

BOARD OF EDUCATION
Millburn School District 24

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
Aug. 2, 2010

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Diane Campbell
Robert Reding
Lisa Scanio
Chris Stream

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT

Dr. Ellen Mauer, Superintendent
Elizabeth Keefe, Special Education Director
Dr. Cheryl Kucera, Curriculum Director
Joanne Rathunde, Technology Director
Jake Jorgenson, Principal

BUSINESS MANAGER

Mary Taylor

VISITORS

Laura Brown
Jenn Kiddle
Alicia Keys
Valerie Powley

BOARD CLERK

Dorothy Pazanin

The Committee of the Whole Meeting of the Board of Education of Millburn School District 24, Lake County, Illinois, held at Millburn Central School, was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Secretary Chris Stream. Roll call was taken with the following Board Members in attendance: Diane Campbell, Robert Reding, Lisa Scanio and Chris Stream. Absent were Robert Buehler, Kenneth Dewitt and Shawn Lahr.

Because Board Secretary Chris Stream was conducting the meeting due to the absence of the President and Vice President, it was decided to elect a Secretary Pro Tem. A motion was made by Lisa Scanio and seconded by Diane Campbell to name Robert Reding as the Secretary Pro Tem. On a voice vote, all Board Members voted Aye. Nays: none. Absent: Robert Buehler, Kenneth Dewitt and Shawn Lahr. The motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Laura Brown, chairperson of Citizens for Millburn, reported that there was a good turnout for the group's first meeting last week. The group, which is organizing support for the upcoming referendum, will be marching in the Lindenfest parade, in front of the Millburn Central Band. Parents and community members are invited to march. Cathy Duffy is contacting teachers who might be interested in joining in the parade. Helmuth Fendel, a Millburn graduate and parent of an incoming kindergarten student, is putting together a marketing plan. Jason Hutchinson, a parent of children starting school this fall, is coordinating the website. The group has opened a checking account and is accepting donations, large and small, to fund the effort. Mrs. Brown said she has submitted a grant application to the Millburn Education Foundation to cover the cost of signs and buttons. Lime green has been chosen as the group's theme color. The next meeting is scheduled for Aug. 10.

Robert Reding said that his neighbor, Carol Zerba, gave him a letter she had written, and asked him to read it to the Board during the Public Comments. Mr. Reding read the letter, which expressed Mrs. Zerba's opposition to the upcoming referendum.

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

RESOLUTION FOR TAX ANTICIPATION WARRANTS – Mary Taylor said there will be an action item on the August Regular Meeting agenda asking for approval of a resolution to authorize \$4 million in TAWs for Fiscal Year 2011. This amount is higher than the \$3.7 million in TAWs authorized for Fiscal Year 2010, of which the district used \$3.5. Mrs. Taylor said it is necessary to increase the amount because of the possibility that the school district will not receive all of its general state aid. She's projecting that the district will start drawing on the TAWs by November or December. The money will be borrowed in \$500,000 increments, as needed. The interest rate is anticipated to be about 3-3.5 percent. Mrs. Taylor said she is attending a seminar on Aug. 11, which should provide the latest information on what to expect in state funding.

Robert Reding asked if the district could limit the TAWs to \$3.5 million, the same amount used this year, in an effort to curtail the borrowing. Mrs. Taylor said it is the district's goal to limit the borrowing to \$3.5 million. However, the authorization of the increased amount will provide a cushion if the state does not meet its funding obligations.

Chris Stream asked if the TAW resolution could be worded to reflect the district's intention to borrow "up to" \$4 million. Mrs. Taylor said that could be done.

REVIEW OF POLICY 4:60 REGARDING PURCHASING – Diane Campbell said she asked for a review of the policy because of the Board's recent decision to raise the limit on the amount of a purchase that required the district to go out for bids. The policy change, approved in August 2009, raised the limit from \$10,000 to \$25,000. Mrs. Campbell asked if the Board wanted to consider lowering the limit back to \$10,000, because of the current financial climate and because of their responsibility to the taxpayers.

Dr. Ellen Mauer explained that the current district policy does not prohibit competitive pricing on purchases under \$25,000. The policy follows state law that requires the district to seek bids through a formal process for expenditures of more than \$25,000, with some noted exceptions. Mrs. Taylor gave two examples of recent purchases under \$25,000 in which not going out for bids was an advantage for the district. In one case she was able to seek an additional price quote for a chiller at Millburn West after the initial quotes were submitted. The new quote lowered the price by about \$10,000. She said that if there had been a formal bidding process, she would not have been able to seek new quotes without restarting the formal procedures. The second example was a recent textbook order of about \$14,000. This type of purchase is difficult to bid because it involves specific publishers and book editions.

Dr. Mauer said it is the district's practice to get at least three price quotes on most purchases. She said that the district has more flexibility to negotiate when it is not bound to take the lowest bid. Dr. Mauer agreed to present the list of summer maintenance projects to the Board earlier next year, and to notify the Board as soon as possible regarding any major expenditures.

REVIEW OF POLICY 8:20 REGARDING FACILITIES USE – Dr. Ellen Mauer presented the current Facilities Use policy, the one recommended by the IASB, and information on SEDOL's rental fee rates. Diane Campbell said she asked for the review of this policy based on the Board's recent decision to rent space to Red Apple Academy during the school day. Mrs. Campbell said the district's current Facilities Use policy was designed to recover costs associated with building use by outside groups. However, she believes the rental agreement with Red Apple Academy changes the district's intent. She said she is concerned about the philosophy of renting school space during the school day. She also expressed concern that this might open the door to non-profit organizations wanting to rent the school facilities during the school day, at a rate set lower than for-profit businesses.

The Board discussed various aspects of the Red Apple rental situation, such as the district's need to raise revenue and the time consumed by school personnel to accommodate a for-profit business. Because the Red Apple building use application has already been approved for this year, the Board Members agreed that it will evaluate the situation over the course of the next few months and review the policy again in November.

FIRST READING OF BOARD POLICY – The following policies were presented for a First Reading:

- Community Relations – 8:25 Advertising and Distribution Materials in Schools
Provided by Non-School-Related Entities
- Community Relations – 8:30 Visitors to and Conduct on School Property
- Community Relations – 8:70 Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities

The policies will be included on the Consent Agenda at the next Regular Board Meeting for a Second Reading and Approval.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Laura Brown said she had a clipboard with her in which she was collecting names of district residents who are interested in volunteering with Citizens for Millburn, the community group in support of the upcoming school referendum.

Valerie Powley said there are many parents who understand the need for the referendum. However, she said there also are many parents, including herself, who are angry because they moved into this area for the promise of this great school district. She said there is a lot

of education that needs to be done with this group of parents because they may be coming in with “starry eyes” and may be surprised to find out that the district is in debt and that class sizes may be increasing. She said many parents may not have been paying attention to school district news until now.

Board Members discussed various aspects of the referendum, including: the cumulative cost to a taxpayer over the cost of many years as compared to the “per day” cost; the fundraising limitations on the citizens committee; and being consistent and accurate with the financial data that is being disseminated. It also was suggested to reach out to Millburn alumni through social networking, such as Facebook.

It was noted that Elizabeth Keefe, Dr. Cheryl Kucera, Joanne Rathunde and Jake Jorgenson exited the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Robert Reding and seconded by Lisa Scanio at 8:17 p.m. to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the superintendent’s goals. On a roll call vote, the following Board Members voted Aye: Robert Reding, Lisa Scanio, Chris Stream and Diane Campbell. Nays: none. Absent: Kenneth Dewitt, Shawn Lahr and Robert Buehler. The motion passed.

A motion was made by Robert Reding and seconded by Diane Campbell to exit Executive Session at 9:08 p.m. On a voice vote, all Board Members voted Aye. Nays: none. Absent: Kenneth Dewitt, Shawn Lahr and Robert Buehler. The motion passed.

COMMITTEE MEETING RESUMES

The Committee of the Whole Meeting resumed at 9:20 p.m. There being no further business, a motion was made by Lisa Scanio and seconded by Robert Reding to adjourn the Committee Meeting. On a voice vote, all Board Members voted Aye. Nays: none. Absent: Kenneth Dewitt, Shawn Lahr and Robert Buehler. The motion passed. The Committee Meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Chris Stream, Secretary
Board of Education
Millburn School District 24

ATTEST:

Robert A. Reding, Secretary Pro Tem
Board of Education
Millburn School District 24