



# BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE Minutes

February 5, 2018

The Board of Education Committee of the Whole met on February 5, 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  
Sheryl Swibel (arrived 5:50 p.m.)  
Jamie Taylor  
Rick Zelinsky, President

Absent:

Joel Raynes

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  
Terry Sofianos, Director of Pupil Services  
Jennie Winters, Curriculum and Instruction Coordinator

Visitors:

George Karcazes  
Roula Karcazes  
Anne Nagel

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## DISCUSSION ITEMS

### **A. Avoca Center Update**

Superintendent, Kevin Jauch, updated the Board regarding Avoca Center, specifically, the prospect of retaining the land, razing the building and potentially generating rental revenue from the grounds surrounding Marie Murphy School. The Board previously discussed that the land may be more attractive to an organization if there was access to all of the land, including the fields currently leased by the Wilmette Park District (WPD) and used by the Wilmette Wings. Dr. Jauch met with the Director of the WPD to give them the right of first refusal regarding the need for the additional space of the Avoca Center parcel and renting it at a fair market rate. The

WPD does not need the additional space to accommodate their current programming, nor will they be without adequate resources to continue programming at the same level if the district decides to terminate their current agreement. There is a 90-day notice of termination clause in the current land lease between Avoca and the WPD. Dr. Jauch indicated that the Wilmette Wings have expressed interest in using all of the grounds surrounding Marie Murphy, however, they are in a favorable agreement with the Park District and may not be inclined to move in another direction. The district plans to contact the Wilmette Wings to keep them informed and consider their position regarding this matter.

Dr. Jauch also spoke with the owner of Sports Made Personal (SMP), who indicated interest in using all of the space and further discussing this with the Board. The district intends to discuss SMP's potential financial role in razing the building.

The Board agreed that the next step is to have the Avoca Center Committee reconvene to discuss and develop the parameters for a potential land lease or rental agreement. The purpose would be to provide the district attorneys with a framework to draft the agreement in the event the district decides to move in that direction.

Mr. Gibori inquired whether or not the lease agreement would be a land lease or a land use agreement. This would be outlined by the parameters set forth by the Avoca Center Committee.

Ms. Taylor inquired as to whether or not the Board has voted whether to sell the land or raze the building and retain the land. Dr. Jauch noted that the Board has not voted, as the timing is not right in light of funding. She also inquired as to whether or not the Avoca Park fields would be able to be used during the demolition of Avoca Center.

Ms. Dechovitz stated that the Board needs to be cognizant of the binding nature of an agreement with another organization and how that may impact the district's flexibility with the use of the land.

## **B. Working Cash Bond Issuance Update**

Chief School Business Official, Beth Dever, reviewed the bond issuance schedule of events. The notice of intent and the notice of BINA hearing were published in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Century Media publications on February 1, 2018. The BINA hearing is set to take place on February 22, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. During the month of February, Ms. Dever will be working with PMA Securities, Inc. to review the parameters, prepare documents and draft the Preliminary Official Statement.

Mr. Gibori inquired as to the petition process. If the district does not receive a petition by March 6, 2018, the district will move forward with the bond issuance. If a petition is received, the Board will review the process and determine how to move forward in procuring funding for the facilities' needs.

## **C. New Trier Township Survey**

Dr. Jauch presented the Board with information regarding the New Trier Township Survey. The New Trier Township Superintendents have engaged in discussion on numerous occasions regarding the credence, value and application of the New Trier Freshman survey. Avoca was in the minority for utilizing the data generated by the old survey model. The township superintendents have been conducting research to create a survey tool that is reflective of the skills and attributes that students need most to succeed in college, careers, and life in general.

This survey does seek collect academic perception data. This new interview tool will be used across the township this year. The implementation of the survey will be modified as well. Baseline data for a cohort of children will be gathered at the end of their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year by the elementary school districts. Those students will be asked to reflect on their middle school experience. A similar survey will be given to NTHS students at the beginning of their sophomore year. This data will be used by the high school and returned to the specific elementary districts. Another survey will be sent to NTHS alumni as they begin their second post high school year. Due to the similarity in the surveys, cohort and trend data can be meaningfully analyzed.

Dr. Jauch also noted that the district would be collecting data from a focus group of Avoca students near the end of their Freshman year at New Trier to continue to obtain actionable data.

Ms. Taylor stated her disagreement, as a parent, with the change to the scope of the new survey model indicating that the academic information gathered is beneficial to the district and to parents and the new model is too subjective.

#### **D. Student Fees Discussion: Instructional; Technology; and Transportation**

Chief School Business Official, Beth Dever, presented the Board with a recommendation for the Instructional, Technology and Transportation fees for the 2018-2019 school year. Ms. Dever reviewed the services and items that the fees cover and gave an update on the fees collected for the 2017-2018 school year.

The Finance Committee reviewed township comparisons and the Avoca fee history and make the following recommendations: change the name of books and materials fees to instructional fees to better reflect what is purchased with those funds; increase instructional fees by \$15 per student; no change is recommended to the technology fees; change the structure of the transportation fees to two tiers versus four tiers; increase transportation fee per student for round trip service by \$20 per student; increase transportation fee per student for one-way service by \$10 per student; no change recommended for the field trip fee; and transfer the credit card processing fee to the purchaser. The increase in the instructional and transportation fees will increase revenues by \$10,000 and \$3,750 respectively.

Mr. Zelinsky inquired as to whether or not RevTrak accepts e-checks without a fee. The district's plan is for parents to pay fees either by cash or check with no fee or online and incur a credit card fee, e-checks are not an option at this time. Mr. Zelinsky also confirmed that Avoca revisits fee structure every year.

Mr. Gibori inquired into why Avoca's technology fees are in contrast with the other districts. Avoca's technology fee is used to offset the cost of the technology program versus a device fee.

Mr. Garbis stated that all students that opt to use district transportation should be required to pay and that it should be based on financial qualification and not distance from the school.

Mr. Gibori commented that Avoca has the lowest household income of the districts included in the comparison. He also agreed that transportation fees should be based on financial qualification and not distance from the school.

The Board determined that they are prepared to approve the recommendations for the 2018-2019 school year as outlined by the Finance Committee, but will revisit school fees to determine beneficial changes in structure moving forward.

## **E. Communication Committee Report**

Dr. Jauch gave a report to the Board regarding the most recent Communication Committee meeting and the work toward the district communication plan.

The members of the Communication Committee reviewed the draft of the Winter 2018 Vision. All agreed that the Vision was inclusive, attractive and well laid out. The Vision has been sent to the printer and is scheduled for delivery by the end of the week.

The committee discussed the school district's ongoing strategy for communication. A key aspect of that discussion revolved around whether or not we are reaching community members without children in the district. The committee is working to develop new strategies and reinstitute former practices to reach this demographic in the community. Ideas include collecting analytics from website traffic, surveying the community via a link provided in the next Board Brief, providing an "opt in" option with each edition of the Vision or Board Briefs, sending a postcard to community regarding the launch of the new website, checking in with parents and teachers regarding communication between conferences and reinstating the Realtor Breakfast or some form of community engagement event during American Education Week.

The Board was given the opportunity to discuss lighthouse logos that the communication and website committees had also reviewed for using on the new Avoca website. Dr. Jauch recorded the Board's thoughts and said he would share those ideas with Kelly Sabatini, the designer, and move forward with the recommendation.

## **CLOSED SESSION**

Ms. Taylor moved that the Board move into Closed Session for the purpose of:

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).

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

The Board moved into closed session at 6:48 p.m. and reconvened in open session at 8:18 p.m.

Ms. Dechovitz moved that the Board return into open session, and Ms. Swibel 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. Garbis seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote, with all members voting aye, the motion was carried. The Board meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

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Board President, Rick Zelinsky

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Secretary, Kevin Jauch