

September 18, 2008

A special meeting of the Board of Education of the Oak Park and River Forest High School was held on Thursday, September 18, 2008, in the Board Room of the high school.

Call to Order President Conway called the meeting to order at 7:36 a.m. A roll call indicated the following members were present: John C. Allen, IV, Jacques A. Conway, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, Sharon Patchak-Layman, and John P. Rigas. Also present were Dr. Attila J. Weninger, Superintendent, Jason Edgecombe, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Cheryl Witham, Chief Financial Officer, and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/ Clerk of the Board of Education.

Visitors Kay Foran, Communications/Community Relations Coordinator; James Franczek, James Zuehl, and John Relias of Franczek & Sullivan.

Visitor Comments None

Closed Session At 7:37 a.m., Dr. Millard moved to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), as amended by PA.93—57; seconded by Mr. Rigas. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

The Board of Education resumed its open session at 9:06 a.m.

Approval of DJ Contract Dr. Millard moved to approve the contract with Boom Entertainment for Homecoming (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting); seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Mr. Allen suggested not paying the full amount the day before the event; Ms. Milojevic suggested that the company might be flexible in that regard. She also explained that the fee of \$795 listed for the percussionist was also for the crew to install the special effects related to the percussionist. Moving this event to the Fieldhouse has presented new sound challenges and the DJ will set up fine-tuned speakers. He has met with Mr. Zummallen, Director of Buildings and Grounds, regarding the electrical needs. The sound will be more targeted. A certificate of insurance will also be provided.

TIF Update

Dr. Weninger and Ms. Witham attended a meeting on Tuesday, September 16, 2008, about the TIF money owed to the Oak Park taxing bodies. The meeting occurred at District 97. There were concerns because of the dire financial situation at the Village. The business manager of the Village was at this meeting. They learned the following:

- 1) The Village trustees do not have to authorize the annual TIF payment to the taxing bodies;
- 2) Cash is not currently on hand to make those payments;
- 3) There was optimism that by the end of the year the Village would be able to pay the school districts the monies owed to them, approximately \$4 million. The assumption was that the money would become available when property tax payments were received.
- 4) The Business Manager admitted that payments had not previously sent previously, as had been stated, and that he does not return phone calls.

Discussion ensued regarding the District's recourse in getting this TIF money. They could 1) wait and see; or, 2) sue the Village of Oak Park. The Board of Education members questioned whether the Village Trustees were aware that the taxing bodies had not received their money. The Village's business manager thought the trustees were aware of the situation. Ms. Witham stated that the Village was to have carved out tax property but, instead, it chose to pay the taxing bodies in cash. She and District 97's business manager are working on an agreement as to how the TIF works and how they intend to collect the funds.

While last year's TIF report had not been issued, Ms. Witham was told it should be out soon. Ms. Patchak-Layman noted that many properties in the downtown TIF, e.g., Forest and Lake, the Colt buildings and the surrounding properties were being discussed, so the TIF dollars should be a part of those discussions. Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if the Oak Park Council of Governments had discussed this. Mr. Conway reported no.

Discussion ensued as to how to proceed. Suggestions included 1) sending notification to the Village Trustees that the TIF payment needed to be included in its budgeting for this year and next year and that the TIF agreement is binding; and 2) Mr. Conway speaking to Village President Pope about this matter.

Dr. Weninger hoped to have more information by Friday, September 19, to be able to update the Board of Education at its Thursday, September 25, 2008 meeting.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if the discussion regarding health care and insurance activities were occurring. Ms. Witham reported that the Village of Oak Park business manager is a nonparticipant in those discussions; he has turned this responsibility over to the Village's Human Resources person.

Board Travel

Mr. Rigas moved to approve Ms. Patchak-Layman's registration fee of \$495 to the "Summit for Courageous Conversations," which will be held in New Orleans from September 29-October 1; seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Dr. Weninger noted that since the Board of Education does not have a policy regarding travel for Board of Education members, this had come to the Board of Education for a decision.

Ms. Patchak-Layman noted her interest in this subject and quoted from a portion of the advertisement of this summit "...a dynamic event that will bring together 500 equity-focused, anti-racist educational leaders, parents, and community members to confront the issue of systemic racism and its impact on opportunity and achievement for students. Join us at this inaugural occasion as we examine, embrace, and celebrate equity/anti-racist educational policy, programs, and practices that empower students, families, and educators to create schools that offer every student a world-class education appropriate for our rapidly changing, increasingly diverse society." Ms. Sharon Patchak-Layman has not and will not attend the IASB Joint Conference, which Board of Education members typically attend, as she preferred to participate in this conference. Ms. Sharon Patchak-Layman will pay for the transportation and housing costs herself.

Mr. Conway suggested that the Policy Committee bring forth a policy regarding Board of Education travel. Dr. Weninger suggested surveying other superintendents as to their boards' involvement with the National School Board Association. Ms. Witham noted that Board of Education members have traditionally not submitted any expenditure for any kind of travel, other than the Joint Conference registration fee.

Adjournment

At 10:07 a.m. on Thursday, September 18, 2008, Mr. Allen moved to adjourn; seconded by Dr. Millard. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Jacques A. Conway
President

Dr. Ralph H. Lee
Secretary