

**Official Minutes of the  
Oak Park Board of Education District 97,  
260 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois  
Meeting April 11, 2017**

President Gates called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

Present: Gates, Spatz, Spurlock, Felton, O'Connor, Brisben, and Datta  
Absent: None  
Also Present: Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations Dr. Alicia Evans, Assistant Superintendent of HR Laurie Campbell, Chief Academic and Accountability Officer Dr. Amy Warke, Senior Director of Special Services Mike Padavic, Senior Director of Policy, Procedures and Communication Chris Jasculca, Sr. Director of Administrative Services Dr. Felicia Starks Turner, Senior Director of Technology Michael Arensdorff, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Carrie Kamm, and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

ROLL CALL

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Gates moved, seconded by Spurlock, that the Board of Education move into Executive Session at 6:08 p.m. to discuss (Appointment, Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance or Dismissal of Specific Employees or Legal Counsel for the District 5 ILCS 120/2(C)(1), Purchase or Lease of Real Property 5 ILCS 120/2/(C)(5), Security Procedures 5 ILCS 120/2(C)(8)). Roll call vote.

Ayes: Gates, Spurlock, Datta, Felton, Brisben, Spatz, and O'Connor  
Nays: None

Motion passed.

**OPEN SESSION**

OPEN SESSION

Gates moved, seconded by O'Connor, that the Board of Education move into Open Session at 6:54 p.m. All members of the Board were in agreement. The meeting reconvened at 7:04 p.m.

**PUBLIC HEARING – REDUCTION IN FORCE**

PUBLIC HEARING – REDUCTION IN FORCE

Laurie Campbell came to the table and explained that eight staff members have been identified to receive Reduction In Force notification. She noted that this is a substantial increase of notices over the past three years, therefore a public hearing is required prior to the Board taking action. Those in attendance were invited to speak on this topic and no one expressed interest in doing so.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

PUBLIC COMMENT

David Yamashita, an Oak Park resident, thanked the Board and staff for their efforts in informing the Oak Park public on the importance and necessity of the of the April 4, 2017 referenda. He explained that during his run for the Board, he took the opportunity to attend most of the evening referenda presentations and was greatly impressed with Board member's persistence in explaining the issues, and patience in answering a myriad of questions. This required a tremendous amount of energy and many nights away from home and family.

He noted that for the new Board of Education, with the victory, comes a great deal of responsibility to the taxpayers of Oak Park. He reminded the Board that 46 percent of the voters were not in favor of the Operation Expense Referendum, noting that some of the residence may be reaching the tipping point of wondering if they can afford to stay in Oak Park. Additionally, he noted that of the 54 percent who supported the referendum, many were also concerned about the affordability of living in Oak Park, but accepted the need and found the alternative; bad schools, declining property values and a less rich Oak Park, unacceptable. Yamashita asked the Board to use this understanding and challenge in guiding their decisions on current and future spending and to ensure that the investment lasts as long as possible.

Jen Dietmeyer, a Hatch School fifth grade teacher, asked the Board to consider the Reading Units of Study investment that will be presented later this evening. She noted that Hatch School is currently piloting the program and her students are truly engaged. She noted that Oak Park is very individualized, as it gives people a scope and sequence to guide the children. Dietmeyer thanked the Board for approving the Writing Units of Study

**PUBLIC COMMENT** (Continued)

earlier this year and noted that the students love the program. She reminded the Board that the Reading Units of Study is meant to partner with the Writing Units of Study.

**2.3.1 SPECIAL REPORTS**

**SPECIAL  
REPORTS**

**REFERENDA RESULTS AND NEXT STEPS**

Dr. Kelley and Alicia Evans came to the table. They reminded the Board of the district’s vision and the two big rocks, and noted that this journey began before Dr. Kelley came to the organization. They reported that the team spent much of their time this year developing a working draft definition for the vision, focusing on targeted actions and excellence targets. Dr. Kelley noted that because the referenda passed, the district can continue its journey toward its vision. She explained that much work will be done to align the district’s fiscal resources to its vision, in an effort to be fiscally responsible and honoring the communities voice.

Evans shared the actual and projected year-end balances for the past five years and noted that the limiting rate will generate \$13,300,000 in additional tax revenue and approximately \$19,000,000 will be generated during 2017-2018. Dr. Kelley explained that in order to guarantee that everyone has a voice regarding next steps; the budget will be discussed at district leadership meetings, FORC discussions and Board of Education conversations. The community will be invited to voice their opinions via Let’s Talk forums, community conversations in April and May, and Board Meetings. Dr. Kelley recommended a Board retreat that will engage new Board members and get the Board’s input. The importance of approving a balanced budget and adhering to it was noted.

The budget timeline was shared noting development through mid-May, allowing for refinement after stakeholder input is received through mid-July, with the final preliminary budget being presented to the Board in July or August.

It was explained that in December 2017, the levy was ballooned to capture referendum dollars if the referendum passed, noting that the district will not receive more dollars than the law allows. The \$57,500,000 is an “up to” amount and may be staggered over a number of years as needed. Additionally, discussions have already begun with the Facilities Advisory Committee (FAC) regarding specific building needs.

Evans explained that the district must be ready for a state shortfall, therefore, adjustments will be made in the budget and money will be set aside to ensure that the funds will last as long as possible. It was explained that the district will not be seeking a balanced budget, but a multi-year sustainable budget for several years. Dr. Kelley emphasized the importance of community conversations regarding the budget to determine where the focus should be, noting that every dollar must support the vision.

A special Board meeting after April 26<sup>th</sup> was recommended to offer financial professional development to the newly seated Board.

**2.1.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 13, 2017 SPECIAL BOARD MEETING**

**ACTION ITEMS**

Spatz moved, seconded by Gates, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, approve the minutes from the March 13, 2017 special Board meeting. Roll call vote.

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

**2.1.2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 14, 2017 BOARD MEETING**

Gates moved, seconded by Spatz, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, approve the minutes from the March 14, 2017 Board meeting. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Gates, Spatz, Datta, Brisben, Felton, and Spurlock  
Nays: None  
Abstained: O’Connor  
Motion passed.

**2.2 APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA**

Spatz moved, seconded by Datta, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the consent agenda as presented.

- 2.2.1 Approval of Bill List
- 2.2.2 Approval of Personnel

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

**2.3.1 REDUCTION IN FORCE – HONORABLE DISMISSAL OF A PART-TIME, NON TENURED TEACHERS(S)**

Spatz moved, seconded by Gates, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, adopt the following resolution;

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING  
HONORABLE DISMISSAL OF A PART-TIME, NON-TENURED TEACHERS**

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Education of Oak Park Elementary School District No. 97, Cook County, State of Illinois has determined to *decrease the number of part-time teachers* in the School District;

**WHEREAS**, the teachers hereinafter set forth are non-tenured and were employed on a part-time basis for the 2016-2017 school year;

**WHEREAS**, a Sequence of Dismissal (SOD) List was provided to the *Oak Park Teachers Association* on March 25, 2017;

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with Section 5/24-12 of The School Code, the Board of Education must dismiss teachers qualified to hold a position in the order of their groupings on the SOD List, with teachers in Group 1 dismissed first and teachers in Group 4 dismissed last;

**WHEREAS**, whenever the total number of honorable dismissal notices based upon economic necessity exceeds five (5) or one hundred fifty (150%) of the average number of teachers honorably dismissed in the preceding three (3) years, whichever is more, the Board is required to hold a public hearing on the question of dismissals;

**WHEREAS**, the Board has determined that a public hearing on the question of dismissals *is* required;  
and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Education has determined that the teachers hereinafter set forth shall be honorably dismissed at the end of the 2016-2017 school term as a result of the decision of the Board of Education to *decrease the number of part-time teachers* in the School District, pursuant to Section 5/24-12 of The School Code.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, Be It Resolved by the Board of Education of Oak Park Elementary School District No. 97, Cook County, State of Illinois, as follows:

**Section 1:** That the following teachers are hereby honorably dismissed at the end of the 2016-2017 school term in conformance with the Exhibits attached hereto and made a part hereof because of the decision of the Board of Education to decrease teachers in the School District:

- Natalie Clark (long-term substitute teacher)
- Amanda Ellis (long-term substitute teacher)
- Scott Kandelman (.75 FTE P.E. teacher)
- Teegan McFeely (long-term substitute teacher)
- Meaghan Pabellon (.91 FTE Art teacher)
- David Wawzenek (long-term substitute teacher)
- Leslie Weiss (.50 FTE elementary teacher)
- Lisa Youman (long-term substitute teacher)

**Section 2:** That the President and Secretary of the Board of Education are hereby authorized and directed to send the teachers a written notice of honorable dismissal by first class mail at least **forty-five (45)**

**REDUCTION IN FORCE – HONORABLE DISMISSAL OF A PART-TIME, NON TENURED TEACHERS(S)** (Continued)

days before the end of the school term, which notice shall be substantially as set forth in the Exhibits attached hereto.

**Section 3:** That the President and Secretary of the Board of Education are hereby authorized and directed to send the teachers a written notice of honorable dismissal by certified mail, return receipt requested, at least **forty-five (45) days** before the end of the school term, which notice shall be substantially as set forth in the Exhibit attached hereto.

**Section 4:** That the Superintendent or his/her designee shall personally deliver a copy of said notice to the teacher, at least **forty-five (45) days** before the end of the school term, which notice shall be substantially as set forth in the Exhibits attached hereto.

**Section 5:** That this Resolution shall be in full force and effect forthwith upon its passage.

**ADOPTED** this 11<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2017, by the following vote:

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

**2.3.2 APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATOR**

O'Connor moved, seconded by Gates, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, appoint Cathy Hamilton as the District Administrator for Substitutes and Teacher Assistants at a salary of \$83,000 for the 2017-2018 school year. Roll call vote.

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

**2.4.1 APPROVAL OF TRI-DISTRICT ERATE CONSORTIUM**

Spatz moved, seconded by O'Connor, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, enter into a tri-district consortium agreement with River Forest Elementary School District 90 and Oak Park River Forest High School District 200. Roll call vote.

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

**2.4.2 APPROVAL OF CONTRACT – 541 MADISON STREET**

Gates moved, seconded by Spurlock, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, enter into an agreement with MEV DEV, LLC regarding the purchase of the property located at 541 Madison Street for \$805,000. Roll call vote.

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

Alicia Evans and Theresa Jurgus were acknowledged for their time and effort on this project, noting that the sale price went beyond the Board's goals. It was noted that this topic has been discussed over numerous dates in the past.

**2.4.3 ADOPTION OF READING UNITS OF STUDY**

Spatz moved, seconded by Gates, that the Board of Education of Oak Park District 97, approves the Reading Units of Study and classroom libraries purchase for K-5. The materials not to exceed \$1,100,000. The administration will provide a report on the actual expenditure and savings from the existing libraries and savings from partnership with the public library reporting back during the first meeting in June, 2017. Roll call vote.

**ADOPTION OF READING UNITS OF STUDY** (Continued)

Amy Warke, Helen Wei, and teachers Martha Polley and Steve Perkins came to the table. They explained that this purchase was presented to the Board in January, but the action on the item was delayed until after the referendum passed. Dr. Kelley noted that the district will be running summer programs that need the materials and explained that spring and summer professional development is being planned to assist the teachers with the transition to the new program. Delaying the purchase, would delay the summer plans.

Discussion took place regarding the purchase and a variety of alternatives were considered. It was reported that most of the classroom libraries contain outdated non-fiction materials, and some teachers are actually borrowing books from the public library.

Board comments included interest in assurance that the text will be spring boarded to classroom writing and the levels of Lexile will be stretched. Interest was expressed in knowing the balance between fiction and non-fiction texts, and hearing about how the administration will share this information with the community and help them understand why the district is purchasing this item. Interest was expressed in knowing when the last time the classroom libraries were refreshed and knowing how long the updated materials should last.

The team was asked to share an update on the progress of the classroom library inventory process at the first meeting in June, 2017.

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

**BOARD ASSIGNMENTS**

**BOARD  
ASSIGNMENTS**

**STANDING BOARD COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORT FOLLOW UP**

**C.L.A.I.M.**

The CLAIM committee will be meeting on April 13, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. They will be discussing opportunities for collaboration between District 97 and the Park District. Additionally, Lynn Allen will be sharing a presentation with the group. On May 11, 2017, Ralph Martire will be addressing the committee.

**FORC**

The FORC Committee will be meeting on Wednesday, April 19, 2017. It was noted that the committee has asked the Board for consensus to propose that the FORC committee address a transparency policy. Additionally, it was noted that FORC, in conjunction with administration, review and report back regarding single issues, and multiple issues to keep the district's bonding costs as low as possible.

**FAC**

It was noted that the Board liaisons were not in attendance during the last meeting of FAC, but notes were shared that reported discussion on the mobile classroom needs at Holmes School. It was reported that FAC unanimously thought that the classrooms should be installed on the concrete (option 2). Some of the reasoning behind that recommendation included the fact that the concrete area is district property and would place the units on a hard surface. Additionally, the committee recommended using a special version of the units and not the traditional style. The committee also discussed the landscaping proposal and the need to ensure satisfaction with the quality of work. The committee will review the 10-year plan again and will be meeting at different elementary schools so that tours of each school can occur.

**CCE**

The newly formed CCE committee met last Thursday for the first time. They talked about goals and district needs. It was noted that this is a very talented, inspirational group. The initial conversation of the group was a mix of budget and business, and how to increase accessibility and finding a practical way to disburse the information. It was suggested that the Board invite the committee to a special Board meeting prior to the end of the school year to discuss plan for the 2017-2018 school year. The next meeting of this group will be held on April 25, 2017.

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND LIAISON REPORT FOLLOW UP**

**IGOV**

The IGOV Board will be meeting on April 22, 2017 to plan for the May assembly on equity and sustainability.

**COG**

The Liaison report for this committee was send to the Board members recently.

**BENEFITS COMMITTEE**

The Benefits Committee is scheduled to meet again on Thursday, April 13, 2017 at 4 p.m.

**ECC**

It was reported that the Collaboration has submitted their response to the Erickson Institute RFP to participate in the early development instrument and total early childhood community systems for grant funding for evaluations of community early child systems. It was noted that District 97 is a partner in the RFP should hear in a month or two if the RFP is selected.

It was noted that the contract with the collaboration expires next year, but will automatically renew unless action is taken. It was noted that the district can change the terms at any time.

**SUPERINTENDENT’S EVALUATION**

**SUPERINTENDENT’S  
EVALUATION**

Member Spurlock reported that an email has been sent to the Board regarding the Superintendent’s Evaluation. She noted that the process is a bit behind schedule; however, the timeline has been adjusted accordingly. She noted that because the evaluation tool is only four categories, compared to 18 from last year, and everyone is now familiar with Dr. Kelley’s work, she anticipates that the processing of the results should not take much time. It was suggested that the executive session on April 26, 2017 begin at 5:30 p.m. to allow time for the evaluation to take place. Dr. Kelley noted that she will not be in the district on that date, but will be available to phone into Executive Session.

**UPDATE ON THE NEW BOARD MEMBER DEVELOPMENT**

It was noted that a breakfast meeting has been scheduled on April 24, 2017 from 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. for the new Board members to meet with members Spurlock and Datta. The breakfast will be followed by a traditional visit to the administration building.

Dr. Kelley shared that the three new Board members attended the Superintendent’s Advisory Panel meeting held earlier this evening.

**ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

**ADMINISTRATIVE  
ITEMS**

**REVIEW OF AUDIT BIDS**

Evans reported that an RFP for auditing services was sent to 12 firms and six expressed interest. The six are currently being interviewed and rated in five categories. Once the interview process is completed, the results will be discussed with FORC and they will be asked to supply a recommendation to the Board.

It was noted that when the district participated in the selection process for architects, FAC and administration were asked to make separate recommendations and both were considered independently. Additionally, it was noted that all the FORC members agreed that there is value in hiring a new company. This item will return to the Board for action on April 26, 2017.

**REVIEW OF LANDSCAPING BIDS**

Evans reported that the RFP was sent to 14 firms and only two expressed interest, one of them being our current company. She reported a substantial difference in pricing, noting changes made to the RFP. Evans plans to meet with the current company before awarding them the contract, as they did not complete everything as defined in the previous contract. Evans will also talk to the Park District about possibly doing some of the work in the future. This item will return to the Board for action on April 26, 2017.

**REVIEW OF HOLMES MOBILE UNITS INFORMATION**

Evans reported that she is trying to acquire three quotes for the mobile units. She has been in contact with two companies that expressed interest; however, one wants to build a special unit. She presented the options to the FAC committee last night, and they expressed interest in supporting the placement of the units on concrete, and suggested that administration tour existing units before making a decision. FAC also suggested that the district consider purchasing a “special” unit instead of a grade level class. Evans noted that she is asking for quotes with and without plumbing. This item will return to the Board on April 26, 2017 for action.

**BROKER EXTENSION FOR 541 MADISON PROPETY**

Evans noted that the Board approved the sale contract for 541 Madison this evening; however, the Baird and Warner contract has expired. In order for the realtor to complete the sale process, the broker contract needs to be extended. Evans recommended extending the broker contract until June 30, 2017. This item will return to the Board for action on April 26, 2017.

**POLICY REVIEW**

Chris Jasculca came to the table and shared policy revision recommendations submitted by PRESS and reported that the committee reviewed section 4 of the policy manual and is recommending a few revisions in this area as well. Jasculca noted that PRESS sent a very large packet of changes back in October and there are only a few minor changes that still need to occur. This item will return to the Board for action on April 26, 2017.

**DONATIONS**

Evans returned to the table and reported that Spaenga is interested in partnering with the district. They expressed interest in donating 25 Yoga mats to each school, along with other items. They have offered to lead assemblies, participate in events, and support staff. Evans noted that Spaenga has already donated to District 200. Additionally, this request has been vetted by administration who feels that the district can use the items.

Evans reported that the Longfellow PTO is interested in donating a buddy bench, and the Mann PTO has expressed interest in donating flower beds at a cost of \$1,200. All three items will return to the Board for action on April 26, 2017.

**OVERNIGHT/OUT OF STATE FIELD TRIP REQUEST – BEST BUDDIES**

Mike Padavic came to the table and shared a request for an overnight/out of state field trip for the Best Buddies program. He explained the criteria for selection of the participating student. This item will return to the Board for action on April 26, 2017.

**CONCLUDING ITEMS**

**CONCLUDING  
ITEMS**

**BOARD REMARKS**

Member Brisben expressed his gratitude for the support of the public, the district the village and the countless people who worked tirelessly to pass the referenda. He noted that the work began in 2016, with weekly meetings beginning in September of that year. He acknowledged member Spatz, Alicia Evans, Chris Jasculca and Saad Bawany for their time on this project, and shared that he is confident that the district will live up to the expectations to be reasonable with tax payers dollars and obtain the vision. It was reported that a public thank you to the community will be included in the next FYI.

It was noted that the community placed a lot of trust on this Board, and that the school Board’s roll as trustee for the community is unique, and essential both to the district and the community. This community expects this Board to be more involved in the following;

- 1) Enhance trust
- 2) Go further to demystify transparency
- 3) Uncomplicated the world of school finance
- 4) Demonstrate the fiscal stewardship

Additionally, it was noted that the community needs more information from the Board. The Board made the ask, they need to step up and take advantage of the Committee for Community Education, as this committee will be a game changer.

**BOARD RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**BOARD  
RESPONSE TO  
PUBLIC  
COMMENT**

**BOARD MEETING AGENDA FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

The draft agenda for the April 26, 2017 Board meeting was reviewed and modifications were recommended.

**BOARD  
MEETING  
AGENDA  
REVIEW**

A special Ad Hoc committee was suggested regarding the BRAVO/CAST questions related to the referenda.

President Gates will review the current committee list to ensure that all committees have at least one representative until the new assignments are made.

**PARKING LOT AND LONG-TERM CALENDAR**

Member Datta noted that long-term subs are a special category and suggested that it would be helpful to hear about what the district is doing in this area regarding recruitment, placement and professional development. She questioned what the Board thinks about this and questioned disparity.

**PARKING LOT  
AND LONG-  
TERM  
CALENDAR**

Member Spatz expressed interest in seeing the timeline and costs that will occur regarding the move from 541 Madison, and emphasized the need for a plan.

PARKING LOT AND LONG-TERM CALENDAR (Continued)

Member Spatz expressed the need for more financial transparency from all the jurisdictions, noting the need to compare and prioritize them. He suggested that this should be part of the IGOV liaison role.

Member Spurlock asked the Board to consider the CLAIM charge and local advocacy, and member Brisben suggested that local issues may need to be externally driven.

BOARD MEETING ASSESSMENT

The results from the March 14, 2017 Board Meeting Assessment survey were distributed.

BOARD MEETING  
ASSESSMENT

Dr. Kelley asked the Board to hold May 15, 2017 for a possible retreat from 6:00 p.m. until approximately 10:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to conduct, President Gates declared the meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

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Board President

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Board Secretary