



BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE Minutes

March 5, 2018

The Board of Education Committee of the Whole met on March 5, 2018 at 5:33 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

Absent:

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:

Jane Bailey

DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Food Service Update

Chief School Business Official, Beth Dever, introduced representatives from Quest Food Management Services, Inc. (Quest), Mike McTaggart, Nick Saccaro and Rebecca Cohen. Quest attended the meeting in order to provide the Board with an update regarding the implementation of the new food service program at Avoca. Mr. Saccaro highlighted the program successes, challenges, accountability for current financial gap and options for the next year and beyond. Quest reported the following successes: 4.5% growth in sales; the involvement of the district employees has been eliminated; new equipment has provided attractive options and increased sales; homemade and fresh foods are available and nutrition education has been

offered. A food service survey was sent to parents and staff. 76% of parent respondents and 96% of staff respondents were satisfied or highly satisfied with the program. The largest challenge the food service program implementation has encountered is staying within budget for food, labor and direct costs. Mr. Saccaro gave an explanation for each variance and explained the action being taken to correct the losses and the impact they have had to date. The months of January and February already show a positive trend toward balance. Due to the imbalance this far, Quest will refund half of their management fee as a gesture to partially remedy the deficit. Going forward, Quest has offered two options to help mitigate the risk and demonstrate commitment to Avoca. The first option is a tiered management fee structure that would be based on the program's performance. The second option is to shift to a different financial structure where Quest assumes full risk/responsibility of financial performance of the operation. The Finance Committee will engage in further discussion regarding these options once more financial data has been collected and will plan to provide a recommendation to the Board in May.

Mr. Gibori inquired into the ability to provide more guidance to students at Avoca West to make better decisions about the food they are purchasing and the amount of time it takes for them to move through the line. Administration noted that parents are able to set daily limits on the dollar amount their children are spending and set alerts regarding particular snacks and purchases through mealtime.

Mr. Gibori also commented that if the objective of the program is to break even and the trajectory is moving in that direction, the main focus should be on improving the systems and nutrition.

Ms. Swibel commented that parents should be given an opportunity to experience the food service program first hand, which will increase their investment and understanding of increased costs.

B. Bond Issuance Update

Chief School Business Official, Beth Dever, reviewed the current status and upcoming dates regarding the working cash bond issuance. March 5th marked the expiration of the petition period. Avoca did not receive any petitions and will continue with the bond issuance as planned. Ms. Dever expects to have a draft of the Preliminary Official Statement sometime later this week and will share that draft with the Finance Committee at its March 12, 2018 meeting. Ms. Dever will also have the Finance Committee review the parameters and escrow resolutions, including the option to sell a taxable portion of bonds to mitigate future risk associated with use of the proceeds. The Board will be asked to approve the parameters and escrow resolutions at the March Board of Education meeting. Ms. Dever will participate in a rehearsal rating and due diligence call with a representative from PMA Securities, Inc. The actual rating call will take place on March 14th. Ms. Dever will be informed of the rating prior to the March Board meeting.

C. Emergency Procedure Update

Kevin Jauch, Superintendent, Matthew Palcer, Marie Murphy Principal and Jessica Hutchison, Avoca West Principal, gave the Board an overview of the district's current emergency procedures. Avoca takes the preparation of staff and students for emergency situations very seriously. Local law enforcement and emergency responders are heavily involved with the procedures Avoca adheres to and have reciprocal communication regarding changes to practice and procedure.

Mr. Palcer outlined the emergency procedures that Marie Murphy staff are trained to follow and implement when necessity arises. Marie Murphy practices vary from those at Avoca West due to the age and emotional maturity of the students.

Ms. Dechovitz inquired into the communication to parents regarding emergency situations and the protocol for them to follow if an emergency arises.

The topic of a national school walkout planned in response to the school shooting in Parkland, Florida was briefly discussed by the Board and Administration. At this time, Avoca is not promoting a walkout, nor are they prohibiting it from occurring. The district is planning for any scenario to best facilitate the ability to safely monitor all students while still conducting school classes and activities.

D. Avoca Center Update

Dr. Jauch gave the Board a brief update regarding the current status of discussions concerning the future of the Avoca Center parcel. Dr. Jauch indicated he is engaging in initial conversations with the board of a local private school regarding a possible arrangement for the use of the Avoca Center parcel.

Dr. Jauch also informed the Board that he has a meeting Sports Made Personal to further discuss their expectations for a land lease and how that aligns with the district's parameters. The Avoca Center Committee will meet on March 16th to further discuss this matter.

E. Draft Staffing Plan Review for 2018-2019

Dr. Jauch presented a revised draft of the staffing plan for 2018-2019. At this time, Dr. Jauch requested that the Board engage in discussion to determine the parameters for setting class sizes and opening new sections. The Board felt that the district should consider the particular needs of the cohort of students to determine class size and sections as opposed to being based on a specific number.

The Board and administration also engaged in conversation regarding opportunities to realize savings in the education fund by reviewing the district's current programs to seek opportunities to restructure.

Mr. Gibori commented that the district should look at the big picture and alternatives to eliminating programs.

The current staffing plan is set to be approved at the March Board of Education meeting, but Dr. Jauch has asked for permission to seek modification in the event student enrollment increases for kindergarten, first grade, English learners and special education students.

F. Summer Professional Activities

Dr. Jauch presented his recommendation for summer professional activities. At this time, Dr. Jauch is requesting that the Board approved 875 summer professional hours to be allocated first toward district needs and then each building's discretionary projects. Teachers must apply and be approved for the discretionary hours, which ensures that district resources are being used for important and practical projects. The number of hours was determined by historical data, which shows the average actual hours used are approximately 850. The Board will be asked to approve the summer professional activities hours at the March Board of Education meeting.

Mr. Raynes inquired as to whether or not there is the ability to fine tune the use of the hours so that the district does not need to allocate more in the budget than is necessary.

VISITOR COMMENTS

Jane Bailey, an Avoca Resident, commented regarding the national school walkout and the impact it could provide in terms of student learning. Ms. Bailey also suggested using a zero budget model to improve spending and make necessary cuts according to need.

CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Raynes 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. Raynes and Ms. Dechovitz, aye. Motion carried.

The Board moved into closed session at 7:56 p.m. and reconvened in open session at 9:03 p.m.

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

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Ms. Swibel commented regarding the Avoca Parent Teacher Council Fun Fair held on Sunday, February 25, 2018. Ms. Swibel noted that it was a wonderful event and the interaction within the community was positive.

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 9:05 p.m.

Board President, Rick Zelinsky

Secretary, Kevin Jauch