

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL AND REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES**

September 28, 2009

The special meeting of the Board of Education of Portage Public Schools held on Monday, September 28, 2009, was called to order at 5:10 p.m. by President Whistler in the Professional Development Center of the Administration Building, 8111 S. Westnedge.

Board Trustees Present: Melanie Kurdys, Deb Polderman, Rusty Rathburn, Randy Van Antwerp, Jennifer Whistler, and John Whyte

Board Trustees Absent: Dale Posthumus

Administrators Present: Business Manager, Karla Colestock; Assistant Superintendent of Operations, Tom Noverr; Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, Ric Perry; Community Relations Manager, Tom Vance; and Superintendent, Marsha Wells

Other Guests: Representative Tonya Schuitmaker

Superintendent Wells led a continuation of the discussion related to short and long range financial planning related to the anticipated shortfall in State funding for public schools.

The special meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

The regular business meeting of the Board of Education of the Portage Public Schools held on Monday, September 28, 2009, was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by President Whistler in the Community Room of the Administration Building, 8111 S. Westnedge. She welcomed an audience of 30 people and all in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board Trustees Present: Melanie Kurdys, Deb Polderman, Rusty Rathburn, Randy Van Antwerp, Jennifer Whistler, and John Whyte

Board Trustees Absent: Dale Posthumus

President Whistler welcomed Representative Larry DeShazor who provided an update on the State budget issues. He responded to questions from the Board and the Superintendent pertaining to possible cuts in education funding, the outlook for future funding, and other State issues. Superintendent Wells and the Board thanked Representatives DeShazor and Schuitmaker for their updates and attending tonight's meetings.

REPORTS

Superintendent's Report: Superintendent Wells commented on the smooth redistricting transition and thanked the staff and parent leaders for their assistance with this process. She discussed the success of the Big Brothers Big Sisters Mentorship Program linking District students with mentors at State Farm and thanked all involved for their efforts. The Superintendent invited Dr. Ric Perry to introduce the new Assistant Principal at Northern High, Mr. Mike Huber.

Dr. Perry welcomed Mr. Huber and shared background on his history in the District. Mr. Huber acknowledged it is an honor to serve the Northern High School community as an Assistant Principal.

Superintendent Wells informed the audience that the homecoming football game for Northern High School is October 2, Central High School is October 9, and urged community support for the home teams. She recognized and congratulated seven District students named as National Merit Semi-finalists. The Superintendent invited Mr. Tom Vance to share updates on the District's response to citizen questions pertaining to the extension of walk zones.

Mr. Vance shared background on the budgetary challenge and equitable criteria used in the recommended changes to the elementary walk zones. He informed the Board that the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) will meet on October 1 to hear appeals regarding Amberly Elementary and West Middle School filed since the September 14 Board meeting. He responded to Trustee questions pertaining to the TAC.

Superintendent Wells reported on two Special Board work sessions held to look at immediate and long-term financial matters. She discussed anticipated cuts to the current budget and outreach plans to key community stakeholders for ideas and ways to continue viable efficiencies and delivery of instruction.

Financial Report: Mr. Noverr informed the audience the General Fund Condensed Statement of Revenues and Expenditures would be brought to the October meeting. He also discussed the strategic planning aspects with regard to difficult future District cuts.

COMMENTS OR COMMUNICATIONS

President Whistler opened the comments and communications portion of the meeting and asked if there were any citizens who would like to speak to the Board. Mrs. Polderman explained guidelines the Board uses for this portion of the meeting.

Mrs. Julie Cartier, 2905 Coachlite Ave., a parent, shared concerns regarding walk zone changes and safety at West Middle and inquired about the Transportation Advisory Committee.

Ms. Lissa Adams, 3554 Cloverleaf Ln., a parent, shared concerns regarding walk zone changes at Amberly Elementary.

Ms. Ellen Robare, 2423 Ridgefield, a parent, shared concerns regarding walk zone changes at Amberly Elementary.

Ms. Millie Taraszka, 410 Marylynn Ct., a citizen, shared historical information and suggested the District cut athletics before academic programs.

Mr. Michael Robertson, 2179 Lovebird Ct., a parent, shared concerns regarding walk zone changes and safety at Amberly Elementary.

A student shared concerns regarding walk zone changes at Amberly Elementary.

Ms. Shari Curtis, 7116 Crown Pointe Circle, a citizen, shared concerns regarding walk zone changes at West Middle School.

Ms. Shauntee Austin, 2145 Albatross Ct., a parent, shared concerns regarding walk zone changes at Amberly Elementary.

Ms. Adriana Rosas, 2179 Lovebird Ct., a parent, shared concerns regarding walk zone changes and safety at Amberly Elementary.

Mr. Frank McNutt, 5196 Mission, a citizen, shared concerns regarding walk zone changes at Amberly Elementary.

President Whistler opened the floor to comments from fellow Board members.

Mrs. Kurdys discussed walk zone issues already handled, timeliness of pending appeals, and voiced concern for the number of new members on the Transportation Advisory Committee.

Mr. Rathburn shared a Portage Athletic Foundation (PAF) update on behalf of Mr. Posthumus. At the recent Central versus Northern football game, the PAF presented a donation in the amount of \$50,000 to the District's athletic fund to help pay athletic trainer fees. Since the PAF's inception in 1981, including the current gift, more than \$550,000 has been donated to aid District athletes. Mr. Rathburn also shared details of a conference he recently attended noting he would provide more details of the Educational Baldrige Express Survey during the discussion portion of the meeting.

President Whistler informed the audience the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) only makes recommendations and that the Administration and Board are not bound by the TAC's recommendation. Mrs. Kurdys inquired if there was an opportunity for the Board to be a part of the TAC process. President Whistler asked that Superintendent Wells keep the Board informed of any TAC recommendations. She also informed the audience that Mr. Whyte would become the new Chair of the Owner's Linkage Committee.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion offered by Mr. Whyte, supported by Mrs. Kurdys, that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda items, as presented. Included on the Consent Agenda was the approval of Minutes of the August 20, 2009, Special Meeting; August 24, 2009, Regular Business Meeting; September 10, 2009, Special Meeting; September 14, 2009, Committee Of The Whole Work Session; and September 21, 2009, Special Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

REQUIRED APPROVAL ITEM

Motion offered by Mr. Rathburn, supported by Mrs. Polderman, that the Board of Education approve the appointment of the following new teachers: Ms. Hannah Gagie, Ms. Gwen Harkins, Mr. Colin Killmer, and Ms. Sarah Zygadlo, as presented.

Dr. Perry provided background on the new teacher appointments noting there were no additions, only staff replacements.

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion offered by Mrs. Polderman, supported by Mr. Rathburn, that the Board of Education approve the revision to the Michigan Schools Energy Cooperative Agreement, as presented.

Mrs. Karla Colestock, provided background on the MISEC Cooperative Agreement and responded to Trustee question and concerns regarding the purchase of non-energy items.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-1.

Motion offered by Mrs. Polderman, supported by Mr. Van Antwerp, that the Board of Education approve the appointment of Ms. Angie Foster and Ms. Mary Barkholz-Ingber to the Special Education Parent Advisory Committee at KRESA, for a three-year term, which will expire in 2012, as presented.

The Director of Special Education, Ms. Gail Van Daff, provided background on the Parent Advisory Committee and the parent representatives recommended for appointment. She also responded to Trustee questions pertaining to the role and responsibilities of the appointed representatives, potential conflicts of interest, and possible Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency Special Education budget cuts.

Motion carried unanimously.

ACTION ITEM

Motion offered by Mr. Whyte, supported by Mrs. Polderman, that the Board of Education award the Lake Center Elementary Technology Infrastructure bid to Buist in an amount not to exceed \$201,927, proceeds coming from the 2007 Bond Fund #2, as presented.

The Director of Technology, Mr. Michael Batterson, shared background information on the Lake Center request. Mr. Batterson and Mr. Alex Ellingsen, Technology Consultant from Secant Technologies, responded to Trustee questions regarding the equipment, cost, and contractor. Mrs. Polderman reminded the audience this purchase was from the Bond Fund #2.

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion offered by Mrs. Polderman, supported by Mr. Van Antwerp, that the Board of Education approve the purchase of 553 desktop computers from Trivalent Group, Inc., for an amount not to exceed \$374,060.26, proceeds coming from the 2007 Bond Fund #1, as presented.

The Director of Assessment and Student Information Systems, Mr. Dan Vomastek, provided background on the recommendation to purchase desktop computers. He responded to Trustee questions regarding potential savings, upgrades, connecting the recommendation to student achievement, expansion and replacement, equity of equipment, and equipment designated for the Community Education Center.

Motion offered by Mrs. Kurdys to table the computer purchases. Motion failed for lack of support.

Motion to approve desktop computers carried by a vote of 5-1.

Motion offered by Mrs. Polderman, supported by Mr. Rathburn, that the Board of Education approve the purchase of 252 laptop computers from Trivalent Group, Inc., for an amount not to exceed \$251,246.52, proceeds coming from the 2007 Bond Fund #1 and #2, as presented.

Mr. Vomastek provided background on the recommendation to purchase laptop computers.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-1.

Motion offered by Mrs. Polderman, supported by Mr. Rathburn, that the Board of Education approve the purchase of 173 netbook computers from Trivalent Group, Inc., for an amount not to exceed \$119,344.05, proceeds coming from the 2007 Bond Fund #1, as presented.

Mr. Vomastek provided background on the recommendation to purchase netbook computers and responded to Trustee questions pertaining to: new or replaced machines, functionality, tracking student achievement related to use, and the differences between laptops and netbooks. President Whistler offered kudos to Mr. Vomastek and his team for their efforts researching the computer recommendations and noted the purchases will all be under budget.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-1.

ITEMS OF INFORMATION

The Board discussed an Agenda Item Request pertaining to the possible utilization of The Educational Baldrige Express Survey by the Board.

Trustees came to a consensus to move Agenda Request 5, Utilization of The Educational Baldrige Express Survey by the Board to a future agenda.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Edna Kent
Recording Secretary