

**Minutes of the Committee of the Whole  
Meeting of the Board of Education  
Flossmoor School District 161  
November 29, 2010**

President, Dr. David Dreyfuss called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll call was taken and the following members were present for the meeting:

**Present**

Mr. Arnold Crater  
Mrs. Christine Marks  
Mr. Ronald Moore, arrived at 7:28 p.m.  
Mrs. Timijanel Odom  
Mr. John Simmons  
Mr. Thomas Sifner  
Dr. David Dreyfuss

**Staff members present:**

Dr. Donna Joy, Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. Susan Pingitore, Associate Superintendent for Administrative Services  
Dr. Rebecca Elish, Director of Learning and Instruction  
Mr. Joseph Martin, Director of Operations  
Ms. Deborah Pitts, Director of Instructional Technology and Information  
Ms. Nancy Wilson, Director of Special Education  
Cathy Perino, Secretary to Superintendent and Board of Education

**Others present:**

John Izzo, Attorney with the law firm of Sraga Hauser, LLC, Jennifer Camilleri, Bruce Nieminski, Kathy Knawa, Crystal Conley, FEA Co-President, staff, and community members (see attached sign in sheet).

**Discussion of Appraisal for the Idlewild and Flossmoor Country Clubs**

John Izzo, attorney for Sraga Hauser, updated the Committee of the Whole members regarding the Property Tax Appeal Board (PTAB) cases pending for the Idlewild Country Club and the Flossmoor Country Club. Mr. Izzo discussed with the Committee members the option of giving him authorization to pursue these appeals, and discussed that the next step for the District would be to conduct a full appraisal of each property, which would cost \$20,000 or \$10,000 for each country club.

Mr. Izzo mentioned that in these two cases, the land value is being disputed. The clubs claim the land values are not at the level which the County Board of Review used for assessments while initial indications from one of his law firm's experts are that the Board's value is closely aligned with fair market value. As a

matter of public policy and state law, the land is valued for tax purposes according to fair market value.

The Committee inquired about the other taxing bodies (Park District, Village and High School) that are also affected by these PTAB. Mr. Izzo stated they are not intervening.

A discussion took place as to the option available to the Committee members if the clubs do not want to settle. One option would be to negotiate with the county to phase-in the new values for the properties. Mr. Izzo said the county has not been willing to budge on these PTABS. Due to the recent elections the county has been in a state of flux; however, Mr. Izzo will find out if there has been any change in the county's stance come December 1. This is due to the fact that a new assessor, Joseph Berrios, was elected and hopefully the District can get the cooperation of the county in regards to these appeals. He will keep the Board updated on this matter. Mr. Izzo also said that each of the clubs are being represented by a new attorney. The deadline to file the appraisals is January 24, 2011. Mr. Izzo mentioned the District may lose its leverage to negotiate with the country clubs if there are no appraisals on file.

The potential loss to the District due to these PTABs was discussed and it was noted these funds would be subtracted from future tax revenues.

Dr. Dreyfuss mentioned the fact this would be a loss of revenue to the school district due to the fact that these country clubs are large taxpayers. Mr. Izzo recommended the appraisals be conducted to keep the School District's options open in case the new assessor is unwilling to negotiate a phase-in.

The Board members would like to receive an update before the December Board of Education meeting. Mr. Izzo reminded the Board members these PTABS are for the 2008 tax year and the District can expect to receive an appeal for the 2009 tax year, which is in the pipeline.

The Board of Education thanked John Izzo for his presentation and Mr. Izzo left the meeting.

- *Recommendation: The Board of Education approves moving approval of appraisal for the Idlewild and Flossmoor Country Clubs forward to the December 13, 2010 Board of Education meeting agenda.*

### **First Reading of Amended Field Trip Policy**

Dr. Pingitore reminded the Committee of the Whole members that a Waiver of Student Fees Policy – 4:140 was adopted in April. This policy permits the District to verify eligibility for fee waivers.

By adopting this new policy, the District now has a separate practice to verify income of those who request fee waivers. The proposed amendment to the field trip policy extends this policy to cover waivers for field trips.

A discussion took place regarding the verification process and whether the policy covers the criteria used for income verification.

- *Recommendation: The Board of Education approves moving second reading and approval of Field Trip Policy to the December 13, 2010 Board of Education meeting agenda.*

### **First Reading of Allergy Policy**

Dr. Joy shared with the Committee of the Whole members there are three types of policies. Required policies, recommended policies, and customized policies for a District's specific needs. The Allergy Policy is a required policy.

Dr. Joy shared the Illinois State Board of Education in conjunction with the Illinois Department of Public Health has developed Guidelines for Managing Life-Threatening Food Allergies in Illinois Schools. These guidelines were developed because of Public Act 96-349, which mandates school boards, no later than January 1, 2011, to implement a policy based on these Guidelines. The District's attorney reviewed the recommended policy.

This policy establishes the goal of reducing food allergy risks and providing accommodations and proper treatment for allergic reactions.

Kathy Knawa, District Nurse, discussed with the Committee the steps the District is currently taking to follow the aforementioned guidelines. The District Nurse learns of students with food allergies through the health information sheet parents provide to the District as well as the school physical. Once the District is aware of food allergies, letters are sent home to the parents. The District also provides safety training to educate teachers in the classroom, and an emergency action plan is requested. The Ceres menu was discussed as well as special seating arrangements.

Dr. Dreyfuss shared his concerns regarding training to all staff. Ms. Knawa mentioned she recently attended a workshop hosted by Children Memorial Hospital and they would provide an in-service for the District free of charge.

- *Recommendation: The Board of Education approves moving second reading and approval of Allergy Policy to the December 13, 2010 Board of Education meeting agenda.*

## **Review of 2011 Summer School**

Bruce Nieminski, Assistant Principal of Western Avenue School and 2011 summer school principal, gave the Board an overview of the 2010 summer school program.

The Summer 2010 program had 202 students in attendance, which included 34 students in enrichment classes. An Early Childhood Special Education Program was offered once again. There continued to be a high degree of satisfaction in the Summer Program. Surveys distributed at the conclusion of the session indicated that 100 percent of the 51 respondents said they were satisfied with their child's summer experience.

Mr. Nieminski shared the proposed Summer 2011 program would offer 90 minutes of instruction in the areas of language arts and mathematics for a total of 23 sessions over a six-week period. Students currently receiving ELL services will have the opportunity to attend a session to improve and support English Language Learning.

The District's summer program is for students in kindergarten through the eighth grade in the area of skill building and will be held at Serena Hills School. An Extended School Year (ESY) experience for special education students as well as an Early Childhood Special Education program will again be offered. Mr. Nieminski mentioned an English Language Learners (ELL) session is also recommended for the 2011 summer program. It is anticipated that the District's cost to provide summer school will be approximately \$50,000. This will be included in the FY2012 budget.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding discontinuation of the enrichment program. The administration stated that enrollment numbers have been declining for the past several years.

Ms. Odom shared her concern regarding the District wanting to discontinue the enrichment portion of the summer program without a discussion. She suggested doing a community survey to find out what areas would interest the community. Dr. Dreyfuss mentioned information was brought to him by the administration due to declining enrichment enrollment.

Dr. Joy shared the District surveyed neighboring school districts to see if they offer summer school and if they offer both skill building and enrichment. Of those surveyed that offer summer school they offered basic skills summer school. It was noted that many students participate in park district programs, soccer, soccer camp, and that may be why the enrichment program numbers have declined as well as some parents need a full day program for their children.

Mrs. Marks shared her concern regarding the number of students who are not performing at grade level. Summer school is really two programs: skill and enrichment. She stated enrichment is only a couple of hours for three weeks. The District needs to have a discussion regarding doing a full day and offer a much fuller and rewarding program. She does not believe the school District is set up for that kind of enrichment – more a park district program.

Mr. Simmons echoed Mrs. Marks comments. Mr. Crater suggested the District might want to offer some type of advanced course or a more targeted course. Also, the name should be changed from enrichment to advanced course for say math, science, or finance.

It was suggested courses could be offered for advanced gifted students for sustained amounts of time to prepare them for high school. It was noted that the High School does provide summer courses specifically for transition courses for incoming students.

Dr. Joy shared with the Committee members that the administration has been discussing the possibility for a Summer Learning Academy. The academy would take place prior to the start of school in August. This would help the students who are not learning at grade level. Communication with the parents was discussed.

The proposed schedule for summer school 2011 is as follows:

Friday, June 10	Teacher Plan Day
Monday, June 13	First day of Student Attendance
Thursday, July 21	Last Day of Skill Building Classes/ELL class

The proposed fees for summer school will again be \$75 for each skill building class/ELL class. Transportation fees will be \$50 for the six-week program. The Summer 2011 program will utilize the NWEA data to obtain a reliable measurement of student growth.

Mr. Sifner believes a more concrete evaluation tool breaking down information into specific categories would be helpful in determining future skill building and enrichment classes.

- *Recommendation: The Board recommends bringing this matter forward on the agenda for the December 13, 2010 Board of Education.*

### **Review of Parker Junior High Improvement Plan**

Dr. Vanessa Atkins shared with the Committee of the Whole members that the District is required by law to submit a District Improvement Plan that covers a two-year time span. The District Plan addresses the educational improvement activities developed for the subgroups that did not make AYP on the 2010 ISAT test. The District previously submitted a plan in 2008. The District

Improvement Plan addresses the needs of the following subgroups: students with disabilities and the economically disadvantaged students. The plan includes the following components: Progress monitoring of identified students, Data review to align instruction with educational needs; Professional development in research-based instructional strategies; and Parent presentations to support reading achievement.

- *Recommendation: The Committee of the Whole members recommend moving forward to the December 13, 2010 Board of Education meeting agenda approval of the District Improvement Plan for the years: 2010 – 2012.*

### **Discussion of Activity Bus at Parker Junior High School**

Dr. Joy shared with the Committee of the Whole members the idea of an after school activity bus has been proposed during various listening sessions at Parker Junior High School. This activity bus would make it easier for students at Parker to take advantage of extra curricular activities, band, and receive help with homework or a class. Students who normally could not get home at this time of day would have transportation if they chose to participate.

Joseph Martin shared two conceptual proposals with the Committee of the Whole members. Since this plan is outside of the contract with the bus company, this plan is reviewable and cancelable.

The administration shared that many details need to be worked out for safety reasons such as the students who will be riding the bus as well as communication with parents.

The Committee commented that the District would look into an after school bus and see what the bus company can recommend.

- *Recommendation: This was an information Item. The administration will continue its research into an after school activity bus and update the Board of Education.*

### **Review of Phase III bid**

Mr. Martin shared with the Committee of the Whole members the legal bidding process was followed for the paving work at Heather Hill School. A pre-bid meeting was held on November 9. Sealed bids were received from eight companies and the results were discussed.

Olthoff, Inc. met every requirement outlined in the bid specifications and submitted the lowest responsible base bid of \$338,900 along with a bid of \$4,294 for alternate A-1 seal coating and striping the circle drive at Parker Junior High. The work will consist of removing and replacing deteriorating

concrete walks, curbs and paving. This will remove unsafe conditions and correct water shed problems adjacent to the school building.

Discussion took place regarding the unsafe drop off procedures at Heather Hill School. Mr. Martin stated this is a Village issue whereby they need to make sure parents are courteous when dropping of their children.

- *Recommendation: The Committee of the Whole members approve moving forward to the December 13, 2010 Board of Education meeting agenda awarding year three of the Six-Year Paving Plan to Olthoff, Inc. as the lowest responsible bidder.*

### **Review of Copier Replacement**

Mr. Martin shared with the Committee members the District has three copiers at Flossmoor Hills, Serena Hills, and Parker Junior High, ending a five-year lease in February. In addition, the District owns older copiers at Heather Hill and Normandy Villa. Mr. Martin stated quotes were obtained from the District's current vendors to replace the five copiers. Mr. Martin shared the District's currently yearly cost for the five copiers along with the lease and maintenance agreements. He shared the new recommended lease and maintenance lease would cost the District substantially less and include more copier and all the supplies excluding paper. Finally, the District has the option to purchase each of these five Xerox copiers for \$1.00 at the end of the five-year lease.

The Committee members thanked Mr. Martin for his presentation.

- *Recommendation: The Committee of the Whole members approve moving forward to the December 13, 2010 Board of Education meeting accepting the proposal by Chicago Office Tech Group to replace five copiers with five new Xerox copiers.*

### **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Dr. Dreyfuss seconded by Mrs. Marks to adjourn the Committee of the Whole meeting. All AYES. Motion Carried

The Board of Education meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

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Dr. David Dreyfuss, President

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Ronald E. Moore, Secretary