

MINUTES

Monroe City School Board
2101 Roselawn Avenue
Monroe, Louisiana 71201

The Monroe City School Board met in regular session, Tuesday, June 30, 2009 at the Monroe City School Board Media Center, 2009 Auburn Avenue, Monroe, Louisiana 71201. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by President Shelling. Prayer was offered by Bishop Rodney McFarland. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Asim Khanfar, Lexington Elementary School.

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. Brenda Shelling

Board Member Absent

Mrs. Stephanie Smith

Superintendent and Administrative Staff

Dr. James Dupree
Mrs. Derenda Flowers
Mrs. Betty Carroll
Mrs. Vickie Irwin
Mr. Andrew Hill
Mr. Bobby Williams
Mrs. Teresa Foreman
Attorney L. Douglas Lawrence

Action Item 5 – Adoption of Agenda

Superintendent Dupree requested that a resolution be added to the agenda to reject the uninsured motorist coverage as action item 7:B-1, delete action item 7:C (approval to purchase Tower Drive Property) and delete human resources agenda item D:1.

Mrs. Dayton stated that she wants to be sure that the board is in support of moving forward with the Superintendent's evaluation in the absence of Mrs. Smith.

Superintendent Dupree stated that he spoke with Mrs. Smith, and she expressed appreciation if the Board would postpone the evaluation until the full board is present.

President Shelling stated that today is the last day to evaluate the superintendent.

Attorney Lawrence indicated that the evaluation must be completed on or before June 30th. He noted that the deadline can be extended if all parties agree.

Mr. Handy asked that the evaluation be postponed because Mrs. Smith would not be present for discussion during the executive session.

On a motion by Mr. Traweck and seconded by Mrs. Krutzer, the Board approved the agenda with changes as requested by the Superintendent.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 6 – Adoption of Minutes

On a motion by Mr. Traweck and seconded by Mrs. Dayton, the Board approved the minutes of June 9, 2009 as printed.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Agenda Item 7:A – Superintendent

Statement on School Performance

No statement made by the Superintendent.

Public Input:

Ms. Gloria Walker stated that an accountability coordinator should be placed at Wossman.

Action Item 7:B – Approval of the 2009-2010 District's Property and Casualty Insurance Renewals/Changes

On a motion by Mr. Handy and seconded by Mrs. Dayton, the Board approved the 2009-2010 District's Property and Casualty Renewals/Changes.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 7:B-1 – Approval of a Resolution to Reject the Uninsured Motorist Coverage

On a motion by Mr. Handy and seconded by Mrs. Dayton, the Board approved a resolution rejecting the uninsured motorist coverage.

Mrs. Dayton requested that Dr. Dupree and Mrs. Flowers bring to the Board a plan to establish a special revenue account for the purpose of self insurance.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 7:C – Approval to Purchase the Tower Drive Property

Deleted

Action Item 7:D – Approval of an Assistant Principal at Wossman High School

On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mrs. Krutzer, the Board approved Mr. Barry Jones as the assistant principal at Wossman High School as recommended by the Superintendent.

Public Input:

Ms. Gloria Walker stated that students, parents and staff are important and that principals and assistant principals need to be mindful of how they address those individuals.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 7:E – Approval of a Principal at Carroll High School

Dr. Dupree stated that the selection of a principal at Carroll High School is the single most important decision that this Board will make during his tenure. He then read a statement referencing the traditions and legacy of the former principal, Mr. Henry Carroll, and Carroll High School. He then recommended Mr. Jerry Payne for principal.

It was moved by Mr. Handy to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent.

The motion died for a lack of a second.

President Shelling noted that state law requires a second or third recommendation. She then asked Superintendent for that recommendation.

Superintendent Dupree stated that he did not have a second recommendation at this time.

Mrs. Dayton stated that this is one of the most important decisions that this board will make. She further stated that she has been on the Board a long time, and has voted for a lot of principals in high hopes that things could be restored to the legacy of Mr. Carroll - to this date it hasn't happened. She noted that the school is possibly on the verge of AUS. It was moved by Mrs. Dayton and seconded by Bishop McFarland to instruct the Superintendent to bring to the Board the results of the LA Tech assessment of the school and the actual performance statistics in lieu of appointing a principal tonight.

Mrs. Dayton asked that a meeting be scheduled as soon as possible to look at data and to bring the board up to date on the school.

The motion carried on a majority vote. Mr. Handy stated that he is opposed because there is no principal at Carroll High.

Superintendent Dupree asked if Mr. Payne could be brought back to the Board for reconsideration since his recommendation died for a lack of a second.

Attorney Lawrence stated that the motion placed on the floor died because there was no second.

Action Item 7:F – Approval of Principals’ and Assistant Principals’ Contracts

Public Input:

Mr. David Claxton addressed the Board on behalf of principals. He requested that the following changes be made to the contract addendum: The wording on item #2 be changed to more students will be tested for the gifted program and that item #3 and #5 be combined. He asked the Board to allow principals to receive MFP funds when those funds are received by teachers. He also asked the Board to meet with principals at a later date to discuss salaries.

Public Input:

Ms. Gloria Walker asked that principals send funds with students if they are removed from their school after October 1st.

It was moved by Mr. Traweek to approve contracts with principals and assistant principals and to allow their participation in the MFP surplus as allowed by the state.

Bishop McFarland noted that a motion is not in order at this time because the Superintendent has not made a recommendation. He also noted that Board members are concerned about the performance of some principals, and for that reason, all principals should not receive the same contract.

Superintendent Dupree indicated that his recommendation is that all principals receive a one year extension.

Attorney Lawrence noted that the law states that new contracts must be for a period of two or four years. The existing contract can be amended to reflect a three year contract which would give the employee an additional year. If this is done, it must be with the agreement of the employee that the existing contract is being converted to a three year contract. The 120 day notice does not apply to a person that is coming up on a contract renewal for the first time.

Bishop McFarland noted that the contracts will expire tonight. He then asked if principals could work without a contract.

Attorney Lawrence stated that they can continue to work, but state law requires that administrators have contracts.

Superintendent Dupree stated that he would like all principals placed on a uniform contract.

Mrs. Dayton asked if there could be a mechanism in place for the Superintendent to terminate a principal after the yearly evaluation if a school is not making appropriate progress. After further review of the contract, she noted that item #8 addresses this issue.

It was moved by Mr. Traweck to approve a two year contract with performance objectives for principals and assistant principals and to allow for their participation in MFP.

Mrs. Dayton offered a friendly amendment to set a timeframe for evaluations.

Bishop McFarland stated that there was no second to the motion.

The motion died for a lack of a second.

It was moved by Mr. Traweck to accept action item 7:F with two year contracts, performance objectives and participation in 9.5 month MFP.

President Shelling stated that MFP is not predicated on number of months. She then asked Mrs. Flowers if the amount for teacher pay raises are specified by the state.

Mrs. Flowers noted that the state sets an amount if it is a pass-through raise. She also noted that MFP money and pass-through money comes from two separate funds.

It was moved by Mrs. Dayton and seconded by Mr. Traweck to approve the contract format with the addition of performance objectives, and to allow principals to participate in the same MFP and pass-through allocations as teachers, and to instruct the superintendent to bring to the Board for ratification, individual contract with terms and/or recommendations.

Attorney Lawrence reiterated that the 120 day provision as presently written in the contract applies to everyone. The law states that the provision is required only if there is a contract renewal or termination.

Mrs. Dayton and Mr. Traweck accepted the change in item #5 to reflect the law based on the Board Attorney's recommendation.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Bishop McFarland stated that Mr. Payne's contract ends tonight and there will not be a principal at Carroll High.

It was moved by Mr. Handy to allow Mr. Jerry Payne to remain as interim principal for the 2009-2010 school year.

Bishop McFarland stated that the motion can not be acted on because that agenda item has been passed.

Attorney Lawrence stated that the Superintendent can appoint someone in an interim position until the matter is resolved.

Mrs. Dayton asked if the Superintendent has the authority to continue Mr. Payne as the interim principal. She stated that the school must come first and that someone needs to be in charge of the school. She then stated that she did not see why Mr. Payne could not continue.

President Shelling stated that there is an assistant principal at that school, and he can continue to run the school. She further stated that her statement is not in support of the assistant principal becoming the principal of the school; it is just logical.

Bishop McFarland stated that the Board needs to rethink this matter before taking action.

Addition to the Agenda

It was moved by Bishop McFarland to add to the agenda, to allow the assistant principal to serve as interim principal until the Superintendent brings a second recommendation at the next meeting. President Shelling passed the gavel to Vice President Traweck and she seconded the motion.

Superintendent Dupree stated that that is not his recommendation. He further stated that he would designate Mr. Bobby Williams to run the school. He then stated that ultimately, the best decision is to allow Mr. Payne to remain as interim principal for the 2009-2010 school year.

Mrs. Shelling stated that the Superintendent's recommendation is out of order. She noted that Board policy states that administrative positions must be advertised and filled immediately.

In favor: Bishop McFarland, Mrs. Shelling

Opposed: Mrs. Dayton, Mrs. Krutzer, Mr. Traweck, Mr. Handy

The motion failed.

Action Item 8:A – Forethought Consulting Contract

Attorney Lawrence noted that Mr. Prescott could not give an exact cost to archive the Board minutes so that they are searchable. It will cost up to \$9,400 to develop the policy manual, \$14,000-\$22,000 to digitize the policies, and \$3,600-\$5,400 annually to maintain the policy manual.

On a motion by Mrs. Dayton and seconded by Bishop McFarland, the Board authorized an agreement with Forethought Consulting as presented by the Board Attorney, and to bring to the Board at a later date an agreement to archive Board minutes.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Agenda Item 8:B – Policy/Procedure to Review Credit Card Expenditures

Mrs. Dayton noted that the Superintendent and Mrs. Flowers are preparing a rough draft of a policy to address this matter. The policy will address who can use the card, what can be purchased and how expenditures will be documented.

New Business

Action Agenda Item 8:C – Employment of an Internal Auditor

It was moved by Mrs. Dayton and seconded by Mrs. Krutzer to employ an internal auditor and to bring to the Board for ratification the policy and job description for the position.

Mr. Traweek inquired as to the pay and job description for this position.

Mr. Handy offered a friendly amendment to bring this item back to the Board with the salary and job description.

Mrs. Dayton and Mr. Krutzer accepted the friendly amendment.

President Shelling noted that the Legislative Auditor recommended that the district have an internal auditor.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Agenda Item 8:D – Report: Gymnasium at Lee Jr. and Wossman High

Superintendent Dupree noted that the firms for the gymnasiums have been identified. Committees for Lee and Wossman have met to discuss the particulars. A trip is being scheduled for travel to Jackson, MS to meet with the architectural firm for Wossman.

Agenda Item 8:E – Report: Replacement Windows at Neville

The committee met to discuss this project. Persons from the historical district will provide input.

President Shelling appointed the following Board members to serve on the committees for the Wossman, Neville and Lee projects:

Bishop Rodney McFarland – Wossman High

Mrs. Vickie Krutzer – Neville High

Mr. Mickey Traweek – Lee Jr.

President Shelling asked Dr. Dupree to notify the designated Board member when meetings are scheduled for these projects.

Mrs. Flowers noted that contracts for these projects have been given to Attorney Lawrence for his review.

New Business

Agenda Item 9:A – Approval of the 2009-2010 Board Meeting Schedule

It was moved by Bishop McFarland to table this agenda item until the full Board is present.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for July 14th at 5:00 p.m. President Shelling indicated that there will not be a work session prior to the meeting. The July 28th meeting is scheduled for 4:00 p.m. with a work session if needed.

Agenda Item 9:B – Time and Place Policy

The Policy Committee is working toward having a presentation of this policy no later than the July 28th meeting.

Agenda Item 9:C – District's Master Calendar

It is the consensus of the Board that the district has a master calendar that outlines all pertinent dates and activities.

Action Item 9:D – Revision of the 2009-2010 School Calendar

Superintendent Dupree indicated that the approved 2009-2010 calendar has an additional four minutes added to the work day which will result in the reduction of the number of work days.

President Shelling stated that in 2008-2009, instructional time was increased by eleven minutes, which resulted in five non-work days for that year. She noted that she met Mrs. Dayton and the Board Attorney to review the tape and Board minutes regarding this

matter. It was determined that employees did work the extra minutes, and that time can not be disputed. She indicated that after polling Board members, she sent a letter to the Superintendent asking him not to close central office on June 26th, but he did not do so. She stated that it is recommended that the calendar revert back to the same instructional minutes as 2007-2008. The Board Attorney was asked to discuss employees taking days off prior to working.

Attorney Lawrence stated that there is an issue with taking days off that have not been earned. Since this matter deals with instructional time, the issue centers around employees that work in the classroom versus employees that do not.

Dr. Dupree stated that with the approved 2009-2010 school calendar, all groups of employees will work four extra minutes, which will result in two fewer work days. By not working the four extra minutes, school will be in session two additional days.

Mrs. Irwin stated that the primary concern of employees is that the district's calendar matches the parish's calendar.

It was moved by Mr. Traweek and seconded by Mr. Handy to allow the 2009-2010 calendar to remain as approved.

In favor: Mr. Traweek, Mr. Handy

Opposed: Mrs. Dayton, Mrs. Krutzer, Bishop McFarland, Mrs. Shelling

The motion failed.

It was moved by Mrs. Krutzer and seconded by Bishop McFarland to revert back to the instructional time for 2007-2008.

In favor: Mrs. Dayton, Mrs. Krutzer, Mr. Traweek, Bishop McFarland, Mrs. Shelling

Opposed: Mr. Handy

The motion carried on a majority vote.

Action Item 9:E-1 – Human Resources Agenda

It was moved by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mrs. Krutzer to approve the human resources agenda with the deletion of item D-1.

Public Input:

Mrs. Gloria Walker addressed the Board on her employment status. She stated that during the 2007-2008 school year, she asked to be hired as a classified employee. Again, in 2008-2009, she asked to be hired as a classified employee. She stated that she has followed the chain of command, and still the attempts have failed. She asked the Board to hire her as a full time classified employee effective school year 2007-2008.

Mrs. Carroll stated that Ms. Walker is not a substitute; she is an hourly employee.

Dr. Dupree stated that initially there were two people working the substitute locator position. At that time, Ms. Walker was working four hours daily; this year the position was reduced to one person and she was given additional hours.

As chairperson of the Personnel Committee, Bishop McFarland asked that Ms. Walker's name be pulled from the human resources agenda and placed on the next agenda.

It was moved by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Handy to approve the human resources agenda with the deletion of agenda items D-1 and G-1.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 9:F – Awarding of Bids

Public Input:

Ms. Rachelle May asked the Board to consider using hand sanitizer instead of soap and paper towels in the bathroom and cafeteria.

On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Handy, the Board awarded the following bids as indicated on the spreadsheets:

1. School Food Service Bread Products
2. School Food Service Milk and Juice
3. School Food Service Paper and Cleaning Supplies
4. Security Cameras and Equipment
5. Instructional Supplies

Mrs. Krutzer asked that the district buy infrared cameras when purchasing security cameras and equipment.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Agenda Item 9:G – Report: Gannet River States Publishing Corporation, et al. -vs- Monroe City School Board, et. al. {No. 08-3832}

Attorney Lawrence updated the Board on the lawsuit filed by The News Star. He stated that the litigation deals with the releasing of personnel records back in October 2008. The Supreme Court of Louisiana has denied granting the writ application as requested by the News Star to further appeal the ruling that was rendered by the Second Court of Appeal. The district was correct in not allowing the personnel records to be divulged. The practical effect is that the case is over and the ruling of the Second Court of Appeal stands in spite of the initial ruling that was made at the district court level in Monroe.

President Shelling noted that Attorney Lawrence has made a discovery regarding the principalship at Carroll High, and he needs to speak with her and the Superintendent prior to the executive session.

The Board recessed for three minutes, at which time the Board Attorney met with the President and Superintendent. At the conclusion of the discussion, President Shelling informed the Board that policy states that the Superintendent shall make another recommendation if the initial recommendation is not accepted. She stated that the Board must deal with this issue immediately because Carroll will not have a principal after tonight.

Agenda Item 10 – Board Committee Updates

- A. Curriculum Committee: Mrs. Krutzer – The curriculum committee recommends the approval of the Fine Arts Advisory Committee. Mr. Brett Smith will bring a proposal to the committee to address the music budget and instrument repair.
- B. Personnel Committee: Bishop McFarland – The chair is requesting thirty minutes for its next meeting.
- C. Facilities Committee: Mr. Traweck – Another interested buyer is looking at Georgia Tucker. President Shelling asked Mr. Traweck to set a standing meeting date.
- D. Policy Committee: Mrs. Dayton – No report.
- E. Public Relations: Mrs. Smith – No report.
- F. Finance Committee: President Shelling – Board members are asked to email items for discussion at a Finance Committee meeting.

Agenda Item 11 – President’s Reports and Announcement

President Shelling noted that she will be attending the Southern Region Conference on July 8-10, 2009 in Little Rock, AR.

Agenda Item 12 – Superintendent’s Announcements

No report.

Action Item 13 – Executive Session to Evaluate the Superintendent

It was moved by Mr. Handy and seconded by Bishop McFarland to table this agenda item until July 14, 2009 with the permission of the Superintendent.

Bishop McFarland indicated that the evaluation will be turned in for tabulation by the Board Attorney, and the results will be available at another meeting; there will be no discussion.

President Shelling noted that Board members received the draft evaluation; Attorney Lawrence has the official copy.

Bishop McFarland asked if there are any changes to the document.

Attorney Lawrence stated that no changes have been made to the document.

President Shelling stated that Mrs. Smith faxed her evaluation to the Board Attorney which suggests that she is in agreement with moving forward with this process.

In favor: Mr. Handy

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

The motion failed.

Upon a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mrs. Krutzer, the Board convened in executive session at 9:25 p.m. to evaluate the Superintendent.

The motion carried.

Action Item 14 – Reconvene in Open Session

The Board reconvened in open session at 11:20 p.m. President Shelling stated that the results from the evaluation should be ready for the July 14th meeting.

It is the consensus of the Board to convene in executive session at the July 14th Board meeting to receive the results of the Superintendent's evaluation. At that time, the Superintendent will have an opportunity to respond to the results.

Other Unfinished Business – Principalsip of Carroll High School

Mrs. Shelling noted that this issue must be addressed because Board policy states that the Superintendent shall bring a second recommendation when the first recommendation is not approved.

Mr. Handy asked if the recommendation needs to be made tonight.

President Shelling stated that the policy does not stipulate a timeframe.

Mrs. Dayton asked if the second recommendation must be another person or another process.

Attorney Lawrence stated that it must be another person.

President Shelling noted that the Superintendent has the authority to recommend an interim person. She stated that it will be left up to the Superintendent to make that interim two weeks appointment until a recommendation is brought to the Board.

Mr. Traweek asked if the Superintendent has to choose from the pool of applicants.

President Shelling stated that she cautions the Board not to go beyond the top three candidates that were recommended by the committee. If the Board goes outside the scope of the top three applicants, the Board may find itself in a vulnerable position.

Mr. Handy noted that the same process was not followed with the principal position at M.L.K.

Bishop McFarland recommended that the Superintendent be directed to bring a recommendation from the top three candidates at the next meeting.

Superintendent Dupree asked Attorney Lawrence if there can be reconsideration since the first motion failed to get a second.

Attorney Lawrence replied that the language in the policy states that if the Board does not accept the recommendation, the Superintendent shall make another recommendation. Therefore, there is no reconsideration. He stated that the Board heard his recommendation and they did not accept it.

Action Item 15 – Recess/Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 11:40 p.m.

Mrs. Brenda Shelling
President

James A. Dupree, Ed.D.
Superintendent

