

**Official Minutes of the  
Oak Park Board of Education District 97,  
970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois  
Meeting May 7, 2013**

Vice President Spatz called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Present: Barber (6:37 pm), Gates, Felton, Sacks, Traczyk, Spatz, and O'Connor  
Absent: None  
Also Present: Superintendent Dr. Al Roberts, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations Therese O'Neill, Assistant Superintendent of HR and General Counsel Joanne Schochat, Director of Policy, Planning and Communications Chris Jasculca, Director of Special Education Mike Padavic, and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

ROLL CALL

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Sacks moved, seconded by Felton, that the Board of Education move into executive session at 6:33 p.m. to discuss (Purchase or Lease of Real Property 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5), Collective Negotiations, 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2), Sale of Property 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(6)). Roll call vote.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ayes: Sacks, Felton, O'Connor, Gates, Traczyk and Spatz  
Nays: None  
Absent: Barber  
Motion passed.

OPEN SESSION

**OPEN SESSION**

Sacks moved, seconded by O'Connor, that the Board of Education move into open session at 6:56 p.m. All members of the Board were in agreement.

The meeting was reconvened at 7:04 p.m. with all Board members in attendance.

**SPECIAL REPORTS**

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**FUN RUN**

Tim McDonald reported that the Fun Run will be held this Saturday at Lindberg Park and invited everyone to attend. He shared that third graders participated in a poster contest for the event and a winner from each school had their picture printed on the Fun Run poster. Mia Rossback from Longfellow School and Vivian Wildfield from Lincoln School were introduced as the winners from their schools.

PUBLIC COMMENT

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**ACTION ITEMS**

ACTION ITEMS

**2.1.1 Approval of Minutes of April 23, 2013**

Sacks moved, seconded by Spatz, that the Board of Education, District 97, accept the minutes from the April 23, 2013 meeting. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Sacks, Spatz, Gates, Felton, Barber, O'Connor, and Traczyk  
Nays: None  
Motion passed.

**2.1.1 Approval of Minutes of April 24, 2013**

Traczyk moved, seconded by Felton, that the Board of Education, District 97, accept the minutes from the April 24, 2013 special tri-board meeting. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Traczyk, Felton, Barber, Sacks, O'Connor, Gates, and Spatz  
Nays: None  
Motion passed.

**2.2.1 Approval of Consent Agenda**

President Barber read the items on the consent agenda. Traczyk moved, seconded by Sacks, that the following items be approved on the consent agenda. Roll call vote.

- 2.3.1 Bill Lists and Related Reports
- 2.2.1 Personnel Action as presented are revised

Ayes: Traczyk, Sacks, O'Connor, Felton, Spatz, Gates, and Barber  
Nays: None  
Motion passed.

**3.4.1 Approval of Out of State Field Trip**

Traczyk moved, seconded by O'Connor, that the Board of Education, District 97, approve the out of state trip for the Mann School Odyssey of the Mind students to East Lansing, Michigan on May 22, 2013 through May 26, 2013 where they will participate in the Odyssey of the Mind World competition, as well as a Julian science trip to the Indiana Dunes. Roll call vote.

Ayes: Traczyk, O'Connor, Felton, Spatz, Gates, Barber and Sacks  
Nays: None  
Motion passed.

Seth Baker was invited to the table. He explained that the Julian trip is led by volunteers. Because of this, it is difficult to identify a date for the event well in advance. Dr. Roberts explained that in order to comply with the Board's procedure, future trips of this type should be submitted for consideration and approval without a specific date being identified for the trip.

**3.4.2 Approval of Donation of Books to the School Libraries**

O'Connor moved, seconded by Felton, that the Board of Education, District 97, accept a donation of 10 library books, one for each school library, from Judy Chrisman, a retired District 97 Teacher Librarian, in memory of her mother, Erika Rosenthal and her mother's cousin, Helga Hertz. Roll call vote.

Ayes: O'Connor, Felton, Sacks, Traczyk, Spatz, Gates, and Barber  
Nays: None  
Motion passed.

**3.5.1 Motion to Certify Official Results – School Board Election of April 9, 2013**

O'Connor moved, seconded by Sacks, that the Board of Education, District 97, certifies the official results of the April 9, 2013 school board election as reported by the Cook County Clerk's office, naming Jim Gates, Amy Felton and Graham Brisben as elected to four-year terms as members of the Board of Education of School District 97. Roll call vote.

Ayes: O'Connor, Sacks, Felton, Traczyk, Gates, Spatz, and Barber  
Nays: None  
Motion passed.

### **3.5.2 Proclamation of Newly Elected Board Members**

Traczyk moved, seconded by Spatz, that the Board of Education, District 97, proclaim that Jim Gates, Amy Felton and Graham Brisben have been duly elected members to the District 97, Oak Park Board of Education. Roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

Motion passed.

### **3.5.3 Adoption of Resolutions on Outgoing Board Members**

Traczyk moved, seconded by Gates, that the Board of Education, District 97, accept the proclamation of appreciation for Peter Barber. Roll call vote.

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

Nays: None

Motion passed.

Whereas Peter Barber was elected by the citizens of Oak Park to serve on the District 97 Board of Education on April 5, 2005; and

Whereas Peter Barber's faithful service as a member, vice president and president of the board resulted in the successful creation, adoption and implementation of the district's recent five-year strategic plan, the establishment of the citizen-led Community Input Team that led the strategic planning process, the implementation of the district's full-day kindergarten program in our elementary schools and the International Baccalaureate Program in our middle schools, and the improvement of processes and protocols that have enabled the board to work more efficiently and effectively; and

Whereas Peter Barber's commitment to sound fiscal management contributed to the successful passage of a referendum in April 2011 that has greatly enhanced the educational experience for our students and helped ensure the district's long-term financial stability; and

Whereas Peter Barber built on the academic excellence that is the hallmark of our schools by spearheading the district's efforts to recruit and hire Dr. Al Roberts as the superintendent, leading the development of the superintendent's evaluation tool, and aiding in the establishment of a higher level of accountability for student and staff achievement both inside and outside of the classroom; and

Whereas Peter Barber exhibited his fervent belief in the importance of shaping the future for our youngest learners by successfully bringing together District 97, District 200 and the Village of Oak Park to support the Collaboration for Early Childhood's vision of creating a comprehensive, integrated early childhood system in Oak Park; and

Whereas Peter Barber's encouragement to better utilize the community's vast talents and resources to assist the work of the board led to the establishment of citizen-led committees such as the Facilities Advisory Committee, the Committee for Collaborative Communication, and the Committee for Legislative Action, Intervention and Monitoring; and

### **Adoption of Resolutions on Outgoing Board Members** (Continued)

Whereas Peter Barber's pursuit of opportunities to increase the board's engagement with residents and collaboration with other governing bodies resulted in the district holding board meetings in our schools on an annual basis, organizing tri-board meetings with districts 90 and 200, and participating in events such as A Day in Our Village; and

Whereas Peter Barber responded to all concerns brought to his attention by constituents, helped augment the district's collaborative partnerships with other government entities, strengthened the district's relationships with its internal and external stakeholders, and increased community engagement in the educational process; and

Whereas Peter Barber participated in the successful negotiation of collective bargaining agreements with the district's employee groups, including the Oak Park Teachers' Association; and

Whereas Peter Barber demonstrated his dedication to board service by attending conferences hosted by the Illinois Association of School Boards and additional workshops that resulted in his earning the designation of Master Board Member;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved by the District 97 Board of Education that it affirms the aforementioned accomplishments of Peter Barber; and

Be It Further Resolved that the District 97 Board of Education expresses its appreciation and gratitude to Peter Barber on behalf of the District 97 community for his exemplary leadership during his eight years as a member of the board.

President Barber expressed his gratitude. He shared that he is proud of most of the work accomplished by the Board during his tenure. He noted the Strategic Plan, Full-day Kindergarten, the referendum, and the Intergovernmental Agreement to support the Collaboration for Early Childhood as highlights.

He recommended that the Board consider creating another strategic plan and resolve the pending administrative office facility issues. He asked that the new Board keep minorities in mind when making future decision and give a lot of thought before initiating future referendums. He encouraged the Board to "stay out of the weeds" and continue to be a "model" School Board.

President Barber thanked his wife and daughters for their support, as well as all the great children in the district. He extended appreciation to the past and current Board members. He thanked them for trusting him, allowing him to be a leader and for being good colleagues and friends. He acknowledged the district staff, the leadership team and extended additional thanks to Therese O'Neill, Chris Jasculca, Sheryl Marinier and Dr. Al Roberts.

#### **3.5.4 Swearing in of New Board Members**

Jim Gates, Amy Felton and Graham Brisben took the Oath of Office.

#### **3.5.5 Adjournment of Old Board**

President Barber adjourned the Board meeting at 7:40 p.m.

A reception was held in President Barber's honor.

## **ROLL CALL**

Vice President Spatz called the meeting of the new Board to order at 8:00 p.m. Member Brisben took his place at the table. A roll call showed all members present.

## **CONVENE NEW BOARD**

### **4.1 Election of Temporary President and Secretary**

Spatz moved, seconded by Sacks, that the Board of Education, District 97, nominate Peter Traczyk as the temporary President and Sheryl Marinier as the temporary Secretary during the reorganization of officers. Roll call vote.

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

### **4.2 Election of Board Officers**

Gates moved, seconded by Sacks, that the Board of Education, District 97, nominate Bob Spatz as President from May 7, 2013 until April 22, 2014. Roll call vote.

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

Sacks moved, seconded by Traczyk, that the Board of Education, District 97, nominate Jim Gates as Vice President from May 7, 2013 until April 22, 2014. Roll call vote.

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

Traczyk moved, seconded by Sacks, that the Board of Education, District 97, nominate Sheryl Marinier as Secretary from May 7, 2013 until April 22, 2014. Roll call vote.

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

## **TOPIC REPORTS**

TOPIC REPORTS

### **REVIEW CUSTODIAL SUPPLY BID**

Therese O'Neill came to the table. She introduced the custodial supply bid. She explained that due to the increase in the student population, the item specific bid is larger than those of the past. This item will return to the Board for approval on May 28, 2013.

### **ASBESTOS ABATEMENT**

O'Neill introduced the summer work plan which includes asbestos removal. She reported that the district received three bids and Arc Environmental is being recommended for this work. She explained that asbestos abatement always needs to be considered when extensive construction work is being done. She noted that the need for future asbestos abatement is uncertain until each construction project is undertaken.

### **PRINTING AND COPY PAPER BID**

O'Neill explained that this item is bid out every three years. Murnane Paper Company has been the provided in the past and has done an excellent job. Murnane Paper Company will be recommended to receive the contract again. O'Neill reported that approximately \$20,000 in

#### PRINTING AND COPY PAPER BID - (Continued)

revenue is brought in by the Print Shop that offsets the cost of paper. This item will return to the Board for approval on May 28, 2013.

#### REVIEW OF MEDICAL, DENTAL AND LIFE INSURANCE RATES

Joanne Schochat came to the table. She noted that the Insurance Committee is comprised of Board member Traczyk and 15 members from various areas of the district. Due to the lower trend in claims, Bjork Group recommended that our insurance rates in general should remain the same. They recommended that the district's stop loss be changed to \$180,000. In doing so, the district could save over \$100,000. Member Traczyk shared that increasing the stop loss makes sense. The actual renewal had been projected at a 15 percent increase, however, it came in slightly lower than the district is currently paying. The committee considered maintaining the rates and putting the additional funds into the reserve fund or lowering the cost to the employees. By maintaining the rate, the district could replenish the insurance fund by about \$400,000.

Schochat reported that the dental premiums will not increase if 35 people sign up for vision care.

#### TECHNOLOGY PROPOSAL

Julie Mullen came to the table. She referenced the revised documents at the table and recommend MacBook Airs for the teachers. She reported that the decision was made to recommend the MacBook Airs partially because MacBooks will be recommended for the children. Additionally, Mullen noted that the MacBooks Airs will have a return rate of 30 to 33 percent compared to 19 percent for the IBM compatible computers. Mullen noted that the repair costs are also expected to decrease. She reported that adding the computers to the server would be streamlined as the MacBook Airs would automatically be added to the server, where with new PCs, each would need to be connected individually by a member of the technology team.

Dr. Roberts reported that Apple staff development is superior. It was noted that if the district wants to purchase any of the units at the end of the lease, it can purchase them for \$1 each. The MacBook Airs work well with the Apple TVs, and the computers have solid state hard drives and they start up instantly.

Board comments and concerns included interest in understanding the longer, larger technology plan, understanding how the MacBooks fit into it, and making assessments with the ISBEs platform for technology. President Spatz reported that he has owned a MacBook Air for five years and since he replaced the hard drive with a solid state drive, he has experienced no problems.

This item will return to the Board for approval on May 28, 2013.

#### FIELD TRIP REQUEST - JULIAN

This item was discussed and approved under 3.4.1 Out of State Field Trips.

#### RECONSIDERATION COMMITTEE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

Lisa Schwartz came to the table. The report she presented from the committee began with the district policy; followed by the list of concerns that the parents shared and finally, the recommendation by the committee. The committee recommended not removing the book from the curriculum, noting that it aligns with the Common Core state standards, it has been used at Brooks successfully for the past few years and it has won many awards. The committee recommended that teachers read the novel prior to sharing it with the students and share a curriculum guide with parents at the beginning of the school year that identifies the themes. Additionally, the committee recommended that alternative novels be made available if parents choose to have their children opt out of this reading experience.

## RECONSIDERATION COMMITTEE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION- (Continued)

It was noted that this report was submitted as a recommendation to administration and is for Board information only.

Dr. Roberts supported the committee's recommendation to inform parents about novels and their themes. He noted that a novel should be considered one of many tools that the teachers use to meet the Common Core standards.

Curriculum Night was recommended as a time to share reading materials with the parents. It was noted that the book is a screenplay and read aloud in seventh grade. The decision to read the book aloud was questioned.

### DISCUSSION ON BOARD CALENDAR DATES

Sheryl Marinier presented a draft calendar for the 2013-14 school year. This item will return to the Board for approval on May 28, 2013.

### DISCUSSION ON COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

President Spatz led a discussion on committee appointments. Board members were asked to provide him with a list of their committee choices (ranked) before May 23, 2013 and explain what role they are trying to fill. It was noted that sometimes the committee appointments are chosen in an effort to diversify the experience of the Board members.

The Board will discuss the committees and their roles in detail during the retreat scheduled for June 22, 2013.

### DISCUSSION ON BOARD RETREAT

Member Traczyk reported that he met with Dr. Robert and Gil Herman of Managing Horizons. Herman submitted a proposal for facilitating the Board retreat. Traczyk was impressed with Herman and recommended consideration of his proposal. Traczyk reported that Jeff Cohn would lead the morning session and Herman would attend, but not participate. Herman would lead the session in the afternoon. He is willing to provide this service at a negotiable fee.

Board comments and suggestions included a recommendation for the completion of some pre-work. A clear understanding of each functional area and a recommendation for the leader of that area was recommended. A three to five page report from each area was also suggested.

### DISCUSSION OF SERVICE CONTRACT FOR BOARD OF EDUCATION RETREAT FACILITATOR

This item was shared under separate cover and discussed above. It will return to the Board for approval on May 28, 2013.

### BOARD GOALS TIMELINE

Adoption of plan to improve the evaluation system (Evaluation – proposed changes), and Approved lists of districts to be used for a variety of financial and academic comparisons, including a district dashboard (revised timeline) were tabled.

### REVIEW AND UPDATE THE TIMELINE

The Measures of Success timeline was reviewed and revised.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

The administrative team met with representatives from ECRA today. They discussed the Boards desire for a dashboard and they discussed the local growth model. Dr. Roberts noted that a strategic plan and ECRA are similar in the fact that both need to prioritize, simplify, stay with it, measure it, evaluate it and respond. ECRA shared very simplified understandable reports.

**SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT** – (Continued)

The Oak Park Youth Baseball Association would like to add fences in the south field by Hatch School. There was no objection.

On May 28, 2013, a recommendation will be made to honorably discharge a few Teacher Assistants and a few non-renewals for just cause.

The district released a probationary employee earlier this week for not meeting the requirements of the job.

Graduation on May 29, 2013 will be held at the Oak Park and River Forest High School.

Dr. Roberts noted that all but four administrative contracts will expire at the end of June, 2013. He will be seeking input from the Board over the next few weeks and discussion on this topic will take place in executive session on May 28, 2013.

The ECRA Group requested dates to meet with the Board. Dr. Roberts suggested that it would be better to meet with them after the Board retreat.

**BOARD CONCERNS / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

BOARD CONCERNS /  
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Member Brisben shared that he is thrilled to be part of the Board. He admires the work they are doing, the teachers and administration. He asked for patience as he tries to get up to speed with the others.

The articles in the Wednesday Journal were noted as exceptionally good this week.

Member O’Connor was thanked for bringing in the guest speaker on Common Core. It was noted that 180 people attended this event.

President Spatz attended a seminar on creating the legal framework on public participation. He would like to discuss this as part of the Board retreat.

Member Brisben will be attending the required Board training on June 14 and 15, 2013. It was noted that re-elected Board members are required to complete training as well; however, members Gates and Felton have already completed the required training.

The Board members were asked to let the Board Secretary know if they will be available to attend the middle school graduations.

It was noted that the retirement party was well attended and the Ethnic Festival was great.

Day in Our Village is scheduled for June 2, 2013. Jасulca reported that neon green erasers will be placed in a jar for students to guess the quantity. The student who wins the contest will win an eraser for all the students at his/her school. Brochures with facts about each school will also be available for distribution at the event.

A concern was shared regarding events being held on Board meeting nights. The administration was asked to communicate this concern to those planning events.

**RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT**

RESPONSE TO PUBLIC  
COMMENT

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION



**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Gates moved, seconded by Sacks, that the Board of Education move into executive session at 9:57 p.m. to discuss (Collective Negotiations, 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2), Appointment, Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance, or Dismissal of Specific Employees 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1)). Roll call vote.

Ayes: Gates, Sacks, Felton, O’Connor, Brisben, Traczyk, and Spatz  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Motion passed.

OPEN SESSION

**OPEN SESSION**

Sacks moved, seconded by O’Connor, that the Board of Education move into open session at 10:45 p.m. All members of the Board were in agreement.

**ADJOURNMENT**

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, President Spatz declared the meeting adjourned at 10:45 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, May 28, 2013 beginning at 7 p.m. location to be determined.

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Board President

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Board Secretary