

A special meeting of the Board of Education of the Oak Park and River Forest High School was held on Thursday, November 9, 2006, in the Board Room of the high school.

Call to Order President Greenwald called the meeting to order at 9:50 a.m. The following members were present: Jacques A. Conway, Barbara P. Fernandez, Valerie J. Fisher, Dr. Barry S. Greenwald, Yasmin A. Ranney and John P. Rigas. Also present were: Cheryl L. Witham, Chief Financial Officer; Jack Lanenga, Assistant Superintendent for Operations; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board of Education.

Visitors Oak Park Village President David Pope; Oak Park Village Manager Tom Barwin (departed at 10:20 a.m.); Kay Foran, Director of Community Relations and Communications; Kathi Kyrias, Director of Guidance; James Paul Hunter and Joe Kostal, Faculty Senate representatives; and Marty Stempniak of the *Wednesday Journal*.

Visitor Comments None

Presentation by Oak Park Village President Pope First Mr. Pope introduced the new Village Manager, Tom Barwin, who had taken office in mid August. The Board of Education members welcomed him to the community.

Oak Park Village President Pope had made a request to address the Board of Education on the topic of community-wide planning. Mr. Pope reviewed a document dated September 13, 2006, titled "Community Wide Planning" and noted that he had shared this same presentation and document with all of the other taxing bodies. (A portion of the document is excerpted below.)

Mr. Pope explained that the reason for community-wide planning was to deal with the challenges all taxing bodies face, such as:

1. higher taxes
2. threats to diversity
3. threats to community character
4. threats to quality of services
5. competition among taxing bodies

The characteristics of community-wide planning would include:

- 1) Coordination/collaboration across taxing bodies
- 2) Community-wide priorities
- 3) Outcome focused
- 4) Show progress over time
- 5) Living Document
- 6) Reasonable Program Evaluation

The requirements for success would include:

1. Leadership Commitment
2. A clear and compelling rationale to collaborate
3. Culture of trust among partners
4. Shared ownership

Mr. Pope shared a list of communities that are leading examples of community-wide planning, as well as a chart depicting the “quality of life” components these communities found to be either key, a sub component or not included. The list included: civic life, cultural life, economy, education, environment, governmental excellence, housing, parks and open space, public health, public safety, technology, and transportation. Mr. Pope felt the potential areas of focus for the Oak Park community might include: civic life, cultural life, diversity (racial/cultural/economic), Economic Health and Vitality, Education (early childhood education, primary education, secondary education and lifelong learning), environmental sustainability, governmental excellence, infrastructure/community character, parks/open space, public health, and public safety/security.

The planning process used to effect change in a quality of life might include 1) focusing on individual areas, 2) determining an indicator of performance, 3) setting a baseline, 4) setting a target or goal, 5) developing strategies, and 6) projecting costs. Mr. Pope noted that the Village had \$250,000 set aside for this endeavor and the taxing bodies would not be asked for any funding. Mr. Conway asked if the communities mentioned were successful with this endeavor. Mr. Pope noted that some saw significant improvements in their quality of life components. At the same time, economic realities were challenging to some of the communities. The community must have a basis of knowledge. Certain areas lack a baseline and decisions have been made on intuition rather than a firm understanding of the issues.

Mr. Pope informed the Board of Education members that the Village called a meeting this summer of all the heads of the taxing bodies, their elected officials, and the chief financial managers

regarding the TIF. Mr. Pope was complimentary to Ms. Witham for the role she had played since Greg Peters, the Village's chief financial officer, had retired.

Mr. Pope asked the Board of Education for a general confirmation and agreement to move in this direction and a willingness to recommend the Council of Government (COG) level of responsibility. The Council of Governments would generate a memorandum of understanding, which would be signed by all governing bodies. The memorandum of understanding would articulate the process of everyone formally agreeing on how to move forward, i.e., the composition of the different working groups, etc. If the members of COG had specific ideas about who should be involved, he would welcome that. He did suggest however that the working groups should be free of elected officials, as other people in the community may want to contribute to the community for a shorter period of time, rather than years.

Mr. Pope gave examples as to who might be asked to participate on these groups. Regarding education, the group should be composed of people who have a deep understanding of education. The composition of the groups working on public safety and public health might include people from all of the taxing bodies, as each would have valuable input. Mr. Pope added that this endeavor would not be possible without the support from all of the taxing bodies. This would not be his initiative, but that of all the taxing bodies. Mr. Pope noted that all of the other taxing bodies had already given their support.

On behalf of the Board of Education, Dr. Greenwald pledged support of this endeavor. Board of Education members Ranney and Fernandez offered individual comments of support. Mr. Rigas, while fully behind this endeavor, foresaw factors that could make this process difficult from his own experience of being on the Village of River Forest Board and its effort to collaborate. Those factors were the elected officials' lack of continuity and the autonomy of different groups. Mr. Pope responded that the way to get past the issue of continuity was to create structures that would outlive people. He felt that the community would come to expect a "report card" on these quality of life components every year and that expectation would maintain the structure.

Ms. Ranney suggested that a potential area of focus might be housing. Mr. Pope informed her that housing is often embedded in the discussion of diversity. The conversation regarding different types of housing stock available or motivation has to do with

supporting a diverse community. The Village presently has a program that will provide support not specifically targeted at encouraging or enhancing diversity, but targeted more at properties being maintained properly on the east side of the Village.

Ms. Ranney also asked that consideration be given to collaborating in the context of a multi-use facility of Ridgeland Commons. Mr. Pope concurred. Mr. Lanenga added that the process had begun and that he was part of a group looking at various opportunities for Ridgeland Commons.

Ms. Fernandez added that she hoped these conversations would include parking guidelines and specifically mentioned the lack of parking in the 700 block of Ontario Street. Mr. Pope suggested that this might be included in the discussion as well.

Mr. Pope also spoke about his desire to discuss the Downtown TIF so that all governing bodies were aware of its status at another meeting. He explained that he thought of the TIF as an investment account tended to 1) improve the allover quality of life; and 2) generate economic return to the governing bodies—the investors. The percentage of ownership in the TIF is as follows:

Village of Oak Park	10%
District 200	30%
District 97	35%.

The Village is the manager of this “investment account” and its responsibility is to inform the investors as to 1) articulate the targets, and 2) report on results. He wants to make this an open process. He hopes for reports that are more frequent in the future.

Ms. Fernandez, having attended the January Joint Session with Districts 97 and 200 and the Village of Oak Park, learned that the high school had not gotten its fair share from the TIF. She asked how District 200 would get its money back. Mr. Pope stated that a collective decision was made to make this investment for two reasons: 1) the quality of life, and 2) an actual financial return. Some of the quality of life investments may be premised on the idea that they will generate an economic return, i.e., streetscape investments may pay an indirect return by enhancing the downtown. Another way would be by land assembly in order to develop a footprint for a more intensive use that will generate more tax values. It is not hard to generate return on investment (ROI) or calculate the ROI. The Village needs to do a better job at reporting on the investments and the intent behind investments being made.

Ms. Fisher was pleased to hear acknowledgement that the TIF process has not be as transparent as it could have been. Mr. Pope acknowledged coming to a deeper understanding of the economic status of the TIF in just the last four weeks through conversations with District 97 about its issues and looking for a way to help District 97 make it to a 2009 referendum. In the context of those conversations, he asked probing questions about the status and a picture is being developed. It is a topic of discussion for all taxing bodies.

Closed Session

Mr. Rigas moved to enter closed session at 10:50 a.m. on Thursday, November 9, 2006, for the purpose of discussing student disciplinary cases 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(10); the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2); seconded by Ms. Fernandez. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

The Board of Education resumed its open session at 11:15 a.m.

New Business

It was the consensus of the Board of Education members to honor the request of Dr. Constance Collins, superintendent of District 97, to speak on District 97's strategic plan at the Instruction Committee Meeting of the Whole Board on Thursday, December 14, 2006.

Ms. Ranney inquired about the status of the cost of the pickup of garbage.

Adjournment

Ms. Ranney moved to adjourn the Special Board Meeting at a.m. on Thursday, November 9, 2006; seconded by Mr. Conway. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Dr. Barry S. Greenwald
President

Barbara P. Fernandez
Secretary