

Minutes
McLean County Unit District No. 5
BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Session
January 16, 2008

The Board of Education of Community Unit School District No. 5, McLean and Woodford Counties, Illinois met in regular session on January 16, 2008 at approximately 7:01 p.m. at the District Office, 1809 W. Hovey Avenue, Normal, Illinois.

Roll Call

Members present: Gail Ann Briggs, Wendy Cannell, Meta Mickens-Baker, Mark Pritchett, John Puzauskas, and President Jay Reece. Members absent: Scott Lay

Open Session

Also present: Superintendent Gary Niehaus, Assistant Superintendent of Operations and Human Resources John Pye, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Jim Braksick, Clerk of the Board Donna Evans, Chief Financial Officer James Gillmeister, Scott Smith of PMA Financial Network, Inc. Prairieland Elementary School Principal Tim Arnold, Meghan Leiseberg, Lori Laughlin, Julia Turner, Pam Reece, Brian Taylor, Cathy Weiss, Phyllis Coulter of *The Pantagraph*, Chuck Bartlett, Kathie Kalina, Jim Fitzpatrick of WJBC, Bruce Boswell, Kelli Hill, and others.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Special Presentation ~ Unit 5 Robotics Team State Qualifiers

- Power-Bots ~ Jacob Bova (Praireland), Blake Byers (Prairieland), Matt Christopherson (PJHS), Nick Huber (Prairieland), David Janik (PJHS), Natalie Janik (Prairieland), Sam Kalina (Prairieland), and Steven Lorenz (PJHS), and Chad Rosenbaum (PJHS).
- Prairieland Ragin' Robot Kickers ~ Brady Anderson, Kayleigh Anderson, Jacob Hayek, CeCe Hill, Eli Hill, Brycen Kirklin, Jacob Mattia, Dylan Oughton, and Eric Reece (Prairieland)

Action

Approve Lease/Purchase Agreement for Portable Classrooms

Pye reported that in order to accommodate anticipated growth, it was his recommendation to add four modular classroom units for the 2008-2009 school year. Units would be distributed at Grove, Northpoint, and Prairieland elementary schools. It was recommended that Jim's Mobile Offices be the supplier of the modular units. (Attachment #1) Briggs moved, Mickens-Baker seconded, to approve the recommendation as presented. Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Cannell, Mickens-Baker, Pritchett, Puzauskas, Reece. Nays: None. **Motion carried**

Approve Financial Advisory Service Provider to the District

Niehaus provided information to the Board regarding the Request for Proposal for Financial Advisor for the District. It was the recommendation of the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee to use PMA Financial Network in the role as financial advisor to the District and First Midstate, Inc. and Wachovia-A.G. Edwards as participants in the underwriting role. (Attachment #2) Cannell moved, Briggs seconded, to approve PMS Financial Network as the Financial Advisor with First Mid-State and Wachovia-A.G. Edwards & Sons, Inc. as underwriter candidates for the potential construction bond sale after a successful referendum. Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Cannell, Mickens-Baker, Pritchett, Puzauskas, Reece. Nays: None. **Motion carried**

Consent Agenda

Niehaus reported that one employee's name was removed from personnel pages. Briggs moved, Pritchett seconded, to approve the Consent Agenda as amended.

Personnel Matters (Attachment #3)

- Staffing Needs

- Resignation/Retirements/Terminations
- Employment
- Contract Revisions
- Leave Requests

Treasurer's Report ~November (Attachment #4)

Approval of Minutes

- November 28, 2007 ~ Closed Session
- November 28, 2007 ~ Regular Session
- December 5, 2007 ~ Special Session
- December 12, 2007 ~ Regular Session

Other

- Request for Approval for Overnight Trips
- NCWHS Music Department (Attachment #5)
- NCHS Music Department (Attachment #6)

Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Cannell, Mickens-Baker, Pritchett, Puzauskas, Reece. Nays: None. **Motion carried**

Reports/Discussion

Custom Training Services

Julia Turner and Lori Laughlin reported that CTS, a management consulting firm, were hired in October to interview District office personnel and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of its operations. (Attachment #7) Items discussed included but were not limited to the following:

- A centralized purchasing system
- Development of employee manuals, job descriptions and Human Resource procedures
- Document retention system
- Creation of full-time dedicated positions for Human Resources
- Employee training program
- Communication plan
- Revisions to the District organizational chart

Freedom of Information Request

Niehaus reported that since the last Board meeting the District had received and processed the following Freedom of Information Requests:

- Mark Kotte, Hudson IL (Attachment #8)
- Lisa Swartz, Normal IL (Attachment #9)
- Patrick Dullard, Normal IL (Attachment #10)

IASB Conference Reports

Reports and discussion on the IASB Annual Conference included but were not limited to the following:

Cannell

- Tour of Lincoln School in Calumet City
- Strategic Planning and 2-Way Communication
- How to Handle Difficult Conversations
- Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Students
- Selling Bonds
- Running a School District Like a Business
- Managing Costs of Group Health Insurance

Puzauskas

- Pre-Conference Workshop - The Board's First Responsibility: Detecting and Communicating a Compelling Vision
- Truth About Premium Bonds, Debt Limit and Cost Effective Finance Plans
- IASB Membership Delegate Assembly

Niehaus

- Met with representatives from First Midstate, Inc. and Chapman and Cutler regarding writing the two questions for the referendum to be placed on the ballot for the February 5 election
- Charter schools

Mickens-Baker

- Pre-Conference Workshop - Comprehensive Workshop for Board Presidents

- Continuous improvement plans in school districts
- College Admissions for Board Members and Administrators
- General Session – *I Choose to Stay: A Teacher's Fight for America's Inner City Schools*, Salome Thomas-El

Briggs

- Pre-Conference Workshop - Comprehensive Workshop for Board Presidents
- Architectural Designs
- Involving the Community in Major Decisions
- Community Study Groups
- General Session – *I Choose to Stay: A Teacher's Fight for America's Inner City Schools*, Salome Thomas-El

Pritchett

- Pre-Conference Workshop - Basics of School Finance
- General Session – *I Choose to Stay: A Teacher's Fight for America's Inner City Schools*, Salome Thomas-El
- Religion and Public Education
- Technology and Governance
- Response to Intervention
- Implementing a Technology Plan for Your School District

Gillmeister

- Risk Management: Strategies to contain costs of workers' compensation, litigation management, employee relations, loss control and containment
- Budget building
- Negotiations

Evans

- Electronic agenda and paperless Board meetings

Enrollment Report and Comparison Report

Pye reported on the monthly enrollment report and comparison figures. (Attachment #11) Current enrollment is 12,478.

Board Representative Committee Meeting Reports

- Facilities Review Committee ~ Pritchett noted that the Facilities Review Committee will meet on Friday, January 18.
- Community Connections Committee ~ Briggs reported on the December 21 Committee meeting. Discussion included the Oakdale open house, future lunch visits with schools, and the upcoming CAC meeting which will be held on Wednesday, January 23. Briggs commented about the importance for Unit 5 to gather information and input from community businesses. This will be an area of ongoing concentration for the Committee. Any issues for future discussion should be addressed to the Committee. Pritchett noted that the Committee will meet on Friday, January 18.
- Board Policy Review Committee ~ Briggs reported that the Committee will review policies for adoption within the next month. More information will be distributed at the next meeting.
- Beyond the Books Educational Foundation Board of Directors ~ Briggs reported that grant applications are available online and that approximately \$33,000 will be awarded to educators in Unit 5 and District 87 for the next school year.
- Consortium for Education Change Continuous Improvement Team ~ Mickens-Baker noted that the January 10 meeting had been cancelled and is rescheduled for January 25 from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the IEA office.
- Unit 5 – Local Government Committee ~ Mickens-Baker noted that the December meeting was postponed and will be rescheduled some time in January.
- McLean County Regional Planning Commission ~ Reece reported that the Commission will meet the first part of February.
- Architectural Services Executive Committee ~ Puzauskas reported that the Committee will recommend that the District work with a construction manager for future building needs. The January 9 meeting discussion included but was not limited to the following:
 - Differences in construction manager vs. general contractor
 - Rezoning
 - Time frame and milestone schedule for all construction needs.
 - Cost controls
 - Request for qualifications for construction projects

- Staffing needs for new facilities
- Development of scopes for renovations for existing facilities
- Environmental designs using LEED certification requirements

It was noted that the next meeting will be January 23.

- Mackinaw Valley Special Education Association Council ~ Cannell reported that the Council met on January 16 to discuss required forms for eligibility services. Pye was elected as chair and Pritchett as secretary for the Council. The next meeting is scheduled for March 19.
- Strategic Planning and Finance Committee ~ Cannell reported that the Committee met on January 16 prior to the meeting to discuss the recommendation for financial advisor. She noted that costs and fees were carefully considered and analyzed by the Committee during the selection process.

Announcements/Comments

- Niehaus reported that he has scheduled monthly meetings with building representatives for the custodial/maintenance employee group. He also noted that he plans to meet with UFSPA representatives on a regular basis as well.
- Niehaus, Cannell, and Mickens-Baker attended the Martin Luther King Awards luncheon on Saturday, January 12.
- It was mentioned that early voting was available through January 31 in the County Clerk office or the Normal Town Hall, late registration and voting are available at the same, and more information about voting can be found on election websites.
- Niehaus reported that he had attended the Chamber of Commerce Ag Banquet on Friday, January 11 where the Lay family was recognized for their contributions to the farm community.
- Mickens-Baker reported that Glenn Elementary School and the Town of Normal are currently working on building a new playground.
- Mickens-Baker complimented the staff at NCHS for their Freshman Orientation program.
- Mickens-Baker reported that the community has a new radio station. WXRJ 94.9 FM has recently had several public services announcements on parent involvement in school.
- Briggs announced that Mickens-Baker and Niehaus participated in a Focus interview on ICN5 on January 15 and that Puzauskas and Niehaus will participate on City Vision on Thursday, January 17 to discuss District issues.
- Pritchett noted he recently became a deputy voter registrar.
- Board members reported on their attendance at several PTO meetings throughout the District.
- Braksick announced that the Textbook and Curriculum Hearing will be held at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 30 at the District Office.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

**Jay Reece, Board of Education President
Community Unit School District No. 5
McLean and Woodford Counties, Illinois**

ATTEST:

John Puzauskas, Board of Education Secretary

Approved Date: February 13, 2008