

MEETING OF THE REGULAR BOARD SESSION OF
THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
WOODLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT 50
Board of Education Office
1105 N. Hunt Club Road
Gurnee, IL 60031
Thursday, January 28, 2010

Call to Order

President, L.A. Gregorash, called the regular session of the Board of Education of Woodland School District 50 to order at 7:48 PM.

Roll Call

Members Present: Bruce Bohren
Catherine Campbell
L.A. Gregorash
Terry Hall
Joan Morris
Mark Vondracek

Members Absent: Carla Little

Superintendent Present: Joy Swoboda
Associate Superintendent: Bob Leonard

Citizen Statements

There were a total of six citizen statements.

- Elyn Ruhlmann – Requested the Board consider busing her child from their home that is located outside of the district boundaries, to the parochial school in Grayslake. She feels, after reading the Illinois Code *105 ILCS 5/29-4*, that nothing prohibits her child from being transported by Woodland School.
- Lauren Reed – Ms. Reed read the attached statement regarding the Woodland Band Program.
- Alex Attiah – Thanked the Board and Bob Leonard for addressing his questions from the January 21, 2010 meeting. Mr. Attiah asked the Board if they will take into consideration suggestions from the public that include proposed cuts but not as drastic as job cuts.
- Tony Blumberg - Mr. Blumberg read the attached statement regarding the Woodland Band Program.
- Richard Nelson – Mr. Nelson addressed the Board regarding the Woodland Band Program. Mr. Nelson feels the band program has positive effects on the students who participate. Mr. Nelson asked the Board to please continue the band program.
- Pam Morton – Mrs. Morton read the attached statement regarding the Woodland Band Program.

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Bruce Bohren and seconded by Joan Morris to approve the agenda as presented.

On Roll Call, the votes were:

Ayes: Catherine Campbell, L.A. Gregorash, Terry Hall, Joan Morris, Mark Vondracek, Bruce Bohren

Nays: None

Absent: Carla Little

The motion carried.

Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Bruce Bohren and seconded by L.A. Gregorash to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Board member Hall asked that items B, E, and K be pulled from consent. Member Campbell asked that items A, C, I and K be pulled from consent. These items will be added to the action Items as follows;

Consent A – becomes Action B
Consent B – becomes Action C
Consent C – becomes Action D
Consent E – becomes Action E
Consent I – becomes Action F
Consent K – becomes Action G

A motion was made by Bruce Bohren and seconded by L.A. Gregorash to approve the consent agenda as amended.

On Roll Call, the votes were:

Ayes: L.A. Gregorash, Terry Hall, Joan Morris, Mark Vondracek, Bruce Bohren, Catherine Campbell
Nays: None
Absent: Carla Little

D. Budget Transfers

F. Acceptance of Resignations

ESP

Holly Anderson

Konnie May

Veronica Salgado

Marcie Weiser

Position

Paraprofessional

Bus Driver

Bus Driver

Insurance Benefits Assistant

CERTIFIED

Alison Murbach

Position

Kindergarten – Prim.

G. Approval of Leaves of Absence

Amy Hartmann

Sarah Kaiser

Katie Norwell

Kristin Miks

Tiffany Short

H. Approval of Substitutes

J. Acceptance of Donations

L. Approval of Aimsweb

Action Items

A. Transportation Bus Lease for FY11

As requested by the FACT committee, the district bid the bus rental agreement for FY11. Bob Leonard, Associate Superintendent, presented to the Board the bid lease summary from the bus rental bids that were opened January 19, 2010. Mr. Leonard explained five bid packages were sent out and two bids were received. Midwest Transit provided three options. The administration recommended Option #2 for a zero (\$0) increase over FY10 costs.

Member Hall wanted to know if the bus lease could be altered. Mr. Leonard replied that it is possible.

A motion was made by Bruce Bohren and seconded by Catherine Campbell to award the FY11 Bus bid to Midwest Transit at a cost of \$937,385 for the FY11 school term.

On Roll Call, the votes were:

Ayes: Terry Hall, Joan Morris, Mark Vondracek, Bruce Bohren, Catherine Campbell,
L.A. Gregorash

Nays: None

Absent: Carla Little

The motion carried.

A motion was made by L.A. Gregorash and seconded by Bruce Bohren to enter into a bus rental agreement with Midwest Transit for 89 buses at a cost of \$937,385 for the FY11 school term.

On Roll Call, the votes were:

Ayes: Carla Little, Joan Morris, Mark Vondracek, Bruce Bohren, Catherine Campbell,
L.A. Gregorash

Nays: None

Absent: Terry Hall

The motion carried.

B. Minutes

Member Campbell expressed her feelings that minutes dealing with budget reductions should contain more detail. Discussions involved the website that includes all of the detailed information, the idea that minutes are not meant to be detailed and the timeline of minutes being approved and available to the public before the next scheduled meeting. It was stated that with the critical timing of the meetings and making the information available to the community that an additional link on the website may be beneficial.

Also, the discussion led to the scheduling of school events and board meetings at the same time. It was brought up that school calendars should be looked at before scheduling in an effort to avoid any overlap. It was explained that the school events calendar is produced before the Board schedules their meetings. Also explained were the difficulties in scheduling events that never coincide with anything else in a district of our size.

A motion was made by Bruce Bohren and seconded by Mark Vondracek to approve the minutes as presented.

On voice vote, there were:

Ayes – 6

Nays – 0

Absent – 1

The motion carried.

C. Financial Report

Member Hall stated she feels the Financial Report should be discussed each month and therefore should not be on the consent agenda. Ms. Hall asked several questions regarding the figures reported.

A motion was made by Bruce Bohren and seconded by Joan Morris to approve the financials as reported.

On Roll Call, the votes were:

Ayes: Joan Morris, Mark Vondracek, Bruce Bohren, Catherine Campbell, L.A. Gregorash

Nays: Terry Hall

Absent: Carla Little

The motion carried.

D. Treasurer's Report

Member Hall feels the Treasurer's Report should not be part of the consent agenda. As stated in previous meetings, Ms. Hall felt that Board members would appreciate the presence of the Treasurer to answer questions. Member Hall questions if the treasurer's presence at meetings is part of the contract.

A motion was made by Bruce Bohren and seconded by Mark Vondracek to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented.

On Roll Call, the votes were:

Ayes: Mark Vondracek, Bruce Bohren, Catherine Campbell, L.A. Gregorash, Terry Hall, Joan Morris

Nays: None

Absent: Carla Little

The motion carried.

E. Employment

Member Hall stated, the Board should be cautious and think about any new hires as they proceed with the budget reduction process.

A motion was made by L.A. Gregorash and seconded by Bruce Bohren to approve the employment agenda as presented.

On Roll Call, the votes were:

Ayes: Bruce Bohren, Catherine Campbell, L.A. Gregorash, Terry Hall, Joan Morris, Mark Vondracek

Nays: None

Absent: Carla Little

The motion carried.

F. Destruction of Closed Session Meeting Audio Recording for June 2008

Member Campbell would like the opportunity to listen to the tape before it is destroyed. Member Campbell feels it is germane to her position on the Board to have the opportunity to possibly learn from listening to the recording.

A motion was made by Bruce Bohren and seconded by Mark Vondracek to approve the destruction of the closed session meeting audio recording for June 2008.

On Roll Call, the votes were:

Ayes: L.A. Gregorash, Terry Hall, Joan Morris, Mark Vondracek, Bruce Bohren

Nays: Catherine Campbell

Absent: Carla Little

The motion carried.

G. Disposition of District Property

Member Campbell inquired if an attempt was made to locate a group or charity that would benefit by the donation of the district's used computers and equipment. A discussion was held regarding the age, condition and usability of the equipment and the difficulties in finding a charity or recycler that is interested.

A motion was made by L.A. Gregorash and seconded by Mark Vondracek to dispose of district property as presented.

On voice vote, there were:

Ayes – 6

Nays – 0

Absent – 1

The motion carried.

Reports

Written Reports

- ARRA Stimulus

Penny Dagley provided a written report on the status of projects through ARRA funds. There were no questions.

- PTA

Dr. Joy Swoboda made a presentation to the Board of Education. The Woodland PTA received the "Over the Top" award from the Illinois PTA for enrolling over 650 new members in the past year. Dr. Gregorash thanked Dr. Swoboda for presenting the award, thanked the PTA for their contributions to Woodland School and stated the PTA would receive a letter from the Board of Education congratulating them for their hard work and contributions.

- Budget Deficit Reduction

The Board discussed how to format the process to be used for making final decisions on budget reductions. After discussion it was agreed to move forward and put on the top of the list those items that can be accomplished. The items needing more discussion will follow and the class size and paraprofessionals will be moved to the bottom of the list.

The administration will make the preliminary list. This list can be modified at the meeting on the 4th of February.

The summary sheet should be reduced to 1 or 2 pages. Also, it was discussed to match the item number description to the binder and show a running total.

Board Improvement and Operations

The Board discussed the following items related to Board Improvement and Operations:

- The April 22, 2010 Governing Board Meeting is the same night as the Annual Infnitec Awards Banquet. After discussion it as agreed to move the meeting from the 22nd of April to April 15, 2010.

Status Requests

The Board members reviewed correspondence to the Board.

- #1 – After discussion it was determined to ask the opinion of the school district's attorney on the School Code mentioned and to request the opinion be put in writing.
- #2 – Suggestion to the Board regarding FACT. This suggestion is already something the district does. A thank you will be sent.
- #3 – FACT suggestion regarding Paraprofessionals for Kindergarten Plus. A thank you will be sent.
- #4 – FACT – The Board feels the FY10 or FY11 needs to be clarified with this community member. A note of clarification and thanks will be sent.
- Band Letters – 2 letters were received on 1-28-10. The requests will be taken under consideration.

The February 4, 2010 board packet materials will be sent electronically as a result of the short turn around time. Member Campbell will receive a paper copy as an alternative.

Closed Session

A motion was made by Bruce Bohren and seconded by Mark Vondracek to enter into closed session at 9:44 PM.

On Roll Call, the votes were:

Ayes – L.A. Gregorash, Terry Hall, Joan Morris, Mark Vondracek, Bruce Bohren, Catherine Campbell

Nays - None

Absent - Carla Little

The motion carried.

A motion was made by Bruce Bohren and seconded by Mark Vondracek to return to open session at 10:29 PM.

On Roll Call, the votes were:

Ayes – Terry Hall, Joan Morris, Mark Vondracek, Bruce Bohren, Catherine Campbell, L.A. Gregorsah

Nays - None

Absent - Carla Little

The motion carried.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Mark Vondracek and seconded by Joan Morris to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 PM.

On Roll Call, the votes were:

Ayes – Joan Morris, Mark Vondracek, Bruce Bohren, Catherine Campbell, L.A. Gregorash, Terry Hall

Nays - None

Absent - Carla Little

The motion carried.

Approved by the Board of Education on March 25, 2010.

President, L.A. Gregorash

Secretary, Bruce G. Bohren

Hello. My name is Lauren Reed and I am a senior band member at Warren Township High School.

It has been brought to my attention that the middle school band's pull-out small group instruction is up for discussion.

After participating in almost four years of high school band, I know that the high school schedule is very limited, meaning time spent in sectionals is crucial. If a director were only allowed large ensemble rehearsals, they would have to stop and fix every little problem, which is just a time waster.

At the high school, students must meet with their section one day every week for 30-40 minutes. We do not have the luxury of our band director standing in front of us, helping us along the way. He expects us to be prepared for the larger group ensembles.

We are mature musicians. Because of what we were exposed to in elementary and middle school band, we know what this process entails.

When the Woodland band directors pull these students out for small group instruction they are taught how to properly play their instrument, rhythmical patterns, their band music, and basic music theory concepts, which reappear as the musician continues down the musical path.

Playing in small groups means everyone is exposed. When playing exposed literature, a student has to be more aware of what they are doing, consequently making them better musicians. This is also why the band directors at Woodland make students participate in solo and ensemble competition as well as pull-out small group instruction.

Colleges across the nation require that every music education and performance major participate in small group ensembles, because of the impact it has on playing ability. Many middle schools in Illinois, Southern Wisconsin, and Northern Indiana are continuing to use a system similar to the one Woodland has now, because of the success it is proven to have.

It is through the band director's assistance, that these students learn the steps and exercises of how to better their playing, so that when they enter high school, they are able to work without director instruction.

Both the Woodland and Warren band programs are successful because of all of the work put into the music, especially at an early age. Our community has made a name for itself in the band world and the last thing we should be doing is cutting away from this fantastic program.

I'm here to speak on behalf of the Band Program at woodland middle school. I don't pretend to know all of the district's financial requirements or problems. Like the majority of parents in the district I have sat by and counted on the good works of others to wrestle with these issues and for their time I am grateful. One program that I do have some intimate knowledge of is the band program. My 8th grade daughter and 7th grade son have both been actively involved and the rewards are huge. My son has always been shy and introverted. The opportunities to perform in front of groups, in front of judges, in full symphony or in solo contests have instilled in him a confidence that spills over into his everyday life. The close knit bonds such as the ones my daughter has forged over the years have proven invaluable to her as she has begun to face some of the inevitable challenges that adolescence brings to bear. As a whole, band kids are good kids. Much is expected of them above and beyond the normal student workload. Meeting those challenges demonstrates to them that they are capable of extraordinary achievement and ~~showed~~ ^{shows} them the benefits that dedication to a task can provide.

One of my favorite parts of the woodland program ~~are~~ ^{is} the small group instruction sessions that take place during the school day. In a school as large as ours it is all too easy for a child to become anonymous. There are few opportunities for small group interaction with a teacher. The instructors in our program know all their kids better than their classroom teachers. They can identify a child having personal or social problems very quickly. I have watched them laugh, love, scream and cry with all these kids. A close connection like that with an instructor, regardless of the subject, can be the spark that ignites a desire to learn, the willingness to work hard and the drive to strive for perfection in other subjects as well.

My kids have been involved in sports, dance, science fairs, scouting and on and on but nowhere have they learned how to see things through or learned how to learn as much as they have in band.

I know our district's finances are limited, I hope that those who ultimately have to allocate those finances will be able to leave the band program alone and funded as it is. It works well now and it is benefiting hundreds of our children in a very real way. Thank you for your time.

Tony Blumberg

CITIZEN STATEMENT January 28, 2010

Thank you for allowing me to make a statement. My name is Pam Morton. I have been a parent in this district for the past 18 years, and also a 4th grade teacher for the past 4½ years. As a teacher in the district, I am well aware of the difficult financial decisions that you have ahead, and the impact they will have on our staff and students. Tonight, however, I come to you as a parent in support of our excellent band program. Having just had a daughter graduate from college with a trumpet performance degree, and now having a 7th grade boy in band, I have a long history with Woodland's band program. Music has been an invaluable source of accomplishment and pride for my children. Both of them are not very good in sports. In our sports-saturated society, my son, in particular, has always felt self-conscious about his shortcomings in athletics. What he *is* good at, however, is playing percussion. Being in band has given him, and other students like him, much-needed self-esteem. It provides them with strong friendships that will last through high school. It also helps them develop excellent time-management strategies as they juggle schoolwork and practicing. Dropping the music program leaves minimal outlets for music performance, unlike sports programs that are also offered through the park district. Finally, I know that research strongly supports the academic benefits of school music programs. The Woodland band students consistently are high achievers on standardized testing, and as a subgroup, typically show the highest growth. This is an important program for a large group of our students. Please do not take it away from them.