

**Official Minutes of the  
Oak Park Board of Education District 97,  
970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois  
Meeting November 19, 2013**

President Spatz called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Present: Spatz, Gates, Sacks, Felton, O'Connor, Traczyk, and Brisben  
Absent: None  
Also Present: Superintendent Dr. Al Roberts, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations Therese O'Neill, Director of Policy, Planning and Communications Chris Jасulca, Director of Special Education Mike Padavic, Director of HR Steve Cummins and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

ROLL CALL

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Sacks moved, seconded by Traczyk, that the Board of Education move into executive session at 6:33 p.m. to discuss (Discussion of Lawfully Closed Meeting Minutes, 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(14), Collective Negotiations, 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2), Pending Litigation, 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11)). Roll call vote.

Ayes: Sacks, Traczyk, Felton, Gates, O'Connor, Brisben, and Spatz  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion passed.

**OPEN SESSION**

OPEN SESSION

Felton moved, seconded by O'Connor, that the Board of Education move into open session at 6:58 p.m. All members of the Board were in agreement.

The meeting was reconvened at 7:05 p.m.

**SPECIAL REPORTS**

SPECIAL REPORTS

**WILLIAM BLAIR – UPDATE ON BOND SALE**

Liz Hennessey from William Blair and Therese O'Neill came to the table. Hennessey shared a spreadsheet demonstrating how the bond sale would be paid off in three years. She shared an updated rating report of AA2.

2.3.1

**Resolution providing for the issue of not to exceed \$3,085,000 General Obligation Limited School Bonds, Series 2013, of School District Number 97, Cook County, Illinois, for the purpose of increasing the Working Cash fund of said School District, and providing for the levy of a direct annual tax to pay the principal and interest on said bonds.**

APPROVAL OF BOND SALE

Sacks moved, seconded by Gates, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the Resolution providing for the issue of not to exceed \$3,085,000 General Obligation Limited School Bonds, Series 2013, of School District Number 97, Cook County, Illinois, for the purpose of increasing the Working Cash Fund of said school district, and providing for the levy of a direct annual tax to pay the principal and interest of said bonds.

Ayes: Sacks, Gates, Felton, O'Connor, Traczyk, Spatz, and Brisben  
Nays: None  
Motion passed.

## UPDATES ON CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

O'Neill came to the table along with Steven Schafer from CS2 Design and Jennifer Costanzo from STR. It was reported that STR not only shared detailed reports, but also supplied executive summaries for each. Each report was discussed in detail.

## AIR CONDITIONING STUDY

Schafer reported that the team toured the eight elementary schools and came up with 10 different air conditioning options for each. He reported that noise levels were considered and decibel levels were included in the executive summary. The choices were shared with FAC, and six options were eliminated by the FAC Committee. He noted that the school tours were performed after school hours and the team experienced temperature fluctuations, and noted open windows and equipment running. STR recommended switch updates at each of the buildings as the first step to improve the building climates. The options were shared with the Board for consideration. Discussion took place about the possibility of a phase-in and about the possibility of stretching the life expectancy of the machinery. Discussion also took place about the possibility of replacing the older heating units with heating/air conditioning units and about installing digital controls.

It was noted that a \$250,000 matching grant is available now, but the district would need to act quickly to qualify. Additional grants will be sought and considered. It was also noted that the existing maintenance team is qualified to maintain any units that are installed.

## ACCESSIBILITY

It was reported that the STR report was based on the study prepared by the Accessibility Committee in June, 2013. STR focused on seven schools (not Holmes, Julian and Brooks). Costanzo noted that not all of the items identified in the committee report are required to be done. She reported that Beye School, item BE2 needs to be done, as it involves an area of rescue at the south staircase at a cost of \$36,000. At Irving School, an accessible exit ramp to the multi-purpose room is necessary at a cost of \$48,000. Costanzo noted that Mann and Whittier Schools also need exit ramps but the need is not as immediate as they have an accessible hallway that would lead to an exit. She noted that door openings and toilet rooms need to be considered when floors become accessible, and would require a larger conversation. She estimated \$15,000 per door opening, toilet stalls at \$25,000 each, and the sinks around \$5,000 each.

Costanzo note that a small addition would need to be added to Lincoln School to allow access to the auditorium.

A new Accessibility Advisory Committee was suggested to review each building and make recommendations now that the STR report is available.

The Board expressed interest in moving forward with the initial work at all seven buildings.

## DISTRICT WIDE CAPACITY STUDY

It was reported that STR visited all 10 facilities and met with the principals. They worked with O'Neill and the district, and considered options identified in the teacher contract. Their assumptions took into consideration that the middle school IB program has specific classroom requirements. It was suggested that there might be spaces within the buildings that could be remodeled or repurposed to become classrooms for future use.

It was noted that although changing the attendance boundaries could be a solution to the capacity needs, it was not part of this discussion. Concern was expressed about how a decision to expand might affect the decision made regarding accessibility and air conditioning. Grade Level Centers, Multi-age classes and relocating teams were also suggested.

## DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

Costanzo noted that the biggest issues at the administration building include the HVAC system as some of the offices are overly heated, doors swinging in the wrong direction, wrong hardware and egress issues.

Schafer offered two solutions:

Option 1 – Roof top units with individual controls for each of the room, at a cost of \$2,800,000.

Option 2 – Replace existing chillers, at a cost of \$1,700,000.

It was noted that the recommendations do not address upgrading finishes, accessibility to the second floor, the efficiency of the current layout, or bow trusses. Costanzo reported that a separate analysis would need to be done of the roof structure as the bow trusses do not usually meet code requirements. She will get an estimate on the cost of this analysis.

President Spatz reported that the fully depreciated administration building and land appraised at \$1,200,000, with the land alone appraised at \$1,000,000. A discussion took place regarding the life expectancy should the Board choose to renovate. It was noted that some equipment is already beyond service life. STR was asked to elaborate on the need for repairs to the bow trusses and the inaccessibility to the second floor.

## REVIEW THE CAPITAL EXPENDITURE SPREADSHEET

It was reported that members Brisben and Sacks have been working with Norm Lane and Therese O’Neill to create a framework that would help the district make informed decision in regard to the capital expenditure plan. The purpose of the spreadsheet is to make better decisions, remove surprises and improve visibility, transparency and communication. The new scoring spreadsheet was demonstrated. It was noted that the word “facilities” has been changed to “infrastructure”. Lane was commended for his hard work and effort for saving the district money.

President Spatz asked the Board to determine the steps toward making decisions on the three student issues. Community input on these items was suggested.

Space Capacity was discussed. It was suggested that STR make recommendations for Beye and Longfellow, noting that the solution may be as simple as moving walls, and reorganizing spaces within buildings, or redistricting.

Air conditioning was discussed. Dr. Roberts suggested the idea of air conditioning the building in phases, starting with the third floors. He noted that the future school calendars will take into consideration hot weather dates. Classroom temperatures will be monitored and a protocol will be created that makes it clear that the district will make the best decisions under the circumstances. It was reported that that cost of cooling all classrooms would cost between \$15,000,000 to \$19,000,000 and would use all available money for the next 10 years. A referendum for this purpose was also discussed.

Air conditioning options six and seven were identified as the two possible solutions.

Board comments included suggesting that future heating unit replacements be completed by installing heating/cooling units. The need to come up with a hot weather plan while it is still cold outside was expressed.

Accessibility was discussed. O’Neill reported that it would cost approximately \$166,000 to make the four schools identified in the STR report accessible. She suggested that the district move forward with these repairs during the summer of 2014, and all agreed.

## REVIEW THE CAPITAL EXPENDITURE SPREADSHEET (Continued)

The Board agreed that the STR options should be scored into the new Cap-ex spreadsheet. This item will be reviewed during the December 3, 2013 special Board meeting.

Interest was expressed in asking William Blair what the DSEB might look like over the next 10 to 20 years.

### ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

Discussion took place about the 101 Madison Street location. It was suggested that STR visit 101 Madison. Dr. Roberts, President Spatz and member Sacks are meeting with the representatives for the Madison Highlands next week. Relocating the administration building to the warehouse location was also discussed. The Board acknowledged the need to consider the information that will be shared during the joint meeting at Village Hall on December 14, 2013 and to acquire the data on necessary repairs for the current building.

Board comments included the need for the options to be broken down by location and consideration to the long-term picture.

Discussion on this item will continue during the December 3, 2013 special Board meeting.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

PUBLIC COMMENT

Amy Williams, an Oak Park resident, was pleased to hear the Board talk about other Administrative building options. She noted that last year, during two separate public forums, many Oak Park residents took time to express their concern about building the district administration building in the Village Hall parking lot, and to her, it seems to be a poor use of everyone's time to reconsider the same building that was met with unanimous opposition just a year ago. She feels that the move to Village Hall would not improve the Madison Street corridor, and would not be a welcome additions to an already congested neighborhood.

Deana Herrman, an Oak Park resident, expressed concern about the need for a comprehensive ADA review of the schools, especially Hatch School. She noted that the stage needs a lift, and accommodations for those with visual and hearing impairments. Doors and restrooms on the upper floors need to be updated because there is now access to them. An elevator needs to be added because the lift is very slow, making a student with a home room on the upper floor travel over an hour a day on the lift in order to attend specials, lunch, recess, etc.

She noted the front of the building, unlike the other schools, was completely ignored in this report. An accessible path of travel must be maintained over the entire building. There is a ramp to enter Hatch, but it is not in compliance with the ADA code; meaning it is over an 8 percent grade and does not have a handrail the entire length of the ramp.

She noted that the parking lots at Hatch were recently repaved and the single accessible parking spot in the South lot was eliminated. The curb cuts actually made that space inaccessible to the sidewalk, and the North parking lot was missing an accessible spot entirely. Now, both parking lots at Hatch are devoid of accessible spaces. In this instance, the district has managed to go backwards in terms of complying with accessibility laws. She noted that she has raised this issue with the district on two occasions in writing and has not received a response since the second communication. Because of the lack of communication, she has filed a complaint with the Illinois Attorney General's Disability Rights office with respect to this issue.

Herrmann encouraged the Board to perform a comprehensive plan which takes into account all of the needs at Hatch School.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** (Continued)

Alex Garcia, an Oak Park resident, expressed concern about the cost identified for air conditioning the classrooms. He suggested testing one classroom with a window unit to see how it works. He expressed concern about the STR walkthrough being performed after school hours, and the fact that the suggested solutions did not take into account the enormous expense. He suggested that there might be a less expensive solution to the overheating in classrooms that has not been considered as of yet.

**ACTION ITEMS**

ACTION ITEMS

**2.1.1 Approval of Minutes from the November 5, 2013 meeting**

Traczyk moved, seconded by Felton, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the minutes from the November 5, 2013 meeting.

Ayes: Traczyk, Felton, O’Connor, Sacks, Gates, Spatz, and Brisben  
Nays: None  
Motion passed.

Member Traczyk noted that it was the efforts of District 97 parent Sinead Alyward that got the American Youth Soccer Organization interested in starting a team for handicap children at Irving School.

**2.2 Approval of Consent Agenda**

Traczyk moved, seconded by O’Connor, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the consent agenda as presented to the Board.

- 2.2.1 Bill List
- 2.2.2 Personnel

Ayes: Traczyk, O’Connor, Felton, Sacks, Spatz, Gates, and Brisben  
Nays: None  
Motion passed.

**2.3.2 Approval to hold an additional Board meeting on Tuesday, December 3, 2013**

Gates moved, seconded by Sacks, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve a special board meeting to be held on Tuesday, December 3, 2013 at 7 p.m.

Ayes: Gates, Sacks, O’Connor, Felton, Traczyk, Spatz, and Brisben  
Nays: None  
Motion passed.

**2.3.3 Approval to hold an additional Board meeting on Tuesday, December 14, 2013**

Traczyk moved, seconded by Felton, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve a special joint Board meeting with the Village of Oak Park to be held on Saturday, December 14, 2013.

Ayes: Traczyk, Felton, O’Connor, Sacks, Gates, Spatz, and Brisben  
Nays: None  
Motion passed.

**PRESENTATION OF THE FINAL LEVY**

TOPIC DISCUSSIONS

Therese O’Neill came to the table. She reported on the steps that have been followed to approve the levy. She shared the 2012 Levy extended dollars and reported that the district is asking for the same dollar amount for the 2013 levy but by reducing transportation and holding the IMRF fund stable, additional funds will be added to the Education fund. This item will return to the Board for action on December 17, 2013.

## **BOARD COMMITTEE/WORK GROUP REPORTS**

### **POLICY REVIEW UPDATE**

It was reported that the Policy committee has not met. The Board was reminded that the Board Protocol documents will be discussed on December 17, 2013. Board members were asked to send their comments to member Sacks.

### **FACILITIES UPDATE (FAC)**

No report was given.

### **FINANCIAL UPDATE (FORC)**

It was reported that the FORC committee will be meeting on December 4, 2013.

### **LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE UPDATE (CLAIM)**

It was reported that the CLAIM presentation at the Joint Conference is scheduled for this Saturday at 1:30 p.m. Additionally, the committee will be meeting on Thursday, and a small committee is being considered to review the data sharing legislation.

### **AD HOC DASHBOARD/BENCHMARK COMMITTEE UPDATE**

This committee met last Monday. The committee members have acknowledged that they have a lot of work ahead of them. They agreed to meet monthly. It was reported that the sub-committees that have been formed are high powered and are functioning well.

### **PARKS IGA**

The draft intergovernmental agreement with the Park District was reviewed and a few changes were recommended. It was reported that the revised draft has been sent to legal and the Park District for consideration. This item will return to the Board for action on December 17, 2013.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Roberts reported that John Saphiere from Research for Better Teaching met with administrators, approximately 30 teachers and two Board members. It was reported that the event was well received and teachers left excited. The team will be meeting for seven sessions, and teachers will share with those not in attendance. Member Sacks, who was in attendance, noted that this was a very unique class and wished that all teachers could have the opportunity to experience this course, Dr. Roberts noted that the plan is to have all our people certified so they can teach this.

The administrators have been working on common core. He has been meeting with teachers and planning on more staff development in math. He also noted the need to make some adjustments to the calendar to accommodate assessments. He reported that the report cards will be distributed using the standards based approach and a letter will go home to parents explaining the new report cards prior to their distribution.

The district has posted the need for a few technology positions. Michael Arensdorff has been moved to the district office and doing a great job at filling in. His position has been filled at Julian and the position of Technology Director will be posted in the near future.

Vice President Gates was invited by Dr. Roberts, along with staff to discuss mentoring options.

The Board was recognized for School Board Appreciation Day 2013.

**BOARD CONCERNS / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The PTO Council will consider bike racks for any school that is interested in having one.

The PTO Council is interested in holding another forum on common core with the math component. They are interested in the possibility of videotaping the event and posting it on the Web site.

Interest was expressed in moving the Public Comment portion of the Board meetings to the beginning of the meetings. It was agreed that this topic could be discussed during the Board Protocol discussion on December 17, 2013.

Interest was expressed in hearing about how the district is doing on common core.

The Oak Park Education Foundation “Rock Out” fundraiser event will be head at Fitzgeralds.

The fifth grade team from Longfellow led the outdoor education trip last week. Pride was expressed in the district for encouraging activities outside of the classroom. It was noted that the success of the event reflects on the efforts of the teachers and staff.

It was reported that BRAVO is performing at the Lights Festival in Chicago.

**RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT**

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PUBLIC COMMENT

President Spatz requested that Mike Padavic and Dr. Roberts respond to the comments made by Deana Herrman.

**PREVIEW AGENDA FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

PREVIEW AGENDA  
FOR FUTURE  
MEETING

The draft agenda for the governing board November 20, 2013, December 3, 14 and 17, 2013 meetings were reviewed and revised.

**BOARD TIMELINE**

BOARD TIMELINE

The Board timeline was reviewed and revised.

**ADJOURNMENT**

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, President Spatz declared the meeting adjourned at 11:11 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, December 17, 2013 beginning at 7 p.m. at the Administration building located at 970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Illinois.

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Board President

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Board Secretary