

Minutes
McLean County Unit District No. 5
BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Session
November 12, 2008

The Board of Education of Community Unit School District No. 5, McLean and Woodford Counties, Illinois met in regular session on November 12, 2008 at approximately 6:05 p.m. at the District Office, 1809 W. Hovey Avenue, Normal, Illinois.

Roll Call

Members present: Gail Ann Briggs, Wendy Cannell, Scott Lay, Meta Mickens-Baker, Mark Pritchett, John Puzauskas, and President Jay Reece. Members absent: None.

Closed Session

At approximately 6:05 p.m., Briggs moved, Pritchett seconded, to adjourn to closed session to discuss the following matters according to the exceptions provided in the "Open Meetings Act" specified as follows:

- Section 2(c)(11) Litigation against, affecting or on behalf of McLean County Unit District No. 5 which has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or is probable or is imminent,
- Section 2(c)(2) Collective negotiating matters with employees or their representatives or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees,
- Section 2(c)(5) The purchase or lease of real property for use by McLean County Unit District No. 5, and
- Section 2(c)(21) Discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed.

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

Return to Public Session

At 7:08 p.m., Briggs moved, Pritchett seconded, to come out of closed session and return to public session.

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

Also present: Superintendent Gary Niehaus, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources John Pye, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Jim Braksick, Chief Financial Officer James Gillmeister, Director of Operations Joe Adelman, Clerk of the Board Donna Evans, Director of Human Resources Dawn Green, Assistant to the Superintendent Dayna Brown, Director of Secondary Education Sandy Wilson, Tom Peffer of Gorenz and Associates, Steve Bushue of Bushue Human Resources, Steve Taggart and Scott Engstrom of Ameresco, Dr. William Phillips of University of the Illinois-Springfield, Jim Fitzpatrick of WJBC, Chuck Bartlett, Phyllis Coulter of *The Pantagraph*, Tim Arnold, Darius Fox, Tim Cox, Jeanette Nuckolls, Jeff Christopherson, Willie Boyd, Tom Laxton, Margarita Alvarez, Julie Steinberg, Angie Funfar, Jon Butler, Kathy Britnell, Rebecca Franks, Jerry James, Vickie Mahrt, Bruce Weldy, Mirjam Schnablel, Tom Eder, Julia Turner, Dan Lamboley, Neil Finlen, Wes Caldwell, and others.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Focus on Students and Good News Reports

- Prairieland Student ~ Darius Fox
- Transportation Department Employee ~ Tim Cox
- Those Who Excel Recipients
 - NCHS "Classroom Team": Foreign Language Department Members Marvis Dickinson, Mary Esther Baldwin, Heather Budak, Anita Claricoates, Lisa Cross, Julie Howell, Annette Jones, Laura Litwiller, Mirjam Schnablel, and Carrie Pedregosa
 - NCHS "Classroom Teacher": Jeff Christopherson
 - Achievement Matters Task Force ~ Willie Brown and Tom Laxton

- Illinois School Board Member Day
- IASB Master Board Member Awards ~ Gail Ann Briggs (Master Status Maintained), Meta Mickens-Baker (Master Board Member and Level 2), and John Puzauskas (Level 1)

Public Comments

Jon Butler, Normal IL ~ Topic: Unit 5 insurance contributions and benefits

Report

Preliminary Tax Levy Report

Gillmeister reported on the 2008 levy for budget years 2009 and 2010. (Attachment #1) Information discussed included but was not limited to the following:

- Setting date, time and place for a public hearing – public hearing must be held if the levy is 105% of prior year's extension
- Requirements for publication of the Truth in Taxation Notice in the Pantagraph
- Property taxes are largest percentage of District revenues
- Breakdown of revenues
- Levy guidelines
- Levy based on estimates of the equalized assessed value (EAV)
- Bond and interest levy is set by the McLean County Clerk
- Chapman and Cutler will prepare the resolution for the abatement of tax levy
- Statutory maximum rates
- Summary of data for equalized assessed value (EAV) for years 1980 to 2008
- Summary of historical change in EAV
- History of tax rate by operating funds
- 2008 estimated real estate taxes collection – broken down by District operating funds

Action

Approve Names for Three New Unit 5 Schools

Brown reported on the process for naming three new Unit 5 schools. She noted that on November 5 a committee of staff, students, parents, administrators, and community members completed their work and a list of recommendations were forwarded to Board members for consideration. Brown noted that suggestions for names were submitted by mail and also through the District's website. Niehaus introduced Dorothy Benjamin and other members of her family. One of the new elementary school's will be named for the Benjamin family as part of a previous land dedication agreement. Representatives from the Benjamin family addressed the Board and expressed their thanks for the honor. Board members discussed the recommendations from the committee for naming one elementary school and one middle school.

Lay moved, Briggs seconded, to name the new Unit 5 school located at The Grove on Kickapoo Creek "Benjamin Elementary School". Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Cannell, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Pritchett, Puzauskas, Reece. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Puzauskas moved, Cannell seconded, to name the new Unit 5 school located at Cedar Ridge as "Cedar Ridge Elementary School". Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Cannell, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Pritchett, Puzauskas, Reece. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Briggs moved, Lay seconded, to name the new Unit 5 middle school "George L. Evans Junior High School". It was also noted that the school would be referred to as Evans Junior High School. Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Cannell, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Pritchett, Puzauskas, Reece. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Adopt Resolution for Estimated Amount Necessary to be Levied for the Year 2008

Pritchett moved, Mickens-Baker seconded, to adopt the Resolution for the Estimated Amount Necessary to be Levied for the year 2008 as presented. (Attachment #2) Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Cannell, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Pritchett, Puzauskas, Reece. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Approve Date and Notice of Publication for Truth in Taxation Hearing

Gillmeister provided a copy of the public notice for the December 10, 2008 hearing. (Attachment #3) Briggs moved, Puzauskas seconded, to set the date of December 10, 2008, 7:00 p.m. at Sugar Creek

Elementary School for a public hearing to approve a proposed property tax levy increase. Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Cannell, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Pritchett, Puzauskas, Reece. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Accept Financial Audit Report(s)

Tom Pfeffer provided a summary of the Financial Audit Report for Unit 5 and Mackinaw Valley Special Education. Information discussed included but was not limited to the following:

- Unencumbered equity and net equity for District operational funds
- Operating revenues (i.e. general State aid, federal sources, property taxes, etc.)
- Debt services
- Breakdown of operational funds disbursement analysis by object
- Operating expenditures (i.e. purchased supplies, salaries and benefits, etc.)
- Average daily attendance
- Comparison of operating expenses per pupil
- Shortfalls on the revenue side due to late receipt of advanced taxes – taxes were deposited in July 2008 rather the fiscal year end (June 2008)
- Shortfall in categorical payments from the State (i.e. transportation aid)
- Timing of receipt of state and local payments affects the budget process
- District passed very realistic expenditure budgets and functioned within those budgets
- State of Illinois financial profile score - Unit 5 has a Financial Watch classification
- Financial profile score and relation to District's bond ratings
- Operating expenses per pupil ~ comparative data for three years shows Unit 5 generally operates below the State average
- Fund balances in operating funds ~ graph illustration shows effect of not getting advanced payments for fiscal year 2008
- Less than one month's worth of operating funds in the fund balance ~ noting June 30, 2008 figures

Pfeffer provided copies of the complete audit reports for both Unit 5 and Mackinaw Valley Special Education Association for Board review. Any questions on this report can be directed to Gorenz and Associates, Ltd.. (Attachment #4).

Pritchett moved, Mickens-Baker seconded, to accept the financial audit report for McLean County Unit District No. 5 as presented. Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Cannell, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Pritchett, Puzauskas, Reece. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Cannell moved, Puzauskas seconded, to accept the financial audit report for Mackinaw Valley Special Education presented. Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Cannell, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Pritchett, Puzauskas, Reece. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Approve Proposal for Lease of Activity Buses

Adelman provided information on the need for four additional activity buses to be used at both high schools. (Attachment #5) It was his recommendation that these buses be leased from Midwest Transit for a period of five years at a total cost of \$26,406 per year. Pritchett moved, Puzauskas seconded, to accept the proposal for the purchase and/or lease of four activity buses as recommended. No action was taken on this motion.

Briggs moved, Lay seconded to amend the motion to read accept the proposal for the lease of four activity buses as recommended. Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Cannell, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Pritchett, Puzauskas, Reece. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Roll call vote on amended motion as presented: Ayes: Briggs, Cannell, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Pritchett, Puzauskas, Reece. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Second Reading and Adoption of Board Policy 7.100

Briggs reported on revisions to Board Policy 7.100 and noted there were no changes from first reading. Board members received a copy of the Illinois State Board of Education District Immunization Summary. (Attachment #6) Briggs moved, Pritchett seconded, to adopt amended Board Policy 7.100 Health, Eye, and Dental Examinations: Immunizations; and Exclusion of Students as recommended. Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Cannell, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Pritchett, Puzauskas, Reece. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Approve Additional Enhancements to the Medical Insurance Benefits and Premium Amounts

Bushue reported on the review of the District's medical insurance benefits and premiums. (Attachment #7) He noted that recommendations were the result of an interest-based bargaining committee. Enhanced wellness benefits and vision benefits will be included in all plans. Two additional enhancements include a reduction in the co-pay for doctor visits and prescription fees in the \$300 deductible plan. Pritchett moved, Mickens-Baker seconded, to approve additional enhancements to the medical insurance benefits and premium amounts effective December 1, 2008 as presented. Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Cannell, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Pritchett, Puzauskas, Reece. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Consent Agenda

Niehaus reviewed and recommended approval of the Consent Agenda.

Personnel Matters (Attachment #8)

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

Payment of Bills and Payroll (Summary Attachment #9)

Financial Reports

- Treasurer's Report (September) (Attachment #10)
- Statement of Expenditures (September) (Attachment #11)

Approval of Minutes

- September 24, 2008 Regular Session
- October 8, 2008 Closed Session
- October 8, 2008 Regular Session
- October 22, 2008 Work Session on Redistricting

Other

- Approve Extension of Contract with GroupCast, LLC – SchoolReach (Attachment #12)
- Request for Overnight Trip ~ NCWHS Baseball
- Request for Overnight Trip ~ NCWHS Drama Club
- Approve Extension of Contract with US Cellular Coliseum for 2009 Commencement Ceremonies (Attachment #13)
- Approve Extension of Contract with Custom Training Services (CTS) (Attachment #14)
- Approve Contract for Architectural/Engineering Services with Middleton Associates Inc AIA (Attachment #15)
- Approve Xerox Copier Lease for Eugene Field Special Services Center (Attachment #16)
- Approve District Organizational Chart (Attachment #17)
- Approve Secondary Course Description Book and Course Changes for 2009-2010 (Attachment #18)
- Approve Filing of School Library Grant Application
- Approve semi-annual review of Closed Session Minutes dated April 1, 2008 through September 30, 2008
- Approve Destruction of Audio Recordings of Closed Session Meetings dated October 1, 2006 through March 31, 2007
- Move location of December 10, 2008 meeting to Sugar Creek Elementary School

Pritchett moved, Mickens-Baker seconded, to approve the Consent Agenda as recommended. Roll call: Ayes: Briggs, Cannell, Lay, Mickens-Baker, Pritchett, Puzauskas, Reece. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Reports/Discussion

Overview on Performance Contracting

Steve Taggart and Scott Engstrom of Ameresco, and Dr. William Phillips of University of Illinois – Springfield presented a report on performance contracting. (Attachment #19)

Report on Middle School Scheduling

Wilson reported to the Board on proposed changes to the middle school schedule. (Attachment #20) Wilson noted that she had met with Braksick and middle school representatives. The next meeting will be held on November 26 with all department leaders to discuss the schedule as it pertains to curriculum.

Human Resources Department Update

Pye and Green along with administrative committee members Tom Eder, Dan Lamboley, and Bruce Weldy provided an update on recruitment, hiring and supervision of employees. (Attachment #21) Information discussed included but was not limited to the following:

- Need for review of District policies and administrative procedures
- Update all job descriptions
- Review of exit interview process
- Need to improve criminal background checks, internet references, and reference checks with former employers
- Use of School Administration Manager to allow administrative personnel time for interviews and follow up evaluation of new applicants
- Reinstate the administrative intern
- Diversity recruitment
- Applicant screening process
- On-line applications – ASP AppliTrack
- Year-round recruitment
- Create a model recruitment program and process
- Ventures for Excellence – service that screens candidates based upon specific criteria
- Skyward FastTrack
- Purchase of *Complete Interview Procedures for Hiring School Personnel* to assist building administrators
- Creation of reference check form template
- Employee handbooks

1st Reading Board Policies and Exhibits

Briggs presented the following Board policies for first reading: (Attachment #22) Policies will be scheduled for second reading and adoption for December 10, 2008.

- Policy 2.80 ~ Board Member Oath and Conduct
- Exhibit 2.80-E1 ~ Board Member Code of Conduct
- Exhibit 2.120-E1 ~ Guidelines for Serving as a Mentor to a New Board Member

Enrollment Report and Comparison Report

Pye provided the enrollment report as of October 31, 2008. (Attachment #22) Total enrollment is 12,733. Pye reported on section range figures for elementary regular education students. 34% are under the range and 16% are over the range.

Freedom of Information

Niehaus reported that the District had received and processed one request for information. (Attachment #23)

- Colin Hitt, Illinois Policy Institute

Board Representative Committee Meeting Reports

- Strategic Planning and Finance Committee ~ Cannell noted that the committee is reviewing Board policies relative to District financial procedures and will submit a summary to the Board Policy Review Committee. The next meeting will be held on Saturday, November 22 for discussion and planning the upcoming PMA presentation at the December 10 Board meeting. Discussion will also include the issuance of remaining bonds.
- Architecture Services Executive Committee ~ Puzauskas noted that the committee has met several times in the past few weeks. The committee has viewed the final initial design from the architects. It was also noted the design has currently remained within the project budget.
- McLean County Regional Planning Commission ~ Discussion continues to include the gravel pit issue near Fox Creek Elementary School.
- Unit 5-Local Government Committee ~ The last committee meeting included Town of Normal, City of Bloomington, and Unit 5 representatives. Discussion included but was not limited to the following:
 - Youth Intervention Program funded by grant from State Farm Insurance
 - Need for additional school resource officers
 - Safe routes to school program and walking tours of town

- Sugar Creek construction and traffic issues
- Proposed retirement village
- Illinois Association of School Boards Corn Belt Division Representative ~ Mickens-Baker will be the delegate to the General Assembly. Niehaus, Briggs, and Pritchett recently attended the Corn Belt Division meeting held at Pontiac Jr. High School. The Unit 5 panel presentation for the IASB Fall Conference is scheduled for Saturday, November 22 at 1:00 p.m.
- Board Policy Review Committee ~ The next meeting will be held on November 17. The committee continues to work on review of all District policies and procedures.
- Community Connections Committee ~ The committee met on October 10 and November 7. Recognition was given to the recent Unit 5 Pride publication. It was noted that school webmasters have received recent training to improve school websites. The next committee meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 12.
- Facilities Review Committee ~ The committee will meet Friday, November 14 to discuss potential needs for the next school year. Board members discussed the need for signs to be placed at the three future school sites naming each facility.
- Mackinaw Valley Special Education Association Council – The next council meeting will meet November 19.
- District Continuous Improvement Team ~ The committee will meet on November 18, 4:45 p.m. at the IEA office.

Announcements/Comments

- Braksick reported on District activities held on Veterans Day and the positive comments received.
- The Citizens Advisory Council meeting is scheduled for November 19 at Pepper Ridge Elementary School.
- Board members attended the District's music department spaghetti supper fundraiser and band performances.
- It was reported that there were approximately 600 more Parent/Teacher Conferences than last year. Conferences went well; however there were some concerns expressed over the 6th grade meeting schedules.
- The Racial Justice Summit will be held on November 14 through November 15.
- Adelman reported that the transportation department employees will be attending a Love and Logic conference.
- Adelman reported that the maintenance department is currently preparing for snow removal.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 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: January 28, 2009