

MINUTES

Monroe City School Board
2101 Roselawn Avenue
Monroe, Louisiana 71201

The Monroe City School Board met in regular session, Tuesday, October 5, 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. Larry Stafford, First United Methodist Church. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Billy Boles.

Agenda Item 4: Roll Call

Board Members Present

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

Administrative Staff

Dr. Kathleen Harris
Mrs. Derenda Flowers
Dr. Tammye Turpin
Mrs. Vickie Irwin
Ms. Mamie Williams
Attorney L. Douglas Lawrence

Action Item 5 – Adoption of the Agenda

On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mrs. Smith, the board approved the agenda as printed.

The motion carried on unanimous vote.

Agenda Item 6 – Points of Pride

When Bonds were last rated by Standard and Poors, the district had a rating of A-. The Bond rating is now "AA-" which is an increase over last year. It is not often that any public body sees an upgrade in a Bond rating; particularly in these difficult economic times. Mr. Grant Schleuter stated that the financial performance of the district is the reason for the upgrade. He noted that the next Bond rate increase is "AA". Of the sixty-nine school district, only four or five have that rating.

Mr. Handy arrived during discussion of this item.

Agenda Item 7 – Public Comments

Mrs. Tammy Parker stated that she is opposed to the hiring of additional administrative staff. She further stated that she would like to see available funds used for certified teachers, paraprofessional and additional tutoring.

Mrs. Shelling asked Attorney Lawrence for clarification on public input only being allowed at the beginning of the meeting.

Attorney Lawrence noted that the law states that a set aside time for public input is now disallowed. Public input must take place prior to each action item.

Ms. Rachelle May stated that she is concerned that the newly hired paras under the Implementation Plan will be paid more than the paras that are currently employed. She further stated that she is against the hiring of chiefs under the new reorganization plan.

Mr. H. M. Butler asked if the hiring of additional administrative staff will have any effect on student achievement.

Ms. Katrina Johnson questioned the salary of newly hired paraprofessionals. She stated that if paras are hired at a different rate of pay, then the salary of currently employed paras should be adjusted.

Action Item 8 – Consent Agenda Items

It was moved by Mrs. Dayton and seconded by Mrs. Krutzer, to approve the following consent agenda items:

- a. Approval of September 21, 2010 Board Minutes
- b. Wossman High School ROTC to Houston, TX; November 19-20, 2010
- c. Wossman High School Talented Art to New Orleans, LA; April 1-4, 2011

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Item for Separate Consideration – Personnel Report

Mrs. Dayton asked if the paras are being paid on a salary scale that is different from current paras. She also asked for the terms of their employment.

Mrs. Flowers replied that they are being paid on the same pay scale.

Dr. Harris stated that the paras will be employed for the remainder of this school term only.

Mrs. Dayton complimented Dr. Harris for seeking input from principals on their needs. She stated that she is in support of paras in the classroom if it helps teachers and students. She then asked Dr. Harris if the employment of additional paras will have an effect on pupil/teacher ratio.

Dr. Harris replied that the paras in the Implementation Plan are being hired so that there are extra hands in Pre-K –3 and in some cases grades four and five. Extra personnel will help with reading and numeracy instruction which will minimize retention.

Mrs. Dayton stated that the superintendent should bring to the board another plan that utilizes funds other than general funds. She stated that there are other areas that can be cut to fund these salaries.

Mrs. Krutzer asked that board policy not be broken by hiring staff prior to them being brought before the board. She stated that the board must now deal with paras that have already begun working. She then asked Dr. Harris to look at other funding sources.

Mrs. Smith stated that she is not concerned about where the funds will come from. She is only concerned about student needs and the equal distribution of paras.

Bishop McFarland stated that the paras have started working and it will be unfair to tell them that they do not have a job. The principals have asked for help and the board should oblige. If a school asks for help and the board denies them then it's on the board; if the school receives help and they fail, then it's on the principal. He brought to the board's attention that many employees begin working prior to coming to the board for approval. He noted that the Personnel Committee will resume their meetings so that matters such as this can be addressed.

Mrs. Shelling stated that she does not have a problem with a plan that helps students; her problem is that some schools will receive more paras than others. She asked Dr. Harris if principals understood that they could ask for more than one para. She also asked how success will be measured.

Dr. Harris replied that principals did understand that they could ask for as many or as few paras as they wanted.

Mr. Handy asked that the paras be distributed equally, especially in lower performing schools.

Mrs. Shelling questioned the change of status on the current curriculum coordinator at Cypress Point. She stated that the board has a policy that new administrative positions are advertised.

Dr. Harris stated that under a different administration, the board authorized the hiring of an assistant principal when a school's pupil count is over 500. She stated that this is in board minutes.

Mr. Traweek asked if the curriculum coordinator would be replaced.

Dr. Harris replied that the position would not be replaced.

Mrs. Smith stated that the assistant principal position at Cypress Point should be pulled and advertised.

Bishop McFarland stated that the same position at Lexington was not advertised. The curriculum coordinator became the assistant principal.

Attorney Lawrence stated that the board has the right to suspend any policy.

Dr. Turpin informed the board that Lexington Elementary received an assistant principal when their numbers exceeded 500, and that their curriculum coordinator then became the assistant principal.

Mrs. Dayton asked that human resources agenda item F, with the exception of F:9, be taken separately.

It was moved by Mrs. Dayton and seconded by Mrs. Shelling, to approved human resources agenda items A, B C, D, E, F:9 and G.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

It was moved by Mrs. Smith and seconded by Mr. Handy, to approve the hiring of para-professionals under section F of the human resources agenda.

Mrs. Shelling asked if the paras will receive a separate 13th check.

Mrs. Flowers replied that the funds will come from general funds and not the sales tax portions.

Mrs. Krutzer offered a friendly amendment that the paras be hired with the understanding that Dr. Harris will seek funding for the positions from another source other than general funds.

The friendly amendment was not accepted.

Mrs. Dayton stated that the district will try and do what it can to keep the paras if they are successful. If these salaries are funded out of the fund balance, the balance will be depleted in three years. She would like to see the paras hired, but she ask that it be done in a more prudent financial manner that will not impact what the district can do for students in the future.

Dr. Harris stated that she will not bankrupt the district, nor will she spend the fund balance year after year. Walkthroughs are taking place monthly to ensure that instruction is taking place at a rigorous level. She asked the board not to punish the principals and the students of the district by being afraid to spend funds that will cut into the budget for one year. The fund balance will be at an acceptable level even if every item that is being asked for is funded.

Bishop McFarland stated that the board has hired a superintendent to take the district to another level but is now unwilling to give her what she needs to succeed. He further stated that if the district does not support the superintendent then she is being set up to fail.

Mr. Handy stated that the superintendent can not be truly evaluated if she is not given the tools she needs to work with in order to move the district forward. He further stated that he does not understand how the board can spend \$10 million on gyms but will not invest money in students.

Restated motion: To approve human resources agenda item F with the exception of F:9.

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

Opposed: Mrs. Dayton (She is not opposed to the para positions; only opposed to the funding source), Mrs. Krutzer (She is in support of paras but would like other funding options explored)
Mrs. Shelling

The motion carried on a majority vote.

Action Item 9:A – Bond Resolution

On a motion by Mrs. Smith and seconded by Mr. Handy, the board approved a resolution providing for the issuance of Sales Tax School Refunding Bonds, Series 2010, of the Monroe City School Board of the City of Monroe, State of Louisiana; prescribing the form, fixing the details and providing for the rights of the owners thereof; providing for the payment of such bonds and the application of the proceeds thereof to the refunding of certain bonds of said School Board; awarding said bonds to the Underwriter thereof and providing for other means in connection therewith.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 9:B – Adoption of 2010 Millage Rates

On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Handy, the board approved the 2010 millage rates as presented by the administration.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 9:C – Awarding of Bid: Administration Building

On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Handy, the board awarded the MC11-05 renovation bid of the Monroe City School Board Administration Building, Project No.09-MCS as indicated on the spreadsheet.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 9:D – Awarding of Bid: Surplus Equipment Bids

On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Handy, the board awarded MC11-07 surplus equipment bid as indicated on the spreadsheet.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 9:E – Permission to Advertise for two School Buses

On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Handy, the board authorized the administration to advertise for two school buses.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 9:F – Permission to Advertise for Pizza Delivery Bids

On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Handy, the board authorized the administration to advertise for 2010-2011 pizza delivery bids.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 9:G – Central Office Reorganization Plan

It was moved by Mr. Handy to accept the Implementation Plan as recommended by the superintendent.

The motion died for lack of a second.

It was moved by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mrs. Smith, to accept the Central Office Reorganization Plan with one position only.

Mrs. Shelling asked for clarification on the one position.

Bishop McFarland stated that the initial plan calls for five positions: three chiefs and two specialists. He stated that his motion calls for the approval of one position. He also stated that an assistant superintendent position is currently in the budget.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Dr. Harris will reorganize and present to the board a job description for the person that is to be hired.

Action Item 9:H – Implementation Plan

Mrs. Shelling stated that she does not feel comfortable expending funds being that the board will have several new members in January. She asked that the board support the deferment of this item until the new board is seated.

It was moved by Mrs. Shelling and seconded by Mrs. Dayton to defer the Implementation Plan until the new board takes office in January.

Public Input

Ms. Gloria Walker stated that elected officials are to fulfill their entire term in office; therefore, this item should not be placed on hold for the new board. By doing this the educational process for the children of the district is placed on hold.

Mrs. Shelling stated that if the new board wants to expend the funds for this project then she will give them her blessings, but she will not support this with less than ninety days left to serve.

Dr. Harris is asking the board to approve the dollar amount for the Implementation Plan. She stated that she will ensure that every building will receive an equitable amount of the funds. She will meet with principals and leverage the dollar amounts to ensure that all schools have the appropriate support.

Mr. Traweek stated that he can not support this plan because it needs to be tweaked.

Dr. Harris stated that the board is making it difficult for her to meet their goals by denying her requests. She asked the board if she is expected to tread water until January. Every day, hour and minutes is needed to move the district to a higher level. Funds should not be built up and then not spent on students to improve achievement. The goal is not to bankrupt the district.

In favor: Mrs. Dayton (She is not opposed to the plan but would like to see more details), Mrs. Krutzer, Mrs. Shelling, Mr. Traweek

Opposed: Mr. Handy (Stated that deferring the plan will stall the educational process), Bishop McFarland, Mrs. Smith

The motion carried on a majority vote.

Action Item I – Permission to Advertise: RFQ/P for Facilities Master Plan

On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Handy, the board authorized the administration to advertise for RFQ/P for Facilities Master Plan.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item J – Permission to Advertise: RFP for Strategic Planning

On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Handy the board authorized the administration to advertise for RFP for Strategic Planning.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item K – Permission to Advertise: RFQ/P for Diagnostic Study of Finance, MIS, and HR

On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Handy the board authorized the administration to advertise for RFQ/P for diagnostic study of Finance, MIS and HR.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Agenda Item 10 – Report of Board Members

Policy Committee – October 7th at 9:30 AM at the Media Center

Personnel Committee – To Be Announced

Facilities Committee – Monday, October 11th at 1:30 PM

Mr. Handy asked the staff to look into in the flooring issue in the cafeteria at Carroll High. He noted that band students at Carroll High have lost numerous items because of a lack of secure storage. He asked if students could get lockers.

Mrs. Smith announced that the walkthrough of Wossman’s gym will be announced.

Agenda Item 11 – Report of Superintendent

- a. Learning Tech/Quest School: A meeting was held with staff from Learning Tech/Quest School. At this time, the school does not have any openings for 16 year old students. If there were openings the cost would be \$7,500 per student, not including supplies and uniforms. The school would not be able to offer students high school credit because the teachers are only certified in grades 1-8. Project ARC has moved forward with the resources they have.
- b. Persistence to Graduation: Brief updates were given by Mrs. Jackie Matthews, GEAR-UP; Mrs. Patricia Johnson, 21st Century and Dr. Phedra Brantley, Safe Schools/Healthy Students.

Dr. Harris stated that the district has done an excellent job in providing wrap-around services.

- c. Board Attorney Update – No update.

Agenda Item 12 – Future Meetings

The next board meeting is October 19, 2010; 6:00 p.m.

Action Item 13 – Recess/Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m. upon a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mrs. Shelling

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Mr. Mickey Traweek
Board President

Dr. Kathleen Harris
Superintendent