

MINUTES OF A **REGULAR MEETING** OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, THORNTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 205, COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS, HELD ON **WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2015** IN THE STUDENT CAFETERIA AT THORNWOOD HIGH SCHOOL, 17101 SOUTH PARK AVENUE, SOUTH HOLLAND, ILLINOIS, BEGINNING AT 6:30 P.M.

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. President Lawrence made the following announcement: Any person may record or broadcast an open Board meeting. Special requests to facilitate recording or broadcasting an open board meeting such as seating, writing surfaces, lighting and access to electrical power shall be directed to the Superintendent at least 24 hours before the meeting. Recording meetings shall not distract or disturb Board members, other meeting participants, or members of the public. The Board President may designate a location for recording equipment, may restrict the movement of individuals using recording equipment or may take such other steps as are deemed necessary to preserve decorum and facilitate the meeting. Please know if you participate in public participation, you are part of the Board meeting and you may be taped.

ANNOUNCEMENT  
BY BOARD  
PRESIDENT

On roll call, Members Butler, Graham, Lawrence and Whittington answered. Members Banks, Gibbs and Williams were absent. Dr. Leotis D. Swopes, Interim Superintendent; Mr. Brett Fickes, Director of Curriculum; Mr. Thomas Porter, Director of Pupil Personnel Services; Mr. Jerry Doss, Director of Public Relations; Mr. John Arrington, Director of College and Career Partnerships; Mrs. Maria Brunson, Director of Information Technology; Mr. James Walton, Principal of Thornridge High School; Mr. Dennis Willis, Principal of Thornwood High School, and Mr. Rob Grossi, Financial Consultant, were also present.

ROLL  
CALL

**Report from Finance Committee:** Mr. Butler stated that two items on the last Finance Committee meeting agenda are on tonight's agenda, which are the Tentative Budget for 2015-2016 and the Transportation Bid. Only First Student submitted a full bid.

COMMITTEE OF  
THE WHOLE

**Report from Curriculum Committee:** Mrs. Graham reported that Curriculum meetings were held on July 13, July 28 and August 11, 2015. Topics discussed were 2014 PSAT scores, dual credit initiatives with South Suburban College, legal requirements for transforming schools, a new data system for the district. A report was received from ICSI (Illinois Center for School Improvement), the district's transformation partner. Discussions were held concerning Vision 2016 initiative and developing a community survey. Minutes of the meetings are on the district website.

Report from Policy Committee: No report.

Report from Discipline Committee: No report.

Report from Facilities Committee: No report.

Mrs. Whittington moved, Mr. Butler seconded, to **Approve the Consent Agenda**, which includes the following:

CONSENT AGENDA

- The minutes of the Special Meeting and Executive Session of June 26, 2015.
- The minutes of the Regular Meeting and Executive Session of July 8, 2015.
- The District 205 bills as presented for payment dated July 14, July 24, July 31 and August 6, 2015.
- Personnel dated August 12, 2015 (Resignations, Leave of Absence and Employment) See Director of Human Resources.

MINUTES:  
JUNE 26, 2015  
JULY 8, 2015

BILLS

PERSONNEL

On roll call, Members Butler, Graham, Lawrence and Whittington voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

The following individuals spoke during Public Participation:

PUBLIC  
PARTICIPATION

- Lionel Moore (Dolton) asked why the solar panel project at Thornwood has been shut down. He is a vendor from the project and has not been called back for service. In response to the Board stating the panels were installed incorrectly, Mr. Moore stated the panels were installed correctly.
- Felita Crayton (Dolton) 1) stated that regarding curriculum meetings, she feels the plan is not being divulged, and 2) asked the Board to mend their ways as there is a long way to go.
- Edward Crayton (Dolton) spoke on behalf of members of the community regarding the issue of Board member Mrs. Gibbs' absence from 15 Board meetings and no longer residing in the district. He asked when the process begin to fill the vacant seat? The district needs all 7 Board members and there are petitions circulating. Mrs. Lawrence responded that at this time there is no discussion regarding this issue.
- Toni Williams (South Holland) stated that on Sunday there will be free back-to-school haircuts at her barber shop in Dolton. This is an annual event. She stated that the district needs to get more involved with local businesses and work together.

10:18

Mr. Doss reported that since the last scheduled Board meeting, there have been no completed Freedom of Information Act requests with one pending. All requests will be responded to within the allotted time.

FOIA

Mr. Doss presented the following information:

COMMUNICATIONS

- Teacher Institute Day is August 14, 2015 and the first day back to school for staff. August 17 is the first day for freshmen and August 18 is the first day for all students.
- The substitute management system, Aesop, will be implemented this school year. It is an automated system for faculty to arrange for class coverage when they are absent.
- The District Jazz Ensemble will be featured at the 2015 Jazz Festival on Sunday, September 6, 2015 at 1:30 p.m. under the direction of Mr. Render, Mr. Tapley and Mr. Douglas.
- Thornridge will host a dedication ceremony of the T.J. Shirley Memorial Track on the football field on Saturday, August 22, 2015 at 1:00 p.m. Mr. Shirley was a track coach and Athletic Director at Thornridge.
- The Thornton Township High School Athletic Program hosted its first annual youth football 707 tournament to encourage participation in the football programs at District 205 high schools.

Upcoming Events:

August 27	Back to School Night
September 1	Finance Committee Meeting
September 8	Student Board Meeting
September 9	Board of Education Meeting

Mr. Rob Grossi, Financial Consultant, presented the 2015-2016 Tentative Budget. The Budget may change before it is presented for approval at the September Board meeting. Notice of this Board meeting was placed in the newspaper on August 7, 2015 in compliance with the law and the tentative budget has been on the District website. The uncertainty of the unsettled contract and the State of Illinois are factors to consider. Real estate tax revenues will increase approximately 3.5%. General State Aid will increase by \$862,000. This year, the district will get 92% of that amount. State grant revenues will increase due to timing of State payments. Federal grants will remain relatively flat.

PRESENTATION OF  
THE 2015-2016  
TENTATIVE  
BUDGET

Total salaries are projected to increase 1.4%. The staff size will decrease by 15 and most retirements will not be replaced. It is assumed certified staff will receive two 2% raises during the fiscal year.

Employee benefits are projected to increase 3.8%. Transportation expenses will increase significantly per the most recent bid award. Debt payments will increase \$1.6 million due to the timing of payments. Major capital expenses will decrease slightly.

PRESENTATION OF  
THE 2015-2016  
TENTATIVE  
BUDGET, Con't.

The total revenues projected are approximately \$104 million and expenses \$113 million. Expenses therefore will be \$9 million more than revenue. The District will again need to transfer \$8 million from the transportation fund to the education fund to keep the fund solvent

He explained the expenditure comparisons from previous years and although there was a salary freeze, there was a slight increase in staff size but a significant increase due to extra duties and overtime pay.

Out-of-district tuition decreased from \$10.5 million to \$9.5 million. The drop in revenue in 2011 from \$118 million to \$101 million is a tremendous decrease.

In 2010 there was a \$4 million deficit. The major expenditure reduction was put into place and the District turned a \$4 million deficit into a \$4 million surplus. Over the next four years, the district operated with a surplus. However, last year, \$5 million more was spent than was brought in. This year a \$6 million deficit is expected.

The two major reasons for decline in revenue is the decline in enrollment. The average daily attendance dropped from 6,300 students in 2010 to under 4,900 students in 2014. It dropped another 100 students last year. The District receives \$6,000 per student from state aid. The other reason is tax collections, which have dropped since the late 2000's from 93% to 82% last year. Every 1% of taxes the District loses, equals approximately \$600,000. (\$6 million less annually)

The District's growing structural deficit of \$5 million annually; the shifting of teacher pension costs from the State to the district; the creation of a charter school, the continued decrease in average daily attendance and major capital projects that need to be addressed are the major financial threats facing the district.

Mr. Butler moved, Mrs. Whittington seconded to **Approve to Go Out to Bid for the Thornton Fieldhouse Floor Renovation.** Mr. Charnot noted that the agenda was incorrect; this item includes the Thornton Fieldhouse only. The cost of the project will come from capital improvement and/or Life Safety funds; money used from the education fund. On roll call, Members Butler, Graham, Lawrence and Whittington voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL TO GO  
OUT TO BID FOR  
THORNTON  
FIELDHOUSE  
FLOOR  
RENOVATION

Mr. Butler moved, Ms. Graham seconded to **Approve the Rebid for the Thornwood Pool Renovation** as presented by Mr. Charnot. Bids previously received were reviewed but are no longer valid. On roll call, Members Butler, Graham, Lawrence and Whittington voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL FOR  
REBID  
THORNWOOD  
POOL RENOVATION

Mrs. Whittington moved, Mr. Butler seconded to **Approve to Go Out to Bid for Two Thornton Elevators** as presented by Mr. Charnot. Thornton has no elevators. On roll call, Members Butler, Graham, Lawrence and Whittington voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL TO GO  
OUT TO BID FOR  
TWO THORNTON  
ELEVATORS

Mr. Butler moved, Mrs. Whittington seconded to **Approve to Go Out to Bid for One Thornwood Elevator** as presented by Mr. Charnot for the media center elevator. On roll call, Members Butler, Graham, Lawrence and Whittington voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL TO GO  
OUT TO BID FOR  
ONE THORNWOOD  
ELEVATOR

Ms. Graham moved, Mr. Butler seconded to **Approve to Go Out to Bid for a New Thornton Girls' Softball Field** as presented by Mr. Charnot who stated bids were previously received and reviewed but are no longer valid. The Board stated that a field is needed near the school to ensure the girls' safety. On roll call, Members Butler, Graham, Lawrence and Whittington voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL TO GO  
OUT TO BID FOR  
THORNTON NEW  
GIRLS' SOFTBALL  
FIELD

Mr. Butler moved, Mrs. Whittington seconded to **Approve to Go Out to Bid for the Thornwood Auditorium Interior Renovation** as presented by Mr. Charnot who stated bids were previously received and reviewed but are no longer valid. Mr. Butler stated that this renovation needs to occur but in the future, a new auditorium at Thornwood should be considered. On roll call, Members Butler, Graham, Lawrence and Whittington voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL TO OUT  
TO BID FOR  
THORNWOOD  
AUDITORIUM  
INTERIOR  
RENOVATION

President Lawrence presented the Board Goals including the aligned strategies.

PRESENTATION OF  
BOARD VISIONARY  
GOALS 2015-2018

**Goal—Student Achievement and Growth:** Ensure continuous learning development, growth and achievement for all students.

**Goal—Learning Climate:** Ensure a safe. Supportive, challenging and culturally sensitive learning environment.

**Goal—Quality Workforce:** Recruit, train and retain a high-quality staff that is committed to continuous improvement through teamwork, collaboration and shared leadership.

**Goal—Family/Community Partnerships:** Engage parents, students, staff, clergy, business owners and the community (stakeholders) in the District's continuous improvement effort.

**Goal—Resources:** Demonstrate and communicate effective and efficient school district operations to ensure excellent stewardship of public resources.

The complete document of Board Goals may be found on the District website.

Dr. Swopes announced the current enrollment at 78%. Thornton=76%; Thornridge=71%; Thornwood=86%. Thornton and Thornridge are under the Illinois State Board of Education's system of support. Thornwood has now been added as a low-income subgroup of not meeting or exceeding state standards.

SUPERINTENDENT  
REPORT

At 7:24 p.m., Ms. Graham moved, Mr. Butler seconded to go into **Executive Session** pursuant to Section 2C of the Illinois Open Meetings Act to consider:

EXECUTIVE  
SESSION

- The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity;
- Collective negotiating matters, and
- Litigation, when an action against the District, affecting or on behalf of the particular public body.

On roll call, Members Butler, Graham, Lawrence and Whittington voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

At 9:12 p.m., **Regular Session Reconvened.** On roll call, Members Butler, Graham, Lawrence and Whittington voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

RECONVENE  
REGULAR SESSION

Ms. Graham moved, Mr. Butler seconded to **Approve the Human Resources Contract** for Mr. Jerry Doss in the amount of \$110,000.00 for the period July 9, 2015 through June 30, 2016. On roll call, Members Butler, Graham, Lawrence and Whittington voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF  
HUMAN  
RESOURCES  
CONTRACT

Ms. Graham moved, Mr. Butler seconded to **Approve the Athletic Director Consultant Contract** for Mr. Bill Mosel in the amount of \$350.00 per day for 100 days. On roll call, Members Butler, Graham, Lawrence and Whittington voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF  
ATHLETIC  
DIRECTOR  
CONSULTANT  
CONTRACT

The Approval of the **Principal Salary Reimbursement Payment** was tabled.

APPROVAL OF  
PRINCIPAL SALARY  
REIMBURSEMENT  
PAYMENT

Mr. Butler moved, Ms. Graham seconded to **Approve the General Release and Waiver of Claims** regarding the Bret Tucker litigation in the amount of \$47,500.00. On roll call, Members Butler, Graham, Lawrence and Whittington voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF  
GENERAL RELEASE  
& WAIVER OF  
CLAIMS

No action was taken.

APPROVAL OF  
EMPLOYMENT  
CONTRACT STEP  
INCREASE

At 9:20 p.m., Mr. Butler moved, Ms. Graham seconded, to **Adjourn the Meeting.** On roll call, Members Butler, Graham, Lawrence and Whittington voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT

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President

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Secretary