

MINUTES

Monroe City School Board
2101 Roselawn Avenue
Monroe, Louisiana 71201

The Monroe City School Board met in regular session, Tuesday, August 17, 2010 at the Monroe City School District Media Center, 2009 Auburn Avenue; Monroe, Louisiana 71201. The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by President Traweek. Prayer was offered by Rev. James B. Johnson. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

Agenda Item 4: 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

Administrative Staff

Dr. Kathleen Harris
Mrs. Derenda Flowers
Dr. Tammye Turpin
Mrs. Betty Carroll
Mrs. Vickie Irwin
Mr. Andrew Hill
Attorney L. Douglas Lawrence

Action Item 5 – Adoption of the Agenda

Dr. Harris noted that the name of the assistant principal of Carroll High School is listed on the revised human resources agenda.

Attorney Lawrence asked that the case of Andrews - vs. - Monroe City School Board, No. 11,297 {USDC-W.D. of Louisiana} be added to the executive session.

Mrs. Shelling indicated that information regarding the music teachers' supplement is in the board packet but not listed on the agenda.

Dr. Harris stated that it was an oversight and can be placed on the next agenda.

Bishop McFarland asked that the surplus bid award be removed from the agenda. He stated that the temporary buildings are currently needed at Minnie Ruffin.

On a motion by Mrs. Shelling that was seconded by Bishop McFarland, the Board approved the agenda with the addition of Andrews - vs. - Monroe City School Board as action item 14:B and the deletion of action item 10:D (awarding of surplus equipment).

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Agenda Item 6 – Points of Pride

In May 2010, Renaissance Learning named Monroe City Schools the 9th Lighthouse District out of 16,000 school districts nationwide who use Renaissance programs and products. The district was chosen based on the schools' implementation, performance, and use of their products.

The Carmel Hill Fund sponsors 18-25 students each summer to attend the Summer Institute for the Gifted. These students attend a three week academic camp at various universities throughout the United States. The students are selected based on requirements established by SIG and Carmel Hill Fund in New York. Each student is given an all-expense paid trip with a voucher for school supplies and books.

Agenda Item 7 – Public Comments

None

Action Item 9 – Consent Agenda Items (taken out of sequence)

Mrs. Smith asked that Personnel Report Item I:1 be removed from the consent agenda for a separate vote.

On a motion by Mrs. Shelling that was seconded by Bishop McFarland, the Board approved the following consent agenda items:

- a. Approval of August 3, 2010 Board Minutes
- b. Personnel Report Resignations/Retirements/Leaves
- c. Personnel Report Appointments (excluding I-1)

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 8 – Consent Items for Separate Consideration (taken out of sequence)

Bishop McFarland stated that the employee listed on Personnel Report I:1 is being transferred by the principal. He further stated that the principal did not follow proper procedures.

Dr. Harris indicated that this personnel matter should be discussed in executive session.

Mrs. Shelling stated that this matter should have been discussed by the personnel committee. She then asked why the committee no longer convenes.

Dr. Harris stated that committee meetings are for information only. She further stated that the personnel committee can convene before board meeting if there are questions.

It was moved by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mrs. Smith to table personnel agenda item I:1.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 10:A – Bond Resolutions

Mr. Traweek stated that he would like the Board to consider other options.

Mrs. Dayton stated that Foley & Judell has done a wonderful job for the district in the past, but it is prudent to look at other options.

Grant Schleuter indicated that he and Bill Boles have tried to be proactive with the Board. There has been a dramatic drop in interest rates, and tax exempt municipal bonds are selling at records lows. Refunding that was not feasible a month ago is now feasible. The deadline for filing with the Bond Commission is today.

On a motion by Mrs. Shelling that was seconded by Bishop McFarland, the Board approved the following resolutions:

- a. Resolution granting preliminary approval relative to the issuance of not exceeding \$8,250,000 general obligation School Refunding Bonds, City of Monroe Special School District, State of Louisiana, Series 2010, in one or more Series, making application to the State Bond Commission for approval of said Bonds and providing for other matters in connection therewith.
- b. Resolution granting preliminary approval relative to the issuance of not exceeding \$8,750,000 Sales Tax School Refunding Bonds, Series 2010, in one or more series, of the Monroe City School Board of the City of Monroe, State of Louisiana, making application to the State Bond Commission for approval of said Bonds and providing for other matters in connection therewith.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 10:B – Arts in Education Resolution

On a motion by Mrs. Smith that was seconded by Mr. Handy, the Board approved the Arts In Education Resolution as proclaimed by the Superintendent.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 10:C – Playground Equipment Bid Award

On a motion by Mrs. Shelling that was seconded by Mr. Handy, the Board awarded the playground equipment bid as presented.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 10:D – Surplus Equipment Bid Award

Deleted

Action Item 10:E – Administration Building/Media Center Advertisement

It was moved by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mrs. Smith to authorize the administration to advertise for bids for the Administration Building/Media Center project.

Mrs. Krutzer read the following statement into the record:

“My vote is based on the following considerations. It is my opinion that there has been insufficient investigation and evaluation of alternative solutions. As proposed, the construction fails to offer a solution to the stated purpose of central office consolidation and increased management efficiency. The plan offered in the pending resolution would achieve the opposite effect of consolidation by establishing separate structures housing various administrative departments. This approach would serve to further separate and isolate central office departments. The Board has not been presented with alternative solutions that better address the needs of central office. Clearly there are other viable alternatives that should be evaluated. The Board has not received an adequate operating cost analysis or cost benefit analysis. The Board has not been furnished with the benefits of spending a very large sum of MCSB funds for new administrative facilities. It is not responsible stewardship of public funds to expend money without clearly defined benefits. Specifically, the Board has not been given a definitive project cost analysis. Simply stated, we do not know the projected total cost of the project; including new construction, renovation, furniture, fixtures and equipment. The Board has not been furnished with sufficient expected operating cost information. In light of the stated projected 2011 two billion dollar funding deficit, the Board must be extremely cautious with any decision that would increase fixed operating expenses. Unless the state can find a solution to the enormous projected 2011 operating deficit, our school system must expect significant reductions in state funding. In light of this very real possibility I cannot vote to approve a project that has undefined benefits as well as undocumented future operating expenses, particularly in light of the fact that the project as proposed fails to adequately address the criteria that is the basis for the proposed construction. For the reasons I have stated, I vote no for the resolution.”

Mrs. Dayton stated that the district does need better facilities for the business staff but she is concerned because there are other pressing matters. This is a great opportunity but the timing is not right.

Mrs. Shelling and Bishop McFarland stated that they are surprised that committee

members are now opposed to the project when they helped design the plans.

Mrs. Dayton stated that she has always been opposed to this project.

Mr. Handy stated that the debate can go on forever. He then called for the vote.

The motion carried on a majority vote. Mrs. Dayton and Mrs. Krutzer opposed.

Agenda Item 11 – Report of Board Members

Mrs. Smith commended Superintendent Harris for being visible daily in schools.

Agenda Item 12:A – Report of Superintendent

Superintendent Harris reported that school is off to a great start. The student count is low at this time but that is to be expected. Staff will continue with warm body counts until September 30th.

Agenda Item 12:B – Board Attorney Update

Attorney Lawrence asked Board members to study the Legislative updates in their packet. He called attention to Act 522 which deals with Georgia Tucker. The passing of this act allows the district to set its own minimum price - this should make it easier to sell the property.

Agenda Item 13 – Future Meetings

The Louisiana School Boards Association Facilities Workshop is scheduled for Monday, August 23, 2010 in New Orleans. Mrs. Dayton and Mrs. Krutzer will attend.

Bishop McFarland stated that he will not be available for the September 9th meeting.

Mrs. Jacobs will poll the Board for an alternate date.

Action Item 14 – Executive Session

On a motion by Bishop McFarland that was seconded by Mr. Handy, the Board convened in executive session at 7:15 p.m. to discuss Kimberly Russell, et al - vs - Monroe City School Board and Andrews - vs - Monroe City School Board.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

The Board reconvened in open session at 7:38 p.m. and the meeting continued. Due to a previous engagement, Mr. Traweek left the meeting prior to the end of the executive session.

On a motion by Mrs. Smith that was seconded by Mr. Handy, the Board authorized the payment of the self-insured retention amount to settle the case of Russell -vs- Monroe City School Board.

The motion carried on unanimous vote.

On a motion by Mr. Handy that was seconded by Mrs. Shelling, the Board authorized Attorney Lawrence to see clarification on the district's obligation to provide transportation for private and parochial school students.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 15 – Recess/Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m. upon a motion by Mrs. Shelling and seconded by Mr. Handy.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Mr. Mickey Traweek
Board President

Dr. Kathleen Harris
Superintendent