

MINUTES - REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

December 9, 2009

6:30 P.M.

Educational Services Center

The Board of Education of the Bloomington Public Schools, School District 87, McLean County, Illinois, met in Regular Session.

Ms. Wilma Gleason, Board Secretary, established a quorum and the following Members were present: Mr. Joe Butcher, Mr. Michael Harrison, Dr. Steve Perry, Ms. Judith Webster, Mrs. Mary Yount, Mrs. Millicent Roth, and Mr. John Dirks, Board President.

Present from the administrative staff were Dr. Robert Nielsen, Dr. Barry Reilly, Dr. Teresa Hill and Mr. David Wood.

Mr. Dirks stated that, "In accordance with the Truth in Taxation Law (35 ILCS 200/18-60) the Board of Education will now hold a public hearing on the 2009 Tax Levy for the Bloomington Public Schools, District #87.

The District prepared a 2009 Levy Report which the Board reviewed at its October 28, 2009 meeting. The Board also approved a resolution estimating the amount necessary from the property tax for the next fiscal year and approved publication of Notice of a Public Hearing on the 2009 Levy in *The Pantagraph* on November 27, 2009.

The proposed 2009 levy, including debt service, is \$40.8 M, an increase of 2.3% over the 2008 levy and a 5.86% increase over the 2008 extension. The main use of additional funds is to pay increases in salaries, benefits, and purchased services and to offset less state and federal funds.

David Wood, Chief Financial and Legal Officer for District #87, will summarize the 2009 levy and the Board and members of the public will then have an opportunity to discuss the budget."

Mr. Wood summarized the 2009 levy and indicated that nothing had changed since the Levy Report was presented in November. He stated that the specific amount paid by each taxpayer will ultimately depend on their particular assessment and the final tax rate.

Mr. Dirks asked, "Is there any discussion from the Board?"

There was no discussion by the Board.

Mr. Dirks asked, "Is there any discussion from the public?"

There was no discussion from the public.

Mr. Dirks stated, "The Public Hearing is now concluded."

Mr. Dirks presented the Minutes for approval. It was moved by Mr. Harrison, seconded by Mr. Butcher, that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education held on November 11, 2009, and the Minutes of the Closed Session of the Board of Education held on November 11, 2009, be approved. Ms. Webster asked that on page 2, 3rd paragraph, the minutes be changed to reflect that graduation rates affect the economy. Upon a roll call vote, all Members present voted "Aye." Motion carried.

It was moved by Dr. Perry and seconded by Ms. Webster to move the Public Comment portion of the agenda prior to approval of the Consent Agenda. Upon a roll call vote, all Members present voted "Aye." Motion carried.

Dr. Nielsen introduced Mr. Willie Brown from State Farm Insurance Companies. Mr. Brown is a 1966 Bloomington High School graduate who has greatly supported District 87 Schools. Mr. Brown is retiring from State Farm on December 29, 2009. Dr. Nielsen stated that Mr. Brown has always been available and willing to help District 87 Schools in every way.

Mr. Dirks stated that early in 2005, District 87 and Unit 5 began the Achievement Gap Task Force with Mr. Brown as the chair. The task force appointed a data reporting team which implemented IlliniData, a parental involvement team, an after school program expansion, and adopt-a-school team, all with funding from State Farm. Mr. Brown is part of 100 Black Men and has been involved in mentoring efforts encouraging kids to stay in school. Mr. Brown has been active in the Western Avenue Community Center, Youth Impact for McLean County, was grand marshal of the Sheridan Parade, and was a BHS Hall of Fame inductee in 2007.

Mr. Brown commented on several individuals who influenced his life. He further stated that any successes he has had in his life are partly due to those individuals in District 87. Mr. Brown said he is very proud of the education he received as a student in District 87.

The Board and Administration thanked Mr. Brown for his support of District 87 Schools.

Mr. Butcher attended the Regional Planning Commission on December 2, 2009. Mr. Butcher also attended the School Board Convention in Chicago in November; he attended a session on religion and free speech in schools.

Ms. Webster attended the School Board Convention. She attended sessions on evaluating school wellness programs, legislative issues impacting school districts, lost generations - advanced learning panel looking at gifted students, panel discussion on poverty and how it affects students' performance, and "going green" (moving Board packets into an electronic media).

Mrs. Roth attended a session on leading as a school board through strategic planning where an emphasis was placed on ensuring that the Board has a mission statement and vision in place. This has been a focus of our Board.

Mrs. Roth also attended the delegate assembly and voted as a delegate. The Board considered supporting most of what the Resolutions Committee recommended. The recommendation to remove the ACT from the Prairie State Exam was highly debated. There were districts that feel that although the ACT isn't necessarily aligned with the learning standards, it does, by virtue that it is college focused, encourage students who may not have been considering college to do so. Mrs. Roth voted against the resolutions committee because of recent discussions regarding the benefit of the ACT; the motion failed. A belief statement was adopted, and Mrs. Roth will distribute it to Board members.

Dr. Perry asked when resolutions are proposed in the calendar year. Mr. Dirks stated that it is generally sometime in the summer. Mrs. Roth will inform the Board.

Dr. Perry attended the BHS/BJHS Choir Concert on December 8, 2009. He also attended the School Board Convention and a session on new technology warnings to school boards to not get over involved in punishing or censoring students' free speech when they post things on facebook. He attended a Freedom of Information Act session reiterating that employee evaluations are going to be open; expect court challenges immediately and new legislation next year.

Mrs. Yount attended the Facilities Committee meeting recently to decide on paint colors for BHS hallways. Mrs. Yount attended the School Board Convention and the Diversity and Inclusion seminar at the convention as well as updates on special education law.

Mr. Harrison - No report.

Mr. Dirks attended the Facilities Committee meeting recently. He attended the School Board Convention and a session on Web 2.0 for School Board Members and Administrators as well as a session on local property tax revenues. A few years ago, there was a task force comprised of legislators, school district employees and business people to study this issue; a report is forthcoming in the near future. Mr. Dirks attended another session, "What's on the fiscal horizon"; school board members took on two legislative presenters making for a contentious meeting. Mr. Dirks gave Mr. Woods literature from the American Schools Foundation Alliance.

It was moved by Mrs. Roth, seconded by Mrs. Yount, that the Agenda (Human Resources Report, Bills, Payroll, Treasurer's Report, Financial Summary, District Liability Insurance, Asbestos Abatement for 2010 Renovations Bid Recommendation) be approved. Upon a roll call vote, all Members present voted "Aye". Motion carried.

Dr. Nielsen stated that he attended the Sheridan Elementary School 1st/2nd grade holiday concert as well as the BHS/BJHS choral concert on December 8, 2009. The orchestra and band concert is Thursday, December 10, 2009, at 7:30 pm at BHS. District 87's Technology Department and the Illinois State Police are presenting a seminar for parents regarding Internet safety on Monday, December 13, 2009, at Bloomington High School at 6:00 pm. Dr. Nielsen wished everyone a happy holiday season.

It was moved by Ms. Webster, seconded by Mr. Butcher, that the Resolution for the Board Levy be approved. Upon a roll call vote, all Members present voted "Aye". Motion carried.

It was moved by Dr. Perry, seconded by Mrs. Roth, that the Board appoint Dr. Barry Reilly as Superintendent beginning with the 2010-11 school year upon Dr. Nielsen's retirement as Superintendent on June 30, 2010. Upon a roll call vote, all Members present voted "Aye." Motion carried.

Dr. Reilly thanked Dr. Nielsen for the opportunities he's been given in District 87. He stated that he has had a great training ground in working with Dr. Nielsen, as well as a great foundation in working with all of the administrators in District 87.

The Board and administration congratulated Dr. Reilly and his family.

It was moved by Mr. Butcher, seconded by Ms. Webster, that the Board go into Closed Session to consider an action against, affecting or on behalf of the District that 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 minutes of the closed meeting. Upon a roll call vote, all Members present voted "Aye." Motion carried.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Dirks adjourned the meeting.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

President

Secretary