

MINUTES

Monroe City School Board
2101 Roselawn Avenue
Monroe, Louisiana 71201

The Monroe City School Board met in regular session, Tuesday, June 7, 2011 at Cypress Point Elementary School, 6701 Mosswood Drive; Monroe, Louisiana 71203. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by President Traweek. Prayer was offered by Rev. James B. Johnson, New Light Baptist Church. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mrs. Betty Carroll.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

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, Mr. Glynn Ludley

Administrative Staff: Dr. Kathleen Harris, Attorney L. Douglas Lawrence, Dr. Phedra Brantley, Ms. Karla Bowlin, Mrs. Betty Carroll, Mrs. Teresa Foreman, Mrs. Derenda Flowers, Mr. Andrew Hill, Mrs. Patricia Johnson, Mr. Josh Leporati, Mrs. Jacqueline Matthews, Mrs. Dana Mullins, Dr. Tammye Turpin, Ms. Mamie Williams

Action Item 5 – Adoption of the Agenda

On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Sharp, the Board approved the agenda as printed. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 6 – Executive Session

On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Muhammad, the Board convened in executive session at 5:33 p.m. to discuss: (i) workplace misconduct involving workplace harassment and dual employment issues; (ii) workplace misconduct involving violation of Acceptable Use Policies; (iii) employee misconduct involving a tenured teacher; (iv) employee grievance of alleged violation of policy and regulations; and (v) receive the results of the superintendent’s six month evaluation. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 7 – Reconvene in Open Session

On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mrs. Krutzer, the Board reconvened in open session at 7:35 p.m. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 6-1: It was moved by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Muhammad, to suspend Mr. Ricky Davis, MIS employee, for 30 days without pay. The motion carried on

a majority vote. Mr. Sharp and Mr. Traweek opposed.

Action Item 6-2: It was moved by Mrs. Dayton and seconded by Mr. Sharp, not to schedule a tenure hearing for Dr. Mary Ann Barham, an administrator, and that she receives training in acceptable use of school property. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 6-3: It was moved by Bishop McFarland not to schedule a tenure hearing for Mr. Daryl Seay, a tenured teacher.

The motion failed for a lack of a second.

On a motion by Mr. Muhammad and seconded by Mr. Sharp, the Board tabled action on scheduling a tenure hearing for Mr. Daryl Seay. The motion carried on a majority vote. Mrs. Krutzer and Bishop McFarland opposed.

Action Item 6:4: On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Muhammad, the Board accepted the findings and recommendations on an employee grievance as recommended by Mr. Jon Guice. The motion carried on a unanimous vote. President Traweek asked Attorney Lawrence to meet with both parties to discuss the results of the executive session.

Action Item 6:5: No discussion or action on the superintendent's six month evaluation.

Action Item 8-1: Approval of Board Minutes

On a motion by Mr. Sharp and seconded by Mrs. Dayton, the Board approved the May 24, 2011 minutes. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 8:B-i and ii – Personnel Agenda

Mrs. Dayton indicated that she is unsure as to which personnel agenda item is the correct.

Dr. Harris stated that the revised agenda was presented at the personnel committee meeting, and copies were placed at Board members' seat prior to the meeting to ensure that everyone received the correct copy. She noted that it is the recommendation of the personnel committee to accept the revised agenda.

It was moved by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Sharp, to approve personnel agenda items A-E.

Mrs. Dayton offered a friendly amendment to take the items separately. The amendment was rejected by Bishop McFarland. The motion failed. Bishop McFarland voted in favor.

It was moved by Mrs. Krutzer and seconded by Mrs. Dayton, to accept personnel agenda items A, B, C and E. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

It was moved by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Ludley, to accept personnel

agenda items D:1-4.

Mrs. Krutzer stated that she is concerned about adding new positions to the medical magnet program before the student count is known.

Mr. Traweek stated that he prefers that the positions be advertised in order to have a group of candidates to select from; by doing so, there could be an applicant that has magnet program experience.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Personnel Report – 8:B3 – Extension of Superintendent’s contract

It was moved by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Ludley, to extend the superintendent’s contract for four additional years.

Mr. Traweek asked Attorney Lawrence for clarification on the length of time the contract can be extended.

Attorney Lawrence indicated that based on his interpretation of the law, the Board can give the present superintendent a four year contract; but, he is unsure if four years can be added to the existing contract period. He recommends that the motion indicate that the contract be extended by the maximum time period allowed by law.

Bishop McFarland stated that since the attorney is uncertain of the interpretation, he wants to amend his motion to state that the contract be extended four years from today’s date.

Public Input: Ms. Gwen Dixon stated that the district’s test scores are lagging and that someone is needed to move the district forward – that person is the current superintendent. Board members should be committed to students; therefore, they should trust the leader that has been hired. She asks that the Board come together for the good of all students. Dr. Veronica Lewis stated that the Board pledged to support Dr. Harris when she was hired; since then, the Board has not been very supportive of her ideas and vision. Change is needed, if not, the district will continue to receive the same results. She asked the Board to support the contract extension and then support the superintendent in her efforts to make changes. She noted that an informal survey in her community yielded over 200 signatures in only one day. Mr. Jessie Handy asked the Board to support the contract extension so that the superintendent can continue with her vision for the district. If she does not perform, then her evaluation should reflect that. If she is not given the needed tools and support, the Board can not hold her accountable.

Mr. Sharp stated that he is a new Board member and that he needs time to see what progress has been made. He stated that his vote not to extend the contract does not mean that he does not support the superintendent.

Mr. Muhammad stated that the Board should not rush to make a decision because the contract does not expire until 2012. He further stated that he can not measure the superintendent’s progress in such a short time.

Bishop McFarland noted that the superintendent received a passing score on her evaluation. He stated that the Board has hired Dr. Harris to move the district forward, but has continued to strip her of the power needed to do so. He asked the Board to give the superintendent time to continue her work.

Mr. Ludley stated that the Board should respect and support the person that it hired. She has the support of the community and she needs time to prove that she can move the district forward.

Mrs. Krutzer stated that it is premature to extend the contract when test scores under Dr. Harris' term is unknown. This year's scores are from the previous superintendent, not from Dr. Harris.

Dr. Harris stated that it is difficult for a superintendent to operate in a short time frame to bring about change. Just as Board members are asking for time to see progress, she is asking for time to prove that she can move the district forward. She stated that she believes that the public is supportive of her. Board packets contain letters of support from various persons within the community. She further stated that the perception is that the Board as a whole is not supportive as evident by the way votes are casted. She ask that the Board extends her contract for the maximum time allowed by law.

The motion failed. In favor: Bishop McFarland and Mr. Ludley. Opposed: Mrs. Dayton, Mrs. Krutzer, Mr. Sharp, Mr. Muhammad and Mr. Traweek.

Action Item 9 – Consent Items for Separate Consideration

None

Agenda Item 10:A – RFP for 2011-2012 Pest Control and Trash pick up service

On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Ludley, the Board authorized the administration to advertise for request for proposals for 2011-2012 pest control services and trash pick up services. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Agenda Item 10:B – Advertise for Bids for 2011-2012 Instructional and Janitorial Supplies

On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Ludley, the Board authorized the administration to advertise for bids for 2011-2012 instructional and janitorial supplies. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

10:C – Permission to advertise for Bids for School Food Service Products

On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Ludley, the Board authorized the administration to advertise for bids for bread, milk orange juice, pizza deliver and paper and cleaning supplies. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

10:D – Contract extension with Sharbono Occupational Therapy Consultants

On a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Ludley, the Board extended a contract with Sharbono Occupational Therapy Consultants for occupational therapy for MCS students. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

10:E – Overcrowding at Cypress Point Elementary School

It was moved by Mrs. Krutzer and seconded by Mrs. Dayton, to approve Option I – to move 6th grade students zoned for Lee to Sallie Humble and move 6th grade students zoned for Carroll Jr. to Carroll Jr.

Mrs. Ann Cook noted that there are currently fifty-eight 6th grade students at Cypress Point. Twenty of those students are zoned for Lee Jr. High School; the remainder is zoned for Carroll Jr. She stated that the students are not being rezoned, they will be moving into their zoned schools a year early. By moving the students to Carroll Jr., it will make that school a middle school. Some of the students that are eligible to go to Sallie Humble may elect to go to J. S. Clark.

Dr. Manning stated that she does have room for the students, but she will not be able to accommodate the students if the STAR program continues.

Dr. Harris informed the Board that approval will need to be obtained from the Federal Court.

Bishop McFarland told Board members that it is important that parents support this move.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 10:F – Change In Job Assignments

It was moved by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Ludley, to accept the superintendent's recommendation to change job assignments for four employees.

President Traweek asked if Board policy needs to be suspended to change job assignments.

Attorney Lawrence noted that the positions must be advertised if the positions are vacant.

President Traweek asked Dr. Harris and Mrs. Carroll to consult with the attorney to determine if the positions are vacant. Upon discussion with Dr. Harris and Mrs. Carroll, it is the recommendation of Attorney Lawrence to advertise for the positions unless the Board is willing to suspend policy.

Addition to the Agenda

It was moved by Mrs. Krutzer and seconded by Mr. Ludley to add to the agenda the suspension of Board policy on advertising.

The motion failed due to the lack of a unanimous vote needed to add an item to the agenda. Mrs. Dayton stated that she is opposed because of legal reasons.

Dr. Harris indicated that she will bring forth the job descriptions for Board approval; thereafter, a request will be made to advertise the positions.

Mr. Traweek suggested that the positions be advertised for the minimum amount of days because of time constraints.

Addition to the Agenda

It was moved by Mrs. Krutzer and seconded by Bishop McFarland, to add to the agenda, permission to advertise for Education Supervisor, 504 Coordinator, School Community Outreach Specialist and Title Grants Supervisor. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Bishop McFarland stated that the length of time to be worked must be stipulated in the job description and advertisement.

On a motion by Mrs. Krutzer and seconded by Bishop McFarland, the Board authorized the administration to advertise for Special Education Supervisor, 504 Coordinator, School Community Outreach Specialist and Title Grants Supervisor for a minimum of two weeks and that the length of the contract be included in the job description. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Agenda Item 10:G – 2011 Test Results

Mrs. Teresa Foreman presented the iLEAP and LEAP test scores from 2008-2011. She noted that the challenge is 8th grade students – the district's test scores mirrors the state's average. She also noted that the last group of students to take the GEE will be in 2013; thereafter, students will take online End-of-Course exams. She asked Board members to call if there are questions.

Public Input: Dr. Veronica Lewis stated that students are not doing as well as they should; some schools are performing and others are not. She indicated that schools that are performing well are isolated to specific districts. She asked the Board to come together to provide for all students.

Agenda Item 10:H – 2011 Summer School

Mrs. Christie Taylor noted that 4th grade LEAP summer school is at Carver Elementary with 75 students participating and 8th grade LEAP summer school is at Carroll Jr. with 248 students participating. Also, 5th and 6th grade promotional summer school is at Carver and 7th and 8th grade promotional summer school is at Carroll Jr. It was also noted that 21st Century has several programs at various sites. Summer programs end June 30th.

Action Item 10:I – FY2011-2012 Budget

No discussion/action.

Bishop McFarland stated that a motion was made by Mrs. Dayton to implement a hiring freeze until the budget is balanced. He is requesting that the elementary and secondary position be taken off the table and placed on the next agenda for action.

President Traweek stated that a lift station is needed at Lee Jr. High – there is money in the contingency fund. The Board is in full agreement to move forward.

Agenda Item 11 – Report of Superintendent

No report given.

Agenda Item 11:A – Report of Board Attorney

Attorney Lawrence informed the Board that he has received several inquires about bus transportation for groups or organizations. Previously, these types of requests have been granted; now contracts are asked to be signed.

Dr. Harris stated that she will not sign any contract that is not reviewed by the attorney, approved by the Board, and co-signed by the president. She indicated that Board approval will slow the process by as much as two weeks.

Mrs. Dayton stated that the superintendent needs to determine if the request is worth the wear-and-tear and potential risk. She suggested that the superintendent contact the insurance agent when there are questions or concerns.

Mr. Muhammad indicated that a policy is needed to address this matter.

Agenda Item 12 – Report of Board Members

Bishop McFarland thanked Board members for attending the ribbon cutting ceremony for Wossman High School gymnasium. He asked Board members to consider purchasing astroturf for high school football fields as the neighboring school district will be obtaining this for their high schools.

Mr. Traweek stated that the facilities committee has been asked to provide basic sign design for the football stadium at Wossman and Carroll High. He noted that the signs will cost approximately \$2,500 each. He asked the facilities committee if they are in agreement with moving forward with this project. The committee is in agreement.

Mr. Muhammad stated that the transportation is the largest department in the district and they need additional staff.

Agenda Item 13 – Future Meetings

The next scheduled Board meeting is June 21, 2011. The time and location will be announced.

Action Item 14 – Recess/Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 10:20 p.m. upon a motion by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mr. Sharp. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Mr. Mickey Traweek
Board President

Dr. Kathleen Harris
Superintendent