

OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL
201 N. Scoville
Oak Park, IL 60302

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
January 15, 2013

A Finance Committee meeting was held on Tuesday, January 15, 2013. Ms. McCormack called the meeting to order at 8:47 p.m. in the Board Room. Committee members present were Terry Finnegan, Valerie J. Fisher, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Amy McCormack, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, Sharon Patchak-Layman, and John Phelan. Also present were Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Michael Carioscio, Chief Information Officer; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; Lauren M. Smith, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Karin Sullivan, Director of Community Relations and Communications; Cheryl L. Witham, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations and Treasurer; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors included James Paul Hunter, FSEC Chair; Robert Zummallen, Director of Buildings and Grounds; Jeff Weissglass, Julie MacCarthy, Melanie McQueen, John B. Bokum, Jr., Jackie Moore, community members; Mary Haley of the League of Women Voters; Al Steffeter, Henry Bros., Robert Wrobbles of Legat Architects; Terry O'Grady of Pekron, and Steve Bremer and Fred Pruess from Asmco Engineering.

Authority to Commence Amended Budget FY 2013

It was the consensus of the Finance Committee members to recommend that the Board of Education approve the Resolution to Commence the Amended Budget for Fiscal Year 2013 at its regular January meeting.

Authority to Commence FY 2014 Budget Preparation

It was the consensus of the Finance Committee members to recommend that the Board of Education approve the Resolution to Commence the FY 2014 Budget Preparation at its regular January meeting.

Presentation of Contracts of \$10,000 - \$25,000 Report

Per Board of Education request, a list of contracts and purchase orders between \$10,000 - \$25,000 from July 1, 2012 through December 31, 2012 was presented. No discussion occurred.

Presentation of Approval of Summer 2013 Construction Bids

It was the consensus of the Finance Committee members to recommend that the Board of Education approve the six lowest, responsible Summer 2013 Construction Bids, as presented, at its regular January meeting. Al Steffeter, Henry Bros. Construction Co. presented the bids. The Board of Education had approved the 16 original projects in May 2012 and the bid documents in December 2012. Legat, Asmco Engineering, and Pekron Consulting performed scope reviews. The bids include alternatives No. 6, the carrier chiller plant, and No. 3, photography lab work. Built into the bids are a \$150,000 allowance and a \$207,087 contingency. The District feels confident that the projects will come in on budget. This year more contractors bid on the projects than had previously. Two minority contractors will continue to work with the district along with several new contractors, including Libertyville Tile, Adler Plumbing, and Airport Elective. Several are minority owned firms.

Presentation of Asbestos Bid with Valor Technologies

It was the consensus of the Finance Committee members to recommend that the Board of Education approve the lowest bidder for the Asbestos Bid with Valor Technologies, as presented, at its regular January Board of Education meeting for abating floor tiles on floor three of the older portion of the school, as well as the girls' and boys' bathrooms in the field house, the 2 north gyms, girls bathrooms on floors 1-4 of the old building, abatement of asbestos on air handling units, and asbestos in ceilings of the new IDF closets. Valor performed the abatement for

the 2012 construction year with no issues. The total contract for 2013 will be \$98,700.00 (base bids only). Valor is a minority-owned company.

Presentation of Instructional Materials Fee (IMF)

It was the consensus of the Finance Committee Members to recommend to the Board of Education that it approve that the IMF remains at the current rate of \$320 for the 2013-14 school year at its regular January Board of Education meeting. This fee covers the expense of each student's loaned textbooks and other consumable items such as novels, workbooks, and art kits needed to complete coursework.

The District's experience since implementing the IMF is 1) fewer people have asked to defer their payments; 2) the District has accommodated about a dozen families that have noted hardship, 3) all students have received their books and supplies; and 4) teachers like receiving their supplies in their classroom "just-in-time".

Because the qualifying income limit of the Free and Reduced Lunch Program of just \$27,000, Ms. Patchak-Layman suggested raising that limit perhaps by \$5,000, to help accommodate more families. Both the states of Alaska and Hawaii have this higher number, as they are states with a high cost of living. She also felt that the District should consider sliding IMF and childcare fees in the future. Childcare fees can also be difficult to afford if the income is not there. She also believed the District should have a policy that families should not have to go and explain their situations. Family income dollars have a big impact on whether families have money for book fees combined with the regular class fees and the composite fees. Discussion ensued about whether the District could explore different benchmarks. How would the District determine the number of those who are affected in order to make a decision, as the District presently does not collect that data? Families receive notification in the registration information about how to qualify for a waiver. The director of the bookstore is also sensitive to these issues. Ms. McCormack felt confident the District was attempting to take care of all of the students.

Presentation of Residency Verification

The Administration continued the discussion about having all residents go through a residency check as part of the annual registration process. The estimated cost for this process, based on 3,500 families, was \$30,000. The new residency check process would be facilitated by the new online registration system. Families would be scheduled to bring to the high school documentation that would help to establish residency. That information will be copied and returned immediately. Most likely 80-85% of the students would be cleared for residency immediately in the April timeline. Some families may need to provide additional documentation. This process would eliminate the need to do a monthly lease check. Currently, one residency compliance officer does this check. The number of lease verifications average about 50 to 70 per month. Each takes approximately an hour to do at an hourly rate of \$50. This amounts to approximately \$30,000 per year, if doing 50 per month. Thus, the Administration does not feel it will be expending additional resources.

Many schools do annual verification with a similar April timeline, although some do it in August. The District must also be mindful of the sectioning process and services required for special education students during this time. Because a student has access to the school system for the entire year if he/she is a resident on the first day of school, monthly lease verifications would no longer need to occur.

Mr. Phelan raised concerns about 1) all parents bringing in materials every year, 2) the numbers presented as to cost, and 3) the reason for having the process completed in April rather than August. He did not understand the nuances of verifying every student every year just as leases have expired in the past versus verifying in April. He might support a pilot program to see if it were indeed cost effective.

Mr. Finnegan noted the equity piece. He felt the Board of Education owed it to the community to do this, if the administration were inclined to do the work. It could turn out that it would be less expense and less work, which would be good for all. The symbolism of having all residents go through this process was compelling to him, as it did not single out those with leases or income levels, etc.

Discussion ensued about whether the District had the ability to use an online verification system. Many families have submitted fraudulent documents in the past, which have allowed them access to the school; online services would not prevent that from occurring again. The District presently spends a large amount on investigating residency, including surveillance, attorneys, etc.

When a family presents the documents in person in the Welcome Center in space designed so that confidential conversations may occur, professionals will look at the original documents, search various databases to match the information provided, and ask questions to help identify or clarify addresses and/or guardianship. Residency can be confirmed within 10 minutes. If verification were not given, a packet may be prepared with information as to what the families might still need to provide and/or home visits may be conducted, etc. These professionals have worked in other districts and they are sensitive about having confidential conversations. Ms. Patchak-Layman was concerned that the family would not be able to look at the same information that the professionals were seeing.

Ms. McCormack acknowledged that it would be cumbersome for her to bring in the documents, but after having sat through hearings on residency and having to ask ultimately students to change schools midyear, she felt it was worthwhile. It would save these students from becoming the pawns on the front end. She supported trying it for two years. Dr. Millard echoed Ms. McCormack's comments, noting that the Board of Education also had a responsibility to the residents.

Ms. Patchak-Layman supported a pilot program with families of freshman students and people with leases with all of the safeguards to be in place with the new procedures. Mr. Rouse noted that incoming freshmen were not the issue, as the District already has a residency process established for them. A pilot would need to include more than just families of freshmen.

Dr. Isoye reminded the Board of Education that not all questions on residency came to the Board of Education's attention. From the experiences of other Districts, this process would deter people who did not live in the District from attempting to register. Dr. Isoye will inquire as to why District 97 had not continued that practice, after having that practice for only one year.

Presentation of Check Disbursements dated January 15, 2013

It was the consensus of the Finance Committee members to recommend that the Board of Education approve the Check Disbursements dated January 15, 2013 at the Special Board of Education meeting immediately following this meeting.

A payment was made to the Sun-Times to announce the public hearing on the Drivers' Ed waiver. The Village of Oak Park Ordinance requires the district to pay for both off and on-duty police as security at football games.

Presentation of Monthly Treasurer's Report

It was the consensus of the Finance Committee members to recommend that the Board of Education approve the Monthly Treasurer's Report dated January 15, 2013 at the Special Board of Education meeting immediately following this meeting.

Presentation of Monthly Financial Report

It was the consensus of the Finance Committee members to recommend that the Board of Education approve the Check Disbursements dated January 15, 2013 at the Special Board of Education meeting immediately following this meeting.

Adjournment

Ms. McCormack adjourned the Finance Committee meeting at 9:38 p.m.

Amy McCormack
Secretary