

**Official Minutes of the  
Oak Park Board of Education District 97,  
970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois  
Meeting – October 25, 2011**

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

ROLL CALL

Present: Barber (6:33 p.m.), Gates, 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, Board Candidate Amy Fenton and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

EXECUTIVE  
SESSION

Sacks moved, seconded by Barber, that the Board of Education move into executive session at 6:35 p.m. Roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion passed.

**OPEN SESSION**

OPEN SESSION

Traczyk moved, seconded by Sacks, that the Board of Education move into open session at 6:57 p.m. All members were in agreement.

**APPROVAL OF NEW BOARD MEMBER**

APPROVAL OF  
NEW BOARD  
MEMBER

President Barber explained why a new board member was necessary, and the process that was followed to identify the perfect candidate. The process was smooth thanks to Member Sacks. Fourteen outstanding candidates expressed interest in the position. The Board interviewed each highly qualified candidate, noting that they were all outstanding. One candidate stood out above all others.

Traczyk moved, seconded by Gates, that the Board of Education, District 97, appoint Amy Felton to fill the seat vacated by Jennifer Reddy, who officially resigned from the Board on September 30, 2011. Ms. Felton will complete the remainder of the term, which ends in April 2013. Roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

Motion passed.

**SWEARING IN OF NEW BOARD MEMBER**

President Barber invited Amy Felton to the table to repeat the oath of office. Following the oath, Member Felton took her place at the Board table and introduced herself to the audience.

**SPECIAL REPORTS****FORC ANNUAL REPORT**

Craig Iseli, chairman of the Finance Oversight and Review Committee (FORC) came to the table. He explained that a majority of the committee's time was spent focused on the referendum. Additionally, the committee monitors the district's management of its finances, and ensures that the correct checks and balances are in place. The committee is considering options for how the referendum dollars can be invested.

Iseli explained that each member of the committee has been assigned to a different financial area within the district. This allows the committee to capitalize on the different talents of the team which will result in the creation of a better team and a more knowledgeable group. The individuals will be reporting back to the committee for the first time during their next meeting.

Board comments and concerns included a suggestion to revisit long-term planning through 2018, noting that the district needs to identify targets that meet the current reality and not those identified during crisis. It was suggested that the Board tap into the FORC's expertise on the impact of the recent facilities discussion.

**ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION**

Members Gates, Sacks and O'Connor reported on a program run by Dr. Jerry Weast about achieving excellence in education. Weast uses the Baldrige approach, a program that focuses on self assessment. After benchmarks were identified for achieving success, the curriculum was modified to meet the benchmarks. People, process, plan and persistence were identified as the four "P"s of this program. Dr. Roberts noted that Weast's resume showed a succession in leadership. He expressed the need to invest wisely to get a good return on investment, and reported that the district is committed to the common core, value, chained thinking, and blurring lines on traditional roles.

Board comments included a suggestion to stay the course with persistence, noting that it will take many years to collect data on the full-day kindergarten students through graduation. It was suggested that as this district sets goals, it needs to focus on District 200, noting that some local work needs to be done.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ana Chavarria, an Oak Park resident, addressed the Spanish program in the middle schools. She noted that Julian students are not given the option of a full-year Spanish program in the sixth grade like the Brooks students, putting the Julian children at a disadvantage. She commended the district for starting with foreign language early, but recommends that the district change the process at Julian.

**ACTION ITEMS****2.1.1 Approval of Minutes of September 27, 2011**

Traczyk moved, seconded by Sacks, that the Board of Education, District 97, accept the minutes from the September 27, 2011 meeting as revised. Roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

Abstained: Felton

Motion passed.

**2.1.2 Approval of Minutes of October 11, 2011**

Traczyk moved, seconded by Spatz, that the Board of Education, District 97, accept the minutes from the October 11, 2011 meeting as printed. Roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

Abstained: Felton

Motion passed.

**Consent Agenda**

Traczyk moved, seconded by Spatz, 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, Spatz, Gates, Sacks, O'Connor, Felton, and Barber

Nays: None

Motion passed.

**2.4.1 Policy Adoption**

Gates moved, seconded by Spatz, that the Board of Education, District 97, adopt the following policies.

- Policy 1613 – Student Supervision and Welfare
- Policy 2270 – Religion in the Curriculum
- Policy 2461 – Recording of IEP Team Meetings
- Policy 3215 – Use of Tobacco by Professional Staff
- Policy 3430.04 – Military Leave
- Policy 4215 – Use of Tobacco by Support Staff
- Policy 5512 – Use of Tobacco
- Policy 7434 – Use of Tobacco on School Premises
- Policy 7530.01V2 – Staff Use of Wireless Communication Devices
- Policy 7540 – Computer Technology and Networks
- Policy 7540.03 – Student Network and Internet Acceptable Use and Safety
- Policy 7540.04 – Staff Network and Internet Acceptable Use and Safety
- Policy 9150 – School/Classroom Visits

Jasculca reported that the competitive food sales and public attendance policies are still being reviewed.

Roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

Motion passed.

## **TOPIC REPORTS**

## **TOPIC REPORTS**

### **SUMMER 2012 CAPITAL PROJECTS RECOMMENDATIONS**

Therese O'Neill came to the table. She reported that last year's capital projects budget was under-spent by \$151,734. The projects recommended for 2012 include secured entrances at Mann and Whittier, and air conditioning in the auditoriums at Irving, Holmes and Whittier. O'Neill reported that the proposed work was reviewed by FAC, and she is requesting authorization to prepare the bid documents for these projects.

It was noted that the purpose for installing air conditioning in the auditoriums is to give the children and staff a cooling place in hot weather. This would be done in lieu of air conditioning the entire buildings.

### **CONSIDERATION OF IRVING SCHOOL SOLAR PANELS**

O'Neill was joined at the table by Barbara Hoffman. It was reported that the Irving PTO acquired grants and fundraised to purchase a solar panel for the school. Installation and ongoing maintenance were considered. Dr. Roberts explained that the panel gives the district a learning opportunity that should not be overlooked. The panel will generate the equivalent of one classroom's power needs. It was suggested that the district pay \$1,600 for the structural assessment of the roof prior to the installation of the panel.

Discussion on the size of the panel (16' x 4') took place. It was noted that the panel will be weighted down on the roof; no anchors into the roof will be used. It was also noted that approval does not need to be sought from the village; however approval must be granted by the Regional Office of Education.

It was reported that the grant includes training for the teaching staff on ways to incorporate the panel into their curriculum. The teachers and principal participated in the initial process, and ongoing support will be included.

### **APPROVAL OF GENERATOR BID**

O'Neill explained that confusion in the bid process requires the district to seek three quotes for the additional needed work. The final recommendation will come to the Board on November 8 for approval. It was noted that approval will need to be sought from the Regional Office of Education; however the village will not need to issue a permit. The installation will occur shortly after approval by the Board.

PRESENT ESTIMATE OF PROPERTY TAX LEVY AND SET LEVY HEARING DATE  
O'Neill explained that annually, the Board of Education must first adopt an estimate of levy and then, at a subsequent meeting, adopt the estimate. If a proposed levy is in excess of five percent, a Truth-In Taxation notice must be published and a public hearing must be conducted. It was noted that the recommended levy increase is only .07 percent.

#### REVISED VISION STATEMENT

Member Sacks shared a revised vision. "Oak Park Elementary School District 97 will be nationally recognized for learning with purpose and respect, academic excellence, educational innovation, and lifelong accomplishment." After discussion, Sacks was asked to revise the statement to include wording that indicates college/career readiness.

#### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

SUPERINTENDENT'S  
REPORT

Dr. Roberts expressed concern regarding the implementation of the Wellness policy and procedures. He suggested that the Board's decision on the selling of healthy foods and practices within the district needs to change.

The district is working on ensuring that the schoolyards are safe and functional at all buildings. The schools need to understand that the district will need to create equity, not equality in this area.

Dr. Roberts reminded the Board that it is necessary to support the Early Childhood Collaboration, including the pre-k program. He noted that the Head Start program is now operating out of Hephzibah.

The administrators participated in a school improvement plan meeting with West40 on November 7. The Board will need to approve the final reports prior to December 1. He asked the Board to be patient and trusting with this process.

The policy committee is not satisfied with the support from Neola and would like to consider a different consultant.

Dr. Roberts was pleased with the Data First Workshop and would like to consider a data coach at each building. He shared that he is concerned about the district's RtI interventions as he is hearing from staff members that they don't understand the process.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS/BOARD CONCERNS**

ANNOUNCEMENTS /  
BOARD CONCERNS

It was noted that the Data First Workshop was successful. Member O'Connor was acknowledged for his efforts in organizing the event and was asked to take the lead in helping the Board organize itself in relationship to data.

A Data Task Force was suggested. The goal of the task force would be to provide guidance to administration regarding the Board's expectations on how and what kinds of data they would want to see utilized and to select trainings for the Board that will allow it to gain an understanding of best practices regarding strategic data usage. It was suggested that this be an administrative committee. It was also suggested that modules two and three of the Data First Workshop could be completed on a Saturday morning.

It was reported that Mary Anne Brown expressed thanks to the Board for their continued support of Hephzibah.

The Board was asked to reflect on ways they can get out in the community.

It was noted that the FAC will meet next Tuesday and Member Sacks will attend. FORC will meet next Wednesday and Member O'Connor will attend.

Jasculca is reviewing a draft of the letter to be sent to the state governing bodies expressing interest in the early childhood pilot program, and it will be mail in the near future.

Appreciation was extended to everyone who applied for the Board opening. Chris Jasculca and Sheryl Marinier were also acknowledged for their assistance in the process.

The League of Women Voters will be hosting a panel discussion on Thursday evening at 7 pm.

Advanced Illinois recommended a new state report card format. Samples of the document were shared.

It was reported that the Board will be holding a facilities study session during the November 29 Board meeting, which will be held at Lincoln School. A tour of the new addition will be offered prior to the meeting.

Dr. Roberts and President Barber attended a meeting last week at Proviso West High School with Danny K. Davis.

President Barber will review the committee list and reassign members. He asked Board members to inform him if there is something he should know before completing this process.

The Board attended an awards banquet in Normal, Illinois where they received the Those Who Excel award for their hard work. The district and members of the community who wrote letters of recommendation were thanked. Member Gates and Chris Jasculca were also recognized for preparing the documents.

#### **BOARD RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

BOARD RESPONSE  
TO PUBLIC  
COMMENT

**ADJOURNMENT**

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, President Barber declared the meeting adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, November 8, 2011, beginning at 7 p.m. at the district office located at 970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Illinois.

---

Board President

---

Board Secretary