

April 30, 2015

A special meeting of the Board of Education of the Oak Park and River Forest High School was held on Thursday, April 30, 2015 in the Board Room of the high school.

Call to Order The meeting came to order at 7:10 p.m. In attendance were Fred Arkin, Jennifer Cassell, Thomas F. Cofsky, Dr. Steve Gevinson, Sara Dixon Spivy, and Jeff Weissglass. Also in attendance were Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Michael Carioscio, Chief Information Officer; Amy Hill, Director of Assessment and Learning; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; Karin Sullivan, Community Relations and Communications; Tod Altenburg, Chief School Business Official; Gwen Walker-Qualls, Interim Director of Special Education; Sheila Hardin, Chair of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors Robert Spatz of District 97; David Boulanger of the Oak Park Youth Township; and other community members.

President Protempore Dr. Gevinson moved to nominate Mr. Weissglass for President Protempore. Hearing no other nominations, the nominations were closed. The chair hereby declared that Mr. Weissglass was elected by acclamation and directed the secretary to so record in the minutes.

Oaths of Office At this point in the meeting, Mr. Weissglass administered the Oaths of Office to the newly elected Board of Education members—Fred Arkin, Jennifer Cassell, and Sara Dixon Spivy.

Election of Officers Mr. Weissglass called for the election of president. Dr. Gevinson moved to nominate Mr. Weissglass for a one-year term as president of the Board of Education. Hearing no further nominations, Mr. Weissglass declared the nominations closed.

Being the only candidate nominated for the office of president, Mr. Weissglass hereby declared himself elected by acclamation and directed the secretary to so record in the minutes.

Mr. Weissglass then declared that the nominations for Vice President of the Board of Education were in order. Mr. Weissglass nominated Dr. Moore. Hearing no further nominations, Mr. Weissglass declared nominations closed.

Being the only candidate nominated for the office of Vice President, Mr. Weissglass hereby declared Dr. Moore elected by acclamation and directed the secretary to so record in the minutes.

Mr. Weissglass declared that nominations for Secretary of the Board of Education were in order. Ms. Cassell nominated Ms. Spivy. Hearing no further nominations, Mr. Weissglass declared the nominations closed. Mr. Weissglass then declared that Ms. Spivy was elected by acclamation and directed the secretary to so record in the minutes.

Recess

From 7:03 to 7:30 p.m., the Board of Education recessed.

2015-16 Board of Dates

Mr. Weissglass moved to approve the regular Board of Education meeting dates for the 2015-16 school year as follows:

Thursday, August 27, 2015
Thursday, September 24, 2015
Thursday, October 22, 2015
Thursday, November 19, 2015
Thursday, December 17, 2015
Thursday, January 28, 2016
Thursday, February 25, 2016
Thursday, March 24, 2016
Thursday, April 28, 2016
Thursday, May 26, 2016
Thursday, June 23, 2016

seconded by Mr. Cofsky. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

Committee Structure

The Board of Education discussed the committee structure going forward. Presently the Board of Education has 3-member committees. Consideration was given to returning to committees of the whole. The new Board of Education members were amicable to committees-of-the-whole in order to have a fuller understanding of the Board's work. The structural difference between an all board committee is the level of discussion. Presently, only 3 people may have the discussion. Other board members are relegated to observing only, unless they would choose to make public comments.

Dr. Moore had prepared some comments on this agenda item. Mr. Weissglass read them into the record.

"I do feel we should continue with current committee structure. Some of the reasons we turned in the direction of 3 person committees were:

1. Delineating responsibilities of each committee. The previous Board has worked diligently with the administration to clarify areas that fall under the purview of each committee respectively and improve our use of reports derived from committee work, insuring that the full Board can

- stay informed, and defer to the full board in instances where a topic had overlap into more than one committee
2. Building trust. By appointing committee chairs and conducting individual meetings, we have modeled an aspect of trust, transparency and communication that the Board desires for the school community as a whole.
 3. Efficient use of time is still a work in progress, but it was one of the reasons that make individual committees compelling.
 4. Shared leadership. Individual committees lend themselves to a diffused power structure that increases leadership skills for more board members, as well as access to administration and staff.”

There was a consensus for the 3-person committees to continue with the new Board of Education members affirming that they would be attending all of the meetings. The administration reiterated the importance of watching, listening, learning and reading the reports by all Board of Education members. In the Board of Education’s governance discussions, a conversation should be had about how to overcome being assigned to a committee and continuing with that committee for a couple of years. Committees are where in-depth studies are had and those not on that committee will miss that. When the work transfers to the regular Board of Education meeting, that information is lost. The 3-person committee has not expedited the process, as agenda items are routinely pulled off the consent agenda. It is also unclear how a committee is bypassed when an item requires the attention of the full Board of Education.

Proposed Board of Education Retreats

The Board of Education will plan to have 3 retreats in the near future on the following topics: 1) governance, 2) goals, and 3) finance.

New Board Member Orientation

The new Board of Education member orientation is scheduled for May 5, 2015 and all Board of Education members are invited to attend.

Adjournment

At 7:57 p.m., Mr. Weissglass moved to adjourn the Special Board Meeting; seconded by Mr. Cofsky. A voice vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Mr. Jeff Weissglass
President

Sara Dixon Spivy
Secretary