

July 16, 2009

A special meeting of the Board of Education of the Oak Park and River Forest High School was held on Thursday, July 16, 2009, in the Board Room of the high school.

Call to Order

Dr. Millard called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m. A roll call indicated the following members were present: John C. Allen, IV (departed at 11:30 a.m.), Jacques A. Conway (departed at 11:45 a.m.), Terry Finnegan, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Amy McCormack, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, and Sharon Patchak-Layman. Also, present were Dr. Attila J. Weninger, Superintendent; Jason Edgecombe, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; Cheryl Witham, Chief Financial Officer, and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board of Education.

Visitors

Jack Lanenga, Director of Student Information Systems; Kay Foran, Community Relations and/or Communications Coordinator; James Paul Hunter, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair; Tim Keeley, Purchasing Coordinator; Curtis Davis, Rachel Ureubu, and Daphne Jones, parents; Judie Wilson, League of Women Voters; Lane Hart and Stephen Allsteadt community members; Jennifer Hansen and Ayane Metzger of Whitted Clearly and Takiff; Terry Dean of the *Wednesday Journal* and Chuck Fieldman of the *Oak Leaves*.

Visitor Comments

Mr. Stephen Allsteadt, Neighbor at 136 Frank Lloyd Wright Lane, oak Park, Board member of the group APRIL (opposed to lighting the stadium) and President of the Euclid Place Townhome Owners Association, addressed the Board of Education.

“As always, thank you for this opportunity to address you.

“I’m still not quite sure how we got here. This School Board voted in March 2006, 4 to 3 to approve the stadium lights. In a very close vote, the Zoning Board voted lights down. The Planning Commission voted them down as well. During that period, the Historical Preservation Commission recommended against installing stadium lights...twice! Then our Village Trustees unanimously approve stadium lights. I just do not know what the Village Board saw in the High School’s application for a unanimous approval that none of us saw, including this School Board.

“Well whatever, I guess we have them now and the questions now revolve around the “facilities usage” and who and how we are going to pay for all of this.

“The ZBA, PC, and the HPC all understood the negative impacts to the neighborhood. Even though the Village Board, who again unanimously

voted to approve lights, spoke about the negative impact to the neighborhood. Heck, this School Board understood the impacts on this neighborhood. Remember, Musco Lighting, indicates that lights on the stadium field will be 40% brighter than the lights currently used on the High School's South Field.

“Ms. Fisher, a School Board member in March 2006 said in the Board Meeting when lights were approved, ‘We each recognize the impact that lights will have on the immediate neighborhood...if this project goes forward the Board would not support it without a very careful and restrictive plan to deal with these issues.’

“Our Village Board put together a group of citizens, etc. to try to reduce this impact on the neighborhood. Interesting enough, I found in the minutes from the School Board meeting in March 2006 that the Board of Education recommended, “The establishment of a neighborhood advisory committee that would meet two times in the fall and two times in the spring with administration and at least one member of the Board of Education.” It would have been very nice and helpful to have a Board of Education member on the SNAC committee.

“While SNAC did some really good work finishing “the brass tacks,” dotting “i” and crossing “t” of the High Schools unfinished application details, it was a complete joke on other issues that were more meaningful to the neighbors. In fact, the high school was completely uncompromising on the ONLY issue that matters to most neighbors. The ONLY issue was that if you were going to install lights that would reduce the negative impact...usage. So when the SNAC committee reported to the Village Trustees with an unresolved compromise on usage, the trustees were forced to “pull something out of thin air” as a limitation on the high schools usage of the field. Sixty (60) nights will be used, instead of sixty-eight (68).

“So many ideas were thrown out at the SNAC meetings to reduce the number of nights...games only for example. In addition, other ideas that would not reduce the number of nights but that would give the neighborhood a break, including starting Friday night games a half hour early to help finish them earlier. Alternatively, if a game is played Friday night, and a game is then played during the day on Saturday, the stadium field would remain closed to use on Sunday. This would give the neighborhood at least one day off. But the High School representatives on the SNAC committee absolutely would not compromise...not one little bit.

“Here is another quote from that School Board meeting in March 2006. Mr. Conway continued that he had a problem with allowing fourteen (14) games. I heard the concerns of the residents in the

immediate area and how stadium lights would impact the neighbors. He believed there is a compromise.'

"Ms. Ranney wanted to know the definitive number of night games to be played. Mr. Lanenga noted that the proposal was for ten (10) night games, which were slated to start at 6:00 p.m." I believe football is now scheduled for a 7:30 p.m. start.

"Mr. Rigas clarified that there would be six games in the spring beginning in March. There would be three or four football games in August through the last week of October, when playoffs would begin. The four additional games would be soccer and field hockey."

"Dr. Greenwald asked if there were a middle ground. He also had been concerned about an escalation of use."

"Well, it ended up being more than the 10 nights just as Ms. Ranney and Mr. Rigas felt there would be and Mr. Conway had a problem with more than 14 nights. What has happened is exactly what Dr. Millard acknowledged would happen at that meeting in March. She said, "It would be inevitable, as it will be difficult not to use them. Lights will be a luxury item expected to be used." So it turns out that there are sixteen Friday night games until 9 or 10:30 p.m. under the lights in the stadium, as well as a large amount of other varsity, junior varsity, and freshman games, etc. adding up to sixty nights of use a year with the majority of those being night games.

"In what I feel was an ill-informed decision made by our Village Board has made me feel as though I've completely wasted at least four years of my time on this issue. You have to know the strain this process has put on the relationship with neighbors and the high school. Now the unwillingness of the high school to compromise on usage now that lights are going up has put the relationship between the high school and the community in an even worse strained condition. And while I feel there is very little or no chance of getting further restrictions on usage, I feel that I have to ask this School Board to put a further restriction on itself and further reduce the number of nights the lights are used.

"One last thing, I want you to know this is my official resignation from high school lighting issues. I really hate being that old guy sitting on the front porch saying, "Hey you damn kids, turn that thing down and get off my lawn." It's not who I am.

"Today, as the school board votes to approve a contract to install lights, I can stand here and feel I went all 15 rounds and did not give up on fighting for what I felt was the right thing for my neighborhood, my friends, neighbors family, and myself. Please, strongly consider further usage restrictions. Your neighbors would very much appreciate it.

Thanks again for your time!”

Agenda Order

Dr. Millard noted that the personnel recommendation would be moved into closed session

Board Comments

In another venue, Dr. Lee hoped the Board of Education would consider the issue of placing further restrictions upon night games. He felt the public raised valid issues. There was discussion about a Board of Education member being included in meeting with the neighbors. Dr. Millard concurred with Dr. Lee. Dr. Weninger noted that the Stadium Neighborhood Advisory Committee (SNAC) had been established by the Village of Oak Park and there had been no requirement for a Board of Education member to be on it.

On behalf of the Board of Education, Mr. Conway recognized and acknowledged the service that Jack Lanenga had provided in the role of Assistant Superintendent for Operations. He would no longer be at the Board of Education table as he had recently taken on new responsibilities in the District.

Stadium Lights

OPRFHS held a bid opening for the stadium lights on July 8. Four vendors responded and the contract was awarded to the lowest responsible bidder, Utility Dynamics Corporation.

Discussion ensued regarding amount of energy that would be used to run the lights over 25 years, the different bid amounts, and the cost of the lights. Early in the discussion, the actual cost of the lights was unknown but later in the meeting, it was reported that the lights cost \$124,900. All the contractors were quoted the same price by Musco. Thus, the difference in bids was a result of labor costs. The projected cost for running the lights for 25 years was \$31,000.

While Dr. Lee concurred with Ms. Patchak-Layman that the school has a responsibility to know what it is receiving, e.g., the stadium lights and to agree to support the burden of the additional costs such as clean up, security, and a possible berm along Linden Avenue, he did not believe the vote should be postponed. Mr. Conway concurred that the staff had provided the necessary information in order for the Board of Education to take a vote.

Dr. Lee moved to award the contract for installation of Musco lighting standards at the OPRFHS stadium to Utility Dynamics Corporation; seconded by Mr. Conway. A roll call vote resulted in six ayes and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Motion carried.

Ms. Patchak-Layman felt the Board of Education had to do its due diligence and she questioned why the high school had not just bought the lights from Musco outright. She did not believe that spending

\$172,000, even if were being given by the Boosters, was an appropriate expenditure of funds at this time, especially with the larger community, the country, and the state in an economic downturn. She felt that money could be spent to improve student academics.

Approval of Check Distribution List Dr. Millard moved to approve the Check Distribution List dated July 16, 2009 (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting); seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Ms. Patchak-Layman questioned whether the kayak was for the swimming pool and Ms. Witham responded affirmatively. Ms. Patchak-Layman inquired about \$2,000 in expenses for two people to attend an Rtl Conference in Myrtle Beach. Dr. Weninger offered to get more information regarding those charges. The discussion of how and who attends conferences will be continued in another venue.

Financial Reports Mr. Allen moved to accept the April and May 2009 Financial Reports, as presented (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting); seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Tentative Budget Ms. Witham reported that the District may now take the AFR Annual Financial Report, upload it into the PMA model, and use it to create spreadsheets, the five-year plan, and the investment plan. She hoped that the narrative included in the tentative budget would be more useful.

Ms. Witham highlighted different portions of the tentative budget, e.g., the revenue and expenditures including a description of the governmental funds, revenue from all sources of all funds, e.g., property taxes, student fees, bookstore, state and federal, etc. Revenue for FY 2010 would increase by 5 percent, reflecting the one-time receipt of ARRA and Federal Stimulus Funds. Ms. Witham also hoped that the high school would be paid the default owed on the TIF funds. She explained that in the discussions about the Education Fund, both Food Service and the Bookstore were excluded because the school expects to receive a slight profit. Expenditures would increase by 1.5 percent. If the school were not receiving the additional one-time funds, it would spend less this year. The District took proactive steps to reduce costs in the following areas 1) tuition fees, 2) furniture and equipment purchases, 3) general administration budgets, 4) clerical staffing, 5) public communication budget, 6) Curriculum and Instruction Department budget, 7) technology budget, and 8) departmental restructuring. As a result, the District will begin to realize financial benefits. The savings from the expired annuity plan will be approximately \$900,000 next year.

Certified staffing will increase 2.0 FTE based on student enrollment and the average number of classes taken. There has been a decrease in

noncertified staff. In 2010, there will be a significant number of retirements, e.g., 12 certified faculty members and 5 administrators, etc.

The Operations and Maintenance Fund will decrease by 1.8 percent because of the negotiations for salaries and benefits in the Buildings & Grounds group.

Two buses and two vans will be replaced, as they had reached their lifetime expectancy.

The IMRF rate is escalating. Next year it will be 11.9%. The assets held by IMRF were impaired during the economic downturn and IMRF intends to increase the rate significantly over the next several years to make up for this shortfall.

The Tort Fund, which includes property, liability, and workers' compensation insurance, will increase 6% for property and casualty due to significant losses in the pool, but there will be a decrease of 17% in the workers' compensation insurance premium.

The long-range projections, included on page 30, showed a status quo, although deficit spending will be less than what was projected in 2014. The District will still have to go for a referendum in 2018. While the revenue is less, so are the expenditures. Ms. Witham hoped to negotiate something with the TIF agreements.

A review of the staffing levels from 2006 to 2010 was provided. In FY 2010, there will be 5.1 fewer staff, while student enrollment will remain steady.

Ms. Witham noted that the District would spend \$1 million less than last year due to the expiration of retirement agreements and changes in staffing.

Referencing page 77, Ms. Witham noted that the decrease in General Instructional expenditures was due to the expiration of faculty retirement costs. Director services are provided by Special Education. Additional changes in this report were a result of IPAM, Illinois Program Accounting Manual, e.g., the principal and assistant principals were moved to building administration and Human Resources were moved from District to Central Administration. There was a reduction in Support Services-Administration due to the one-time expenditure of FY 2009 of \$600,000 due to the closing the Cicero Township Treasurer's Office, a 13% decrease.

When comparing the FY 2009 budget with the FY 2010 budget, there is a 16.59% decrease in employee benefits.

Discussion ensued.

Q: Regarding the increase in revenue from local sources showing a 3 ½ to 4%, is the school only allowed to increase taxes on property that is not new but not more than 1/10 of 1%.

A: The school has not levied the increase by 1 percent yet. The Board of Education will take action on the 2009 Levy in December.

Q: If the economy does not recover, will all institutions have to put more of their income in the retirements of IMRF employees.

A: IMRF could perform better or less. IMRF wants to be fully funded; TRS is not fully funded. Eventually, the rate could come back down to 8%. The worst possible scenario would be that the employer's contribution would be 16% and that is reflected in the projections.

Q: What would the effect of 16% participation be on the school?

A: The District is projecting that scenario and hoping that the trend moves back down again. Until then, more money will go into the IMRF fund rather than the Education Fund to meet that obligation.

Q: Five years ago, the District projected that if nothing changed, the District would have to go for a tax referendum in 2018. Had any assumptions changed that would cause the District to change that conclusion?

A: The District continues to do CPI projections and it is doing better, but there will be some deficit spending in 2014 and large deficit spending 2018.

Q: Are the Board of Education initiatives reflected?

A: No contingency dollar amount was included in this budget. Dr. Lee stated that the partial answer to this question, based on the resolution the Board of Education passed in January, was that the money would be needed for Board initiatives; it was resolved to set up a process of acquiring that money by changing priorities and spending less on one items rather than more on other items. That process is one of the goals for the 2009-10 school year, e.g., to develop the process by which the Board of Education may change priorities.

Q: Is there a soft amount allocated for supplies, materials, consultants, etc.?

A: The District uses a zero-based budgeting process, which provides for a very detailed budget and no soft amount is included.

Q: What was trade off for the stadium lights and related expenditures?

A: Capital expenditures were delayed.

Mr. Allen commended Ms. Witham and her staff on this work. Have been fiscally responsible has enabled the District to carry out its true mission of providing educational excellence.

Dr. Weninger remarked that this document is substantial and the intent is to expand it and make it the Annual Report and Budget.

Ms. Witham noted that the budgeting process had been moved up by 30 days and the Board of Education will be asked to approve the final budget at its regular August Board of Education meeting.

Display of 2009-2010 Budget

Mr. Allen moved to approve the Resolution regarding the Tentative Budget for Fiscal Year 2009-2010 to be placed on display 30 days; seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Closed Session

At 8:46 a.m., on Thursday, July 16, 2009, Mr. Finnegan moved to enter into closed session for the purpose of discussing student disciplinary cases 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(10); seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

At 10:45 a.m., on Thursday, July 16, 2009, the Board of Education resumed its open session.

Visitors

Judie Wilson of the League of Women Voters and Chuck Fieldman of the Oak Leaves attended.

Student Discipline

Dr. Millard moved to expel EXP 07/16/09-05 held in abeyance for the first semester of the 2009-2010 school predicated on enrollment at an alternative placement, and that the student's return to campus would be conditioned upon the following: 1) No instances of being under the influence or in possession of an illegal substance; 2) that the student undergo substance use/abuse counseling in addition to what was imposed by Police Department (such as that available through Thrive Counseling); and 3) that the student's academic performance, behavior, and attendance are satisfactory or better as determined by the student's Pupil Support Services (PSS) Team; seconded by Mr. Conway. A roll call vote resulted in all five ayes and two nays. Motion carried. Ms. McCormack and Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay.

Ms. Patchak-Layman did not support the recommendation because she felt the student would not be best served by moving the student off campus.

Dr. Millard moved to assess tuition charges for student RES 07/16/09-01 in the amount of \$16,561.00 for the 2008-09 school year; seconded by Mr. Conway. A roll call vote resulted in two ayes and five nays. Mr. Finnegan and Dr. Millard voted aye. Motion not carried.

Closed Session

At 11:19 a.m. on Thursday, July 16, Dr. Millard moved to enter closed session for the purpose of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees

of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), as amended by PA. 93—57; and Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular District has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the District finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the closed meeting minutes. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11); seconded by Mr. Conway. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

At 11:42 a.m., the Board of Education reconvened its open session.

**Personnel
Recommendations**

Dr. Millard moved to approve the personnel recommendations as presented (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting); seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in all four ayes. Mr. Conway and Mr. Allen had departed and Ms. Patchak-Layman passed. Motion carried.

**Discussion of
Goals for 2009-10**

Referring to the proposed goals, Dr. Weninger worked with Dr. Millard and Dr. Lee on focusing them. The goals related to 1) Racial Equity, 2) Student Academic Achievement, 3) Recruitment, Employment, and Retention of Professional Staff; 4) Finance; and 5) Learning Environment. Included in the Board of Education packet was a memo relative to the areas not included in the goals with a recommendation to defer them until the end of first semester after the Baldrige assessment is completed and a report is issued. The DLT put more measurements, indices and more fully developed the goals presented. The DLT intends to have the DLT member(s) fully responsible for the goals and they will provide quarterly reports at the PEG meetings and calendarize them. It was noted that the administration would spend much time this year on the Baldrige assessment and the hiring for the following year.

Dr. Millard noted that the format used for developing the goals was SMART: specific, measurable, available, realistic, and timely. These goals were intended for the coming school year.

Goal 1: Racial Equity

By the end of the 2009-2010 school term, develop and implement a professional development program for the Board of Education, and administration, faculty and staff, which addresses racial predictability and disproportionality in student achievement through courageous conversations about race in an effort to develop critical race consciousness that will address how institutionalized racism and micro aggressions are obstacles to the academic achievement of students of color and the success of staff of color.

Ms. Patchak-Layman voiced her concern and disappointment that the Board of Education, as a group, was not asked to prioritize. At the last

meeting, a conversation had not taken place even though the material was available. The Board of Education took the first reiteration of trying to combine all of the activities mentioned at the meeting and said that they might want to prioritize within an item. The step that is missing is having the conversation about what would be a priority within each of the goals. Both Dr. Millard and Dr. Lee stated that conversation was to occur at this Board of Education meeting. Dr. Millard did review the goals, as the Board of Education president, as to what might be a priority. Dr. Lee continued that these were not decisions, but only recommendations.

Discussion ensued regarding Goal 1. Dr. Millard stated that her concern was for the implementation of the care team, to expand it by three fold. Could one work with a large group and still be effective in the expectations and how could the District ensure that all people there were contributors so that the goal is being addressed in an effective way. She did not understand the rationale for the individual teams. Mr. Rouse said that the increase in the number of individuals related to professional development on courageous conversations was because the fact that the District needed to involve more key stakeholders in this work in order to develop the buy-in necessary for implementation the following year. Not enough administrative presence was involved to support the work and the school was being negligent by not adding support staff. The intent was to have a broader impact on this work so that staff knew this was being taken seriously. The District is developing a timeline that will include professional development.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked what would prevent the school from implementing an equity team at the same time, similar to the one at Evanston Township High School, that would have responsibility for the leadership training and the conversation happening at the same time. Mr. Rouse felt that the District needed to develop capital among the Learning Teams first. The development of the care team usually takes place usually in year two or three of the conversations. Last year was OPRFHS's pilot year. Dr. Weninger concurred that the District could only take on so much in any given area. The accountability is for the Board of Education, the Superintendent, and the rest of the District to implement it. One or more DLT members will be responsible for this. Mr. Rouse said that a significant component of an equity team would be to go through the policies and procedures as it relates to the language, systems, etc., that may have an impact to marginalize certain individuals within the groups. Ms. Patchak-Layman felt that looking at the policies for one more year, etc., just delayed action. She felt that both the conversations and the review of the policies, etc., could occur at the same time. The teachers and administrators who have been working on this for a year or more have an opportunity to bring this forward. Mr. Finnegan concurred with Mr. Rouse's statement that in order to have effective change, one must have buy-in from other areas. While

sympathetic to Ms. Patchak-Layman's concern, Ms. McCormack too felt patience was necessary and that this year should be used as a building block for next year.

Ms. Patchak-Layman noted that the revised goal did not meet the community's need for a focused goal. What are being presented in the goal are really activities and strategies that might add to objectives for this year but goals should be easily understood, succinct, and be easy to communicate. Dr. Millard thought the original goal was not realistic for a one-year goal; although it is a vision and ultimate aim. Ms. Patchak-Layman replied that with the SMART goal, the methods happen with the objectives that come under the goal. The District can say to the community that the goal is what it is working on and the objectives will move one forward. When asked if other Board of Education members supported this, Dr. Lee supported Ms. Patchak-Layman's point of view but in fewer words. Dr. Weninger said that could be the goal, but that it would not be accomplished in one year. Based on this discussion, there was consensus to make the following adjustments to Goal 1:

- 1) Condense Goal 1.
- 2) Item 3: Replace "4 quarterly" with "one each semester" and add "to focus on 4a and 4b" after "facilitators." While most of the Board of Education members were willing to spend their time at these meetings, Dr. Weninger noted significant time would be spent in the criterion committees for Baldrige. Dr. Lee was unsure of the productivity of having such discussions on race. Mr. Rouse noted that employees asked where the administrative support was for this process.

Ms. Patchak-Layman suggested that all Board of Education members attend the Courage Conversations Conference in Baltimore in October as a sign of the Board of Education's commitment to this process. Her proposal for the equity team as an action item was because it was more than just symbolism.

The balance of this discussion on the goals would be rescheduled due to the lateness of the day.

Adjournment

At 12:44 p.m. on Thursday, July 16, 2009, Mr. Finnegan moved to adjourn the Special Board Meeting; seconded by Dr. Millard. A roll all vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Dietra D. Millard
President

John C. Allen
Secretary