

**Official Minutes of the
Oak Park Board of Education District 97,
970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois
August 24, 2010**

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

Present: Barber, Clouser, Reddy, Gates and Traczyk
Absent: Harton and Spatz
Also Present: Superintendent Al Roberts, Human Resources Director Trish Carlson, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations Therese O'Neill, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Kevin Anderson, Director of Special Services Mike Padavic, Assistant Director of Special Education Regina MacAskill, Communications Coordinator Chris Jasculca, PMA Representative Steve Miller and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

ROLL CALL

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Gates moved, seconded by Reddy, that the Board of Education, District 97, move into Executive Session. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Gates, Reddy, Clouser, Barber, and Traczyk
Nays: None
Absent: Harton, and Spatz
Motion passed.

OPEN SESSION

OPEN SESSION

Reddy moved, seconded by Gates, that the Board of Education, District 97, move into Open Session at 7:06 p.m. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Reddy, Gates, Barber, Clouser, and Traczyk
Nays: None
Absent: Harton and Spatz
Motion passed.

PUBLIC HEARING

PUBLIC HEARING - Issuance of Bonds

Therese O'Neill explained that, historically, the Board of Education has authorized the sale of approximately \$2,900,000 of Debt Service Extension Based borrowing. However, given the shortfall of 2009-10 state receipts, anticipation of even later state revenue receipts for the 2010-11 fiscal year, and the exceptionally late receipt of Cook County taxes, coupled with the need to meet its debt obligations on December 1, 2010, the Board of Education is considering the issuance of up to \$6,750,000 of Debt Service borrowing. There was no public comment or questions.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW STAFF

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The Board celebrated the introduction of new staff.

Special Reports -
SPECIAL EDUCATION

Mike Padavic, Regina MacAskill, Val Doherty, Paula Andries, and Donna Middleton came to the table to present the Special Education annual report. Padavic reported that 965 special education students received services in the 2009-2010 school year. The department reviewed the special services needs of the district and began participating in the staffs' monthly department meetings. They evaluated 32 staff members and were given the opportunity to share in the interview process for new hires. Padavic also reported that he meets monthly with the director of the District 200 special education department, as well as the SEA executive committee. The department increased Medicaid this year by \$35,000, refocused on the extended school year, and increased attendance in their parent advisory meetings. Padavic reported that Slant training was initiated during the 2009-10 school year.

It was reported that due to the results of the parent survey, the department will look for ways to increase parent involvement, and develop a teacher assistant training program that will focus on technology, classroom management and relationship building. The department will also focus on inclusion this year, and is planning on distributing another parent survey in early spring. Padavic will share those results with the Board when they become available.

Padavic reported that the coordinators are helping the teachers track data and are going into the classrooms more than in the past. He reported that the teachers have been trained on data collection. Padavic emphasized the need for tracking data. He shared that through this process teachers will also be encouraged to look at learning styles and ways to support the students.

Padavic recommended that the district consider an all-day therapeutic day care and an early childhood center in the future. He was asked to look into the difference in cost between the all-day therapeutic day care versus sending the children out of district.

Public Comment -

Dawn Deaton, an Oak Park resident and teacher leader for FLES, addressed the Board. She expressed concern about the June 22 message regarding recommendations for staff reductions if the referendum does not pass. She was disappointed that the message was not sent to team leaders before it was shared at the Board table, and suggested that the Board and new administration address the way this message was given. She suggested that the message was impersonal, and the timing was poor. She requested that the Board explain the criteria for making this decision, and explain how the district plans on moving forward on this as the date for voting on the referendum falls after the date for announcing releases.

3.1.1 Approval of Minutes of July 13, 2010

Clouser moved, seconded by Barber, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the minutes from the July 13, 2010 meeting with revisions.

Discussion took place regarding who will plan the agenda for the referendum planning team meeting. It was agreed that the minutes reflected the discussion accurately.

Roll call vote.

Ayes: Clouser, Barber, Gates, Reddy, and Traczyk

Nays: None

Absent: Harton and Spatz

Motion passed.

APPROVAL OF
MINUTES OF JULY
13, 2010

Consent Agenda -

President Traczyk read the items on the consent agenda. Clouser moved, seconded by Reddy, that the following items be approved on the consent agenda. Roll call vote.

3.2.1 Bill Lists and Related Reports

3.3.1 Personnel Action as presented are revised

Ayes: Gates, Clouser, Reddy, Barber, and Traczyk

Nays: None

Absent: Harton and Spatz

Motion passed.

3.4.1 Recertification of Hazardous Crossings

Clouser moved, seconded by Reddy, that the Board of Education, District 97, recertify previously identified hazardous routes and forward the same to the State Superintendent of Education, per Section 29-C of the Illinois School Code. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Clouser, Reddy, Barber, Gates, and Traczyk

Nays: None

Absent: Harton and Spatz

Motion passed.

3.4.2 Acceptance of Crossing Guard Intergovernmental Agreement

Clouser moved, seconded by Reddy, that the Board of Education, District 97, accept the Intergovernmental Agreement between the Village of Oak Park and District 97 regarding the responsibilities and costs of the crossing guards for the 2010-11 school year.

Vice President Barber noted that the wording of the agreement is explicit that this is only for the 2010-11 school year. Barber requested that the district identify a date in December or January to discuss this agreement.

Roll call vote.

Ayes: Clouser, Reddy, Gates, Barber, and Traczyk

Nays: None

Absent: Harton and Spatz

Motion passed.

3.4.3 Adoption of Gift Policy

Gates moved, seconded by Barber, that the Board of Education, District 97, adopt the revised Gifts, Grants, and Bequests policy (7230).

Amendments were submitted for consideration and were adopted as part of the policy.

It was suggested that administration ensure that the gift procedures align with the policy.

Roll call vote.

Ayes: Gates, Barber, Clouser, Reddy, and Traczyk

Nays: None

Absent: Harton and Spatz

Motion passed.

3.4.4 Adoption of Video Camera Policy

Gates moved, seconded by Barber, that the Board of Education, District 97, adopt the Video Security Camera and Electronic Monitoring policy.

Discussion took place regarding the quantity of changes made to this policy, suggesting that this policy should be submitted for a new first reading and approved on September 14. It was agreed to see this policy as an exception and complete the vote this evening. It was also suggested that the wording be changed to indicate that cameras can be shut off in the location of labor meetings. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Gates, Barber, Reddy, Clouser, and Traczyk

Nays: None

Absent: Harton and Spatz

Motion passed.

Topic Review

Review of the 5-Year financial Projections

Therese O'Neill and Steve Miller reported on the updated 5-year financial projections. The projections included the unaudited actuals from the 2009-10 fiscal year, and the tentative 2010-11 budget as presented at the July 13 meeting. The report also included 2009-10 state receipts of \$1,583,000 received in early August, and the current revenue projections from the Downtown TIF. With the exception of the Education Fund, all operating funds maintain a positive year-end fund balance through Fiscal Year 2015. As anticipated, the Tort Fund zeroes itself out during Fiscal Year 2012 and all expenditures once allocated here return to the Education Fund. It was reported that this update does not include any other state monies due from 2009-10. Additionally, receipts from the Madison Street TIF were not considered as a clear understanding of the language regarding repayment of the Sale/Leaseback monies has not been determined.

Discussion took place regarding the Transportation Fund and the services provided to the students. The Board will discuss this issue at a future meeting.

Discussion also took place regarding the student numbers for this year. Trish Carlson came to the table and explained the need for additional teachers and assistants at some of the schools.

Preliminary Recommendation Review

SCHOOL RECOGNITION APPROVAL

District 97 is required to submit a School Recognition Application for all 10 schools. The applications, as completed by District 97 administrators, verify that all schools comply with the School Code and State Board of Education rules. The Board of Education will be asked to approve the applications for the 2010-11 school year during the September 14, 2010 meeting.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

The district has annually received requests from neighboring districts to educate some of their students as part of school for choice under the No Child Left Behind Act. Due to space, staffing and other considerations, the formal decision by the Board of Education has been to not accept students who are not residents of the district. This item will return to the Board as an action item on September 14.

ELEMENTARY READING ADOPTION UPDATE

Kevin Anderson reported that the administration is recommending that “Treasures” published by McGraw-Hill be selected as the new elementary reading and language materials for the district.

Anderson reported that the price of these materials will increase \$20,000 on October 1, and suggested that the purchase be made in September. He explained the process that took place in choosing these materials. The series sells for \$425,000 which includes Spanish books for the Spanish immersion program. Materials should arrive in November with training beginning in January. The Board members emphasized the need to focus on grammar.

It was suggested that a procedure be put in place that would identify the books so they can be tracked.

Topic Review

TOPIC REVIEW

BOARD SELF-EVALUATION DISCUSSION

The Board agreed to hold a self evaluation meeting on Wednesday, October 20 at 7 p.m. A discussion took place regarding the format of the meeting. Member Reddy will send a sample list to the Board members prior to the next Board meeting. She will contact Jeff Cohn to ensure his availability.

Dr. Roberts shared a program called “True Colors” that he recommends the Board consider at some time in the future. The Board members were interested in this process. Dr. Roberts will look into getting the materials.

COMMITTEE FOR COLLABORATIVE COMMUNICATION

Dr. Roberts suggested that the Board consider making this committee an administrative committee. Members Gates and Reddy expressed interest in participating on this committee.

It was suggested that this committee be a standing Board committee with an administrative sub-committee. It was also suggested that this discussion return to the Board when all members are present.

Superintendent’s Report

Stakeholders

SUPERINTENDENT’S
REPORT

Since the last Board meeting, I have had the opportunity to meet with many of the community stakeholders, including the OPTA and OPTAA presidents, and representatives from the Frank Lloyd Wright Preservation Trust, the Early Childhood Collaboration, Page97, SEA, the PTO Council, McGladrey Pullen, the Park District, and Hephzibah. Additionally, I have met with representatives from Fenwick, Steve Isoye, the new District 200 superintendent, and Tom Hagerman, the superintendent of District 90.

Media

BOARD CONCERNS

I had the privilege of meeting with both Terry Dean from the Wednesday Journal and Chuck Fieldman from the Oak Leaves. Topics covered included; drug and substance abuse, curriculum/instruction, early childhood, consolidation of services and my transition.

Conferences

I attended a New Superintendent's Conference in Springfield, which I am pleased to report I found to be an extremely valuable conference. The agenda addressed topics that transcended the experience levels of the participants. The most useful topics covered included Illinois School Law, school finance, media relations and technology.

During the week of August 13, I attended the Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN) meeting. While all of the districts who participate in MSAN have and continue to work toward eliminating the "gap," there is still much work to be done. The good news is that in sharing the research and the practices that are being implemented as possible solutions, districts are finding ways to narrow the achievement differences between various sub-groups.

New Teacher's Institute Day

I had an opportunity to speak with our new teachers and I must say that this is an impressive group. My presentation to our newest staff members was somewhat interactive and the feedback that I have received has been quite positive. I pressed them to be creative, to use their ingenuity to motivate students and to think like a 21st century teacher. Bob Spatz was there to welcome the teachers on behalf of the school board and he did a great job.

Ad Leadership Retreat

The Administrative Leadership retreat was held on August 19 and 20. The meeting gave the district leaders an opportunity to catch up on new curriculum, technology updates and other changes that will be implemented at the beginning of the new school year. The team has decided to meet on the second and fourth Friday of each month from 8 a.m. to noon. This new meeting schedule limits the time they are away from their schools, giving them the opportunity to use that time to support their staff.

Institute Day

Yesterday the 2010-11 staff met together for the first time. The meeting, held at Dominican University, was well attended. Gabby Rosenblum, music teacher at Beye School, coordinated a choir and band made up of staff and administrators. The entertainment was fantastic and my message was clear. I reminded all that the decisions made by district staff must be for the betterment of the children, not to facilitate the adults.

Opening Day

Thanks to Chris Jasculca, I was able to visit classrooms at eight of the 10 schools today. I saw many smiling faces on children and adults. Tomorrow, I will visit with the students and staff at Holmes and Brooks.

White Board and Projector

The new white board and projector were installed in the Board room last weekend. Some additional wiring is still necessary and the staff needs to be trained. We look forward to using this new tool during the September 14 Board meeting.

Parent Cafés

Dr. Roberts shared his commitment to sponsor one of the parent cafés on substance abuse.

Park District

He met with the Park District. They want to continue using our facilities with an understanding that if things get broke, they will repair them.

Buildings and Grounds

Dr. Roberts reported that the maintenance crews did a great job of getting the buildings ready to go.

Board Concerns

Member Gates expressed his appreciation for the Boards’ understanding of his absence the past few months.

Interest was expressed regarding the ethnic background of the new hires. Carlson reported that the breakdown is approximately 25 percent.

Vice President Barber asked the Board to consider holding one or two meetings in the schools again this year. He also suggested that the Board consider visiting with the individual school PTOs. Chris Jasculca volunteered to help coordinate this for the Board.

Appreciation was expressed at seeing Dr. Roberts at the schools on opening day and for a fabulous kickoff during the Institute Day.

It was suggested that the Board consider holding a community meet and greet to welcome Dr. Roberts to the district.

Board Response to Public Comment

BOARD RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. Roberts will prepare a response to the public comment. Following approval from the Board, he will forward the response to the speaker.

The Board reviewed the agenda and minutes in question and determined that the discussion item in question was clearly identified.

Adjournment

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, President Traczyk declared the meeting adjourned at 11:32 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be on Tuesday, September 14, 2010, beginning at 7 p.m. at the Administration building located at 970 Madison Street.

Board President

Board Secretary