

MINUTES

Monroe City School Board
2101 Roselawn Avenue
Monroe, Louisiana 71201

The Monroe City School Board met in regular session, Tuesday, March 9, 2010 at the Monroe City School District Media Center, 2009 Auburn Avenue; Monroe, Louisiana 71201. The meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m. by President Traweek. Prayer was offered by Bishop Rodney McFarland, Sr. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by J. S. Clark Magnet School student, Qadir Allah.

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. Brenda Shelling

Board Member Absent

Mrs. Stephanie Smith (out of town)

Administrative Staff

Mr. Julian Gray
Mrs. Betty Carroll
Dr. Tammye Turpin
Mr. Andrew Hill
Mrs. Teresa Foreman
Attorney L. Douglas Lawrence

Action Item 5–Adoption of the Agenda

President Traweek asked that a request for travel for the elementary school orchestra be added to the agenda as action item 7:1A.

On a motion by Bishop McFarland that was seconded by Mr. Handy, the Board approved the agenda with the addition of action item 7:1A (permission to travel).

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 6–Approval of Board Minutes

On a motion by Bishop McFarland that was seconded by Mr. Handy, the Board approved the minutes of February 23, 2010 as printed.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Agenda Item 7:1–Request for Funds for Carroll High School Choir Travel to New York

Mr. Gray recognized Dr. Veronica Lewis. Dr. Lewis indicated that since the last Board meeting, additional expenses have arisen. The choir is in need of \$20,000, which is \$5,000 more than the previous request. She noted that fundraisers are ongoing.

It was moved by Mr. Handy and seconded by Bishop McFarland, to provide \$20,000 for Carroll High School choir to help defray the cost of the trip to Carnegie Hall.

Mrs. Krutzer stated that she supports the choir but is concerned that other groups will come forward for assistance. She also stated that the district's budget is not limitless; therefore, she may not support this request.

Mrs. Dayton offered a friendly amendment to provide a one time allocation of \$20,000 to all junior and senior high schools to improve Fine Arts in their schools.

Mr. Handy and Bishop McFarland accepted the friendly amendment.

President Traweck stated that there are only two months left in the school year.

Bishop McFarland stated that unexpended funds can be carried into the next school year.

Mrs. Shelling stated that Carroll High can not improve their Fine Arts program because the choir will be using all of the funds for this trip. She stated that all schools should be treated equally. She further stated that it is the responsibility of the school to ensure that they have adequate funds when they participate in activities.

Bishop McFarland stated that at the last meeting, the entire Board agreed to provide funds for the choir trip. The \$20,000 for Carroll must go toward the trip and should not be used for any other purpose. He then asked Mrs. Dayton to clarify her motion.

Mrs. Dayton restated her motion: To provide \$20,000 to Carroll High School choir for travel to New York, NY and to provide a one time allocation of \$20,000 to each of the remaining secondary schools to improve Fine Arts at their school.

Mr. Handy stated that the superintendent should set the rules and regulations for use of these funds.

Mr. Gray stated that the principal must submit a formal request.

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

Action Item 7:1A–Permission to Travel

Mr. Xuan Liu, orchestra teacher, requested permission to travel to the State Music Festival in Lafayette, LA. He is also requesting a one time allocation of \$5,000 to fund the trip. The request for funds is being made because the orchestra has just learned that they have advanced to the next level of competition. Because of timing, there have been no fundraisers.

President Traweek passed the gavel to Vice President McFarland and made the following motion: To authorize travel for Sallie Humble, J. S. Clark and Lexington orchestra students to travel to Lafayette, LA and authorize a one time allocation of \$5,000. Mrs. Shelling seconded the motion.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 7:2–Permission to Travel

On a motion by Bishop McFarland that was seconded by Mrs. Krutzer, the Board authorized travel for Sallie Humble Elementary School Beta Club to Dallas, TX; May 17-18, 2010.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 7:3 – Permission to Enter into a MOU with Dr. Linda Heard to Write the New Federal Literacy Through School Libraries Grant

Attorney Lawrence noted that there was discussion about this agenda item at the last Board meeting. Since then, he has been in contact with Dr. Heard and she has indicated to him that her rates are comparable and that she will only write the grant for the amount indicated in the MOU. She also indicated that she is concerned that others might copy her work.

Mr. Gray noted that the grant is approximately \$400,000.

On a motion by Bishop McFarland that was seconded by Mr. Handy, the Board approved the MOU authorizing Dr. Linda Heard to write the Federal Literacy Through School Libraries Grant.

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

Agenda Item 7:4–Permission to Advertise for a Principal of Lincoln Elementary School

On a motion by Bishop McFarland that was seconded by Mrs. Shelling, the Board authorized the administration to advertise for a principal of Lincoln Elementary School.

Public Input: Ms. Sandra Shaw asked that the Board consider allowing the acting principal to remain at Lincoln. She stated that the school is moving forward under Mrs. Williams' leadership.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Agenda Item 7:5–Permission to Advertise for a Principal of Madison James Foster Elementary School

On a motion by Bishop McFarland that was seconded by Mrs. Shelling, the Board authorized the administration to advertise for a principal of Madison James Foster Elementary School.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 8:A–Human Resources Agenda

On a motion by Bishop McFarland that was seconded by Mr. Handy, the Board approved the human resources agenda of March 9, 2010 as presented by the administration.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Agenda Item 9–Superintendent Search Process

President Traweek stated that the Board voted to hire a firm to conduct the superintendent search. E-mails were sent to Board members asking for suggestions. Names of two firms were provided: McPherson and Jacobson and George McShan. The firms will be contacted and information will be gathered.

Mrs. Dayton requested that each firm provide a list of searches they have conducted in Louisiana.

Mrs. Shelling requested that the district look at the success of the persons the firms have placed.

Public Input:

Ms. Sandie Lollie stated that the new superintendent needs to be a transformer. She also stated that the superintendent needs to be about performance; not politics.

Ms. Rachelle May stated that the district should utilize the talents of persons in the community rather than hire an outside firm to search for a superintendent.

Mrs. Dana Jefferson asked the Board to consider an alternative to hiring a search firm. She stated that she objects to tax dollars being spent on outside search firms. There are persons, locally and statewide, that are familiar with the needs of the community.

Agenda Item 10–Superintendent’s Reports and Announcements

Superintendent Gray congratulated the Carroll High School Lady Bulldogs and Coach Sheryl Madison on winning the 3A Basketball Championship.

Agenda Item 11–President’s Reports and Announcements

President Traweck thanked students and staff for working hard to ensure that the Louisiana School Boards Convention was a success.

Mrs. Shelling noted that attendees commented that this was the best conference they have attended in a long time. She stated that she has received phone calls thanking the district for their role in planning activities.

President Traweck stated that General Honoré was as an excellent speaker. He also stated that he would like to see him as the back-to-school speaker.

Agenda Item 12–Board Committee Updates

Curriculum Committee: Tentatively scheduled for March 29th.

Facilities Committee: Date and time to be announced.

Transportation Committee: Tentatively set for March 23rd.

Action Item 13–Executive Session

Public Input: Reverend Roosevelt Wright asked if the Board will allow the attorney to submit the consent decree without the Board seeing the final document. He stated that the copy that was presented to the Board is not the same copy that is being submitted.

Attorney Lawrence noted that the signature of the attorney for two of the plaintiffs is needed on the document.

Bishop McFarland asked that the final document be presented to the Board before it is submitted to the Department of Justice.

Mrs. Shelling asked that this item be placed on the next agenda.

On a motion by Bishop McFarland that was seconded by Mrs. Krutzer, the Board convened in executive session at 7:45 p.m. to discuss the following:

1. Monroe City School Board v. Williams, No. 06-4771 {Sec. 3} (4th JDC-Parish of Ouachita)
2. Godfrey v. Monroe City School Board, No. 09-4176 {Sec. 4} (4th JDC-Parish of Ouachita)
3. Misconduct Investigation regarding the use of Monroe City School District Property

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Reconvene in Open Session

The Board reconvened in open session at 9:05 p.m. and took the following action:

Action Item 13:1–Monroe City School Board v. Williams, No. 06-4771

It was moved by Mrs. Shelling and seconded by Mrs. Dayton, to dismiss the lawsuit against Ms. Corletta Williams.

The motion carried on a majority vote. Mr. Handy and Bishop McFarland opposed.

Action Item 13:2–Godfrey v. Monroe City School Board, No. 09-4176

It was moved by Mrs. Shelling and seconded by Mrs. Krutzer, to accept the offer of settlement made in the case of Godfrey v. Monroe City School Board.

Mrs. Krutzer withdrew her second.

Mrs. Shelling restated her motion: To accept the offer of settlement made in the case of Godfrey v. Monroe City School Board, and that the offer not exceed \$35,000 which is the precedent in the case out of East Baton Rouge Parish.

The motion died for lack of a second.

It was moved by Mr. Handy and seconded by Bishop McFarland, to accept the recommendation of the Board attorney in the case of Godfrey v. Monroe City School, and that the settlement offer not exceed \$25,000.

Mrs. Shelling indicated that when this item was discussed in executive session, the Board attorney offered a case out of East Baton Rouge Parish for this same type of injury for \$35,000. She stated that this African American student at Madison Foster deserves the same amount of settlement.

The motion carried on a majority vote. Mrs. Shelling stated that she is opposed because the student deserves the \$35,000.

Action Item 13:3–Misconduct Investigation Regarding the Use of Monroe City School District Property

It is the recommendation of the superintendent to suspend Mr. Kirk Clark for ten days without pay and that restitution of \$2,000 is made to the district.

It was moved by Mrs. Krutzer and seconded by Mrs. Dayton to accept the recommendation of the superintendent.

The motion carried on a majority vote. Mrs. Shelling opposed.

Superintendent Gray noted that the suspension will begin on Thursday, March 11th.

Agenda Item 14–Recess/Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m. upon a motion by Mrs. Shelling that was seconded by Mrs. Dayton.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Mr. Mickey Traweek
Board President

Mr. Julian M. Gray, Sr.
Interim Superintendent