

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
OF
BOARD OF EDUCATION, SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 172
ADAMS COUNTY, ILLINOIS
HELD ON DECEMBER 10, 2013 – 5:30 p.m.**

Meeting Convened

The Board of Education of School District No. 172, Adams County, Illinois, met in special session December 10, 2013 at 5:30 p.m. in the Board of Education Office, Room 214, located at 1416 Maine Street, Quincy, Illinois, in said school district.

Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by President Erwin, who directed the secretary to call the roll. On the call of the roll, the following members were present and answered to their names: Members Ali, Bailey, Erwin, Mays, McNay, Niekamp, and Stone. Whereupon the president declared that a quorum was present. Member Bailey was present telephonically.

Questions and Comments

President Erwin opened the meeting to questions and comments to members of the Board, by members of the public and employees of the district, in compliance with state statutes.

Mr. Jeff Kerkhoff presented a plan for facilities which included using the former St. Mary's Hospital building for a school. His plan included building new facilities over time and using a line of credit for funding.

Mr. Bill Daniels, former Board member, asked the Board to consider option two which would leave senior high with grades 10-12 and junior high with grades 7-9. He said it would be the most cost effective. He said 9th graders have been at junior high for 49 of the last 56 years. He said a 9-12 configuration is desirable but not necessary. He said the elementary buildings are the immediate need and will require the most Life Safety money. Regarding using a line of credit as Mr. Kerkhoff suggested, he said no lender would want to take a risk with that amount of money.

President Erwin responded that the community indicated in the past two surveys that they want 9th grade with the high school. Current survey results indicate that the community prefers option one.

Ms. Mindy Holthaus said she is very concerned about placing the referendum issue on the March ballot. She said that she interacts with parents, staff and community members and others have the same concern. She said she wants this to happen but more time is needed to answer questions such as what the music program would look like and what these elementary schools can offer students.

Mr. Tom Dickerson, former Board member, said he applauds the Board's efforts to look at this issue. It has been looked at many times before but was always stopped short because of financial constraints. Past conclusions were similar—K-5 or K-6 buildings and those are the poorer buildings. He said he is concerned with placing it on the ballot so soon. There needs to be a solid plan, not three plans, five versions, etc. He encouraged the Board to develop a plan that is in the best interest of students in the district.

Mr. Darren Smith addressed the Board regarding his facilities plan he has sent to Board members. He proposed a new high school built out at Flinn Stadium for 9-12. K-5 students would all be housed in the

current high school building after it is renovated and 6-8 would be in the current junior high. He said there would be less moves during the transition for students than the other plans. Mr. Smith said neighborhood schools are a thing of the past. Many students go to daycare while parents work which is not even in their home neighborhood.

Member Mays said he appreciated Mr. Smith's input but he would not be in favor of a K-5 school larger than 600 students.

Open Public hearing on the ISBE Renewal of Waiver of Section 27-5 and 27-6 of School Code (Physical Education Waiver)

President Erwin opened the public hearing on the Physical Education Waiver at 5:55 p.m.

Testimony from staff and others

Ms. Peggy Pryor, Quincy Senior High physical education teacher for 34 years, addressed the Board in opposition to the PE waiver. She said she is against any waiver except as allowed in the school code. She said physical activity, even in short bouts, enhances brain activity and students perform better academically. She provided some information to Board members on Enhancing Physical Education in Illinois. The Enhance P.E. Fact Sheet states that enhancing PE and physical activity during the school day leads to better learners, better behavior in the classroom, and better student health. Active children show greater attention, have faster cognitive processing speed, and perform better on standardized academic tests than children who are less active. She said the research cannot be ignored. The PE waiver has been in effect for seven years and she asked for evidence that the waiver is helping increase student performance. It is already in the school code that P.E. can be waived for student who needs a class to graduate or a particular course for college. Also, P.E. can be waived for driver education and health courses without a waiver. Ms. Pryor asked the Board to not submit the waiver.

Ms. Penny Garner, 25-year P.E. teacher, told the Board that smaller districts have daily physical education. Currently, K-3 students have 30 minutes of P.E. only three times a week and it is not enough.

Ms. Toni Smith, parent, said that for many students, P.E. is their only physical activity. They go home and play video games.

Mr. Jeff Kerkhoff said he agrees with the P.E. waiver for the senior year which has been common practice but said he is not in favor for lower grades K-11. He said P.E. and recess are especially important for little boys.

Member Mays said some courses have been added at the high school, ISAT cut scores for younger grades have been increased to align to the upper levels, and the state continues to add more on schools for the Common Core Standards. We need to get our academic house in order. He said Illinois is only one of two states in the nation requiring P.E. for graduation.

Mr. Matt Longo, Quincy Senior High P.E. teacher, said if our kids are failing, why take something away from them that will help in other areas.

Carol Frericks, Secondary Academic Director, discussed the reasons for the waiver, its impact on student performance, and the program to be implemented if the waiver is granted. She clarified that the School Code allows some flexibility at the secondary level, that this application goes beyond what is in the School Code, and that there is not the same flexibility at K-6 grade level for exemption from P.E.

Member Stone said he is in favor of the waiver but suggested innovative ways be explored to include more P.E.

Member Ali said he agrees with Ms. Pryor about the benefits of physical education but at this time, it is a financial matter that he hopes can be looked at in the future.

President Erwin stated that some issues with shared space for gym and cafeteria will be addressed with the plan for new and renovated buildings which may allow more flexibility for P.E.

Close Public Hearing

President Erwin asked if there were any other comments regarding the P.E. waiver. Hearing none, she closed the hearing at 6:20 p.m.

Approve Physical Education Waiver

It was moved by Member Mays and seconded by Member Stone to approve the Physical Education Waiver and authorize submission of waiver application to ISBE requesting Physical Education Waiver (Doc. Reg. No. 2696). On the call of the roll, the following members voted Aye: Members Ali, Bailey, Erwin, Mays, McNay, Niekamp, and Stone; and the following member voted Nay: None; . Whereupon the President declared the motion carried.

Departure of Member Bailey

Member Bailey disconnected at 6:25 p.m. which was duly recorded by the Board Secretary.

District Facilities Discussion

Business Manager Joel Murphy presented some of the information shared at the community forums regarding planning parameters and guidance for developing recommendations to meet the facility needs. Potential cost savings were presented. Moving from 10 elementary attendance centers to six would result in a potential saving of \$750,000 to \$850,000. There would also be reduced costs for building maintenance, transportation, and Life Safety expenditures for aging facilities. Financing options for school construction include issuing traditional building bonds with a tax levy or a county-wide sales tax of up to one percent. Both would require voter approval. It was noted that the county sales tax would support only \$51.2 million, falling short of the projected cost of \$75.4 million for Plan One. Mr. Murphy explained that issuing new building bonds would not increase the tax rate beyond the 2013 rate because there are three bonds maturing within the next five years which will reduce the rate.

Member Ali said he is in favor of renovating and building new buildings but has concerns with putting it on the ballot in March. He said more time is needed to do the process correctly, to present information and engage the community.

Member McNay said he would also favor taking more time and looking at February 2015. In consideration of the taxpayers, he said he favors the county sales tax. Property owners currently bear the cost of schools. The sales tax would shift the burden to consumers. QPS would receive 71% of the sales tax revenue with the remainder going to other districts in Adams County. He also stated that the Bond and Interest fund is only a part of the tax rate. In three to four years, the education fund may need to be increased so there is no way to guarantee keeping the rate the same.

Member Stone said based on survey input, the Board has a feasible plan to make elementary buildings better and move 9th graders to the high school with Plan One. The Board can bond at the current tax rate.

He prefers to see the district sell bonds upfront. No one can guarantee property taxes will be kept at a low rate because the Board's membership and district financial needs are subject to change.

President Erwin said the Board has been very direct in sharing information and soliciting input. There have been forums and information in the media. If people are seeking information, it has been available. She said Business Manager Joel Murphy and other staff have done an incredible job compiling information and coming up with a plan. To say there is no plan to do this in March is not giving staff the credit they deserve. Once a decision is made to put it on the ballot in March, a steering committee can share information with service clubs, community organizations, parents, staff, and the media to get the word out. Voters should not be denied a chance to vote on this issue. Regarding moving 9th graders to high school, that has been one of the biggest priorities in the past 18 years of soliciting community input. No other junior high schools in Illinois have 9th grade with junior high. This is a golden opportunity to move forward instead of spending \$60 million on Life Safety Projects to keep decaying buildings in use.

Member Ali agreed that staff have done a tremendous amount of work. He would like to see the Board share with the community the focus, how it will work, and then put it on the ballot instead of some truncated time table. A model to go by is needed.

Member Niekamp said he could not support building any new schools. He said when he ran for the Board in 1982, he promised to not raise taxes, to spend wisely, and not spend more than we have. It is a promise he will keep.

Member Mays said the Board has been tremendous and working on this since July. He said the Board is now respectfully coming to a point for a decision to be made. Compelling information can be presented between now and March. Buildings need to be maintained or they will go to seed. If the public does not vote for new buildings, money will be spent on Life Safety repairs.

Executive Session

At 7:40 p.m., it was moved by Member Stone and seconded by Member McNay that the Board suspend the rules and go into executive session to discuss a) the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the School District and b) collective negotiating matters between the School District and its employees or their representatives. On the call of the roll, the following members voted Aye: Members Ali, Erwin, Mays, McNay, Niekamp, and Stone; and the following members voted Nay: None; and the following member was absent: Member Bailey. Whereupon the president declared the motion carried.

Resumption of Rules

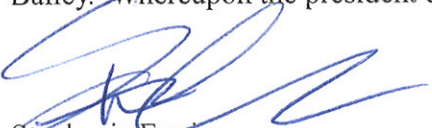
At 7:53 p.m. it was moved by Member Stone and seconded by Member Mays to resume the conduct of the special meeting under rules. On the call of the roll, the following members voted Aye: Members Ali, Erwin, Mays, McNay, Niekamp, and Stone; and the following members voted Nay: None; and the following member was absent: Member Bailey. Whereupon the president declared the motion carried.

Approve Salary Increase for Non-Collective Bargaining Educational Support Staff

It was moved by Member Stone and seconded by Member Mays to approve the recommendation made in executive session for salaries increases averaging 3.3% non-collective bargaining support staff including technology, head custodians, non-certified nurses, security, clerical, and fiscal. Total cost of the increases is \$94,365. On the call of the roll, the following members voted Aye: Members Ali, Erwin, Mays, McNay, Niekamp, and Stone; and the following members voted Nay: None; and the following member was absent: Member Bailey. Whereupon the president declared the motion carried.

Adjourn

It was moved by Member Ali and seconded by Member Stone that the special meeting adjourn. On the call of the roll, the following members voted Aye: Members Ali, Erwin, Mays, McNay, Niekamp and Stone; and the following member voted Nay: None; and the following member was absent: Member Bailey. Whereupon the president declared the motion carried and the special meeting was duly adjourned.



Stephanie Erwin
President



Phyllis Stewart
Secretary