



# **BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE Minutes**

January 11, 2018

The Board of Education Committee of the Whole met on January 11, 2018 at 5:34 p.m. in the Library at Marie Murphy School, 2921 Illinois Road, Wilmette, Illinois. The President called the meeting to order and asked the Board Recorder to call the roll.

The following members were present:

Louise Dechovitz, Vice President  
Dan Garbis  
Gil Gibori  
Joel Raynes  
Sheryl Swibel  
Jamie Taylor  
Rick Zelinsky, President

Also Present:

Debbie Cotter, Videographer  
Beth Dever, Chief School Business Official  
Suzie Harris, Board Reporter  
Jessica Hutchison, Principal, Avoca West  
Dr. Kevin Jauch, Superintendent/Board Secretary  
Matthew Palcer, Principal, Marie Murphy  
Terry Sofianos, Director of Pupil Services  
Jennie Winters, Curriculum and Instruction Coordinator

Visitors:

George Karcazes

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## **VISITOR COMMENTS**

George Karcazes stated his attendance at the meeting was to represent the Friends of Avoca Park community group and their interest in preserving the Avoca Center parcel as open green space for the community and school district to use.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **A. Avoca Center Discussion**

Board President, Rick Zelinsky, provided the Board with the framework to guide a discussion regarding the Board's imminent decision regarding the future of Avoca Center. Mr. Zelinsky presented objectives for the discussion which include a review of the current options for Avoca Center, determination of potential new options, an opportunity for each Board Member to share their opinion on the current options, potential elimination of options, and a revisit of decision

making priorities. The current options under consideration are to raze Avoca Center at the district's partial or full expense or with financial assistance of an outside entity and to keep the land, sell the entire Avoca Center parcel to a private developer, sell to a municipality municipality for community use and/or development, or to sell a portion of the parcel for development to offset the cost of razing the building and retaining the remainder as green space.

Mr. Zelinsky suggested that the Board agree to a set of values to drive the best decision for the district. Mr. Zelinsky shared potential decision values including financial impact, land use, focus, educational use and environmental impact. At this time, Mr. Zelinsky opened the floor to open discussion from the Board for them to site their stance on the current options and the decision values.

Board Member, Dan Garbis, believes that cost should be the overriding value driving the decision and should be woven into all the other considerations in order to make the most fiscally responsible decision for the district. Mr. Garbis does not feel that the district should sell the parcel at this time, but keep it as public land.

Board Member, Joel Raynes, stated that he also does not feel that the district should sell the parcel at this time, but keep it as public land. Mr. Raynes does not believe this would be the best time to sell because of the current market, but that the building does need to be razed. Mr. Raynes also noted that the district should pursue avenues to recoup the loss of revenue from the rental of Avoca Center.

Board Member, Sheryl Swibel, shared that the land is an asset to the district and that this is not the time to sell. Ms. Swibel believes that keeping the land would not inhibit the district's ability to educate, but could potentially enhance learning. Ms. Swibel stated that funding the razing of the building now is an investment in the future as it allows for the potential of new options for the land to be envisioned.

Board Member, Jamie Taylor, read a statement indicating that she feels the district should sell the Avoca Center parcel for the financial integrity of the district. Ms. Taylor believes selling the parcel will provide better financial stability in order for the district to continue providing the resources necessary to maintain academic excellence. Ms. Taylor suggests reinvesting the proceeds of the sell for capital expenditures.

Board Vice President, Louise Dechovitz, stated that she also agrees that it is not time to sell the land as there are other options to procure funds to meet the capital and educational needs of the district. Mr. Dechovitz also shared the increasing importance and value of preserving open space. Ms. Dechovitz believes that the district should look to the community for resources to preserve the land for public use.

Board Member, Gil Gibori, stated that the Avoca Center parcel was at one time given to the district to use for education and because the district no longer needs that land, it should be given back to the community to use. Mr. Gibori believes that the district should retain ownership, but allow the municipalities to use the land to serve the community. Through

retaining ownership, Avoca could reserve the right of first refusal for the use and reclamation rights if the school district eventually needs to use that parcel for education in the future.

Board President, Rick Zelinsky, believes that the Board needs to make the decision based on the core values of the district. There are financial aspects that need to be considered, especially as they may draw resources away from educating the Avoca students. Mr. Zelinsky indicated that the district should continue to pursue options that will offset the cost of razing the building and secure funding for future generations.

The Board plans to make a decision regarding the future of Avoca Center and the parcel of land it sits upon within the next few months.

### **B. Potential General Obligation Bond Issuance**

Chief School Business Official, Beth Dever, presented the Board with information regarding a potential general obligation bond issuance. The Board directed the Administration to begin the bond process at its December Board of Education meeting. In turn, the district has received a Financial Advisory Agreement from PMA Securities for the issuance of approximately \$7.6 million in General Obligation Limited Tax School Bonds and \$1 million Taxable General Obligation Limited Tax Refunding School Bonds. Ms. Dever indicated that the agreement outlines a fee structure that will be calculated on an aggregate issuance basis plus \$3,500 for document services. Ms. Dever estimates the fees at approximately \$25,000. Fees are paid concurrently with the delivery of the bonds and only if the sale of bonds is successful.

Ms. Dever also reviewed the Preliminary Schedule of Events regarding the potential bond issuance. At the January Board of Education meeting, the Board will adopt a resolution of intent, resolution of BINA Hearing and reimbursement resolution. At the February Board of Education meeting, the Board will hold the BINA hearing and review the parameters and escrow resolutions. The notice of the BINA Hearing will be published in local news publications on February 1, 2018. The published notices marks the beginning of a 30-day petition period, which terminates on March 5<sup>th</sup>. Barring any petition from the public, the parameters of the sale and the escrow resolutions will be adopted at the March Board of Education meeting. The potential sale will take place on April 11<sup>th</sup> and the closing and transfer of bond revenues will take place on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Board President, Rick Zelinsky, inquired into the appropriate avenues to educate the tax payers. The Administration suggested a presentation at the BINA hearing and an article in the next district newsletter.

### **C. Summer Life Safety and Facilities Projects**

Chief School Business Official, Beth Dever, reviewed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) from DLA, Architects, Ltd. regarding the 2018 Summer Projects for Marie Murphy and Avoca West Elementary School. Projects at Avoca West include architectural finish work related to asbestos abatement in the kitchen, and classrooms 46 and 48, replacement of flooring and wall base in Room 26, replacement of casework and sinks in classrooms 46, 48, and 26 and the replacement of select exhaust fans. At Marie Murphy, projects include architectural finish work related to asbestos abatement in the stairwells, gymnasium storage spaces, gymnasium offices, and upper weight room including new flooring and wall base as well as the replacement of select exhaust fans.

The estimated cost of these projects excluding the 10.8% architect fee is \$290,000. The Board will be asked to approve the MOU at its January Board of Education meeting. The projects will

be out for bid in mid-February and bid contracts approved at the March Board meeting. Construction will begin in June after the last day of student attendance with an anticipated completion date of August 10, 2018.

**D. Fund Balance Policy**

In light of the current financial plan for the district, the Board held a discussion to determine their level of comfort for the districts reserve level on cash basis, as opposed to accrual. The Board agreed they are comfortable with the goal to maintain the reserve level above or at 50% and to act to address the district's financial position if the reserves fall below 50%.

**E. Compliance with Public Act 100-554: Sexual Harassment Policy and Resolution**

Superintendent, Kevin Jauch, informed the Board that due to the State's adoption of Public Act 100-554, the district is required to adopt a sexual harassment policy by resolution. Avoca already has policies (2:260 Uniform Grievance Procedure and 5:20 Workplace Harassment Prohibited, 7:20 Harassment of Students Prohibited and 7:180 Prevention of and Response to Bullying) that address the requirements of the new law. To insure compliance, Dr. Jauch enlisted the district's attorney to review the current policies, amend them as necessary and draft a resolution for adoption. The attorneys made minor changes to the current policies, specifically. The Board will be asked to approve the revised policies and a Resolution Approving Workplace Harassment Policy and Uniform Grievance Procedure at the January Board of Education meeting.

## **CLOSED SESSION**

Mr. Garbis moved that the Board move into Closed Session for the purpose of:

The setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the public body. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(6); and

The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1).

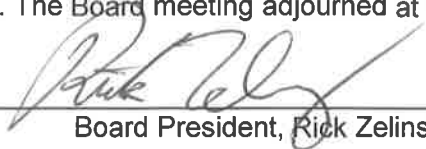
Ms. Swibel seconded the motion. Upon roll call, members voted as follows: Mr. Garbis, aye; Ms. Taylor, aye; Ms. Swibel, aye; Mr. Gibori, aye; Mr. Raynes, aye; Mr. Zelinsky, aye; and Ms. Dechovitz, aye. Motion carried.

The Board moved into closed session at 7:50 p.m. and reconvened in open session at 8:52 p.m.

Mr. Raynes moved that the Board return into open session, and Ms. Dechovitz seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote, with all members voting aye, the motion was carried.

## MEETING ADJOURNS

Ms. Taylor moved to adjourn the meeting, and Mr. Raynes seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote, with all members voting aye, the motion was carried. The Board meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

  
Board President, Rick Zelinsky

  
Secretary, Kevin Jauch