

**UNAPPROVED
MINUTES
BOARD OF EDUCATION
June 28, 2016**

PLACE:

Darien Board of Education
Meeting Room
7:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mesdames Hagerty-Ross, Zuro, Stein and Sullivan; and Messrs. Burke and Martens.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mrs. McNamara; Messrs. Harman and Dineen.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:

Dr. Dan Brenner, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Susie DaSilva, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction; Ms. Shirley Klein, Assistant Superintendent of Special Education and Student Services; Mr. Michael Feeney, Director of Finance and Operations; Ms. Marjorie Cion, Director of Human Resources.

VISITORS:

Approximately 20.

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Hagerty-Ross, Vice Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:39 p.m. The next Regular BOE meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 26, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. in the Darien Board of Education Meeting Room.

Ms. Hagerty-Ross noted Mr. Harman's absence and advised she would be acting as the substitute Chair. She wanted to congratulate the children who are moving up this year in school.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Brenner echoed Ms. Hagerty-Ross' sentiments regarding the moving up students and advised that next year they would be sure to schedule the moving-up ceremonies on different days.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no one present who wished to address the Board at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

June 14, 2016 Special Meeting and Executive Session

**** MS. SULLIVAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 14, 2016 SPECIAL MEETING AND EXECUTIVE SESSION.**

**** MR. MARTENS SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 14, 2016 SPECIAL MEETING AND EXECUTIVE SESSION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

June 14, 2016 Regular Meeting

**** MS. STEIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 14, 2016 REGULAR MEETING.**

**** MS. SULLIVAN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 14, 2016 REGULAR MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no Board Committee reports to present at this time.

PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS

A. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ON PHILOSOPHY OF ELP IN ONE BUILDING (IN THE CONTEXT OF THE MASTER PLAN)

Ms. Shirley Klein and Ms. Laura Straiton were present to speak on the subject.

Ms. Klein went through a PowerPoint presentation (File #2518) on what their Early Learning Program would look like including: district goals, an overview of the optimal environment, and administrative and staff development practice.

Board questions and comments and Administration's responses: a) **The first slide is pertinent to the discussions we've been having on the need for more space.** (Dr. Brenner confirmed that there had been questions about the efficacy of moving spaces and wanted to present the philosophy of why this would be a best practice.) b) **It seems clear from the data here that this is an overpoweringly good thing to do under one roof. Thank you for the presentation and solid work.** c) **The Board has always had agreed with the philosophy to be under one roof. When we outgrew Hindley, there has always been a desire to go back to one place – this should be able to get us back on track.** d) **Is there any dollar and cents benefit from this as well? I would just like that to be kept in mind.**

B. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACCEPTANCE OF CONTEMPLATED GIFT FROM DHS PARENTS ASSOCIATION (File #2519)

Dr. Brenner described the generous gift given of two filtered bottle fillers. The high school currently has some in place but these would be additional and help move toward a green-conscious environment.

**** MS. STEIN MOVED TO ACCEPT THE GIFT OF TWO FILTERED BOTTLE FILLERS FOR THE HIGH SCHOOL.**

**** MS. ZURO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO ACCEPT THE GIFT PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

C. UPDATE ON STADIUM LIGHTS

Dr. Brenner wanted to revisit the questions that had been asked at the last Board meeting. The first was whether it was feasible to put in place a natural tree barrier on the property line. Dr. Brenner advised wetlands would not come into play if we chose to do this. Measurements were taken based on the site plan and it would be feasible to place respectably sized trees and the cost from the landscape architect came back to roughly \$20,000.00.

Dr. Brenner then moved on to the question of scheduling on the field. A mock schedule had been built and gave the number of games that would be held if the lights were given a 7:00 shut-off time versus an 8:00 shut-off. He also noted that if the football team continued their success, playoff games needed to be taken into consideration.

Board questions and comments and Administration's responses: a) **Regarding the trees, would this mean that we need to ask for more money in addition to what has already been gifted?** (Dr. Brenner said yes, you would have to decide where this money would come from. It can either be assumed in the operating budget or yes, you could ask for more.) b) **I would think that a \$20,000.00 increase for the overall improvement of site and environment is justifiable within the operating budget. We could certainly ask for help but I wouldn't want this to hold up any forward movement.** c) **I agree. If an additional donation is made, that would be great, but we should anticipate that we might have to foot the bill on this and note that it is nominal in comparison to the other improvements.** (Dr. Brenner advised he would be happy to go back and ask for the additional funds, but should we plan on moving ahead with the plan?) d) **We have to reflect on the guidelines, and we can have a discussion at our next meeting, but we don't want to over-ask of the generosity we have already seen.** e) **On the mock schedule, if we apply the 8:00 schedule, that would mean by Thanksgiving – that would be the end of the lights past 7:00?** (Mr. Chris Manfredonia replied that yes, that's accurate. If the team is successful, we could go into mid-December.) f) **As an example, in September at 8:00 do we need lights?** (Dr. Brenner replied it would all depend on the daylight saving impact. Mr. Manfredonia then advised that they would probably be okay for most of September.) g) **Looking at this schedule, it seems it is not as impactful as we may have envisioned before.** (Mr. Manfredonia brought up that this is assuming the youth group uses it as well. Dr. Brenner noted this would have to be part of the conversation as well. Whether youth football or soccer would have usage of the field.) h) **I would like to reiterate the position I took at our last meeting which was the 7:00 shut-off. Maybe in the first one or even two years, there would be a lot of give and take with neighbors and parents getting used to this.** i) **Are there any other sports that would need a late finish?** (Dr. Brenner advised that first the varsity game is held and then junior varsity. If this were flipped and finished under lights would they need beyond 7:00?) j) **We would only need until 7:00?** (Dr. Brenner gave an example using the field hockey as a model stating that the games start at about 4:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. If they were to flip, they would start at 4:00 p.m. and would that be enough time? Mr. Manfredonia said this would be cutting it pretty close.) k) **We need to leave time to get safely off of the field and in the parking lot - 7:00 may not be appropriate if you cannot get the varsity team off the field on time.** (Mr. Manfredonia agreed that that would be in a perfect scenario where no busses/teams were late.) l) **Once a time is set, how easy is it to then change it?** m) **I would like to ask that Dr. Brenner and Mr. Manfredonia find out how the applications need to be handed in, including DJFL and what we need to do for the school to not cut JV games short. Maybe at the next meeting we can vote.** (Dr. Brenner advised he and Mr. Manfredonia would go back and research how many games needed to be shortened and they would have a conversation with DJFL about their needs. Dr. Brenner also advised he would come to the next meeting with an application to review and ready it to submit to Planning and Zoning. Edits can be suggested.)

D. PRESENTATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON PROPOSED ATHLETIC FIELD TRIPS (File #2520)

Mr. Manfredonia presented the proposed DHS athletic field trips.

**** MS. SULLIVAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE FIELD TRIPS PRESENTED.**

**** MR. MARTENS SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE FIELD TRIPS PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

E. ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT ON 2015-2016 DISTRICT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES (File #2521)

Dr. Brenner advised they would present what goals and objectives had been set for 2015-2016 and each department would give updates.

Board questions and comments and Administration's responses: a) **I would like to add to the Business section the work we are doing with the town to investigate healthcare savings.** (Mr. Feeney advised they had received proposals back, but has not had a chance to look at them yet. Dr. Brenner stated they would add this item to Community #4.) b) **Regarding Special Education in the High School, most children with an IEP have been co-taught to this point. They then move into a team-taught environment – how are we tracking these children to see what our needs are in regards to Personnel?** (Ms. Klein advised these children would also be receiving other services such as Learning Centers so a Case Manager would be monitoring this. Dr. Brenner advised this is all part of an evolution – we are not setting ourselves up to lose sight of these kids, but the point is well made.)

F. ANNUAL REPORT ON DONATIONS RECEIVED (File #2522)

Mr. Feeney presented on all Donations received this year reaching over \$173,000.00

Board questions and comments and Administration's responses: a) **Does this number include some of the money given for individual teachers such as the Reiss Fund?** (Mr. Feeney replied, no it did not. Dr. Brenner advised there were three notable and significant donations.) b) **Can we develop a cohesive way to thank the donors? I'm interested to know how we have thanked them for their generosity. Can we "bump-up" what we do?** (Yes, we can figure out a better way. All donors are sent a letter of thanks, but we may want to consider a different way.) c) **I'd like to note how nice it was to see how many gifts were musical; it really makes a big difference to the students.**

G. UPDATE ON RFP SCHEMATIC DESIGN FOR HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA RENOVATION/EXPANSION PROJECT

Mr. Feeney reported that the district had sent out a request for proposals. They had received three proposals and are going forward with the lowest bid. Construction starts tomorrow.

Board questions and comments and Administration's responses: a) **With past projects, problems arose with bonds that needed to be in place. I want to make sure that even though we chose the lowest bidder, any securities that we need are being covered.** (Dr. Brenner said certainly for any place with risk or liability, we make sure this is in place.) b) **The winning bid was below the money we had allocated for the project?** (Yes.)

H. REPORT ON 2015-2016 BUDGET STATUS AND ACTION ON RECOMMENDED TRANSFERS
(File #s2523-2524)

Mr. Feeney reported on the budget, noting that there were still outlying numbers that needed to be considered for the fiscal year. He is asking for a transfer to the Special Ed department for salaries and residual on Health Insurance.

Board questions and comments and Administration's responses: a) **Regarding the field cameras, which fields have them and how many are there?** (Dr. Brenner advised there are none right now, but will be mounted to the score-boards. They will be put in place to monitor people who don't belong on the fields.) b) **There will be something we will see in August that will be more comparable?** (Mr. Feeney said yes, we will have final numbers but I can report now that we are in a comfortable space.)

**** MS. STEIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER.**

**** MS. SULLIVAN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

I. UPDATE MASTER AGENDA-FEBRUARY THROUGH AUGUST 2016 (File #2525)

Dr. Brenner noted the changes have been highlighted in the packet for approval.

Board comment and Administration's response: a) **We need to add on July 26th for the lights.** (Dr. Brenner confirmed.)

J. PRESENTATION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF UPDATED FACILITIES USE FEE SCHEDULE (File #2526)

Mr. Feeney and Mr. Lynch presented the facilities use schedule noting they are looking at a three-year approval instead of the usual annual approval.

Board questions and comments and Administration's responses: a) **Is there any interest amongst my colleagues to waive the \$100.00 fee for high school team car washes?** b) **I wouldn't have a problem with that, each time we look at the fees overall, we need to be cognizant that we are asking money from the same parents who have put their children into youth programs etcetera and this would come out of their pockets. I think our philosophy should be on an as-needed basis for Darien, rather than in comparison to everyone else.** c) **I agree. I think that is an important stance to take, the only thing missing are actual revenues secured. I would like to see what kind of numbers we are talking about and differentiate that for the for-profit and non-profit. I'm hesitant for this minimal 3-year bump-up.** d) **I don't think the proposed 2% is high enough and regarding the youth groups – there is significant money spent on security and custodians, this needs to be reflected in the \$25.00. We need to figure out how to manage the teams using our facilities that are not Darien taxpayers.**

Ms. Hagerty-Ross advised that in light of these comments, we would need more information from Dr. Brenner. He advised he would prepare and come back with necessary information.

K. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF SCHEDULE OF 2016-2017 REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS (File #2527)

Dr. Brenner presented the schedule.

Board questions and comments and Administration's responses: a) **We need to note that we are only having one meeting in April because of vacation.** b) **Regarding the budget schedule, last year we moved that to a Special Meeting.** (Dr. Brenner will put this on the schedule and advised that the feedback given was that it has worked out well.)

ACTION ITEMS

PERSONNEL ITEMS (File #2528)

**Appointments
Resignations**

- ** MR. BURKE MOVED TO APPROVE THE PERSONNEL ITEMS.**
- ** MS. ZURO SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE PERSONNEL ITEMS PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Stacey Tie, Clocks Lane, commented that the tagline, "One Site One Community" was a strong one and reflects the community well. She would like to remind the Board that there is a group of parents that believe ELP should be in separate schools and asked when would these parents be involved in this discussion.

Ms. Jill McCammon, Old Kings Highway South, wanted to thank the Board for their time looking into the ELP.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** MS. SULLIVAN MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** MR. BURKE SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Schneider Zuro
Secretary

