

Minutes of the Regular School Board Meeting

Of the School Board of Independent School District No. 709 held at the Historic Old Central High School, 215 North First Avenue East, Duluth, Minnesota 55802, on

Tuesday, January 17, 2012

Members Present:

Mary Cameron
Tom Kasper
Mike Miernicki
Art Johnston
Judy Seliga Punyko
Ann Wasson

Others Present:

Bill Gronseth, Interim Superintendent
Bill Hanson, Deputy Clerk
Sue Talerico, Interim Secretary

Student Representatives

Alex Livesay
Airel Pendelton

Members Absent:

Bill Westholm

- **Chair Wasson called the regular school board meeting of January 17, 2012 to order at 6:30 p.m., and the pledge of allegiance to the American flag was given.**

Chair Wasson welcomed the new student advisors and encouraged them to share their views and assured them that student voices are very important to the school board and district.

M-Kasper, S-Cameron, to table Resolution B-1-12-2964 to no later than January 31, 2012 – Approving the Working Drawings Related to New Construction at Congdon Park Elementary School. Upon a vote to table Resolution B-1-12-2964, the same was approved – 6-0

Miernicki stated that the board values community input.

M-Seliga Punyko, S-Cameron, to approve the balance of the agenda. Upon a vote on the agenda as amended, the same passed – 6-0

Chair Wasson asked school board members if there were any corrections or changes to the minutes of the special school board meeting of December 19, 2011.

M-Cameron, S-Kasper, to approve the minutes of the December 19, 2011 Special School Board Meeting. Upon a vote, the same was approved – 6-0

Chair Wasson asked school board members if there were any corrections or changes to the minutes of the Regular School Board Meeting of December 20, 2011.

M-Kasper, S-Cameron to approve the minutes of the December 20, 2011 Regular School Board Meeting. Upon a vote, the same was approved – 6-0

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Chair Wasson asked school board members if there were any corrections or changes to the minutes of the Annual Organizational Meeting of January 3, 2012.

M-Kasper, S-Seliga Punyko, to approve the minutes of the January 3, 2012 Annual Organizational Meeting. Upon a vote, the same was approved – 6-0

Chair Wasson asked school board members if there were any corrections or changes to the minutes of the Special School Board Meeting of January 6, 2012.

M-Kasper, S-Seliga Punyko, to approve the minutes of the January 6, 2012 Special School Board Meeting. Upon a vote, the same was approved – 6-0

Chair Wasson asked school board members if there were any corrections or changes to the minutes of the Special School Board Meeting of January 9, 2012.

M-Kasper, S-Seliga Punyko, to approve the minutes of the January 9, 2012 Special School Board Meeting. Upon a vote, the same was approved – 6-0

Public Comment

January 2012

Chair Wasson reminded the audience to follow the civility code and that they have three minutes to speak.

Bob Fryberger, 1727 Lake View Drive, spoke to the school board, encouraging them to support Congdon Park School recreation areas, shared the history and the benefits of a hockey and other outdoor programs for youth that are provided in a safe area for kids in Duluth, asking for the school board's support and consideration as plans are reviewed and worked on

Kristina D'Allaird, 418 Ridgewood Road, spoke to the school board regarding Congdon Park School and outdoor areas, to share her concern that the plan should be reviewed to separate the indoor and outdoor portions of the plan, urging the school board to take it slow, to take the time and vote to table the plans for further work.

Sara Vallie, 2614 Branch Street, spoke to the school board regarding Congdon Park plans, thanking members who have met with their group, encouraging them to keep in mind the value that outdoor recreation provides, that they care to be included in the decision-making process, and thanking the board for the chance to work with them on the plans.

Jacinta Snyder Roth, 2331 London Road, spoke to the school board expressing the importance of the Congdon Park rinks, how they can help foster a sense of community and belonging, providing family time and a platform where parents can nurture their children, and encouraging them to take time to listen to parents and community regarding the plan.

Greg Repensky, 324 Halsey Street, spoke to the school board, introducing himself as a retired principal who has been working as an educational consultant for JCI since June 2008. Mr.

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Repensky spoke about the many hours of work that has gone into the over 30 plans for Congdon Park School thus far in an attempt to develop a plan that provides a separate and safe bus and parent drop-off and recreational green space for kids, as well as continuing a green space for skating, softball, and soccer. An updated plan will be presented to the recreation committee that is meeting on January 18, 2012. Mr. Repensky also spoke to the concerns related to the size of the gym, explaining MDE's strong recommendations for the minimum size for elementary school gyms and the City code that dictates the minimum number of required parking spaces. Mr. Repensky expressed that he believes a solution can be found through the continued conversations between the District and recreation committee which will meet the educational and recreational needs of our kids.

Anne Hinderlits, 1309 E. 8th Street, spoke to the school board about the importance of the community and land around Congdon Park School, where kids can engage in constructive, creative play, adding that her family chose the neighborhood because of the outdoor space.

Dana Lindaman, 2127 E. 2nd Street, spoke to the school board about his family's positive experiences at the hockey rinks and the soccer fields, making friends and watching their daughter gain confidence through sports.

Tim Kleinschmidt, 3130 E. 1st Street, spoke to the school board to thank them for taking the time to think about the whole space at Congdon Park Elementary School, and shared the important and positive experiences his family and kids have had due to the Congdon site, which is the only flat space for kids to be active and play, and is a community gathering space where kids can be kids.

Loren Martell, 623 E. 7th Street, spoke to the school board about civility and how it was used by the board to stifle criticism. During his campaign he spoke in favor of the levy because he cares about teachers but most about democracy and the value of diversity of opinion.

Scott Pilate, 2929 Greysolon Road, spoke to the school board about the citizens' group *Duluth for Education* that is working toward getting a levy passed next fall, inviting board members to join them at their every other Wednesday meetings. Mr. Pilate also spoke about Congdon Park School, with its core value being education, and supporting the school board, coming together as a community to focus on educating our students.

Marcia Stromgren, 6179 Lakewood Road, spoke to the school board about last Monday's meeting at which a plan for Congdon Park was presented, adding additional funds, and that she took note of the word equity, asking why is the board adding more to the long range facilities plan when it should fit costs into budget. The equity should have been in 2007 red plan to begin with, and the board should get a handle on how they are spending taxpayers' money.

Mike Piette, 3214 Greysolon Place, spoke to the school board to make four statements: 1) agrees that site plans for Congdon should be approved with exception of outdoor space, 2) equity among schools and costs of Congdon have risen partly to keep equity – the District is not responsible to find a new home for hockey, but to educate students, 3) petition to save rinks at Congdon are irrelevant because the taxpayers have already voted down more funding, and 4) speaking for his neighbors whose homes would be destroyed for hockey rink, urging the board to use funds wisely in pursuit of the education of future generations.

Board members shared what they learned at the MSBA conference.

Communications, Petitions, Etc.
January 2012

Interim Superintendent Gronseth acknowledged the communications received.

Superintendent's Report
January 2012

Interim Superintendent Bill Gronseth delivered a State of the District presentation.

Education Committee Report
January 2012

Member Kasper presented the Education Committee report, a copy of same being in the hands of each school board member.

Member Kasper presented the resolution:

RESOLUTION

Acceptance of Grant Awards to Duluth Public Schools

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statute 465.03 requires a school district to accept grants by resolution expressed in the terms prescribed by the donor in full; and,

WHEREAS, acceptance of the grant in accordance with the donor's terms is in the best interest of the Duluth Public Schools:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Duluth Public Schools does accept the below-described grants from said organizations in accordance with the terms set forth herein.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Duluth Public Schools wishes to extend its grateful appreciation to these various organizations.

| | Organization | Author/Contact | Project Title | Award Amount | Terms |
|---|--|----------------|------------------------------|--------------|--|
| 1 | Target Field Trips – Scholarship America | Kristen Teberg | 2012 Target Field Trip Grant | \$700 | Funds from this grant award will be used to support a field trip being planned for Lakewood students who will be traveling to the St. Paul Science Museum in 2012. |

Resolution E-1-12-2961

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M-Kasper, S-Seliga Punyko, to approve Resolution E-1-12-2961 - Acceptance of Grant Awards to Duluth Public Schools. Upon a vote taken, the same was approved – 6-0

M-Kasper, S-Miernicki, to approve the remainder of the Education Committee Report as presented. Upon a vote on the remainder of the Education Committee Report as presented, the same was approved – 6-0

Human Resources Committee Report

January 2012

Member Cameron presented the Human Resources Committee report, a copy of same being in the hands of each school board member.

M-Cameron, S-Kasper, to approve the Coordinator of Education Equity's Request to Rescind Retirement.

Member Cameron asked if there was a new retirement date. Tim Sworsky stated there was no new retirement date.

Upon a vote, the same was approved – 6-0

M-Cameron, S-Kasper, to approve the Human Resources Committee Report as presented.

Upon a vote, the same was approved – 6-0

Business Committee Report

January 2012

Member Seliga Punyko presented the Business Committee report, a copy of same being in the hands of each school board member.

Member Seliga Punyko presented the resolution:

RESOLUTION

**Authorizing the Application for Free Conveyance of Tax Forfeited Land –
Western (Lincoln Park) Middle School at the North Wheeler Site**

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statute 123B.51 SCHOOLHOUSES AND SITES; USES FOR SCHOOL AND NONSCHOOL PURPOSES; CLOSINGS provides that the board may locate and acquire necessary sites of schoolhouses or enlargements, or additions to existing schoolhouse sites by lease, purchase or condemnation under the power of eminent domain; and

WHEREAS, School Board Resolution B-6-07-2452 directs, “the identification and negotiation of land to be acquired as identified in the RED Option. Options to purchase land may be secured where necessary to protect the district’s interests”. The RED Option called for a new western middle school on a site to be determined; and

WHEREAS, the School Board by approving Resolution B-7-08-2558, selected the North Wheeler site for the new western middle school; and

WHEREAS, the School District approved Resolution B-2-10-2737 authorizing the application for conveyance of tax forfeited land for the new western middle school construction, and has since purchased a large parcel of tax forfeited property from the County/State; and

WHEREAS, there exists an additional parcel of tax forfeited land totaling 4.65 acres, said parcel legally described on Exhibit A and as shown in blue on the Exhibit B drawing both attached hereto, that has since been determined to be critical to the school and community for the

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purposes of allowing the construction of a pedestrian and bike path and walk connecting the new school site to the neighborhood to the east; and

WHEREAS, the need for such a path has been determined and supported by a community group organized to study and recommend methods to improve walkability and pedestrian safety in the Lincoln Park community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

The School Board hereby authorizes Administration to make application to St. Louis County for Free Conveyance of this Tax Forfeited Land to be used for the specific public purpose of constructing a paved pedestrian and bicycle path connecting the new Lincoln Park Middle School to existing public sidewalk at Devonshire Street, and hereby authorizes the School Board Chair to sign the applications and execute all other documents required for completing and closing this transaction.

B-1-12-2967

January 17, 2012

M-Seliga Punyko, S-Kasper, to approve Resolution B-1-12-2967 – Authorizing the Application for Free Conveyance of Tax Forfeited Land – Western (Lincoln Park) Middle School at the North Wheeler Site. Upon a vote, the same was approved – 6-0

Member Seliga Punyko presented the resolution:

RESOLUTION

Granting an Easement to Minnesota Power Across Property at Myers-Wilkins (Formerly Grant) Elementary School

WHEREAS, Independent School District #709 is the owner of the property in St. Louis County, Minnesota legally described on Exhibit A dated 10/31/11 from Salo Engineering attached hereto; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Power requires a permanent and perpetual easement across, over, under and through the property at Myers-Wilkins Elementary School for the purposes as described in the Easement Agreement;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the School Board of Independent School District No. 709, St. Louis County, State of Minnesota that the Easement Agreement at Myers-Wilkins (Grant) Elementary School to Minnesota Power, is hereby approved.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the School Board authorizes the School Board Chair and Clerk to execute the Easement Agreement.

B-1-12-2968

January 17, 2012

M-Seliga Punyko, S-Kasper, to approve Resolution B-1-12-2968 – Granting an Easement to Minnesota Power Across Property at Myers-Wilkins (Formerly Grant) Elementary School. Upon a vote, the same was approved – 6-0

Member Johnston noted that the placeholder was for authorizing the sale of properties and this resolution is for an easement. Chair Wasson thanked him for the correction.

M-Seliga Punyko, S-Kasper, to approve the remainder of the Business Committee Report, as presented.

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Member Johnston withheld Items 1.F., 2.A.1), 2.A.2), 3.A.2), 4.B.2), 4.B.3), and 6.E.

Member Johnston withheld Item 1.F. – WADM Projections, to ask how the report compares to the start of this school year and as well as a year ago and previous years, suggesting the board be provided with a running tabulation for the future. Bill Hanson provided an update, stating that the positive impacts of enrollment cited at the beginning of the year are still running true, which has impacted staffing in a positive way, and administration has not seen any extraordinary declines through the year that would give cause for concern. Enrollment numbers are better than originally planned for when the budget was put together. Member Kasper asked if the District will be looking at any mid-year staff cuts as was the case in January of 2011. Bill Hanson stated that is not foreseen at this time. Member Johnston asked for an update on total FTEs for upcoming budget discussions. Bill Hanson stated that that can be put together for the board.

Member Johnston withheld Item 2.A.1) – Bid 1214 – PRI Circuits and DID Services, to ask if it is part of the long range facilities plan or independent of the same. Bill Hanson explained that it is part of new buildings but independent because it was started before the start of the long range facilities plan, with funding being partially related to the facilities plan along with other funding

Member Johnston withheld Item 2.A.2) – Bid 1217 – Laura MacArthur School Demolition, to ask why it remains as a placeholder. Member Wasson replied that the item was pulled, with Kerry Leider explaining that, although the District received bids, the results of that bid did not allow him to make a recommendation at that time. The District continues to review the results, including talking to the contractor who was the apparent low bidder, before being able to make a recommendation to the board. The item will be brought to the board at a later date.

Member Johnston withheld Item 3.A.2) – Policy 8095 – Procedures During Meetings to ask who put the item on the agenda. Member Wasson stated that she put it on the agenda. Member Johnston stated that he will not vote to approve the Business agenda because of this item. Member Kasper stated he will vote in support of the Business agenda and that, although he understands the importance of knowing the risk that can be brought upon a board member or the district as a result of bringing a recording device into a closed session, he hopes the board can put this issue behind them and focus on the items placed in front of them.

Member Johnston withheld Item 4.B.2) – Eastern HS LRFP – Earthwork and Site Demolition, to ask if should it have been a part of the original plan. Kerry Leider explained the need for the change order.

Member Johnston withheld Item 4.B.3) – Denfeld HS LRFP – Structural Steel – Erection, to ask if should it have been a part of the original plan. Kerry Leider explained the need for the change order.

Member Johnston withheld Item 6.E. – JCI LRFP Status Report to ask for an update on some items, punch lists for high schools. Kerry Leider explained that he meets bi-weekly with JCI to review changes and for updates related to the punch lists, which are getting down to just a few items for each of the two high schools. Member Johnston asked about the status of the greenhouse structure at East High School. Kerry Leider updated the board that it is his understanding that it will be completed this month. Member Johnston asked whether classes

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would be able to be held beginning second semester. Interim Superintendent Gronseth explained that classes will be held with adjustments to curriculum when necessary. Member Johnston asked about the status of the automotive facility at Denfeld High School. Kerry Leider explained that it is his understanding that the facility is completed, occupied, and operational.

Member Johnston spoke to his concerns with regard to the Review and Comment for the long range facilities plan, delays and amount of time it is taking to get a decision from MDE on the Review and Comment, as well as his concerns whether the District will have enough funds to complete the schools with costs continuing to increase, adding that he feels it's critical that the board be provided with a full accounting of the red plan, the original and the two amendments.

Chair Wasson asked if Bill Hanson or Kerry Leider like to comment. Kerry Leider explained that Member Johnston's request is something he is working on with JCI with the goal being to have information available to the board on a monthly basis, and that a sequential history can be provided as well. Bill Hanson explained that the schedules for Congdon Park and Myers-Wilkins remain the same and will open in the Fall of 2013. Chair Wasson asked if the price increase for those schools are somewhat in part due to input from the community and users, to which Mr. Leider explained that, yes, input from users/community have resulted in some of the increases being requested. Questions and answers on various projects continued.

Member Cameron stated that this is the second time Member Johnston stated there are figures within the review and comment that board members have not been made aware of; that, although she does recall the \$15MM, is going on record that she will not approved anything that's not been presented before her, adding that she would like to see information presented to Johnston as well.

Student Advisor Pendelton asked about a small leakage in an area at Denfeld High School and how long it will take to be worked on. Kerry Leider explained that the repair work has been completed, with cleanup being taken care of and rooms being opened yet this week.

Member Wasson asked Member Johnston if he had asked for a separate vote on Item 3.2. – Policy 8095, which Member Johnston said he had not but would comment on.

Upon a vote on the remainder of the business committee report as presented, the same was approved 5-1 as follows:

Member Johnston stated he would be voting against because of Policy 8095, questions on the long range facilities plan, and delays with review and comment.

Yea: Cameron, Kasper, Miernicki, Seliga Punyko, Wasson

Nay: Johnston

Other
January 2012

Chair Wasson asked the 2012 Student Advisors if they would like to share something about themselves. Student Advisor Pendelton shared what she is involved in at Denfeld High School and Student Advisor Livesay shared what she is involved in at East High School.

Member Miernicki asked about Congdon Park's rinks plan. Interim Superintendent Gronseth stated that he and others would be meeting with members of the recreation committee tomorrow to discuss and start work on developing adjustments to the plan.

Chair Wasson stated that there are remarkable things being done in our schools and encouraged board members to remember that the District has always put children and education first, not forgetting that in any of their discussions. She spoke to board members about doing a better job in asking constituents to give of their time to help an individual child or school, challenging them to step up and give back to the schools and echoing interim superintendent Gronseth's words that it takes more than educators to help students succeed; it takes the whole community giving back to our schools because the doors are open and they are looking for volunteers.

- **Chair Wasson adjourned the Regular School Board Meeting of January 17, 2012 at 8:20 p.m.**