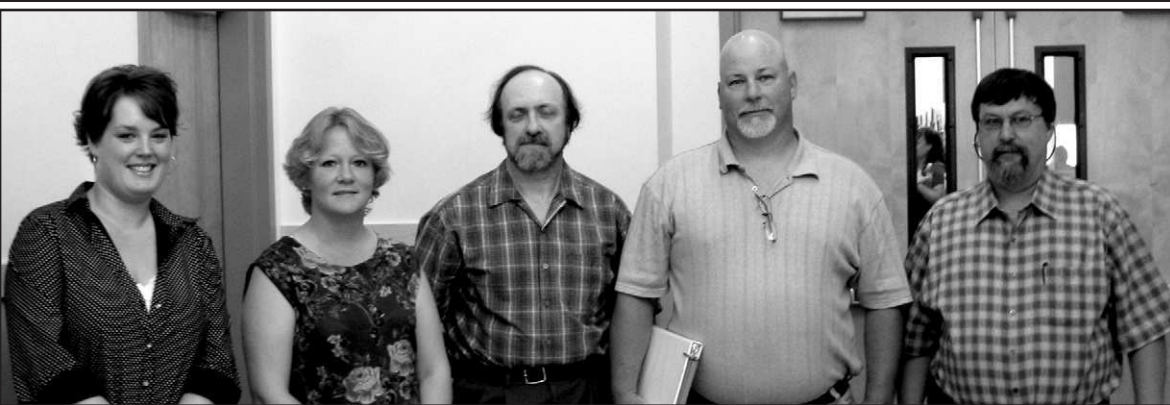


Large crowd at 47J school board meeting to hear Miller's fate



Top; the crowd, estimated at between 80-90 people, waits for the school board to come out of executive session. Above; Angie Rhodes, Tammy Jennings, Greg Kintz, Ernie Smith and Tim Bamburg shown after taking their oaths of office.

Because a large crowd was anticipated at the July 12 Vernonia School District board meeting, it was held in the Vernonia Middle School cafeteria, instead of the district office.

The first item of business was swearing in new board members Tim Bamburg and Greg Kintz, along with re-elected board members Ernie Smith, Angie Rhodes and Tammy Jennings. Board members Cari Levenseller and Kim Wallace are still under their elected terms and did not require swearing in.

After the oaths of office, the board unanimously elected Wallace as board president for the 2007-08 school year. Smith and Levenseller were both nominated for vice-president, with Levenseller receiving the majority for the position.

The board then recessed and went into an executive (closed) session with Superintendent Ken Cox. When they returned, Wallace read a statement by the board and Cox read a statement (see Chalk Talk on page 10 for Cox's statement). The statements addressed the fact that principal Aaron Miller will face discipline,

but will not be dismissed, for his July 6 citation for possession of 1.4 gram of marijuana.

Because this was a personnel issue, no audience statements were taken. Nevertheless, spontaneous applause broke out upon hearing that Miller would not be fired.

The board heard that the grade school basement will be cleaned, then retested for hazardous materials. If it passes the tests, the basement may be used in future for limited time periods but there will no be full day use.

The hiring of Peter Weisel as High School (HS) Counselor, Robyn Richmond as Elementary Teacher, Sarah Dahlstrom as Middle School Counselor, Brad Baker for HS Social Studies, Brenda Docken for HS

Special Ed, and Linda Allen for HS Art were all approved by the board.

In other business, the board;

- heard that an OSHA study found no errors but did issue a citation because the district did not have a written Hazard Communication Program. The Program has now been put in written form,

- established substitute teacher pay for 2007-2008 at \$160.00 per day (the same rate as 2006-2007),

- approved (with Smith voting nay) an increase in high school student fees from \$16.00 to \$20.00.

The next board meeting will be Wednesday, August 8 (rather than Thursday, August 9) starting at 6:00 p.m. at the District office.

No double standard for Miller

Aaron Miller, 41, Vernonia, is facing disciplinary action after receiving a misdemeanor citation for Possession of a Controlled Substance (1.4 grams of Marijuana), on July 6, by a Clatsop County Sheriff's Deputy.

Miller, the principal of Washington Grade School, faces a penalty that Superintendent Ken Cox describes as like, but more severe, than the penalty that would be faced by students at the district for similar citations. As the discipline is part of a personnel issue, the actual penalties are not public record, and have not been made public. The district's *Employer and Employee Responsibility Regarding Drugs and Alcohol* policy (Code: GBEC) states that "Off-duty miscon-

duct that adversely affects the effectiveness of the employee's job performance may result in discipline." In addition to school district penalties, Miller will also face court action.

Students at the district who fail mandatory drug tests can expect a suspension from sports or other activities until they receive an evaluation. They can then resume sports or activities, as long as they remain in compliance with the recommendations from their evaluation.

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