

Board Chairman Mike Adams called the **regular meeting** of the board of Directors of Sweet Home School District No. 55 to order at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, September 8, 2025.

Board Members in Attendance

Mike Adams, Dale Keene, Dustin Nichol, Mary Speck, Jenna Northern, Rachel Maynard, Floyd Neuschwander
Absent: Amanda Carter

Staff Members in Attendance

Superintendent: Terry Martin; Administrators/Supervisors: Kevin Strong, Josh Darwood, Brian Brands, Barbi Riggs, Darel Bidwell, Ralph Brown, Mark Looney, Josh Dargis, Todd Barret, Shelley Nurre, Nate Tyler Certified: Steve Thorpe, Aly Ellis, Marissa Russell; Classified: Michelle Bidwell, Velma Canfield, Sean McNellis; Board Recording Secretary: Julie Emmert

Other Attendance: Scott Swanson, New Era, Mindy Cummings, Matthew Bechtel, Mindy Cummings, Chris Hiaasen, Jason Redick, Tom Ellis, Lisa Gourley, Jim Gorley, Steve Nelson, other members of the community and staff

1. Called the meeting to order/pledge

2. Board Elections #8-At Large

Candidates: Matthew Bechtel, Mindy Cummings, Chris Hiaasen, Jason Redick

Motion No. 25-59: - Board Member Rachel Maynard moved to move public comments before the board elections. Board Member Floyd Neuschwander seconded the motion. The motion failed 4-3.

Rachel Maynard - yes

Amanda Carter - AB

Floyd Neuschwander - yes

Jenna Northern -no

Mike Adams -no

Dale Keene -no

Mary Speck -yes

Dustin Nichol -no

Interview Questions:

Our school board has enjoyed stability and unity for a great number of years. Recently the board has experienced unrest. You will be stepping into a board that is in the process of re-establishing itself. Your power as a board member is in session, when all are gathered together.

Candidates introduced themselves

Mary Speck thanked the candidates that came to the work session earlier in the day that was led by Jennifer Nelson from OSBA.

What do you believe is the primary role of a school board member? All candidates answered- Matthew Bechtel, Jason Redick, Chris Hiaasen, Mindy Cummings,

How should our district balance student achievement, fiscal responsibility, and community expectations when making decisions? All candidates answered answered- Mindy Cummings, Matthew Bechtel, Jason Redick, Chris Hiaasen

How will you work with our other board members, district leadership, and the community-even when you disagree? All candidates answered- Chris Hiaasen, Mindy Cummings, Matthew Bechtel, Jason Redick

What experience or perspective do you bring that will help you represent the whole community's interest? All candidates answered - Jason Redick, Chris Hiaasen, Mindy Cummings, Matthew Bechtel

VOTING:

Matthew Bechtel
Jason Redick
Mindy Cummings
Chris Hiaasen- received the majority votes in Round Two

Round One:

Rachel Maynard- Chris Hiaasen
Amanda Carter- AB
Floyd Neuschwander- Mindy Cummings
Jenna Northern- Jason Redick
Mike Adams- Jason Redick
Dale Keene - Jason Redick
Mary Speck -Chris Hiaasen
Dustin Nichol -Chris Hiaasen

Round Two:

Rachel Maynard- Chris Hiaasen
Amanda Carter- AB
Floyd Neuschwander- Chris Hiaasen
Jenna Northern- Jason Redick
Mike Adams- Jason Redick
Dale Keene - Jason Redick
Mary Speck -Chris Hiaasen
Dustin Nichol -Chris Hiaasen

3. Swore in Chris Hiaasen to Position #8 At Large

4. Elect Board Officers for 2025-2026 ORS 322.040, 332.005(2) BC/BCA

Vice Chair Dale Keene

Secretary Jenna Northern

VICE CHAIR

Motion No. 25-60: Board Member Jenna Northern moved to appoint Dale Keene as Vice Chair. Board Member Dustin Nichol seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 -2.

Chris Hiaasen -yes
Rachel Maynard- yes
Amanda Carter- AB
Floyd Neuschwander- no
Jenna Northern- yes
Mike Adams- yes
Dale Keene - yes
Mary Speck -no
Dustin Nichol -yes

Secretary

Motion No. 25-61: Board Member Dale Keene moved to appoint Jenna Northern as Secretary. Board Member Dustin Nichol seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The motion passed 5 -2.

Chris Hiaasen -yes
Rachel Maynard- yes
Amanda Carter- AB
Floyd Neuschwander- no
Jenna Northern- yes
Mike Adams- yes
Dale Keene - yes
Mary Speck -no
Dustin Nichol -yes

5. Public Comments: Steve Nelson: Wanted to share his opinion on the information that has been published online. Do we believe what has been reported is accurate? The Board Chair, Mike Adams shared that staff or board are not required to respond to comments. Dustin Nichol told him to go online and watch past board meetings online and you can get all of the information. So much that is published is untrue and slanderous to the people in this community. Mary Speck shared that she can tell he cares and that there is a public complaint that has been turned in regards to last month's meeting. The Board Chair shared that this is a KL. Steve continued discussing his view of our boards dysfunction.

Steve Thorpe - As the union president he wanted to make sure that he shared his opinion on the situation and that does not represent the teachers. Thanked Chris Hiaasen and Dustin Nichol for joining the board; shared that it is time to move on. Get out of Facebook and the things that are going on. This board needs to work together and stop stirring things up. He spoke with Jason and stated that we would come together. Challenges are good, we do not always have to agree or like each other. We have clutter and disruption going on and we need to put our pride aside.

6. Agenda Approval/Changes

Chairman Adams called for changes and/or approval of the agenda

Motion No. 25-62: Board Member Dale Keene moved to approve the agenda as presented. Board Member Dustin Nichol seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

7. Student & Personnel Reports/Comments

- A. Student - Certified & Classified Representatives-None: Ms. Victor, Student Body President- 1st day of school was just freshmen and it was a great success. Staff and Admin were able to help them around and then the rest of the students showed up. Pride focus - Traditions and embrace the passing of the torch. Huge rise in all of our clubs. Sports - volleyball had a jamboree, football also had a jamboree and won their first game. Soccer's first match is this week and the cross country team has the most students signed up ever. Mary Speck mentioned that the Cheerleaders showed up at the inservice.

Certified - Steve Thorpe shared the open houses at the schools. Great turn out from parents at all schools. We only had 10 new staff. This is a good place to work. All three of our admin are doing great. Coming up is the cell phone policy. Would like to have a say. Make it manageable. We are offering 35 honors classes. The High School is doing a great job with

this. Negotiations are starting soon. Last time was the best we have ever done and was fair, hoping it goes that way again.

B. Superintendent's Report

1. Enrollment- Our enrollment is up from June. Our kinder classes are up from what we thought was going to be. Rachel Maynard asked why our enrollment is down. Birthrates are down across the States. There was extra money during covid and now other districts are suffering for it because they did not plan.
2. The first day of school was good. Kinders joined us today. District office staff visited all schools.
3. Wait lies behind us fails to what lies ahead. We are not functioning like we should and he wants to work in unity and work together. If we need to bring someone in to help us work together we can do that. We do not want this trickle into our classrooms.

8. Consent Agenda

- A. Approved minutes from the August 11, 2025 School Board Meeting
- B. Accepted resignation from Harrison Neal, Science teacher at the High School Effective September 12, 2025
- C. Approved COOP for Dance/Drill team between Sweet Home/Central Linn
- D. Approved Temporary hire of Serena Compton, 3rd grade teacher at Hawthorne for the 2025-2026 school year.

Motion No. 25-63: Board Member Dale Keene moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Board Member Jenna Northern seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Information/Discussion

- A. Budget Update- Kevin Strong presented the budget report K. Strong
- B. Audit Letter and Board Questionnaire- not mandatory but it would be great if the board could. Board members can send it directly to the auditor or bring it in to the Business Office
- C. Open Budget Positions: 1 – Holley, 2 – Liberty, 3 - Foster, 4 – Cascadia, 6 – Crawfordsville, 7 – At Large, 8 – At Large - If the board knows of anyone who would like to be involved please let Julie Emmert know.
- D. Update on Ethics Violation- Chairman Adams -Dale Keene had requested this to be on the Board Agenda. Board training was done prior to this meeting with OSBA, letters to all 5 complaints have been sent and received, done on August 15th. 192-705 All documents were received by OGE on August 18, 2025. Board Chair Adams said that the ethics committee said all 5 complaints are public meetings violations not public ethic violations. We were in compliance with the 30 day timeline and 21 days as required by law - Chairman Adams asked what the next steps would be and they replied that they would not be doing anything further unless one of the people filing the grievances is not good with the outcome and want to send a rebuttal to OGE. Nothing has been done yet and will not unless something happens within 4 years. August 21, 2025 - another complaint. No Board members were named. Complaints are public records.

Rachel Maynard - shared her feelings and read a response that explained that she did not participate in a serial meeting, no hidden agenda. Shared that she felt intimidated and this was not ok.

Floyd Neuschwander shared his information that he received from OGEC. There were no actions taken. He stated that when the investigations all come in and find there is nothing set then there should be an apology. It was made clear that there was no investigation made by the district on the board. I would like to move forward but there needs to be an apology for the way this board handled the last meeting. He felt that he was kicked out of his board chair without an investigation to prove that there was no wrong doing. Chairman Adams shared that the board voted that we did find that there was an illegal meeting. We are required by State law that we have 21 days for the board to respond and acknowledge that there was a violation. Dustin Nichol shared that we had three options and at the end the board determined that there was something wrong and the board members did violate meeting laws. While under investigation the board decided it was best to remove those named in the ethic violation from their officer roles.

Mary Speck felt that an investigation should have taken place. Mary Speck denied that she met in a serial meetings. Said that we did not follow policy KL. False information led to both her and Floyd's position to be replaced.

Dustin Nichol - Investigation could be possible. Asked Mary if she would like an investigation. Mary did not answer.

Much discussion on the process of an investigation that is in process. It is not an investigation on the board, it is on a staff member.

Floyd Neuschwander shared that he was upset that he was not contacted about the violations. Chairman Adams explained that if he sent information out to the five people involved in the allegations it would have created a quorum and in illegal meeting.

Mary Speck feels that she should have been asked if she did these things, if there was an investigation and they were all found incident then they should all get their position back.

Floyd Neuschwander brought up "public officer" and the removal of one. Superintendent Martin explained that Board members are not public officers. The Board cannot remove board members. Discussion on board removal of what you can and cannot do. Superintendent Martin explained what a public officer is.

Discussion of removing Superintended was then mentioned. Floyd Neuschwander shared that the July 21 meeting he made was a legal meeting. Dustin Nichol then asked why we canceled the meeting. Mike Adams shared how the officers meeting went. How Mary Speck treated the Superintendent and would not even greet him. Rachel Maynard started asking about the evaluation and why she did not have input. Mary Speck then shared that Mike Adams was one of the people who helped set the meeting. Mike Adams shared policy on the agenda. Mary Speck said that Mike Adams wanted to terminate the Superintendent and Mike Admas told her that was a lie. He wanted to put him on a plan but did not want to fire him.

Terry Martin called for a point of order - You can not use names. We need to get more training so that we do not do stuff like this. OUR STUDENTS DESERVE BETTER!!

Jenna Northern - shared that we should work together. We need to move forward. We should look at Superintendent Martin's Evaluation, they are all good. We have great things happening in our district.

Mary Speck shared that she wants unity and but also wants her name cleared

Dustin asked again; For transparency should we hire an investigation because several board members want their name cleared.

The superintendent shared that he would like his name cleared and would like an apology as well. We need to get together with maybe a former board member or someone who could help mediate this and get this taken care of.

Floyd Neuswhander claimed that no news agency contacted him to do an interview. Superintendent Martin called him out and then Floyd changed his statement that he contacted them.

Board Chair called a five minute Break at 8:34 pm

Floyd Neuschwander resigned his position.

Mike Adams asked if this was his formal resignation. Floyd responded that he is not sitting on the board for two more years with this den of vipers.

Back in session: 8:42

Public Comment: Terri Alder - Appalled - the board needs to be better and be better role models. Calling out the Superintendent in a public meeting is uncalled for.

E. Board Policy Discussion - INDB

Discussion: There needs to be board consensus of the policy change.

Motion No. 25-64: Board Member Dale Keene moved to have Superintendent Martin send policy INDB to legal council. Board Member Jenna Northern seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-1.

Discussion: Proposed changes, liability, sending to legal council

Jim Gourley spoke up and mentioned teaching on different flags from other countries etc.

Chris Hiaasen -no

Rachel Maynard- yes

Amanda Carter- ab

Floyd Neuschwander- ab

Jenna Northern- yes

Mike Adams- yes

Dale Keene - yes

Mary Speck -yes

Dustin Nichol -yes

F. December board meeting update- Change 12/8/25 to 12/15/25

Motion No. 25-65: Board Member Jenna Northern moved to change the December board meeting from December 8th, 2025 to December 15, 2025. Board Member Mary Speck seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Action Item

A. 2024-2025 Integrated Programs Annual Report

Motion No. 25-66: Board Member Dale Keene moved to approve the 2024-2025 Integrated Programs Annual Report. Board Member Mary Speck seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion No. 25-67: Board Member Dale Keene moved to accept the resignation of Floyd Neuschwander. Board Member Jenna Northern seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-2

Chris Hiaasen -yes
Rachel Maynard- no
Amanda Carter- ab
Floyd Neuschwander- ab
Jenna Northern- yes
Mike Adams- yes
Dale Keene - yes
Mary Speck -no
Dustin Nichol -yes

Julie Emmert will post this position 9/9/2025.

11. Board Comments: Jenna Northern - Cell phone policy. The deadline is in January. Dustin Nichol wanted the issue with our board done, questioning if this was done. If not he wants the investigation so that we can move forward. Could we call an Executive session - litigation - and attorney advice - Decision was to just let it go.

12. Late Items – October 13, 2025 - Worksession from 3-6pm, strategic planning.

13. Future Agenda Items

- A. Next Board Officers Meeting, Monday, October 6, 2025 at 3:30 p.m. Superintendent's Office
- B. Next Board Meeting Monday, October 13, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. in DO Boardroom

Motion No. 25-68: Board Member Dale Keene moved to adjourn. Board Member Jenna Northern seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

14. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Signature, Board Chairman

Julie Emmert, Board Recording Secretary (This meeting was also recorded and saved supt/board/audio)