

BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Millburn School District 24

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING  
Nov. 3, 2010

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Robert Buehler  
Diane Campbell  
Kenneth Dewitt  
Shawn Lahr  
Robert Reding  
Lisa Scanio

BUSINESS MANAGER

Mary Taylor

BOARD CLERK

Dorothy Pazanin

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT

Dr. Ellen Mauer, Superintendent  
Elizabeth Keefe, Special Education Director  
Dr. Cheryl Kucera, Curriculum Director  
Jake Jorgenson, Principal  
Jason Lind, Principal

VISITORS

Susan Stone	Shelly Graves
Bernadette Hanna	Jenn Kiddle
Geneen Hoetzer	Ralph Bachinger
Laura Brown	Rachel Nichols
Bridget Sieracke	Barbara Queen
Joy Gajda	Tammy Olson
Jen Gari	Valerie Powley
Becky Moeller	RaeAnn Collins
David Cain	Karen Ende
Jane Gattone	Joan Green
Cindy Brugioni	Glenn Sturt
Carla Blanchard	Kim Dodd
Steve Craven	John Spiewak
Tracy Prieto	

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

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Laura Brown said she was speaking on behalf of Citizens for Millburn District 24. She expressed disappointment that the referendum did not pass. She said the committee worked tirelessly to give the district the funds it needed to pull itself out of financial trouble. She expressed a deep appreciation for all of the district's teachers, and said the committee will support the district as it tackles future challenges.

Carla Blanchard said legislators need to know that something must be done about school funding at the state level. Kenneth Dewitt said representatives from Millburn and several area districts have been meeting for the past two months to formulate a message to the state lawmakers. A meeting is scheduled next week with the school representatives and the newly elected legislators so that the school message can be delivered.

Mrs. Blanchard also asked about school fees, opportunities for parents to volunteer, redrawing district boundaries, reviewing technology expenses, and preserving band and sports programs.

Dr. Ellen Mauer responded that fees will be reviewed in December; a parent is coordinating a volunteer program; and redrawing boundary lines involves intergovernmental agreements, and often ends up costing more money than it saves. Dr. Mauer said she would email Mrs. Blanchard an explanation of past investigations of technology expenses. Dr. Mauer also explained that the band and sports programs will be limited to one per district, regardless of the grade configuration of the two schools.

ADDITION OF NON-ACTION ITEMS – It was agreed to add a discussion item about the school buses being parked at Millburn West.

Shawn Lahr expressed the Board's gratitude to the referendum committee for getting involved, especially when time and resources were limited. He said the Citizens for Millburn District 24 exemplifies what it means to be a part of the Millburn community. He said he agreed with Mrs. Brown's comments about the importance of attending Board Meetings, staying engaged in school activities and supporting the teachers.

## INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

AUDIT REPORT – David Cain of Milburn Cain & Co. presented an overview of the 2010 Audit results. He said the auditors have issued an unqualified opinion on the district's financial statements, which means it's a "clean" opinion. He said accounting records are well maintained, his staff had unrestricted access to the books and records, and no material errors or irregularities were found. Comments on the audit included the following:

- The Annual Profile Summary gives the district a rating of 2.00 out of a possible 4.00, which places the district on the Financial Watch List again. However, this score is an improvement over the 2009 score of 1.55.
- The 2010 Operating Expense Per Pupil is \$9,743, which is \$548 lower than 2009 when the amount was \$10,291.

- The district received \$603,183 more than it paid out in 2010. This compares favorably with 2009 when the district had an operating deficit of more than \$1.5 million. Mr. Cain referred to this as a “remarkable improvement” from a financial perspective.
- The Fund Financial Statements show a deficit of \$147,569. Included in these statements are depreciation expenses and accreted interest, neither of which is included in the budget. This is a considerable improvement over 2009 when the fund deficit was more than \$2.4 million.

STRATEGIC PLAN OPTIONS – Dr. Ellen Mauer reported that the Strategic Planning Subcommittee sought additional proposals and estimates from firms that facilitate a Strategic Plan. Lisa Scanio said that although the subcommittee had a favorable recommendation for two of the firms, the strongest recommendation is for School Exec Connect. The Board generally agreed that the subcommittee should move forward with their choice.

REVIEW OF POLICY 8:20 – Previously a Board Member had requested the Board review its policy on community use of school facilities, including an update on the rental of rooms to the Red Apple preschool. Dr. Mauer reported that the preschool operation has not interfered with Millburn West’s regular school activities, and that the district will receive about \$10,000 a year in rent.

Diane Campbell expressed concerns that the policy doesn’t match current practices. She also asked if the policy will be enacted fairly to both for-profit and non-profit groups, especially when rooms are rented during the school day. The Board discussed security issues, insurance liabilities, and what constitutes a fair rental rate. Dr. Mauer said she will draft an amended policy to state that any agreement to rent rooms during the school day must be approved by the Board of Education.

HOUSE LEASE – Dr. Ellen Mauer informed the Board that employee Mariana Bibian has agreed to the one-year lease of the district’s home at 18620 Millburn Road. Mrs. Bibian was the second person chosen in the lottery; the first person declined. The lease agreement allows Mrs. Bibian and her husband to live in the home in exchange for her doing security checks on the school buildings. Dr. Mauer said this saves the district more than \$20,000 in services. Approval of the lease will be added to the Consent Agenda at the next Regular Board Meeting.

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

Operational Services – 4:20 Fund Balances

Operational Services – 4:80 Accounting and Audits

General Personnel – 5:180 Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity

## Professional Personnel – 5:190 Teacher Qualifications

Dr. Mauer explained that Policy 4:20 requires the superintendent to inform the Board whenever reserves are drawn on or the whenever the district borrows money. She said that although this practice was followed in the past, it was never included in a Board policy. The proposed policy also suggests that year-end fund balances be maintained at 25 percent of the annual expenditures. Dr. Mauer said she suggested that the 25 percent figure be used because it is a good goal toward which to work. A sentence was added stating the district will seek to pass a balanced budget each year.

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

BUSES AT WEST – Mary Taylor said that most of the school buses will be parked at Millburn West this winter instead of at Millburn Central as has been done in the past. The change was proposed to improve safety and alleviate insurance claims. Mrs. Taylor explained that the bus parking area at Millburn Central has a water drainage problem and is prone to be ice-covered in the winter. There have been several workman's compensation claims filed by bus drivers who have slipped and fallen on the ice. At West, the buses will be parked on the east side of the building, and will be able to pull out moving forward. Jake Jorgenson, Millburn West principal, said he explained the bus parking change in a recent communication to parents, and has not received any negative feedback. It was agreed that the Heritage Trails Homeowners' Association should be notified of the plan.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Rachel Nichols asked when the new plan for next school year would be in place. Dr. Ellen Mauer explained that teachers need to be notified at least 60 days before the end of the school year if they are not being rehired. Dr. Mauer said the intention is to move forward with the plan that was announced by the Board before the referendum, and work has already started on that.

Carla Blanchard commented on the discussion regarding renting school facilities. She said a not-for-profit entity, such as a school district, is limited by how much non-operational revenue it can raise and still maintain its not-for-profit status.

It was noted that Mary Taylor, Elizabeth Keefe, Cheryl Kucera, Jake Jorgenson and Jason Lind exited the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Lisa Scanio and seconded by Diane Campbell at 8:17 p.m. to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel. On a roll call vote, the following Board Members voted Aye: Kenneth Dewitt, Diane Campbell, Robert Buehler,

Shawn Lahr, Lisa Scanio and Robert Reding. Nays: none. Absent: Chris Stream. The motion passed.

A motion was made by Diane Campbell and seconded by Robert Reding to exit Executive Session at 8:35 p.m. On a voice vote, all Board Members voted Aye. Nays: none. Absent: Chris Stream. The motion passed.

#### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING RESUMES

The Committee of the Whole Meeting resumed at 8:36 p.m.

Dr. Mauer reported that the administrative team will be meeting on a regular basis to enact the proposed budget cuts. She said the team is compiling figures based on actual salaries. She said the figures will have to be updated each month because some changes can not be anticipated. Issues such as seniority, benefits and early retirement were discussed.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Lisa Scanio and seconded by Diane Campbell at 8:50 p.m. to enter into a second Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel. On a roll call vote, the following Board Members voted Aye: Diane Campbell, Robert Buehler, Shawn Lahr, Lisa Scanio, Robert Reding and Kenneth Dewitt. Nays: none. Absent: Chris Stream. The motion passed.

A motion was made by Diane Campbell and seconded by Robert Reding to exit Executive Session at 9:06 p.m. On a voice vote, all Board Members voted Aye. Nays: none. Absent: Chris Stream. The motion passed.

There being no further business, the Committee of the Whole Meeting adjourned at 9:51 p.m.

---

Shawn Lahr, President  
Board of Education  
Millburn School District 24

ATTEST:

---

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