

**Official Minutes of the
Oak Park Board of Education District 97,
970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois
Special Joint Meeting – December 13, 2011 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.**

This meeting was held at Julian Middle School which is located at 416 South Ridgeland Avenue. This was a joint Board meeting between the Village of Oak Park, School District 200 and School District 97.

President Barber called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Present: Barber, Gates, Felton, Sacks, Traczyk, Spatz, and O'Connor

Absent: None

Also Present: Superintendent Al Roberts, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations Therese O'Neill, Director of Human Resources Trish Carlson, Director of Policy, Planning and Communications Chris Jasculca, Director of Special Education Mike Padavic, and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

ROLL CALL

Also Present: District 200 Board of Education members, Dietra D. Millard, President, Terry Finnegan, Vice President, Amy Leafe McCormack, Secretary, Ralph H. Lee, Sharon Patchak-Layman, John Phelan, Valerie J. Fisher and Gail Kalmerton, Clerk of the District 200 Board, and Village of Oak Park Trustees David Pope, President, Glenn Brewer, John Hedges, Ray Johnson, Colette Lueck, Adam Salzman and Therese Powell, Clerk of the Village Board.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ACTION ITEMS

PUBLIC COMMENT

President Barber thanked the Julian Middle School community for hosting this meeting. He explained that the three governing Boards have been working for years to reach an agreement on how payments and details of the Downtown TIF should be handled. As a result of mediation and additional discussions, they were prepared to consider approval of the settlement presented. He recognized the negotiation teams and the administrators who were part of this, noting that their work was appreciated.

ACTION ITEMS

David Pope spoke on behalf of the Village stating that the agreement will help to address some of the key concerns from each entity. He reported that each of the bodies believe this is a fair agreement although not what anyone probably anticipated. He thanked the representatives from the school districts for their patience and understanding and to the Village leadership. The settlement captures the concept that District 97 should be held harmless in potential losses of the General State Aid (GSA). It addresses the Village's current commitments by the TIF, i.e., debt and other obligations. Pope reported that the settlement has been carefully reviewed by the negotiation teams and the CFO's from each entity. Pope acknowledged Bob Spatz, John Phelan, Valerie Fisher, Ray Heiss, Darrell Davison, and John Hedges for their efforts.

Mr. Hedges moved to approve the settlement agreement, dated December 13, 2011, (including all attachments and exhibits) between the Village of Oak Park, Oak Park Elementary School District 97, and Oak Park and River Forest High School District 200 to resolve the Cook County, Illinois, Circuit Court Case No. 10CH07059; seconded by Mr. Johnson.

Peter Traczyk spoke on behalf of District 97. He explained that this is the best agreement that could be reached. He thanked the District 200 Board and the Village. He acknowledged John Phelan and Valerie Fisher for their efforts, as well as Dr. Roberts, Therese O'Neill, and Bob Spatz. He noted that if the TIF terminated prematurely, the district would have lost several million dollars. The agreement protects the underlying assumptions that protects the District 97 referendum sizing and allows for potential growth.

Mr. Traczyk moved to approve the settlement agreement, dated December 13, 2011, (including all attachments and exhibits) between the Village of Oak Park, Oak Park Elementary School District 97, and Oak Park and River Forest High School District 200 to resolve the Cook County, Illinois, Circuit Court Case No. 10CH07059, and seconded by Mr. Gates.

John Phelan spoke on behalf of District 200. He made the recommendation to ratify this agreement. He reported that the parties were able to renegotiate the agreement in a way that supports children and protects the constituents. He moved to approve the settlement agreement and all of its attachments to resolve the circuit court case, seconded by Mr. Fisher.

The three Boards entered into open discussion. Member Traczyk shared minor corrections to the documents.

1. All pages marked as "Attachments" are now marked as "Exhibits"
2. Exhibit A, page 6, last bullet replaced the word "percentage" with the word "distributed"

Sharon Patchak-Layman questioned why this agreement wasn't vetted through the community prior to the Boards voting. Phelan reported that it was critical that confidentiality be maintained during the preparation of the agreement. It was not finalized until the last moment and maintaining confidentiality was important. It was his belief that they were directed to lead in this procedure.

Ms. Patchak-Layman read a statement, noting that the TIF has always been front and center. The problem with TIF is funds are diverted from helping children to supporting village growth. Properties within and out of TIF districts pay for TIFs. This agreement continues the TIF agreement, collecting an additional tax from tax payers. If the TIF ends, the tax payers would see a decrease in their taxes. Patchak-Layman thinks it is time to walk the walk by reducing the tax rate. As elected officials she suggested that the Board members should govern with honesty and transparency, and she encouraged everyone to vote no on this agreement.

It was noted that if the TIF was eliminated, District 97 would lose \$9,000,000. Peter Traczyk explained why it would impact District 97 and not District 200. Should the TIF end early, it would have been a gain in the first year for District 97, but after that, it was estimated that the district would see a 50 percent loss. With the TIF in place, it allows District 97 to meet the financial statistics that the referendum was predicated on.

David Pope stated that if the TIF had ended prematurely, it would still have had \$23 million of bond debt that would need to be paid through alternative sources.

Ralph Lee from the District 200 Board believes that Ms. Patchak-Layman's statement was an accurate one. The solution to the problem is to change the taxing of the state of Illinois; however we are not up to that task. He will vote in support of the resolution.

The District 97 vote on the motion was as follows:

Ayes: Traczyk, Sacks, Gates, O'Connor, Barber, Felton, and Spatz

Nays: None

Motion carried.

A roll call vote of the Oak Park and River Forest High School District 200 resulted in six ayes and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Motion carried.

A roll call vote of the Village Board resulted in six ayes with one member identified as absent. Motion carried.

Mr. Barber was elated to have found that these entities could work together and stated that another joint Board meeting with School Districts 90, 97 and 200 is scheduled for Tuesday, January 10, 2012 to discuss communication and technology.

ADJOURNMENT

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, President Barber declared the meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, December 13, 2011, beginning at 7:30 p.m. at Julian Middle School which is located at 416 S. Ridgeland Avenue.

Board President

Board Secretary