

Hi all,

Jill asked that I share out other emails I had regarding agenda requests. My apologies for not including them the first time around.

Christine

From Garrett (3/12/17)

Hi Christine,

I hope you have had a nice weekend. I wanted to let you know that I reached out to Lisa Atwood about asking student council to join our HUUSD meetings. She said she would ask and shared the feelings of the students from an earlier meeting we had this budget season:

As an FYI, they had been attending earlier in the year but were very taken back by the behaviors of the board members and audience at the meetings around the budget. They have not been back since.

I know the students appreciated the rapport they had with the HU board and felt there was a sincerity in the boards interest regarding the student's perspective. My hope is this can be established with the new district board.

To me that statement speaks volumes.

Hopefully, as a board we have become more civil and professional.

Should we have the student council attend the first meeting of the month or the second? I am not sure if there is a preference or not. They should only be asked to come once a month. Once we establish a day, we should also put them early on the agenda so they do not have to stay as long.

Thanks,
Garett

Response from Christine (3/13/17)

Thanks for the follow up Garrett.

I appreciate their candor and would say they have a valid concern. I do think since that time the board has made strides in being more civil around the table and that the audience has for the most part taken to the ground rules.

Perhaps we should put the issue on a future agenda for a short board discussion? I think it would make sense for several reasons, but it would also allow us to air the concern and maybe discuss a schedule for their attending. As we move forward and tackle more potentially controversial topics, I can't promise we won't have angry people in the boardroom sometime in the future. In the interim, more discussion might help us

live up to a self-described standard, and work better as a team to hold the audience to a similar one. Thoughts?

Thanks,

Christine

Response from Garrett (3/13/17)

Thanks Christine,

Yes, I think we should discuss the issue with the board. Hopefully, it will be an eye opener to the entire board when they hear that students were appalled at board's behavior.

Can we put it on an agenda soon? That way we could hopefully start having the student council attend a meeting next month.

From Peter (3/23/17)

Christine and Brigid,

I'm writing to suggest that we move public comment to the beginning of our meeting agendas (or at least consider this move as a full board). I think it would allow public comment to be just that. People could share their concerns, and then we'd be able to know what they're hoping to hear in the discussion. Last night was at least the third time that public comment turned into an open forum, adding even more voices to an already crowded room, and now we need to revise future agendas to fit in the lost conversations.

Thoughts?

Thanks,

Peter

Response from Christine to Peter (3/23/17)

Peter,

Thanks for the input.

To be fair, I don't think we would have gotten through the agenda anyway. And, allowing only an hour for last night's PBL presentation was probably a stretch as we had originally allotted 90 minutes for it and cut it down to 60 since the agenda was so full. I'm guessing that 15 minutes on preparing for next year's budget isn't realistic either. So, part of this is Brigid and I figuring out how much time to allot and my figuring out how to keep everyone to that projection.

But, point taken. You're not the first to question what portion of the meeting is the best fit for public comment (myself included). In Waitsfield, it has always come before any action - even approving minutes. I am not sure if this is consistent across all boards or not. I do sense there is a lack of consistency across our boards in how we've accepted and dealt with public comment. I think some boards have welcomed it more as a basis for back and forth discussion with the public and some, not so much. I think this lack of consistency was somewhat apparent last night.

I hate to say it, but I think we might need to put "public comment" on our agenda as a board discussion topic just so that we can get everyone on the same page. It would probably be wise to do so for our next meeting since we'll be discussing local councils at the April 22 meeting and having everyone on the same page beforehand might be a good idea. As part of this we can review our current policy on public participation at board meetings.

Does this seem like a reasonable approach?

Thanks,

Christine

From Brigid (3/23/17)

Good morning team-

Thank you for your message Peter. This is another operating procedure where I see differing opinions within our board team. Several board members turned around and engaged the public further. You are correct. While we want to be welcoming, we need to fully define public comment, and recognize that a board meeting is a deliberation of the board and the administration. we have a whole group of policies that address public/parent participation.

This is a transition time and a time of growing and learning. I think we should make a list of 5 or so important reflections we have as a team, bring them forward to discuss to further define our operating procedures and clarify the boards goals and roles and the interface with community. Whether community members show up individually or in advisory councils, the law allows for input; not debate of differing positions and shared decision making with the non elected or non employed folks.

Best,
Brigid

From Peter (3/23/17)

Thanks.

Both of your suggestions for choices to bring to the whole board sound very reasonable.

From Alex (3/31/17)

Can we maybe spend a few minutes talking about group emails, how to set an agenda etc? You can blame it on me. I just can't stand the snarky group emails

Christine to Alex (3/31/17)

It's already on the agenda.

You aren't used to dealing with them all the time on the W-D board? I could count on one hand the number of group emails the Waitsfield board has had in my 3+ years as a member.

I am going to cover the issue in a board report of sorts ahead of time, and we'll have follow up on the agenda. All the emails which were sent will be published. I got a couple after the fact as well. We'll discuss the small group emails and the problems they create. We'll cover board roles, especially as they relate to PBL, and some relevant policies. We are also going to be covering public comment, those policies, and how we should all handle the communications we get from the public when they come to us as individuals.

All in all a pretty light agenda.
Anything else?

Response from Alex (3/31/17)

Oh vey. We never had those kind of emails because of open meeting laws. They were just informational.