

MINUTES
McLean County Unit District No. 5
BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Session
November 10, 2004

The Board of Education of Community Unit School District No. 5, McLean and Woodford Counties, Illinois, met in regular session on November 10, 2004, at approximately 6:00 p.m. at the District Office, 1809 West Hovey Avenue, Normal, Illinois.

1.0 Roll Call Members present: Gail Ann Briggs, Tom Ellsworth, Scott Lay, Meta Mickens-Baker, Steve Whittington, and Board President Rick Percy. Members absent: Martin O'Connor.

2.0 Closed Session Briggs moved, Ellsworth seconded, to adjourn to closed session to consider the employment and compensation of specific employees, collective negotiating matters, pending litigation, and semi-annual review of closed session minutes. Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Also present: Superintendent Dr. Alan Chapman, Assistant Superintendent of Operations/Human Resources John Pye, and Clerk of the Board Cindy Prescher.

3.0 Return to Public Session At approximately 7:10 p.m., Briggs moved, Lay seconded, to come out of closed session and return to public session. Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Also present: Chapman, Pye, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum/Instruction Jim Braksick, Executive Director of Secondary Education Bruce Boswell, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer Tod Altenburg, Prescher, Meghan Leiseberg, Michelle Steinbacher from The Pantagraph, Kevin Heinkes from WJBC, Chuck Bartlett, Linda Chizmar, Cathy Greene, Grethe Armstrong, Terri Daugherty, Julie Basting, John Puzauskas, Robert Burritt, Mary Rossio, Amy Pfeifer, Michael Staehely, Matt Muehlbauer, Angie Midnight, Kenneth Dufelmeier, Rich Schroeder, Richard McLean, Gillian Stengel, Emily Brooks, David Merrill, Anne McDowell, Valerie Leichtenberg, and others.

4.0 Pledge of Allegiance The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

5.0 Focus on Students/ Good News Reports The following were recognized:
Good News Reports

- Terri Daugherty, Title I Parent Coordinator, and Anne McDowell, Pre-K Parent Coordinator

6.0 Public Comments The following individual addressed the Board:

	<u>Topic</u>
• Valerie Leichtenberg, P. O. Box 94, Hudson	Invitation to Board

7.0 Reports/Discussion

7.1 Tax Levy Report
Altenburg reported on the proposed tax levy for 2004. He reported the District's equalized assessed valuation to be about \$1.4 billion. Based on his forecasting, Altenburg recommended a levy of \$1,552,961,765 for the as needed levies and \$1,592,961,765 for the statutory levies. He presented historical data pertaining to last year's levy and reviewed the estimated tax rate for 2004. Altenburg noted that a rate increase of about 4.4 cents is anticipated for 2004. The recommended levy for 2004 was reported to be \$61,347,409, with an automatic levy on behalf of the counties for the District's Bond and Interest Fund. He remarked that the District would also abate a portion of the debt service for the tax levy, as it has done for the past four years.

As a result of S.B. 2112 that was signed into law in July 2004, Altenburg stated the assessor's office has indicated the District stands to lose about 2 percent in EAV growth due to landowners who qualify for both the Senior Citizen and Homestead exemptions.

Altenburg noted the District was attempting to maximize its tax rates while still holding them at a reasonable level for Unit 5 taxpayers. It was also noted that a conservative 5 percent of the District's administrative salaries have been shifted to the Tort Fund. This has been deemed to be appropriate by the District's financial auditor.

Also presented was the estimated impact of the change in assessed values on the real estate tax rates and tax levy extension, as well as schedules of tax rate limitations and ten-year tax collections.

Altenburg reported that the Notice of the Proposed Property Tax Increase for the District would be published in *The Pantagraph* no more than 15 days, but no less than 7 days from the December 8 board meeting. He added that a Truth in Taxation notice would also be published as the District is anticipating more than 5 percent growth in EAV. Altenburg indicated he would file the levy with the County Clerks' offices in McLean and Woodford Counties following approval of the levy on the 8th.

Board members reviewed the proposed levy and asked questions regarding EAV growth as compared to past years, the Educational Fund tax levy extension, the Tort Immunity Fund levy, and maximization of tax rates. Chapman remarked that the District was in the process of developing a risk management plan to help in determining appropriate expenditures to assign to the Tort Immunity Fund.

Of the tax rates for school districts belonging to the Large Unit District Association (LUDA), it was reported that Unit 5's tax rate in the Educational Fund and total tax rate are each \$.17 less than the LUDA average.

8.0 Action

8.1 Adopt Resolution for Estimated Amount Necessary to be Levied for the Year 2004
Altenburg recommended Board approval of the Resolution for the Estimated Amount Necessary to be Levied for the Year 2004. Lay moved, Ellsworth seconded, to adopt the Resolution for the Estimated Amount Necessary to be Levied for the Year 2004 as presented. (Attachment #1) Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

8.2 Action From Closed Session

Chapman remarked that there were a number of issues discussed in closed session and motions to be approved as a result of the discussion. He recommended approval of each of those motions.

Briggs moved, Lay seconded, to grant the request as described in closed session for the employee discussed in closed session, based on the individual's projected retirement in June 2006. Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Lay moved, Mickens-Baker seconded, to approve the Settlement Agreement discussed in closed session. Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Briggs moved, Lay seconded, to open to the public and approve the closed session minutes as discussed in closed session. (Attachment #2) Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Lay moved, Mickens-Baker seconded, to approve 2004-2005 salaries and benefits for food service personnel, transportation personnel, and educational office personnel. (Attachment #3) Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

8.3 Approve Proposed Secondary Course Title Changes and High School Course Description Handbook for 2005-2006

Boswell reported that in a school year with budget constraints, there have been very few courses with significant proposed changes. He pointed out some course title changes and highlighted some of the minor handbook changes. Following approval of the handbook, Boswell indicated it would be distributed to the schools prior to winter break. Registration for courses for the next school year will begin in January. Ellsworth moved, Mickens-Baker seconded, to approve the proposed secondary course title changes and high school Course Description Handbook for 2005-2006 as presented. (Attachment #4) In response to a question about virtual high school, Boswell noted that the Board had already approved that as an option up to 1 credit. He added that this year the virtual option was restricted. Boswell pointed out that expanding the virtual option would require the Board to give up more control. In response to a question about whether the District's graduation requirements are where they should be in order to be competitive with other high-performing school districts, Boswell remarked that raising the requirements would limit students' options as far as collective courses. The potential for students taking Area Vocational Center courses or being involved in a work program would be limited. Opportunities to be successful would also be limited for some students who struggle with school. Concerning more students taking AP exams, Boswell commented that colleges view this as providing them with weaker students. Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

8.4 Approve Intergovernmental Agreement Between the Regional Superintendent of Schools of DeWitt, Livingston, and McLean Counties, Illinois and Unit 5 School District Regarding Criminal History Records Checks

Chapman recommended approval of an Intergovernmental Agreement that would allow the District to work cooperatively with the Regional Office of Education in regard to the required criminal history record checks for potential substitute teachers. He noted that a law went into effect this summer requiring each school district to do these record checks for its employees. This requirement has caused school districts to incur significant costs. With this agreement, the ROE would administer the finger printing and share the information with participating school districts. The participating districts would share the cost of the finger printing. Chapman noted that Eric Ruud of the State Attorney's office drafted the proposed agreement. It was noted that fingerprinting costs this year had already cost the District \$6,000, with no state reimbursement for this mandate. Briggs moved, Lay seconded, to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement between the Regional Superintendent of Schools and Unit 5 School District regarding Criminal History Records Checks as presented. (Attachment #5) Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

8.5 Appoint Board Secretary's Designee to Receive Nominating Petitions for the School Board Election

Ellsworth moved, Briggs seconded, to appoint Cynthia Prescher as the Board Secretary's designee to receive nominating petitions for the April 5, 2005 school board election. Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

8.6 Approve Notice of Filing Period for the School Board Election

Chapman recommended approval of the Notice of Filing Period for the School Board Election and noted that the District's attorney had reviewed it. Briggs moved, Lay seconded, to approve the Notice of Filing Period for the April 5, 2005 School Board Election as presented. (Attachment #6) Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

9.0 Consent Agenda

Chapman reviewed the Consent Agenda and recommended its approval. Lay moved, Mickens-Baker seconded, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

9.1 Approval of the Minutes

- October 27, 2004 Regular Meeting

- 9.2 Personnel Matters (Attachment #7)
- 9.3 Payment of Bills and Payrolls (Attachment #8)
- 9.4 Treasurer's Report (Attachment #9)
- 9.5 Other
 - Approve filing of the School Library Grant
 - NCWHS request for Sunday use of the NCWHS Gymnasiums on February 20, 2005 for a basketball competition

Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Ellsworth, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Whittington, Percy. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

10.0 Reports/Discussion

10.1 Board Representative Report

Community Connections Committee (Briggs/Mickens-Baker) – Briggs reported that the first of two town meetings was held on November 3 at the Laborers' Hall in Bloomington. While attendance was low, she remarked that good, interactive discussion took place. Briggs indicated minutes of the November 3 meeting would be available on the Unit 5 website following their approval at this meeting. The committee will review the discussion and suggestions from the meeting and decide how to best disseminate the information. Briggs complimented Chapman and his administrative team for their responses to questions at the meeting. She asked that constructive comments be offered to the committee on the November 3 meeting. Briggs indicated the December 7 Community Connections meeting would be rescheduled. She announced that the Organization of Chinese American scheduled a public forum for December 1, which some Unit 5 board members and administrators would attend. An agenda for that meeting will be provided to board members and administrators prior to the 1st. It was also announced that the next Unit 5 Citizens Advisory Council meeting would be held on November 17 at 7:00 p.m. at Carlock Elementary School.

In addition to posting of the November 3 town meeting minutes on the District's website, Chapman remarked that other board members have offered ideas on other ways to present information derived from the town meeting or investigations initiated at the meeting. It was suggested that the opportunity to submit a comment or suggestion be included on the website with the minutes of the town meeting.

10.2 Enrollment Update

Pye reported student enrollment as of October 29 to be 11,432. He commented that average class size at the elementary level remained at 22.8 and noted that teaching assistant support also remained the same. Growth continues at the elementary and high school levels, with a slight decrease at the middle school level. Pye indicated the enrollment had increased by 3 percent since last October. It was requested that board members be provided with information on the number of available classrooms at each school.

10.3 Freedom of Information Requests

Chapman reported that two requests for public information accessible under the Freedom of Information Act were received and processed. He indicated that one dealt with grocery bid information for the current year. Another request for bid and purchases information was partially processed. A portion of the request was denied as responding would have been unduly burdensome.

11.0 Announcements

Announcements made at the meeting:

- Altenburg commented that he enjoyed the town meeting the other night and felt it had a good turnout considering the weather and road conditions.
- Boswell commented that students submitted artwork for consideration as the cover of the Course Description Handbook for 2005-2006. He indicated one had been selected and written permission would be sought from the student to use the artwork on the cover.
- Lay commented that he and Briggs attended the annual Harvest Day Wiener Roast at Carlock School on October 29.

- Lay said “Good Luck” to the NCHS Girls Volleyball team who would be making its fourth consecutive Elite 8 appearance this Friday.
- President Percy welcomed Pantagraph reporter, Michelle Steinbacher, to the board meeting. Steinbacher indicated she was filling in until a replacement is named for Rebecca Loda.

12.0 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Richard B. Percy, Board of Education President
Community Unit School District No. 5
McLean and Woodford Counties, Illinois

ATTEST:

Scott Lay, Board of Education Vice President