

MONROE PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

Board Meeting #20

November 11, 2014

7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Roll Call and Call to Order

Board Members Present: President Robert Yeo, Vice President Lawrence VanWasshenova, Secretary Wendy Spicer, Parliamentarian Dr. Tedd March, Trustee Aaron N. Mason, and Trustee Ryan Philbeck

Board Members Absent: None

Administrators Present: Barry Martin, Julie Everly, Ryan McLeod, Katherine Eighmey, Jerry Oley, David Payne

Administrators Absent: None

President Yeo called the meeting to order at 6:58 p.m.

A moment of silence was held in remembrance of June Knabusch-Taylor.

Public Commentary-Agenda Items Only

Dale DeSloover discussed the procedure to replace Mrs. Knabusch-Taylor for the remainder of her term. Mr. DeSloover expressed concern with a portion of the Mulligan's contract.

Selma Rankins commented on the new hires, feels kids are not learning, and discussed MEAP scores from 2009-10.

Closed Session

Motion by Mr. Philbeck; support by Dr. March to convene in closed session upon written advice of counsel, Section 8(h) of the Open Meetings Act.

Vote: Motion carried by a 6-0 roll call vote at 7:15 p.m.

Adjournment of Closed Session and Reconvene

Motion by Mr. Mason; support by Mr. Yeo that the closed session adjourn and the 7:00 p.m. November 11, 2014, Board Meeting #20 reconvene.

Vote: Motion carried by a 6-0 hand vote at 7:40 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Mr. VanWasshenova; support by Mr. Philbeck to approve the minutes of the following meetings as submitted:

- October 21, 2014, Board Work Session
- October 21, 2014, Board Meeting #19
- October 28, 2014, Special Board Meeting (4 sets)
- October 28, 2014, Closed Meeting (3 sets)

Vote: Motion carried by a 6-0 roll call vote.

Reports and Update

The November 3, 2014, Board Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes and the Informational Report – Contracted Services Recommendations were received.

Appointment of Board Secretary

Motion by Mr. Yeo; support by Dr. March to appoint Wendy Spicer as Secretary of the Monroe Public Schools Board of Education for the remainder of the 2014 calendar year.

Vote: Motion carried by a 6-0 roll call vote.

Consent Agenda – Exempt Employee Appointments

Motion by Mr. VanWasshenova; support by Ms. Spicer that Agenda Items C.6 and C.7 be considered as a Consent Agenda, and that the consent agenda items be approved as recommended.

- C.6 Move to approve the appointment of Robert Kennedy as a Level 2 Computer Technician for the 2014/15 school year effective November 12, 2014, and place on the appropriate salary level for this position, upon completion of all pre-employment requirements.
- C.7 Move to approve the appointment of Michael Reaume as a Level 2 Computer Technician for the 2014/15 school year effective November 12, 2014, and place on the appropriate salary level for this position, upon completion of all pre-employment requirements.

Discussion: Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Reaume are part-time employees moving to full-time positions that were previously vacated. Mr. Payne stated they are great additions to the department and is happy to offer them full-time positions.

Vote: Motion carried by a 6-0 roll call vote.

Teacher Appointment

Motion by Mr. VanWasshenova; support by Ms. Spicer to approve the appointment of Christopher Dominguez as an alternative high school teacher with Monroe Public Schools effective November 24, 2014, and place on the appropriate salary level as contained in the Master Agreement, and upon completion of all pre-employment requirements.

Vote: Motion carried by a 6-0 roll call vote.

Maintenance Appointment

Motion by Mr. VanWasshenova; support by Mr. Yeo to approve the appointment of Tom Bell as a Classification 2 Maintenance with Monroe Public Schools effective November 18, 2014, and place on the appropriate salary level as contained in the Master Agreement, and upon completion of all pre-employment requirements.

Vote: Motion carried by a 6-0 roll call vote.

Approval to Extend Custodial Service Agreement

Motion by Mr. Mason; support by Mr. Philbeck to accept the Custodial Cleaning Services Agreement with Mulligan's Building Maintenance for two years, expiring June 30, 2016.

Discussion: Mr. VanWasshenova is concerned with the increases and would like to see the contract rebid in two years. Mrs. Eighmey stated that savings to the district increases each year through attrition. Currently, Mulligan's employs less than 50 people. If the company exceeds 50 employees, his costs would increase because of the requirements of the Affordable Care Act, therefore the contract provides the opportunity to renegotiate in the event the company reaches 50 employees.

Vote: Motion carried by a 5-1 roll call vote. Ms. Spicer voted no.

Highway Easement and Consent to Grade - Waterloo

Motion by Mr. VanWasshenova; support by Mr. Mason to approve the request from the Michigan Department of Transportation for Consent to Grade for the property in front of Waterloo School as well as a property easement. The state will pay the district \$500 for the grading and \$2,000 for the highway easement.

Discussion: The State of Michigan, through a grant they received, wants to add additional equipment to the crosswalk in front of Waterloo School. There will be no cost to the district and MDOT will maintain the equipment.

Vote: Motion carried by a 6-0 roll call vote.

Energy Management Upgrades – Raisinville and MHS

Motion by Mr. VanWasshenova; support by Mr. Philbeck to accept the bid from Control Systems of Ohio, of Sylvania, Ohio, for \$13,351.00 for the energy management upgrades for Raisinville Elementary School and Monroe High School. Money for this purchase will come from the Site Sinking Fund.

Vote: Motion carried by a 6-0 roll call vote.

Monroe High School CTE Robotics Purchase

Motion by Mr. VanWasshenova; support by Ms. Spicer to approve the purchase of robotics workstation equipment from Questech for MHS CTE at the cost not to exceed of \$8,545.00 and will be paid from MPS Perkins Grant funds.

Vote: Motion carried by a 6-0 roll call vote.

Superintendent Comments

Over the past two weeks our instructional staff and some members of our support staff have been involved in ongoing professional development to enhance both their instructional and leadership skills. Lucy West has continued her work with teachers, coaches and administrators to strengthen their instructional skills and create classroom environments that are sensitive to the needs of all students and provide structured and meaningful classroom conversations and activities. Dan Newby has been in the district the past few days continuing his work with administrators, helping them to become familiar with how understanding their physical being is important to the way they relate to others, and provide leadership to others. Both of these people have provided great insight and support for our teachers, administrators and support staff, helping to make them more effective in the work they do for our students. I want to thank Mrs. Everly and Dr. McLeod for their work in delivering this professional development in the district.

Today is Veterans' Day and on behalf of the school district, I want to thank anyone here today or anyone who is part of our school district and community who is a veteran for their service and sacrifice as members of the armed forces of the United States. We are very proud of your contributions to our freedom and safety.

Just a reminder, that Wednesday is an early release day.

Old Business

Motion by Mr. Mason; support by Mr. Philbeck to waive the portion of Board Policy requiring advertising and interviewing for the appointment of the empty Board seat of June Knabusch-Taylor resulting from her recent passing. Said motion also forgoes the requirement of readings and is specific for this Board appointment only.

Discussion: Mr. VanWasshenova feels that this violates board policy. He prefers to amend the policy and add a third paragraph to the policy stating that in a case such as this, we don't have the interview process. Mr. Mason's view is this waiver is technically amending the policy just for this case. He agrees that the policy should be updated with this information, but it would be more appropriate to go through the policy committee.

Vote: Motion carried by a 5-1 roll call vote. Mr. VanWasshenova voted no.

Motion by Mr. Mason; support by Mr. Yeo to appoint Cynthia Taylor to the empty Board seat for the remainder of the 2014 calendar year.

Vote: Motion carried by a 6-0 roll call vote.

Mr. Mason suggested that we need a plan for the several pieces of vacant land the district currently holds. In particular, the large piece of land where Lincoln School once stood. These are assets of the district that are just sitting there. One example would be to have our construction trades students design a plan for the property. Put something new there that helps the neighborhood and the school system. If it is a house or houses, it would be a better tax base and it can revitalize the neighborhood. Maybe include a park that could be dedicated to the neighborhood. Even though the costs to maintain the properties are minor, they add up over time.

Mr. Mason believes we need a training session, especially with our new board members, on the rules of the Open Meetings Act. Mr. Yeo agreed and encouraged Dr. Martin to contact Jeremy to set up a training session.

New Business

There was none at this time.

Public Commentary-Any Topic

Dale DeSloover expressed concern about an item that was part of the board personnel committee meeting minutes regarding Dr. Martin's ability to give Mr. Oley human resource duties without board approval.

Mr. Yeo explained what he meant when he used the term business in the personnel committee meeting. He feels we need to take a business approach to some of the decision-making in the district. We are in the business of education. He encouraged employees and community members to contact him if they ever have a concern with a comment he has made.

Dr. Martin stated that the various board committees are occasions for administration to present ideas and make proposals, and get input from board members. Administration can rework items and/or reconsider ideas based on input from board members. There were concerns that were expressed at the last personnel committee meeting. We continue to work on this plan and nothing has been finalized.

Ms. Spicer thanked Mr. DeSloover and Mr. Yeo for their comments. Ms. Spicer thinks that when the board and/or administration make decisions, we don't think through the ramifications and the consequences of those decisions. She has been approached by many employees and they are very concerned about personnel issues. She doesn't know what other board members think about recent decisions on how to carry forward on some issues. If employees feel there is an issue, she thinks the board has an obligation to meet and hear everyone's comments. Any decision that has a huge impact on the district, our board members need to be heard among each other; and we need to listen to what the

community and employees have to say. Ms. Spicer feels the board hasn't had good, frank discussions on some decisions and she has felt left out.

Mr. Mason feels there's a deep interaction going on with part of the board and administration. When something comes to the board they get a glossed kind of version and they don't know all that is going on in the district. Information is disseminated to the board, but he doesn't think it's a complete picture of what's really going on. He feels sometimes there are things he's not aware of when he votes, but finds out afterwards. The board would function a lot better as a whole if all information was disseminated to all board members. Mr. Mason feels in his earlier terms that he received more information about things that were going on behind the scenes than he does now. He feels this should be improved upon.

Ms. Spicer feels the board should have a policy that if anyone in the district has a concern or wants to give us information, we as a board should hear it. Mr. Philbeck agreed and stated that we have open meetings that anyone can attend, and board members can be contacted through email or by phone. Ms. Spicer said that if an employee has a problem and they don't feel they can go to their supervisor, the board should be a resource so they can be heard; and if it's a big issue, the board should take that into consideration before making a decision or voting on something.

Mr. Rankins appreciates Ms. Spicer's comments.

Cindy Taylor stated that people need to feel comfortable to approach a board member without fear of retaliation. Some are frightened of their principals, the people who evaluate them, and the higher-ups. People used to go to work and enjoy what they do – she feels that's disappearing from Monroe Public Schools. Some things that are being done at the state are out of our hands, but we need to get back to respecting and caring about one another in order to give our best to the children.

Chantele Henry agrees that a lot of education should be run like a business. This is a large decision and shouldn't be made quickly, because that would make it very difficult for Mr. Oley. When decisions are made like this it sets precedence and it affects trust.

Mr. Mason said the personnel minutes were really brief in what he said. There was more to his objections than the degree issue. It was a morale issue; it was about trying to attract talent. We are a large organization that should be able to attract someone to the HR position who has experience.

Mr. Philbeck thinks we shouldn't hesitate to institute an HR position because of the support from some board members and the public; and we should do it as soon as possible.

Mr. Yeo feels bad for Mr. Oley this evening. Mr. Oley didn't ask for this position. Mr. Yeo doesn't disagree with some of the comments, but is sad that one of our administrators had to endure the comments this evening. No decision has been made and it is sad how this grew out of control.

Mr. Mason also said in the personnel meeting that based on Mr. Oley's role in the district when compared to private industry, his current compensation package is well below industry standards. If it's felt that he's under compensated, it should be addressed in a separate issue; Mr. Mason is not comfortable packaging it up into one position and asked who's idea it was originally.

Dr. Martin stated that the administrative team is still looking at options and considering what is best for the district. Whatever administration recommends to the board will be in the best interest of the students.

He understands there are a lot of concerns, and the administrative team needs more time to talk about options and come up with a solution that will best serve the needs of students.

Adjournment

Motion by Mr. VanWasshenova; support by Mr. Philbeck that the November 11, 2014, Board Meeting #20 of the Monroe Public Schools Board of Education be adjourned.

Vote: Motion carried by a 6-0 hand vote at 8:57 p.m.

Wendy Spicer, Secretary