

MINUTES

Monroe City School Board
2101 Roselawn Avenue
Monroe, Louisiana 71201

The Monroe City School Board met in regular session, Tuesday, January 13, 2009 at the Monroe City School Board Media Center, 2009 Auburn Avenue, Monroe, Louisiana 71201. The meeting was called to order at 5:20 p.m. by President Dayton. Prayer was offered by Rev. James Johnson. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

Item 5: Roll Call

Board Members Present

Mrs. Victoria "Vickie" Dayton
Mrs. Victoria "Vickie" Krutzer
Mr. James Mickey Traweek
Mr. Jessie Handy
Bishop Rodney McFarland, Sr.
Mrs. Stephanie Smith
Mrs. Brenda Shelling

Superintendent and Administrative Staff

Dr. James Dupree
Mrs. Derenda Flowers
Dr. Tammye Turpin
Mr. Andrew Hill
Mrs. Betty Carroll
Mr. Bobby Williams
Ms. Mamie Williams
Mrs. Julie Staley
Attorney L. Douglas Lawrence

Action Item 4 – Election of Board Officers for 2009 (Superintendent Dupree presiding)

Superintendent Dupree called for nominations for president.

It was moved by Mrs. Smith and seconded by Mr. Handy to nominate Bishop McFarland for president and Mr. Traweek for vice president.

Mrs. Shelling stated that both names cannot be voted on; it must be done individually.

Mrs. Smith replied that the agenda does not state election of president and vice president. It states election of officers.

Attorney Lawrence stated that under Robert's Rules of Order, it is permissible to vote on a slate of names. He noted that Board policy does not address a prescribed method of electing offices.

In favor: Mr. Handy, Mrs. Smith
Opposed: Mrs. Dayton, Mrs. Krutzer, Mrs. Shelling
Recused: Mr. Traweek, Bishop McFarland

The motion failed.

It was moved by Mrs. Dayton and seconded by Mr. Traweek to nominate Mrs. Shelling for president.

In favor: Mrs. Dayton, Mrs. Krutzer, Mr. Traweek
Opposed: Mr. Handy, Bishop McFarland, Mrs. Smith
Recused: Mrs. Shelling

The motion failed.

Bishop McFarland noted that the elections for 2009 cannot proceed tonight because there is a tie vote. He stated that the current president will remain seated until the matter is resolved.

Attorney Lawrence stated that the election process can continue until the matter is resolved. He further stated that Board policy mandates that officers are elected in January.

It was moved by Mrs. Smith and seconded by Bishop McFarland to nominate Mr. Handy for president.

It was moved by Mrs. Krutzer and seconded by Mrs. Dayton to nominate Mrs. Shelling for president.

Mrs. Dayton asked which item would be voted on first.

Superintendent Dupree replied that the last nomination would be voted on first. He then called for the vote on Mrs. Shelling for president.

In favor: Mrs. Dayton, Mrs. Krutzer, Mr. Traweek
Opposed: Mr. Handy, Bishop McFarland, Mrs. Smith
Recused: Mrs. Shelling

The motion failed.

Superintendent called for the vote on Mr. Handy for president.

In favor: Bishop McFarland, Mrs. Smith
Opposed: Mrs. Dayton, Mrs. Krutzer, Mr. Traweek, Mrs. Shelling
Recused: Mr. Handy

The motion failed.

Seeing that the election of officers could not be resolved, Superintendent Dupree stated that a special called meeting will be scheduled to elect officers. He returned the gavel to President Dayton and the meeting continued.

Action Item 6 – Consent Agenda

Superintendent Dupree asked that agenda item 9:A (Discussion: Revised 2008-2009 General Fund Budget) and agenda item 10:A (Report: ResCare) be removed from the agenda. He also asked that a Board work-session be scheduled for Thursday, January 15th at noon to discuss the General Fund Budget and other financial item.

Mrs. Krutzer requested that the Board receive the budget prior to the work-session.

It was moved by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mrs. Krutzer to delete items 9:A and 10:A from the Board agenda, delete item E (certified termination) from the Human Resources agenda and to approve the following consent agenda items:

- 6:A – Adoption of the Agenda
- 6:B – Adoption of the December 16, 2008 Board Minutes
- 6:C – Permission to advertise for bids: 2 school buses for students with disabilities (General Funds)
- 6:D – Permission to advertise for bids: Chiller for Carroll High (QZAB Funds)
- 6:E – Permission to advertise for bids: Fan Coil Units for Lee Jr., Berg Jones and Barkdull Faulk (QZAB Funds)
- 6:F – Permission to piggyback with Caddo Parish School System for gasoline bid
- 6:G – Human Resources Agenda

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Agenda Item 7 – President’s Reports and Announcements

President Dayton welcomed everyone to the meeting. The public was informed on procedures for addressing the Board on agenda items. She asked that all cell phones be turned off.

Mr. Traweek announced the passing of Mrs. Sharon Taylor, former employee and Board member.

Action Item 8 – Action from the Superintendent

Agenda Item 8:A – 2007-2008 Audit Report

Mr. Lynn Andries of Luffey, Huffman, Ragsdale & Soignier presented the 2008 Audit Report to the Board. Mr. Andries noted that there were no findings and the district received an unqualified opinion. The year ended with a general fund balance of \$10.7 million and a special revenue fund balance of \$13.5 million. He also noted that during the exit interview with Mrs. Flowers and the Superintendent, it was suggested that major federal funds be requested quarterly.

Board members thanked Dr. Dupree, Mrs. Flowers and the business department for their hard work.

Public Comment:

Ms. Gloria Walker asked that the Board use a different Firm for future audits.

Action Item 8:B – Appointment of the Public Relations Officer

Superintendent Dupree recommended Mrs. Amy Scott for the position of public relations officer.

Public Comment:

Mrs. Sandra Shaw spoke on behalf of the Monroe Association of Educators. She stated that members of the association are concerned about additional central office staff being hired when the district is in need of more support staff.

Board Comments

Mr. Traweek stated that he did not support the position when it was initially brought before the Board, and he cannot support it now. He further stated that his non-support of the position has nothing to do with who applied.

Mrs. Krutzer also stated that her disapproval of the position has nothing to do with the person that applied for the position.

President Dayton stated that although the district has a healthy fund balance, this is not the right time to add positions because the economy is unstable.

Mr. Handy stated that the position is needed because the public is not being made aware of all the positive things in the district.

Superintendent Dupree stated that this is a key position; a position that the district has not had in five years. The Superintendent's performance objectives call for a focus on community and public relations. If the district is to be perceived for all of its greatness, this is an investment that needs to be made. Excellent results can come from this position.

It was moved by Mr. Handy and seconded by Bishop McFarland to accept the superintendent's recommendation.

In favor: Mr. Handy, Bishop McFarland, Mrs. Smith

Opposed: Mrs. Dayton, Mrs. Krutzer, Mr. Traweek, Mrs. Shelling

The motion failed.

Agenda Item 8:C – Action Plan for Community Engagements

Superintendent Dupree briefly discussed the action plan for community engagements. The plan addresses Superintendent's objectives #5, #6 and #10. He asked Board members to peruse the plan and call him with any question.

Mrs. Shelling commended Dr. Dupree on the plan. She suggested that community meetings be held in general locations such as the three high schools.

Agenda Item 9:A – Revised 2008-2009 General Fund Budget

Deleted

Agenda Item 10:A - ResCare Report

Deleted

Agenda Item 10:B – Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA)

Dr. Turpin briefly discussed the Technical Assistance Agreement with Intercultural Development Research Association which is part of the Department of Justice Consent Decree. Packets containing course offerings for the three high schools was disseminated to the Board. She noted that the district has been working with the IDRA from San Antonio, TX to develop an agreement as to how technical assistance will be provided.

Mrs. Krutzer stated that an assessment needs to be performed.

Dr. Turpin noted that an audit will take place in the spring.

President Dayton asked Dr. Turpin for a report from LA Tech.

Superintendent Dupree noted that over the last several years, Monroe City Schools is the fastest paced improved school district in the state of Louisiana other than Red River Parish. He stated that teachers are doing a great job. He also stated that the district has the best technology in the state. There are great things that are happening, and the word needs to get out.

President Dayton stated that there are still quite a few students dropping out of school.

Bishop McFarland stated that there is always room for improvement and that the district is moving in the right direction. He stated that Board members need to speak positive about the district and refrain from making negative comments.

Mrs. Krutzer stated that the Board did not assume its role as academic leaders, and instruct the Superintendent to address leadership and deficiencies at Carroll High. She said, "For the record, I want to state that I do not feel there are inequities. We had one school's counselors and principal doing something and the others were not."

Mr. Handy said, "The Department of Justice has been dealing with Monroe City Schools for many years. We were instructed by the DOJ to do certain things, and they were not done. We must support the Superintendent because he is trying to correct the problems."

Mrs. Smith stated that the Board as a whole is affecting the principals, teachers, staff, students and the community with this atmosphere.

Agenda Item 11 – Board Committee Updates

Agenda Item 11:A – Bread Street Property Update

Mr. Traweck noted that the committee is awaiting the property appraisal. Once the appraisal is completed, the committee and Superintendent will decide if purchasing the property is feasible.

Mrs. Krutzer asked if a cost analyst and EPA study has been done.

Mr. Traweck replied that neither had been done because the appraisal is not complete.

Mr. Traweck noted that discussions have taken place with the Superintendent regarding stipends for coaches and extra curricular activity sponsors. The proposal should be ready for presentation at the next Board meeting.

Agenda Item 12 – Superintendent’s Announcements and Updates

Superintendent Dupree announced the following:

- Schools will remain open for the Presidential Inauguration. School activities have been planned to educate students about the inauguration.
- The superintendent will be on vacation January 20-23, 2009

Attorney Lawrence handed out folders containing information about a personnel matter that was briefly discussed at the personnel committee meeting prior to Board meeting. He asked Board members in possession of the folders to keep the information confidential.

Action Item 13 – Recess/Adjournment

On a motion by Bishop McFarland that was seconded by Mr. Handy, the meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Mrs. Victoria Dayton
President

James A. Dupree, Ed.D.
Superintendent