Meridian Chamber of Commerce

**Government Affairs Committee**

**October 19, 2020 | Noon**

**Virtual Meeting**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| X | John Berg, Ripley, Doorn, Co-Chair - V | X | Mark Freeman, Foley Freeman, Co-Chair- V | A | Roy Kyle, U.S. Bank |
| A | David Ballard, Attorney - V | X | Lori Jones, Investment Resources of America-V | X | Dave Miles, City of Meridian - V |
| X | Ruth Ann Hultman, ID Assn Commerce | X | Dirk Mendive, Representative Russ Fulcher’s office | X | Calvin Barrett, Edward Jones Investments - V |
| A | Toni Sutton, TDS Telecom | X | Todd Grande, Bright Bank | X | Sean Evans, Chamber |
|  |  |  |  | X | Michelle Leverett, Chamber |

**Guest: Linda Clark, State Board of Education**

**Minutes**

**Welcome:** John Berg

**Linda Clark, Idaho State Board of Education**

* The role of the State Board of Education
* There are eight members on the State Board of Education who serve five-year terms; the Governor appoints seven of those members.
* Linda Clark, a career educator, was appointed to the State Board of education in July of 2015; prior to Linda’s appointment, there had not been a public educator on the Board in 30 years.
* There are three standing committees: one on government and policy, one on personnel and one on higher education.
* There are 115 school districts in the state and 70 public Charter schools, each with their own Board.
* The State Board of Education is a single system vision board for K through higher education. The State Board is over 4-year institutions, but community colleges have their own Boards. The State Board is also over some agencies such as the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Public Television and Career and Technical Education.
* The State Board makes policies based first on the Constitution and secondly on the statutes. The Board seeks public input and processes to get new rules approved. Temporary rules are sent to the legislature (1 of the 2 education committees need to approve them). The Board is also trying to clean up out-dated rules. Budgets of agencies and institutions are also approved by the legislature.
* The role of the State Board of Education in the pandemic
* At the onset of the COVID-19, a large percentage of school districts wanted the State Board to provide guidelines. One of the initial problems was that all of the health districts were not on the same page in determining how stage RED should be defined (East Idaho - 50 cases out of 100,000; Southwest Health District – 20 cases out of 100,000).
* There have been weekly Board ZOOM meetings since March, keeping the committees involved as well. As the Board is in place to provide guidance, rules, policies and practices, they work to provide a road map for the districts to make decisions. The State Board sets policy while the local governance sets a plan in place. An example of this is that the State Board of Education sets curriculum standards, then on the local level it is decided how those standards are delivered and which curriculum is used.
* Since COVID-19 hit in March of this year, there have been discussions on how to make up for what the students missed in the second quarter of 2020. Summer school is not funded except for special education.
* The State Board is also concerned with maintaining uniformity throughout the state districts such as how can Idaho address the issue of devices, connectivity and teacher training more consistently. The State Board decided to purchase devices/computers that will are scheduled to be delivered by the first week in December for those districts that didn’t have enough devices for all of their students. The Governor has a task force working on the connectivity issue; St. Maries has no internet service, for instance.
* The State Board is taking what they have learned and putting policies in place to work with the districts in moving forward.
* The interface between the State Board and the local districts and Education Funding
* Success for schools is dependent on local partnerships, such as the partnerships that West Ada School District has always had with the City and the Chamber. The business community needs to partner to support local school districts in areas such as providing sites for CTE students to get experience in their field and providing speakers to present to students on careers/jobs in their industry.
* Idaho is one of the only states where the state doesn’t fund school buildings. During the legislative forums, many candidates expressed their support for Impact Fees being used for education.
* The Governor put a 5% hold back on funds; this caused the career ladder to be frozen.
* The question was raised by this committee regarding the control of costs for higher education. The State Board is looking to change the model of higher education funding from a student count to an outcome-based model (more completed degrees).
* When asked if there was one thing that she would change, Linda answered that she would like the schools to be funded at an appropriate level (Idaho rates 49th out of the 50 states on state funding for schools).

**Finalization of the 2021 Legislative Priorities**

* The Chamber will email out the most recent draft of the 2021 Legislative Priorities for this committee to review; please submit any possible revisions before Thanksgiving so that a final draft can be prepared before meeting with legislators.

**Discussion on Coffee with the Legislators for 2021**

* Although the Chamber has secured the West Ada School District meeting rooms for the 2021 Coffee with the Legislator meetings, a virtual platform is probably the best with Meridian set back to Stage 2 restricting meetings to 10 and under people. A virtual meeting would allow the time to be pushed up to 7:00 am and might bring more legislative participation.
* The Meridian Chamber will reach out to the legislators to explore their level of comfort with live meetings or their preference for virtual meetings, and to obtain a list from each Legislator of their priorities for this legislative session.
* A virtual meeting platform will provide more control if registration is required or at the least all virtual participants/callers need to be identified.

**Planning for Fall Economic Excellence Forum**

* The fall Economic Excellence Forum has been postponed from the original November 17th scheduled date.
* The challenge for a possible December forum date is waiting to see if there will be a runoff of winner declared in the ACHD race as we would want the representative to be a part of this panel on transportation.
* The other challenge occurs with holding a panel forum in a hybrid or all virtual platform.

**Upcoming Government Affairs Committee Virtual Meeting Dates**

* December 21, 2020
* January 18, 2021

Meeting Adjourned: 1:08 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Leverett