members of the Council:

**SUBJECT: Report by the City Council Committee on Citizen Development and Enrichment on the March 25, 2009 joint meeting with certain members of the Torrance Unified School District Board of Education.
Expenditure: N/A**

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of the City Council Committee on Citizen Development and Enrichment that City Council receive the Committee report and provide direction with respect to an action item proposed at the March 25, 2009 joint meeting of the Committee and Torrance Unified School District Board of Education (TUSD).

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

The City Council Committee on Citizen Development and Enrichment and certain members of the TUSD Board of Education met in a joint session on March 25, 2008. The meeting was held at the TUSD Board Meeting Room. School Board members attending were Don Lee and Terry Ragins. A list of attendees is provided in the attached meeting Agenda and in the attached notes of the meeting.

Information was presented by TUSD staff on the current status of bond funded construction projects. Additionally, staff discussed the impact on TUSD's current year and next year's program budget resulting from the State's growing budget deficit.

City staff presented a status report on the updating of the Reciprocal Agreement between the City and TUSD. The Reciprocal Agreement addresses the protocol for joint-use of City and TUSD facilities. The draft of the Reciprocal Agreement will soon be complete for review by TUSD staff and will be brought to the Joint Committee for review and action at a future meeting. Facility usage history for City and TUSD facilities for 2008 was provided to the Joint Committee.

A discussion ensued among the Joint Committee members about the similar work efforts that occur at the City and TUSD in maintenance and other services. All members concurred that partnership efforts to share facilities and expertise would be beneficial to both agencies, especially given the increasing budget concerns for both. The members stated that there was merit in exploring efficiencies where efforts are duplicated. It was mutually agreed that a joint meeting of the full Council and the Board of Education in a town hall style meeting would be a beneficial forum for identifying and discussing duplicate tasks.

As an action item, the Joint Committee recommended that the proposal for a town hall style meeting be brought to their respective agencies for discussion. If it is agreed by each agency that a joint meeting is a viable forum for community discussion, the Joint Committee further recommended that staff be given direction to work together to develop the structure of the forum. The proposed structure would be brought to the Joint Committee for consideration and recommendation to their respective bodies.

Respectfully submitted,

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON CITIZEN
DEVELOPMENT AND ENRICHMENT



Councilman Tom Brewer, Chair



Councilman Gene Barnett



Councilman Pat Furey

MKG/dle

- Attachments: A) Agenda of Joint Committee Meeting – March 25, 2009
B) Notes of Joint Committee Meeting – March 25, 2009

JOINT MEETING OF THE TORRANCE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
AND THE
TORRANCE CITY COUNCIL
CITIZEN DEVELOPMENT AND ENRICHMENT COMMITTEE

AGENDA

DATE: **Wednesday, March 25, 2009**

TIME: **4:00 p.m.**

PLACE: **Torrance Unified School District
Board Room, Second Floor
2336 Plaza del Amo, Torrance**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:	Councilman Tom Brewer, Chair	Mrs. Terry Ragins, T.U.S.D. Board of Education
	Councilman Gene Barnett, Member	Mr. Don Lee, T.U.S.D. Board of Education
	Councilman Patrick Furey, Member	

STAFF:

Dr. George Mannon, T.U.S.D. Superintendent
 Dr. Donald Stabler, T.U.S.D. Deputy Superintendent
 Dr. Laurie Love, T.U.S.D. Chief Academic Officer
 Dr. Tim Stowe, T.U.S.D. Senior Director – Secondary Schools
 Dr. E Don Kim, T.U.S.D. Senior Director – Elementary Schools
 Dr. Mario Liberati, T.U.S.D. Senior Director – Human Resources
 Phil Fielding, T.U.S.D. Director – Facilities/Operations

Mary K. Giordano, Assistant City Manager
 Sheryl Ballew, General Services Director
 John Jones, Community Services Director
 Eric Tsao, Finance Director

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I. Welcome and Introductions

II. T.U.S.D. Items

- A) Construction Update
 - ▶ Hull Middle School
 - ▶ Order of Construction
 - ▶ Stadium Progress
- B) TUSD Budget Reductions

III. City Items

- A) Status of Reciprocal Agreement between City and TUSD
- B) Use of City Cultural Arts Center Meeting Rooms by TUSD

IV. Oral Communications

V. Adjournment

JOINT MEETING OF THE TORRANCE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
AND THE
TORRANCE CITY COUNCIL
CITIZEN DEVELOPMENT AND ENRICHMENT COMMITTEE

NOTES

Wednesday, March 25, 2009

**Torrance Unified School District
Board Room
2336 Plaza del Amo, Torrance**

COMMITTEE	Councilman Tom Brewer, Chair	Mrs. Terry Ragins, T.U.S.D. Board of Education
MEMBERS	Councilman Gene Barnett, Member	Mr. Don Lee, T.U.S.D. Board of Education
PRESENT	Councilman Patrick Furey, Member	

**STAFF MEMBERS
PRESENT**

Dr. George Mannon, T.U.S.D. Superintendent
Dr. Donald Stabler, T.U.S.D. Deputy Superintendent
Dr. Laurie Love, T.U.S.D. Chief Academic Officer
Dr. Mario Liberati – Senior Director – Human Resources
Dr. Tim Stowe, Senior Director – Secondary Schools
Dr. E Don Kim, Senior Director – Elementary Schools
Phil Fielding, Director – Facilities/Operations

LeRoy Jackson, Sr., City Manager
Mary K. Giordano, Assistant City Manager
Sheryl Ballew, General Services Director
John Jones, Community Services Director
Eric Tsao, Finance Director

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Mrs. Ragins called the meeting to order at 4:08 p.m., and thanked everyone for attending. She asked Mr. Fielding to lead the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

T.U.S.D. Items:

Construction Update:

Dr. Donald Stabler, Deputy Superintendent gave a presentation, updating the committee on the status of the construction projects funded through Measures Y and Z, including Hull Middle School and the high school athletic stadiums. He also reviewed the order of construction approved by the Board of Education in January.

Questions:

Councilman Brewer asked why the residents in the Hull Middle School neighborhood prefer to have the structures back-up against the houses, as opposed to Arlington. Dr. Mannon responded that through community meetings and surveys it became very clear the preference in that neighborhood is for the school to be rebuilt on the same footprint.

Board member Mrs. Ragins asked for an explanation of what is meant by “poor soil” on the Hull site. Councilman Barnett advised that area on the campus was once a sump and so the soil is full of “stuff” that is not toxic or anything, but not good quality to support any type of construction.

Councilman Brewer asked if District staff had investigated the possibility of switching the SHS home bleachers to the other side of the field to address the neighbors’ concern about noise. Dr. Mannon responded that the architects had advised that would not be possible from an engineering standpoint, and that actually if they were flipped it would create more noise. He said the neighbors’ real complaint was more about trash than noise, and that District personnel will be working with the school administration to address that problem.

TUSD Budget Reductions:

Dr. Don Stabler, Deputy Superintendent made a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the effect the state budget will have on TUSD by way of budget reductions for this year and next school year.

Questions:

Councilman Brewer asked if the reduction being taken for deferred maintenance was going to create the same problem we have had in the past of the District not being able to maintain its facilities after they have been modernized. Dr. Stabler explained this figure represents the District’s matching funds, and that the state is currently not contributing its share. He opined this could potentially be a problem, but that the District still has some reserve in the Deferred Maintenance Fund that is not being transferred into the General Fund, and will be used until 2011 or 2012, when the District hopes to be able to begin putting money back into this fund.

Councilman Brewer asked how many teachers we are actually losing with these budget reductions. Dr. Mannon explained we are only laying-off temporary teachers, which total about 160 positions. He advised the District expects they will at a maximum be able to bring back 61 of those teachers, for a reduction of 99 FTE this round. He emphasized that the District had previously cut approximately 70 teachers going into this year, and that combined with the classified positions that have been cut, the impact to the District for this fiscal year alone is the loss of over 200 employees.

Councilman Brewer asked if it was possible to go to a 4-day school week. Dr. Mannon advised we are prohibited to do that under the California Education Code.

Board member, Mrs. Ragins confirmed the District has previously cut over \$23 million over the past few years, prior to the reductions discussed at this meeting.

City Items:

Reciprocal Agreement between City and TUSD:

John Jones, Community Services Director reviewed the history of the present agreement between the two entities for use of each others facilities, and said he is working on an amendment to that agreement, pursuant to discussions at the last joint meeting. He advised he expects to have a draft ready for review by Dr. Stabler within the coming weeks, and then would expect it to be brought to the full Committee for discussion and approval at a later meeting.

Questions:

All members of the committee agreed they would like to see a more cooperative effort between the entities to share facilities and resources, and a reaffirmation of the agreement. Councilman Barnett commented that we have to be careful not to focus on the cost and lose site of the value of these alliances, and suggested the city and District work together to improve mutual use facilities such as the baseball fields at Torrance Park, which are also used by the Torrance High School baseball team. Councilman Furey said he is surprised at how many people in the community think the District and the city are one entity. He said this committee needs to look further at partnerships between the two that better utilize the expertise and city staff for projects the District may no longer have personnel to address due to the many budget cuts they have endured over the past several years. Mr. Lee stated this same conversation has been going on for many years and he would like to see the committee move forward towards formalizing a joint efficiency agreement. He said he would like to see a better use of resources by not duplicating efforts, but this did not mean eliminating jobs, just utilizing personnel from both entities more efficiently since we all serve the same constituents. Mrs. Ragins opined that since much of the community already thinks we are one entity, it behooves us to show that we can work together to prove tax dollars are being well spent. Committee members discussed ways to move this discussion forward, including having the respective staffs develop lists of projects they would like to make part of this type of agreement and each entity getting approval from their own Boards before bringing back to the joint committee; holding a joint meeting of both staffs to discuss; holding a town hall style meeting to gather input from employees as well as the community; and holding a joint meeting of the entire Board of Education and City Council. Mr. Lee said he would like to see such a meeting take place by some time this summer.

The discussion was concluded with Ms. Giordano, Assistant City Manger suggesting the members take the idea of a joint meeting to their respective boards, and if they are receptive, that direction be given to their staffs to work together in developing the structure of the meeting, so that it will be more effective in moving the concept further along rather than an open ended joint meeting, which may result in a lot of input, but not much outflow. All members of the committee agreed to that idea.

Use of City Cultural Arts Center Meeting Rooms by TUSD:

Sheryl Ballew, General Services Director, reviewed the District's use of the Cultural Arts Center for various programs throughout the year, including band concerts, elementary talent shows, and dances.

Questions:

Mr. Lee expressed appreciation on behalf of the District for the ability to use such nice facilities for their special events.

Oral Communications:

1. Councilman Furey announced the launching of the South Bay Enrichment Academy, and thanked the Torrance Education Foundation Board, TUSD Staff, and particularly Michael Wermers for their hard work and commitment to getting this program off the ground. He said it could not have been accomplished without the guidance of former Torrance Mayor, Dee Hardison.

He announced the Torrance Education Foundation Annual Celebrate Education Dinner would take place at the Torrance Marriott on April 18, and would, again, include the raffle of a new Toyota Prius. He said the Foundation hopes to raise \$100,000 this year, which goes to funding programs such as the Enrichment Academy and teacher grants. He thanked the city and district personnel for their continued support of TEF's efforts.

Finally, he commented that the city seal reflects the true goals of both the city and District, which is the education of our children and safety of our community.

2. Councilman Barnett congratulated TEF on the opening of the SBEA, saying he had received a packet of their marketing materials and was very impressed. He also commented that the Council had honored the South High School Girls Soccer Team as CIF Champions, and looked forward to seeing what future athletes would accomplish with our new facilities.
3. Mrs. Ragins advised she had spent most of the past week in Sacramento listening to the latest information on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and that the reality is that most of the stimulus money will not get past Sacramento, so that it was critical for the District and city to work together on a co-efficiency agreement as we would be facing budget constraints all around.
4. Councilman Brewer reiterated enthusiasm for the SBEA and thanked Dr. Mannon for attending the council meeting the night before as they recognized the accomplishments of the South High Girls Soccer Team. Dr. Mannon relayed a conversation he had with parents of those athletes regarding the exceptional quality of the fields the girls played on in the championship games at Warren High School, where they confirmed with him that the new playing fields planned for South High School will be the same ones they played on, since we will be using the same architect and turf products used at Warren High School.
5. Michael Wermers, resident of Torrance, commented that citizens of Torrance are not concerned about whether the city and District are separate entities; they just want to see the best use of their tax dollars. He said he had participated in a Joint City Council/Library Commission meeting where the city agreed to do everything possible to fund a Live Homework Help program in the amount of \$35,000. Mr. Wermers opined that if the same conversation had taken place with the District, the answer would have been an unequivocal no, as the District does not have money to fund these kinds of programs. He said anywhere the city and District can marry their services to the community, he and 75% of the voting community would support that, as shown by the recent passage of the bond measures and election of the Council and Mayor. He encouraged members of the committee to push forward with a plan to find ways to combine efforts.

Motion was made by Councilman Barnett, seconded by Board member, Mrs. Ragins, that the meeting be adjourned at 5:16 p.m.