

MINUTES

Monroe City School Board of Education
2006 Tower Drive
Monroe, Louisiana 71201

The Monroe City School Board met in regular session, Tuesday, October 4, 2011 at Monroe City School District Central Office, 2006 Tower Drive; Monroe, Louisiana 71201. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Traweek. Prayer was offered by Bishop Rodney McFarland, Sr. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Traweek.

Agenda Item 4: Roll Call

Board Members Present: Mrs. Victoria “Vickie” Dayton, Mrs. Victoria “Vickie” Krutzer, Mr. James Mickey Traweek, Mr. Clarence Sharp, Bishop Rodney McFarland, Sr., Mr. Verbon Muhammad and Mr. Glynn Ludley

Administrative Staff: Dr. Kathleen Harris, Attorney L. Douglas Lawrence, Ms. Karla Bowlin, Dr. Phedra Brantley, Mrs. Derenda Flowers and Mrs. Vickie Irwin

Action Item 5 – Adoption of the Agenda

Mr. Muhammad asked that Mr. Lonnie Hudson be allowed to address the Board.

It was moved by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Sharp, to adopt the agenda with the addition of a discussion by Mr. Lonnie Hudson, MCSA Bus Association President, as agenda item 9:C. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Agenda Item 6 – Point of Pride

Ms. Sonya Collins, Neville High School, has been selected to participate in the Teachers for Global Classrooms program. Over 300 teachers applied from 45 states and 65 teachers were selected to participate. This program is an online professional development course that explores the themes and applications for global education in the U.S. secondary school classrooms.

Action Item 7 – Consent Agenda Items

On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Sharp, the Board approved consent agenda items: 7:A – Approval of September 13, 2011 minutes; 7:B – Human Resources Agenda; 7:C-i – Carroll High Medical Magnet students to Carencro, LA on October 11-12, 2011; 7:C-ii – Wossman High JROTC to Houston, TX on November 18-20, 2011; 7:C-iii – Wossman Talented Art students to New Orleans, LA on March 15-18, 2012; 7:C-iv – Wossman High Spanish Club to San Antonio, TX on March 21-26, 2012; 7:C-v – Neville Senior English Class to London, England on March 26 – April 3, 2012; 7:C-vi – Carroll Jr. 8th grade to Philadelphia, PA on April 30 – May 4, 2012 and 7:D –

Financial Reports ending June 30, 2011 and July 30, 2011. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 8 – Consent Items for Separate Consideration

None

Action Item 9 – Change Order for Wossman High School Gymnasium

Mrs. Krutzer wanted to know the reason for the change order.

Mr. Kyle Lowery, Senior Project manager, noted that the biggest cost was the correction of soft spots in the parking lot and other minor items.

On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Ludley, the Board approved a \$12,406.24 change order for Wossman High School's gymnasium. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 9:B – Plat for Cypress Point Elementary

Mr. Traweck noted that for several years the Board has discussed additional parking for Cypress Point Elementary School. Once the district signs off on the plat, it will go to the City of Monroe Zoning and Planning Committee for final approval.

On a motion by Mr. Muhammad and seconded by Mrs. Dayton, the Board approved a resolution authorizing the Superintendent and Board President to execute an agreement regarding changes to the public roadway for the benefit of Cypress Point Elementary School. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Agenda Item 9:C – MCSD Bus Association President

Mr. Hudson asked Mrs. Krutzer what she meant by a statement in an email in which she wrote "the department is almost minority." He also asked her who she was referring to as "them." He stated that if she does not feel as though an apology is necessary, he ask that she resign because her actions as an elected official are unacceptable. He also stated that he was disappointed that Mr. Traweck and Mrs. Dayton did not address the matter immediately.

Bishop McFarland stated that he was disappointed by the contents of the email. He agreed that an apology is needed.

Mr. Muhammad stated that the email was confusing because Mrs. Krutzer made reference to supplanting of federal funds and that led him to believe that she was talking about Title funds. He further stated that she needs to explain what she meant by that statement.

Mrs. Dayton stated that she is sorry that this matter has gotten to such a sensitive state. The mission of the district is to educate students; if Board members cannot educate

children, then they need to resign. She asked that the Board work together and move forward.

Mr. Sharp stated that this matter would not be an issue if an apology had been made. He also asked that the Board move forward.

Mr. Traweek stated that he has known Mrs. Krutzer for many years and he has never known her to make a racist statement – she made a mistake by using the wrong use of words. He indicated that he has spoken with Mr. Hudson and every Board member about this matter. He apologized and noted that he did not respond to the email.

Mrs. Krutzer responded by reading a prepared statement in which she explained the context of the email. She noted that her emailed comments regarding significant problems in the Transportation Department have caused resentment, discontent and conflict. In summation, she stated that the intent of the email was not meant to be offensive but it was meant to bring to light concerns from staff about the possible supplanting of grant funds in the Transportation Department. She stated that she will not resign because that request can only come from constituents in her district. She further stated that she will continue to serve all students and every department.

Mr. Muhammad stated that this matter needs further discussion. He also stated that he is concerned that the matter was being discussed without his input, considering that he is chair of the Transportation Committee. A committee meeting is forthcoming, and issues and concerns will be addressed.

Bishop McFarland thanked Mr. Traweek for apologizing.

Agenda Item 10 – Report of Board Members

Mrs. Krutzer noted that she will consult with the Superintendent and Board President to set a Finance Committee meeting.

Bishop McFarland stated that during the retreat, there needs to be a discussion about Board members threatening principals and referencing them being placed on “their watch list.” Senior Board members have relationships where they can talk to principals, but they dare not threaten them – it is an ethics violation for a Board member to do something like that. There has always been a gentlemen’s agreement between Board members about their schools.

Mr. Traweek stated that it was one of the first conversations he had with Bishop McFarland.

Bishop McFarland further stated that Board members never went into each other’s district and said to a principal that there are things that they must have at their school. Although Board members represent the entire school district, they have always had that line they did not cross. He stated that he would never go to the north side of town and tell a principal they must have a certain program at their school. Also, north side Board members should not go to the south side and do the same.

Mr. Muhammad announced that Wossman's homecoming is this week. He also announced that a Transportation Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 13th at 11:00 a.m.

Mrs. Dayton announced that a Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 13th at 9:00 a.m.

Agenda Item 11 – Report of Superintendent

Dr. Harris reported that the State has released the School Letter Grades but they are under embargo. Although the staff has been working hard, the district did not fare as well as she would have liked. The district can no longer have low expectations from students; therefore, teachers must change the way they think. All students must be treated well and they must all have excellent opportunities. She then presented an overview of the district's school performance. She informed the Board that feeder pattern schools and Central Office staff will present status reports on academics and operations during the first meeting of every month. Feeder pattern and instructional and operational updates were presented by Ms. Karla Bowlin, Mr. David Claxton, Mr. Robert Johnson, Mrs. Vickie Williams, Mr. Patrick Taylor, Mr. Josh Leporati, Mrs. Derenda Flowers and Mr. Sam Moore.

Agenda Item 13 – Future Meetings

Future Board Meetings: October 18th and November 1st.

Action Item 14 – Recess/Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m. upon a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Muhammad. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Mr. Mickey Traweek
Board President

Dr. Kathleen Harris
Superintendent