

**Official Minutes of the  
Oak Park Board of Education District 97,  
970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois  
Meeting - September 27, 2011**

President Barber called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Barber, Gates, Sacks, Reddy, Traczyk, and Spatz

Absent: O'Connor

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

**SPECIAL REPORTS**

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**FAC ANNUAL REPORT**

Jamil Bou-Saab and his team came to the table. Bou-Saab reported that the electrical performance contract has been successful in saving energy. An audit was completed and revealed an average reduction of 28 percent in energy costs. It was reported that 15,600,000 kwh was saved (enough energy to power about 200 homes), which resulted in an annual savings of \$170,000.

The 2010-2011 capital improvement plans were reviewed and approved by the FAC. Space needs at the warehouse, roof inspections, maintenance O & M were discussed and costs were evaluated. It was reported that Brooks and Julian may need significant capital improvements (roof). The committee also reviewed and evaluated possible site improvements that included playgrounds and landscaping.

President Barber reported that the Board may use one meeting in November to review the findings of this committee in more detail.

Bou-Saab reported that the committee was charged years ago with considering the possibilities alternatives for the administration building. He reported that mechanical units would need to be replaced and the roof would need to be repaired at the current building.

He reported that the committee identified the following options for the administration building and the warehouse:

- 1) Maintain building as it is – fix things as they break and maintain items that have not been previously maintained
- 2) Gut the existing buildings and renovate
- 3a) Revenue producing – building a structure with commercial/retail on the first floor
- 3b) Revenue production commercial space and increased parking.
- 3c) Three-story building on the existing site with additional parking

- 4a) Construct a new building on the warehouse location and sell the administration building; maintenance would relocate to another site
- 4b) Construct a larger building on the warehouse lot that includes retail
- 5) Relocate and renovate another building in the village for the administration offices
- 6) Consider a new proposed development and relocate
- 7) Relocate and rent space

Dr. Roberts reported that the district has done what it can with the existing administration building to make it functional by moving staff around. Therese O'Neill complimented Norm Lane, reporting that the maintenance team has done a fantastic job of maintaining the administration building. Dr. Roberts complimented FAC for their dedication to the district. The Madison Street TIF was explained and it was noted that the Madison Street plan requires that buildings be limited to three stories with retail on the first floor and offices above.

It was reported that the square footage of the existing office space is roughly 35,000 square feet. The size of a new facility could potentially be reduced by 10,000 square feet.

Board questions and concerns included interest in hearing about the feasibility of an inclusion school into the plan. The district was reminded to consider the tax value of the current property, and it was suggested that the Finance Oversight and Review Committee consider the timing for revenue in property taxes. Interest was expressed in understanding the difference between renting and owning the facilities and whether the district wants to be renters or landlords. It was suggested that the green initiative should be considered moving forward, and that a therapeutic day care or early childhood facility be considered as part of the administration facility plan.

#### PRESENTATION OF FY 2010-11 AUDIT

Therese O'Neill and Brian Guastella came to the table. Guastella explained the process that is followed to complete the annual audit. He reviewed the audit financial statements and the compliance audit documents with the Board, and reported that the district earned a clean audit with a few findings. The Board will approve the audit on October 11 and the documents will be sent to the state by October 14.

#### STUDENT PERFORMANCE REPORT

Felicia Starks-Turner and Harla Hutchinson came to the table. They shared background on the AYP requirements, including the targets that must be met within all subgroups for a school to meet AYP. The Federal and State requirements for schools not making AYP were identified.

Hutchinson reported on the district's AYP status in reading and math for 2011, noting that the majority of the students are excelling in these areas. She shared that AYP is not what defines the district, but that the focus is actually on student growth.

Hutchinson reported that the use of MAP testing began last fall, providing the district with a large quantity of data. The MAP testing provides a RIT score that is linked to DesCartes. National percentile ranks are available and ISAT predictions are made.

#### SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS

School improvement plans were introduced, and information regarding data, analysis, action plans, plan development, board action and deadlines was shared.

Principals Ellwanger, Carter, Hackmiller and Sindelar came to the table. They talked about how their schools are using data to track student growth. Hackmiller reported that the Holmes staff finds their data wall enlightening and rewarding because they are able to monitor/measure the students' individual progress. Carter noted that if the district wants to maximize a student's learning, a connection must be made with each family.

Sue Tresselt, Jen Nelson and Tye Johnson from the OPTA came to the table and read a statement regarding the No Child Left Behind Act. They reported that the district staff is dedicated to supporting all children, understanding the whole child, and that the focus should be on each child's gains.

Dr. Roberts shared his concern for the children at the lower end of the spectrum, but also expressed his concern for the children at the high end, wondering if they are being challenged appropriately. He recommended an IEP for accelerated students and talked about the need to cultivate an environment where teachers feel comfortable teaching outside of the box. He explained that the district's goal is to be assured that every child grows at least one year per year. He noted that the economically disadvantaged students need more attention, and that the district's needs go beyond the planning that is already used by schools. He explained that there is a need to change the culture of the system so that decisions are based on the district's vision and parameters. He concluded by stating that children need to be engaged in learning that stays with them beyond the test.

Board questions and comments included acknowledgement that the kindergarten readiness testing is a great beginning. Continued professional development was encouraged, as well as communication with the parents, assuring their understanding of the test scores. Interest was expressed in hearing more about the successful groups and those that appear to be stalling. Interest was also expressed in hearing about how staff is helping children to reach beyond their means and how the district can assist the staff with growth. It was noted that statistics show that American students do much better after high school than children in other nations. Administration was asked to remember the importance of being aware of the cultural differences that they might need to address, while maintaining sensitivity.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**ACTION ITEMS****2.1.1 Approval of Minutes of September 13, 2011**

Traczyk moved, seconded by Gates, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the minutes from the September 13, 2011 meeting as revised. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Traczyk, Gates, Spatz, Reddy, Sacks, and Barber

Nays: None

Absent: O'Connor

Motion passed.

**Consent Agenda**

Traczyk moved, seconded by Gates, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the consent agenda as presented in the Board packet. Roll call vote.

2.2.1 Bill Lists and Related Reports

2.3.1 Personnel Action as presented

Ayes: Traczyk, Gates, Reddy, Sacks, Spatz, and Barber

Nays: None

Absent: O'Connor

Motion passed.

**2.3.2 Adoption of 2011-2012 Budget**

Gates moved, seconded by Reddy, that the Board of Education, District 97, adopt its 2011-12 budget (in the Illinois state format) in the total amount of \$80,754,512, following adoption of its tentative 2011-12 budget on July 26, 2011, with proper notification posted in the newspaper, and a Public Hearing conducted on September 13, 2011.

SPECIAL REPORTS

Therese reported that the budget they will be adopting features a .08 percent increase from the 2010-12 budget. All state and federal dollars have been received. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Gates, Reddy, Traczyk, Sacks, Barber, and Spatz

Nays: None

Absent: O'Connor

Motion passed.

**2.4.1 Proclamation for Jennifer Reddy**

Barber moved, seconded by Spatz, that the Board of Education, District 97, read a Proclamation of Appreciation for Jennifer Reddy. Member Reddy expressed her gratitude.

Ayes: Barber, Spatz, Gates, Traczyk, Sacks, and Reddy

Nays: None

Absent: O'Connor

Motion passed.

**TOPIC REPORTS**

**RESOLUTION APPOINTING LEGAL COUNSEL IN CONNECTION WITH TAX RATE OBJECTIONS**

O'Neill reported that this is an annual resolution that comes to the Board. This resolution will be for tax year 2007-2008.

**NEW MEMBER PROCESS**

Member Sacks reported that she has been working on the process along with Jasculca, Marinier and Barber. The deadline to submit applications for the open position is noon on October 14. Interviews will be scheduled within the next two weeks and the new board member will take the oath of office on November 8. Discussion took place about tightening up the timeline, noting that the Board will be missing a Board member for two full meetings. Questions that focus on Board service were suggested as part of the interview process.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

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Dr. Roberts reported that each Board member was presented with an OP97 coffee mug as a token of appreciation for winning the Those Who Excel Award.

Dr. Roberts noted that the compensation report is part of the board packet and will be posted on the Web site.

Dr. Roberts addressed the candidates, noting that participation on the Board is not an easy job; however, they won't find a better group of people to work with.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS / BOARD CONCERNS**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Concern was expressed regarding the lack of recognition of some Jewish holidays.

Member Spatz attended the League of Women Voters event last week with Keynote speaker Sheila Simon. He noted that the legislation to create a consolidation committee is now called the Classroom First committee.

The 350.org and green network held a bike tour of green sites in Oak Park and four of the district's schools were stops on the tour.

ED-RED met last night and a summary of the meeting will be sent to the Board.

FAC will be meeting next week. Board members were encouraged to send questions they have for this group to the Board committee representative as soon as possible.

Member Spatz reminded the Board about the preschool initiative proposed by the state. He offered to write a letter of encouragement and request that the district be considered as a pilot program, this letter should be signed by the entire Board.

The Board was reminded that the IASB Fall Dinner is scheduled for Thursday evening.

A Board member visited Julian Middle School after a rain and the paving appears to be working nicely; however the new trees need to be watered.

Members Traczyk and Gates volunteered to participate in the International Work Group coordinated by Ray Johnson. Clarity for the group was requested.

A reminder that the Triple I conference is approaching was given.

**BOARD RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT**

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TO PUBLIC  
COMMENT

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

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There being no further business to conduct, President Barber declared the meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, October 11, 2011, beginning at 7 p.m. at the district office located at 970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Illinois.

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Board President

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Board Secretary