

**Official Minutes of the
Oak Park Board of Education District 97
260 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois
October 29, 2019 Meeting**

President Broy called the meeting to order at 5:38 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Broy, Kim, Liebl, Kearney, Spurlock, Breymaier (arrived at 5:45 p.m.), and Moore
Absent: None
Also Present: Superintendent Dr. Carol Kelley, Assistant Superintendents of Human Resources Gina Herrmann, Director of Communications Amanda Siegfried, Chief Academic and Accountability Officer Ebony Lofton, Senior Director of Administrative Services Felicia Starks Turner, Senior Director of Equity Carrie Kamm, Senior Director of Technology Michael Arensdorff, Senior Director of Buildings and Grounds Jeanne Keane, Director of Finance Patrick King, Senior Director of Special Education Donna Middleton, Performance Fact Consultant Mutiu Fagbayi, and Committee Secretary Lou Anne Johannesson.

BOARD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SESSION

Professional
Development
Session

Dr. Kelley explained that the district has been aligning its work to the aspirational goals. She noted that the only department/area within the district that has not established its focus area to be aligned with the work of the district, is the Board of Education. She explained that this series of professional development session will help the Board to determine what board governance looks like. Dr. Kelley introduced Mutiu Fagbayi from Performance Fact as the facilitator for the evening.

Fagbayi suggested that the primary purpose of planning is alignment. He questioned how the Board will realign people, processes, programs, structures, etc. to get the proper results. The district's strategic plan is set up to monitor the results of the children. He suggested that the means to the end of every goal, is success of the children. This evening's process will help determine the Board's goals for the year, by creating a roadmap for disciplined implementation of the Equity Project. Fagbayi noted that the Board will have a role in the means, but they just need to be clear on what that focus should be.

Fagbayi referred to the 2020 District Goals and Action Plan noting that this document supports the work of the district, and he led the Board in a discussion about how the Board should support this plan. He asked the Board to read the *Foundational Principles of Effective Governance* and identify the sections that resonated with each of them. Board member comments included confusion about the monitoring of performance and data. It was suggested that a level of trust is needed when reviewing/monitoring data. Interest was expressed in determining how the district shares data and reports data in an equitable way? One Board member expressed interest in the Board's connection with the community, and seeing models of other school districts that have equity as a priority, and how they manage this area. Interest was expressed in how the Board can clarify the district's purpose related to equity. Concern was expressed in being a collective voice and the issues that can arise. One Board member noted that this Board expressed interest in creating spaces for different people to bring ideas to the tables via focus groups. It was noted that delegation can be difficult for some people, and not being the person in control can be difficult when you want to see results. A Board member shared that it is difficult to communicate and rebuild trust within the community when Board members do not have the answers, and letting the district respond. Fagbayi recommended that Board members learn to connect community members with the proper person within the district to answer their questions, and not attempt to answer questions themselves. Concern was expressed about how to manage the comments being sent the Board's way, taking into consideration what each Board member thinks is right, what the community is asking them to do, or if the unheard voices should be sought out. One Board member reflected on a prior retreat when they learned that the Board members are trustees and need to consider what is best for the children and the district, although it was suggested that seeking community support for decisions can be helpful.

The 2020 District Goals and Action Plan were reviewed by the Board and they were asked to identify what role the Board plays in the success of these goals.

BOARD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SESSION (Continued)

Fagbaya asked each Board member to identify one or two things for each goal that will be important for the Board to focus on when supporting the district for the year.

- Make a plan to attend and be present during student focus events, like town hall meetings with students.
- Forums that are more conversational than Board meetings. Educating community on strategies. Each forum could be focused on a different area. Building support for our actions and strategies.
- Seek better feedback from community.
- Have Coffee Chats that are more specific. Asking parents what does it mean for your student to belong?
- Create targeted efforts with specific groups, like teachers, families of color, LGBTQ, with an attempt to break down those barriers. Might there be some key information that the Board would want to collect?
- How would we like to communicate the successes of the known, nurtured learner?
- If we do a good job of educating the community on what we are doing, they are more supportive. Do we need to educate the community more?
- Explain why we need to allocate resources the way we do.
- Monitoring the ROI – co-teaching
- Board Focus
- State and regional advocacy
- Allocating resources/dollars for community engagement research.
- Understand when data will be delivered to the Board and understand what they will receive so that expectations are met.
- Raise awareness and celebrate the qualitative accomplishments related to belonging.
- What do good models of monitoring look like?
- General framework for questions on topics where decisions need to be made.
- Opportunities to check-in.
- Culture and Climate, and Data. Looking at data through lenses that the Board already cares about.
- Learn best practices, review decisions made by the prior Board, and regular check-ins with Dr. Kelley.

The Board members were asked to identify their top four from the list. Fagbaya will compile the list and report back to the Board. President Broy suggested having a point person on the Board for each area, noting that she could represent culture and climate, and member Kearney could represent data. Members Spurlock and Moore offered to represent engagement and forums.

Dr. Kelley offered to work with Board leadership to identify a date to continue this discussion.

The Board took a brief recess prior to beginning the business portion of the meeting. President Broy called the meeting back into session at 7:38 p.m. with all Board members present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jenna Leving Jacobson asked the Board to vote against the IASB Resolution on arming teachers in the classrooms. She spoke last year about the resolutions and was happy with the response she received. She told the Board that the resolution is up for vote again and asked the Board to vote no for the resolution again. She told the Board that last year it only failed by 24 votes. She shared that Mom's Demand Action is a local group that opposes this resolution. She noted that Mom's Demand Action's positions are all based on resources, and they currently do not have any research that supports the request being made by rural area schools.

Ameri Klafeta, a Mann parent, spoke on behalf of the League of Women Voters. She urged the Board to instruct its delegate to vote "NO" on both resolutions 1 and 3. Resolution 1 would "provide local school boards the option to decide if they will allow for properly trained staff to be armed in school buildings". Resolution 3 would establish school safety grants so school districts can hire School Resource Officers (SROs) who may carry a firearm provided training is received. Both of these would serve to bring guns into our schools. She suggested that schools should be places of safety. There is no evidence to show that arming personnel within a school increases school safety. These actions are contrary to conclusions in a 2015 New England Journal of Medicine evidence-based, peer-reviewed study which indicated that more guns do not make communities safer but rather contribute to the rise in gun-related suicides and homicides in our country.

PUBLIC COMMENT (Continued)

She asked the Board to refer to the two Fact Sheets that she provided for alternative measures for school safety, and asked the Board to insist that IASB recommendations be data based, utilizing evidenced-based, peer-reviewed research which will give all involved the confidence that choices are based on the best information available to create the safest possible options for the safety of our school children, district employees, and communities.

SPECIAL REPORTS

FINANCIAL AND CAPITAL PROJECTIONS AND FORC RECOMMENDATIONS

Rob Grossi shared a presentation that was reviewed by the Finance Oversight and Review Committee (FORC). He reminded the Board that they will need to make a decision on the tax levy. This topic will be discussed again in November and action will be taken in December. The Board will also need to determine how to address major capital expenditures that fall outside of the referendum bonds.

Grossi share a graph that demonstrated the revenues and expenditures over the past 7 years. This graph supported the need for the 2017 referendum. He explained to the Board that the district's practice is to have reserves on hand that would sustain the district for three to six months. He noted that in 2019, the district spent a significant amount on capital projects that were not funded by the referendum.

Grossi reported that major assumptions for the revenue projections are;

- The 2019 tax levy will capture all available taxes from expiring TIF (\$5.2 Million)
- The district will not abate its bond and interest fund tax levy
- The district will increase its tax levy by CPI annually, which is projected at 2 percent
- The district is projecting \$8,000,000 in annual new taxable property growth. This will generate approximately \$360,000 annually in tax receipts above CPI increases
- The Bond Levy will decrease in 2020 due to the expiration of the Series 2016 Bonds
- The district is projecting to receive 98 percent of its taxes extended on an annual basis
- The district will receive one final TIF surplus payment of \$2,000,000 in FY 2020
- State and Federal revenues will remain relatively flat versus FY 2019
- The district will issue \$27,500,000 in referendum bonds in FY 2020
- The district will not issue any additional debt during the projection period

The major assumptions for expenditures were reported as;

- The collective bargaining agreement for the Oak Park Teachers' Association will increase by 3.3 percent in FY 2021, 3.2 percent in FY 2022, and is projected to increase by 3 percent annually thereafter
- After the increase in staff size of 19 in FY 2020, total staff size is projected to remain constant
- The district will save approximately \$180,000 annually from retired staff being replaced by lower paid staff
- All other salaries will increase by 2.5 percent annually after existing contracts expire
- Employee medical benefits are projected to increase at industry trend averages of 6 percent annually
- Transportation expenses are projected to increase by 4 percent annually due to industry-wide cost pressures primarily due to a bus driver shortages
- The district is projected to maintain all other expenses at the projected rate of inflation of 2 percent
- The district's debt expenses will decrease by \$1,400,000 beginning in FY 2022 due to the expiration of the Series 2016 bonds
- The district will collectively spend approximately \$2,000,000 annually on building maintenance, repairs, and technology purchases
- Major capital projects will be addressed pursuant to the facilities plan

Grossi reported that with these assumptions in place, the district is anticipating a surplus of about \$35,000,000 over the next 6 years.

Grossi reported that the capital projects identified for the summer of 2020 and 2021 will be covered by the phase 2 funding from the referendum, but projects identified after that time do not have funding identified. He reported that

FINANCIAL AND CAPITAL PROJECTIONS AND FORC RECOMMENDATIONS (Continued)

because the district has a healthy revenue surplus for the next few year, the district could be able to pay for the identified capital projects using the surplus dollars.

FORC made the following recommendations;

Expiring TIF

Grossi explained that the Board has one chance to capture the taxes from that growth. The Board could capture this year in the total bond levy. He explained the formula and told the Board that taxes would only raise by 3.7 percent (1.9 CPI and the money that the district abated the previous year). He explained that this information was presented to FORC, and the committee recommended approving the maximum levy. Grossi told the Board that this decision would allow the district to address the facilities needs without issuing debt, noting that it is a more cost effective way of tax relief.

Non-Referendum Bonds

Grossi explained that there is \$33,500,000 in capital projects that would need to be addressed. If the Board does not reissue the non-referendum bonds there would be a natural tax increase in 2021. If the district uses non-referendum bonds to pay for the capital projects, it would have level debt. These bonds would need to be filed by February 2020. FORC recommended issuing all the bonds at once. Grossi suggested starting the process in November.

Grossi shared thoughts on the major levy decision as;

- Both TIF districts expire at the end of this year
- Taxing bodies only have one opportunity to directly capture the tax revenues generated from the growth that occurred during the life of the TIF
- That one opportunity occurs during this tax levy
- If the district captures the taxes (approximately \$5,200,000) it preserves the opportunity to capture those revenues in future years
- If the district does not capture the tax revenues in this tax levy, that opportunity is lost forever

Grossi recommended that the Board consider the following factors when making the levy decision

- The decisions made concerning the 2019 tax levy will have a significant long-term impact on the school district. A decision to capture a large portion of the available tax levy will;
 - Significantly delay the need to have to go to referendum
 - Will allow the district to address more facility needs without issuing debt
- After the TIF expires, the district will no longer receive TIF surplus dollars, which have averaged \$3,000,000 over the past five years. Additional tax dollars will be needed to offset this loss in order to be revenue neutral
- There exists a realistic possibility that the General Assembly will freeze property tax revenue growth. Strong consideration must be given to maintain a higher base tax level in anticipation of this possibility

Board comments included noting that FORC never made a formal recommendation. The Board was reminded that there are also opportunities to review the capital projects and determine if some of them can be prioritized based on needs. Interest was expressed in knowing what the competing interests might be. President Broy shared that she has invited FAC to update the Board on the summer work. Concern was expressed about the stigma around referenda, noting that it can also be a way to give the community voice.

It was agreed that Grossi will present the tentative levy during the month of November.

ACTION ITEMS**3.1.1 APPROVAL OF REVISED MINUTES FROM THE OCTOBER 15, 2019 BOARD MEETING**

Kim moved, seconded by Moore, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the revised minutes from the October 15, 2019.

Ayes: Kim, Moore, Broy, Liebl, and Breymaier
 Nays: None
 Abstained: Kearney and Spurlock
 Motion passed.

3.2 APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

Kim moved, seconded by Spurlock, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the consent agenda.

3.2.1 Approval of Bill List

3.2.2 Personnel

3.2.3 Disposal of Property

3.2.4 Approval of Special Board Meeting Date on November 9, 2019

3.2.5 Approval of Policies

Policy 2:230 (Public Participation at Board of Education meetings and Petitions to the Board)

Ayes: Kim, Spurlock, Moore, Broy, Breymaier, Kearney, and Liebl
 Nays: None
 Absent: None
 Motion passed.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

IMRF RESOLUTION TO INCLUDE CASH PAYMENT RELATED TO HEALTH INSURANCE AS IMRF EARNINGS

Patrick King explained that the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund Board Resolution 2017-12-17 amended the definition of reportable earnings to include cash payments made separately from salary and made in lieu of employer-provided health insurance and healthcare benefits. To include these payments as IMRF earnings, the Board of Education must pass a resolution allowing cash payments in lieu of or related to healthcare benefits to be reported as IMRF earnings. The attached resolution will satisfy the IMRF requirement noted above so the District can continue the same reporting practice. This item will return to the Board for action on November 12, 2019.

LIBRARY RENOVATION UPDATE

Jeanne Keane reported that she shared the draft library renovations for Hatch, Irving and Mann. She explained that some spaces need to be renovated in order to have staff and students placed in safe locations. Keane reported that the Facilities Advisory Committee (FAC) has approved these recommendations. This item will return to the Board for action on November 12, 2019.

DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY

Donna Middleton reported that some special education equipment needs to be destroyed because they are covered in mold. She reported that practices are in place to ensure that equipment is stored safely moving forward. This item will return to the Board for action on November 12, 2019.

BOARD ASSIGNMENTS

STANDING BOARD COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORT FOLLOW UP (as needed – FAC, FORC, CCE and CLAIM)

FACILITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FAC)

President Broy shared that the final numbers are in regarding the Lincoln/Longfellow construction. She reported that the actual cost of the projects was below the allotted budget.

COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (CCE)

Member Moore will not be able to attend the next CCE meeting, but President Broy will be in attendance.

CLAIM

The CLAIM committee is scheduled to meet on November 6, 2019.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL LIAISON REPORT FOLLOW UP (as needed – IGOV, PTO council, CEC, OPEF, Community Council, Tri-Board on Equity, Policy, and Self-Evaluation)

IGOV

During IGOV, they discussed the census, the need for translators, and a concern that people are having about using their own devices to enter the required data.

They also discussed cannabis distribution and zoning. The zoning was not done, therefore, a cannabis business can be placed next to a school. The Township wants to help the school district present the concern to the Village and have the zoning reconsidered. Interest was expressed in knowing what the restrictions might be as far as the distances from schools. Member Spurlock will ask the Township for a list of potential cannabis businesses.

IGOV is still planning on meeting to discuss property taxes during the month of December.

PTOC

Member Liebl reported that she arrived late to this meeting due to a conflict with FAC. Concern was expressed about executive functioning in the middle schools. Interest was expressed in the professional development for the teachers in this area.

OPEF

Member Kim reported that the organization is looking into continual improvement and conceptualizing what their board does. Interest was expressed in the policy related to partnerships, as OPEF is looking to become more independent.

POLICY COMMITTEE

Member Liebl reported that the committee met last Friday. They are working on a framework around the partnership agreements. There are a couple issues around this topic, such as providing space which does not require a policy. Jeanne Keane will come back to the committee with a recommendation in this area. The committee also discussed the need for fees, but agreed to deal with the space issues first.

The committee talked a little about the background check issues and will continue that discussion at the next meeting. They will review what information is considered.

The team is also reviewing press updates and reviewing current policies to determine if the current policies are being followed, and if they need to be changed. Interest was expressed in the normal wait time for background checks to be returned, and what kind of communication is being sent to the parents when it is received.

CONCLUDING ITEMS

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BOARD REMARKS

It was noted that the National School Board Conference conflicts with a scheduled Board retreat date.

Administration was recognized for the Halloween sensitivity messages that were sent out this year.

Jeanne Keane was acknowledged for her leadership during the construction projects this past summer.

Everyone was asked to send their list of priorities for the year to President Broy. She was referring to the deep dive questions from the retreat that indicated more analysis in the future. This list could be used when preparing special detailed reports for the Board.

AGENDA MAINTENANCE

The draft agenda for November 12, 2019 was reviewed.

ADJOURNMENT

Breymaier moved, seconded by Moore to adjourn the meeting. There being no further business to conduct, President Broy declared the meeting adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Board President

Board Secretary