

Region #9 Board of Education
Regular Meeting
February 24, 2004
Minutes

Present: Bonfanti, Coppinger, Eichhorn, Gmelin, Gombos, Harris, Pemberton, Shapiro
Administrators: Fossbender, Jokubaitis, McLiverty, Voss
Student representative: Gray
Others: 26 members of the public
Media: Redding Pilot

Dr. Shapiro called the February 24, 2004, regular meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in Music Room of the Joel Barlow High School.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Minutes of January 20, 2004, Regular Meeting
Move to approve. Gombos, Gmelin. Approved. Unanimous.

2. Minutes of January 28, 2004, Joint Meeting
Move to approve. Eichhorn, Gombos. Approved. Unanimous.

AGENDA ADDITION

Motion: move to add discussion of Central Office Insurance Reserve Fund. Gombos, Eichhorn

PUBLIC COMMENT

Bill Oppenheimer, Redding: addressed the Board with his concern about the drinking water at Joel Barlow High School. He referenced a letter sent to Jay Hubelbank by the State that listed concerns which needed to be addressed.

David Bohn, Redding: referring to an article in the Redding Pilot, Mr. Bohn asked if any legal expenses associated with the Building Project were being funded through the school's operating budget. Director of Finance, Keith McLiverty, responded that all legal fees for the project, with the exception of one, were paid by the building project fund. The one exception noted will be transferred to the building project fund.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Student Council Representative, Ari Gray, reported on student activities. He introduced the President of the Senior Class, Kat Rowan, who asked that the Board of Education entertain a request from the Senior Class for a "senior trip" in the spring. This request will be on next month's agenda for presentation, discussion and consideration.

BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Macaluso reported the following:

1. Area C, Cisco area: completion and turnover of the area is expected 3/22/04.
2. Area B, commons/servery area: completion and turnover expected 3/28/04, with exception of the servery equipment
3. Heating system: good progress has been made with equipment, controls and reliability.

4. Electrical work: the remaining electrical work will be rebid in 2 weeks.
5. Site work: Banton Construction is soliciting proposals from site contractors which will include value engineering. After all proposals are evaluated, a bid package will be prepared and be put out to bid, including acceptable value engineering proposals. The contractor estimates this process will take a month.
6. Draft contracts with KBA & Banton Construction are in the review process and are expected to be completed and finalized this week.
7. Schedule: the schedule has not been finalized; work is continuing to compress the schedule.
8. Release and Ratification Process: the process for this has been streamlined and should move forward quickly.
9. Mrs. Eichhorn provided on-site oversight during Mr. Bonfanti's vacation.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion: move to executive session for a discussion of negotiations. Coppinger, Gombos. Approved. Unanimous. Invited to be present: Jokubaitis, McLiverty, Voss, Pritchard, Macaluso, Calabro.

The meeting recessed at 7:55 pm

RECONVENE

The Chair reconvened the meeting in public session at 8:20 pm.

BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT, continued

10. Mr. Macaluso noted that Banton Construction has been working under a letter of intent in effect until 2/1/04, with an option to renew. He requested that the agreement be extended to March 12, 2004 to allow for the finalization of the contract.

Motion: move to extend the term of the letter of intent with Banton Construction to March 12, 2003. Gombos, Bonfanti. Approved. Unanimous.

FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE REPORT

Mrs. Gombos reported that the Financial Oversight Committee expects to have the financial review of the building project on Friday, February 27, 2004. They also reviewed information from the bonding advisor on the financing of debt and will prepare a recommendation for the proposed budget.

COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE

Mrs. Eichhorn reported that due to budget preparation, school vacation and weather the Committee has not yet met. At their first meeting, the discussion will include the expansion of the committee and they will establish goals. Mrs. Eichhorn, Mr. Coppinger and Ms. Pemberton serve on the committee.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Mr. Jokubaitis reported on the following:

- 1 JBHS Principal Search: 21 applications have been reviewed and seven candidates are scheduled for the initial interview next week.
- 2 Strategic Planning: The Chairs of the three boards of education want to move forward with strategic planning. Mr. Jokubaitis has had experience in this area and it would be an excellent opportunity for the boards to benefit from his knowledge.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The year-to-date report was available for review. Mr. McLiverty reported all accounts are being reviewed, anticipated expenses through the end of the year are being reviewed and monies are being encumbered where needed.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON CENTRAL OFFICE HEALTH INSURANCE RESERVE

Mrs. Gombos reported discussions with the insurance advisor and discovery of the deficit in the Central Office Health Insurance Reserve Fund. The Central Office was previously included in the Redding budget, but this practice was discontinued three years ago. The Reserve Fund is the responsibility of the three boards of education budgets. The Insurance Committee recommended that the three boards cover the shortage now.

Motion: move to authorize the transfer of \$33,334 from the Region #9 Medical Insurance Reserve Fund Account to the Central Office Medical Insurance Reserve Fund. Gombos, Gmelin. Approved. Unanimous.

Mrs. Gombos also reported that the Committee reviewed the fully funded versus self insured medial insurance plans and the consensus was to stay with the self insured plan at this time.

CALENDAR COMMITTEE

Mrs. Eichhorn reported on the Calendar Committee discussions regarding the February break issue. The Barlow PTSA surveyed their parents at a recent meeting and found a 50/50 split between the choice of a long weekend or whole week break. The staff is now being surveyed on their views and feedback is expected by the end of the week.

NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE

Mrs. Gmelin reported that negotiations with the Non-Certified staff are going well.

PRESENTATION OF 2004-2005 PROPOSED BUDGET

Mr. Jokubaitis presented the proposed budget that included a continuation budget with improvements/re-instatements and new programs clearly defined. The board reviewed, in detail, the 1100 accounts.

The budget discussion will continue at the March 4, 2004 meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Fran Scharf, Redding: as PTSA liaison to the Board of Education, Mrs. Scharf asked where the agenda & minutes of the Financial Subcommittee were available. Mrs. Gombos reported both items are on file with the Town Clerks of Easton and Redding. Mrs. Scharf asked to be added to the email distribution of information. Mrs. Scharf also commented on the Debt Service and asked why it was treated the same as contractual agreements when there was some flexibility in the way this was funded.

Julie Gorman, Redding: noted that the Redding Public Hearing on the 2004-2005 budget is scheduled for March 4 and hoped that Region #9 would be represented at that meeting. She

suggested Region #9 reschedule their next workshop meeting to allow for participation. She also asked that debt service be clearly delineated and separated from the operating budget.

Frank DeSalvo, Redding: commented that without the debt service, the budget is essentially flat.

Christina Kearney, Redding: comments related to debt service and asked that the one-time expenses, such as those associated with the NEASC visit and early retirement incentives be delineated.

DISCUSSION OF NEXT MEETING

Board members were in agreement that the March 4 meeting should be changed to March 3, 2004, Wednesday, to allow board members to attend the Redding Public Hearing on the budget. Dr. Shapiro will advise Central Office to make that change in the special meeting date.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: That meeting of the Region 9 Board of Education adjourns. Gombos, Bonfanti Approved. Unanimous.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Eichhorn, Secretary

Reported by Mary Maday