

Supplement to the Open Meeting Law Complaint Form

A Special (Board) Meeting of the Sedona Oak-Creek Unified School District (“SOCUSD”) was held on Monday, June 23, 2014. At this meeting a presentation was presented to the Board by David Lykins (Superintendent), Dr. Lisa Hirsch (Principal) and Scott Keller (Director of Student Services) and at the conclusion of this presentation there was solution presented to the board. Albeit the solution, the creation of a new position Director of Education Services – Associated Principal of Assessment, lacked sufficient information regarding how this new position would answer the myriad of problems presented in the presentation as justification of the need for the new position. The Superintendent presented it as an action item of not only creating the position but placing an existing employee, Scott Keller, into the position immediately through an extra duty contract.

The Board responded by tabling the action item citing the need for more time and information of other options before making this decision. It was also noted that all five board members should be present for the vote (two members of the board were not present at the time).

Another Special Board Meeting was held on Monday, July 14, 2014 @ 7:00pm. This was unusual as most Board Meetings were held at 4:00 pm, and in spite of the late hour the Board Room was full of participatory public. All five members of the Board were present for the meeting. There was not public discussion of the position presented by the Superintendent at the last meeting, instead the Board opted to enter into Executive Session “for the purpose of obtaining advice from the district’s attorney” at 7:16pm. The Board remain in Executive Session unto 8:33 pm, for over an hour and fifteen minutes, which upon entering in normal session, after a brief statement by the Superintendent, and with no additional information regarding the position the Board voted and approved the position.

As two of the board members were not present for the prior meeting and that there was no public discussion regarding the position, one can assume that the discussion of the position was done within the Executive Session. Remember the Board had tabled the action item previously for more information of other options and to include the absent board members. I believe that the over an hour Executive Session was used to discuss the proposed position and other options, not just conferring with the district’s attorney. I believe that this was done deliberately by the Board to eliminate the public’s participation thus violating Open Meeting Law.

The subsequent Board Meeting that would have been held on Monday, August 4, 2014 was cancelled by the Superintendent, the importance of this is the District utilizes a website (<http://www.sedonak12.org/wordpress/?cat=5>) to post the Board’s notice-of-quorum, meeting agendas and meeting minutes, but the District does not post its meeting minutes until they are approved at the next Board meeting.

When the Superintendent’s secretary, Sally Cadigan, who also serves as the Board’s secretary, was asked regarding the process she said:

“We can’t post anything that’s a draft. You know we can’t have something out there that’s could be inaccurate, or not approved, or changed at the next meeting. So I don’t really post anything until it has been signed by the board.”

Thus the meeting minutes of the July 14th Special Meeting will not be available (posted on the site) until after the scheduled upcoming Board meeting on Monday, September 8, 2014, nearly sixty days later.