

MINUTES - REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

September 13, 2006

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. Marianne Clancy, Board Secretary, established a quorum and the following Members were present: Mr. Keith Davis, Mr. Joseph Butcher, Mrs. Cheryl Jackson, Mr. John Dirks and Mrs. Janet Smith, Board President. Mrs. Millicent Roth was absent.

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

Ms. Linda Aschenbrener, Public Relations Facilitator, was also in attendance.

Present from the news media was Ms. Sharon Wolfe, The Pantagraph.

Mrs. Smith presented the Minutes for approval. It was moved by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Butcher, that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education held on August 23, 2006 and the Minutes of the Closed Session held on August 23, 2006 be approved. Upon a roll call vote, all Members present voted "Aye". Motion carried.

Mrs. Millicent Roth entered the meeting at 6:34 p.m.

Mrs. Cindy Helmers, Bloomington High School (BHS) Principal, introduced BHS Senior Kristina Warren, who was recently named a National Merit Semi-Finalist. To be a Semi Finalist a student must score a 218 or above on the PSAT/NMSQT (Preliminary Standard Achievement Test/ National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test). Kristina scored a 235 and was in the top 12 students of the 50,000 students in the State of Illinois with a score of 235. Mrs. Helmers stated that she hopes Kristina will continue on to become a Finalist. Merit Scholar designees are selected on the basis of their skills, accomplishments, and potential for success in rigorous college studies, without regard to gender, race, ethnic origin, or religious preference.

Mrs. Smith congratulated Kristina and asked her to come forward and receive personal congratulations from the Board.

Mrs. Helmers introduced Mr. John Szabo, Athletic Director. She stated he has been recognized by the Illinois High School Association as the 2005-2006 Boys Track and Field Coach of the Year. Mrs. Helmers stated that in addition to serving as the District's Athletic Director, Mr. Szabo is the Head Coach of the BHS Cross County and Track teams.

Mrs. Smith congratulated Mr. Szabo and asked him and his wife to come forward and receive personal congratulations from the Board.

Mrs. Smith stated that she made some changes to the Committee Assignments and she asked that Ms. Clancy send out those changes when made.

Mr. Dirks stated that he and Mrs. Smith attended a Facilities Committee Meeting yesterday with Dr. Nielsen to look at the north side of BHS and some of the practice fields. He stated that he thinks that there will be a plan to look at some options in the near future.

Mr. Dirks stated that tomorrow is the first organizational meeting for the Beyond the Books Educational Foundation for this year.

Mrs. Jackson stated that the next meeting of the Cornbelt Division of the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB), will be Wednesday, October 18, 2006 at Olympia High School. She asked Board Members to let Ms. Clancy know if they would like to attend.

Mrs. Smith stated that she attended a Regional Planning Committee Meeting on September 6, 2006. Afterwards she stopped at the County Assessor's Office where she was given information concerning the TIFF District which she passed on to Mr. Wood. She stated that Mr. Butcher will attend the October 4 meeting with her to see if he would be interested in serving as the District 87 representative to the Committee when Mrs. Smith's term ends in December.

Mrs. Smith stated that on September 12 she and Mr. Dirks met with Dr. Nielsen about the north side of BHS.

Mrs. Smith stated that last night she attended a Sesquicentennial Meeting at the Educational Services Center (ESC) and the plans for that event are progressing nicely.

Mrs. Roth stated that as a parent of a school age child this year, she is becoming more aware of the issues that are faced in the District. She is very proud of the people that work for the District. The kindergarten classes at Oakland were bursting at the seams this year and an additional kindergarten class was needed and a fifth section was added.

Mrs. Roth stated that last evening she attended an orientation at Oakland School and was thrilled with all the new computers in the Learning Center. She stated that the Learning Center thanked her as a Board Member for the additional equipment that was added this year.

Mrs. Smith stated that on August 31 she, Dr. Nielsen and Mr. Dirks attended the Elected Officials Reception at the Interstate Center. She stated it was a good event.

Mrs. Smith stated that on September 1 she, Mrs. Jackson, Mr. Dirks and Mr. Butcher participated in the Sheridan School Back To School Parade and it was fun as usual.

Mrs. Smith stated that she, Mrs. Jackson, Mrs. Roth and Mr. Dirks attended the BHS Booster Club Steak Fry and it was a good event.

Mrs. Smith stated that there is a Partners in Planning Conference sponsored by the Illinois Association of County Board Members and Commissioners on October 4 and 5. She stated that she will be attending on October 5 as a representative from the Regional Planning Committee.

Mrs. Smith asked if anyone had any comments regarding the longstanding rental agreement between the WAVES (Bloomington/Normal YMCA Swim Program) and District 87 that was received this week? She stated she would like to give the administration some direction whether to renew the old agreement with changes to the rental amount.

Mr. Davis stated that the counterproposal is not fair to the District or the taxpayers and he would not support the funding suggested.

Mrs. Roth stated she would not support the counter proposal.

Mrs. Jackson stated that she would not support the counter proposal, however she thinks some issues are raised making a change like this immediately that troubles her, especially with a group that relies on fundraising and member fees to pay its rent. She stated that she would not be averse to suggesting that Mr. Wood talk with the WAVES and see if we can come to an agreement to make any changes on a gradual basis. Mrs. Jackson stated she is completely against the proposal to using a "practice day" because part of the answer to affording the rent is to cut their practice time. Mrs. Jackson stated that she would like the administration to work with the WAVES and come to some agreement that will benefit both parties.

Mrs. Smith asked Mr. Wood to continue talking with the WAVES and see if a mutual agreement can be reached.

Dr. Nielsen stated that he and Mrs. Helmers have been meeting with representatives of the U.S. Coliseum to explore moving the BHS Graduation to the Coliseum. He stated that they believe that there is a significant amount of merit to doing this, and there are some downsides.

Positives of having commencement at the Coliseum: No restrictions on number of guests for families; not effected by the weather; the Coliseum would provide the setup and the security; and the Coliseum would take the graduate's image and put it up on the big screen with the student's name scrolling at bottom of screen.

Dr. Nielsen stated that the cost would be approximately \$6,000 at the high end. We presently commit our entire custodial and maintenance staff the day of graduation to set up both the football field and the north gym. We paid over \$2,000 last year in overtime tearing down the setup after the ceremony is over.

Dr. Nielsen stated that we have also talked about moving graduation to a Sunday afternoon. Parents could come to the ceremony in early afternoon and then have their celebrations later in the day. This would alleviate the need for staff to stay late in the evening to tear down.

Dr. Nielsen stated that the downside is mostly financial, however, breaking a tradition and moving the ceremony to another location will be another downside to some. We want to make this a great event for the families and the Coliseum provides the opportunity to put on a first class performance.

Mr. Davis asked how much the District was foregoing in property taxes because the Coliseum was part of the downtown TIF district?

Mr. Wood said he might be able to determine that if he could get more information on the assessed value of the property.

Mr. Davis stated that the Coliseum might want to consider giving the District a break on the cost of graduation given this loss in taxes to the District.

Dr. Nielsen stated that we might be able to negotiate down the \$6,000 estimate of having graduation at the Coliseum. He stated that his sense, from discussions with representatives of the Coliseum, was that they were not trying to make a profit off this event only cover their cost of operation.

Mrs. Jackson stated that she thought it would be a good idea to talk to the graduating seniors. There is a lot of emotion involved in our graduation ceremony at the football field.

Mrs. Helmers stated that through informal discussions with some seniors, many of them like the idea of moving graduation to the Coliseum and some parents have contacted her and think it's a great idea. She stated there are some students who truly want graduation to be outside but there is never a guarantee that it will be.

Mrs. Roth stated that she graduated in the gym and it is a terrible experience. It's very difficult to determine which relatives will be chosen to attend. She stated she thinks it's a great idea to have the graduation ceremony at the Coliseum as long as we can maintain some control over the event.

Mr. Dirks stated that he has heard from parents of seniors this year that they think it would be a good idea to have the event at the Coliseum.

Mr. Butcher thinks it's an excellent idea to explore and he would like to see what the cost would actually be. He also stated that he would like to have some input by those who would be directly affected from the traditional change.

Dr. Nielsen stated that Prairie City Soccer League (PCSL) and the city of Bloomington have had an ongoing discussion about District 87 using the PCSL soccer complex for the BHS soccer team's games. The real issue is that there is no cost to District 87 to use this property. It is a year to year agreement. The City has agreed in principle to make improvements. They will maintain the fields, and down the road the goal is to put up lights. We have discovered anything done on Federal Aviation Association (FAA) property must be run by them. They want to know exactly how the lights will be situated and where. This agreement will be brought back to the Board at the next Board Meeting. He stated that he welcomes any comments regarding this agreement. The City Council will either look at this later in September or in October for approval. The PCSL has already met with their Board and they have approved it.

Mr. Dirks stated this is a great idea. The only reservation that he has is that the City has indicated that they may build restrooms and maybe concessions, but those two items never actually make it into the agreement.

Dr. Nielsen stated that there is an impetus to the City building restrooms and concessions because BHS cannot host any tournaments at our field due to the fact that it is not a regulation size field. This will enable the District to invite teams for tournaments which the City

understands will bring in a significant amount of money to the community. So there is an incentive on their part to create a solid stadium field. He stated that Normal Unit 5 has some portable score boards that we may be able to borrow for a while.

Mrs. Smith presented the Consent Agenda for Approval.

Dr. Nielsen asked that Consent Agenda A, Human Resources Report, be moved to Board Action C.

It was moved by Mrs. Jackson, seconded by Mr. Butcher, that the Consent Agenda (Bills, Payroll, Resolution: Review of Verbatim Tapes of Closed Sessions and Athletic Officials Stipends for 2006-07) be approved. Upon a roll call vote, all Members present, voted "Aye". Motion carried. (See with Original Minutes, Attachment 9-13-06/1)

Dr. Nielsen asked the Board to contact Ms. Marianne Clancy with any requests to attend workshops at the Triple I Conference in Chicago in November, and she will make any reservations necessary.

Dr. Nielsen stated that we are off to a great school year.

Dr. Nielsen stated that with the resignation of Mr. Uvaldo Herrera, the Board will have 45 days to fill the vacancy. We will accept applications through September 29. Candidates must be 18 years of age, a U.S. citizen, a registered voter of District 87 and a resident of the District at least one year prior to their appointment to the Board.

The Board will review all applications and set up times for interviews of the candidates which will be in Closed Session. The new Board Member will be seated on the Board at the October 11, 2006 Board Meeting.

Mrs. Smith thanked Mr. Herrera for his service to the Board. He brought a different perspective from his life experiences from what most of us has gone through living in the Bloomington/Normal area. He will be sadly missed but she is very happy for him and wished him the best of luck in his new job in Arizona.

It was moved by Mrs. Jackson, with regrets, seconded by Mr. Dirks that Mr. Uvaldo Herrera's Resignation be approved. Upon a roll call vote, all Members present, voted "Aye". Motion carried. (See with Original Minutes, Attachment 9-13-06/2)

Ms. Smith asked for a nomination for Vice-President of the Board of Education.

It was moved by Mrs. Roth, seconded by Mr. Davis that Mrs. Jackson be appointed Vice-President of the Board of Education, for the remaining term. Upon a roll call vote, all Members present, voted "Aye". Motion carried.

Dr. Nielsen stated we need to make a correction under the Retirement of Certificated Staff section of the Human Resources Report. The information for Ms. Cathy Roberts' retirement is incorrect. Her retirement will not cost the District anything under the ERO, which is a savings of almost \$40,000.

With that correction, it was moved by Mr. Butcher, seconded by Mr. Davis, that the Human Resources Report be approved. Upon a roll call vote, all Members present, voted "Aye". Motion carried. (See with Original Minutes, Attachment 9-13-06/3)

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mrs. Smith adjourned the meeting.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

President

Secretary