

MINUTES OF THE **OPEN SESSION OF A SPECIAL MEETING** OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, THORNTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 205, COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS, HELD ON **THURSDAY, MAY 5, 2011** IN ROOM 1630 AT THORNWOOD HIGH SCHOOL, 17101 SOUTH PARK AVENUE, SOUTH HOLLAND, ILLINOIS, BEGINNING AT 7:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order by the President for the purpose of discussing and/or acting on contractual services.

PURPOSE OF MEETING

A copy of the meeting and certification by the Secretary are a part of the official minutes.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. On roll call, Members Banks, Crayton, Lawrence, Robinson, K. Williams and T. Williams answered. Member Burton was absent. Dr. J. Kamala Buckner, Superintendent was also present.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Crayton moved, Mr. Robinson seconded, to **Approve the Appointment of Grasso Bass, P.C. and Tressler LLP** as the District 205 legal counsel. Mrs. Lawrence requested the motion be amended to allow Franczek Radelet, District 205's current legal counsel, to continue their work with the Illinois State Board of Education and District administration regarding the \$18 million School Improvement Grant 1003(g). Mr. Banks stated he thought there was an agreement to consult with other attorneys before appointing legal counsel and because all Board members could not attend this meeting, suggested the matter be tabled for Board discussion and possible candidate interviews. Mr. Banks also stated that the opportunity should be given to other attorneys interested in presenting to the Board. On roll call, Members Crayton, Robinson, K. Williams and T. Williams voted aye; members Banks and Lawrence voted nay, motion passed.

RESOLUTION FOR APPOINTMENT OF ATTORNEY

The following individuals spoke during public participation:

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- Deidre Baumann (Attorney) stated that she expressed an interest to the Board to represent District 205. She worked with parents, teachers and community members to stop the closure of Thornridge. She looks forward to working with the Board in the future.
- Vincent Browder (Lansing) represented Balfour, the supplier of class rings, diplomas, etc. to District 205 since 1999. Balfour recently moved to Lansing, which better accommodates parents and students. He has had meetings with District 205 Safe and Secure personnel and stated Balfour has the best clear back pack available for students.
- Evelyn Sorrell (Dolton): 1) asked if keeping the \$18 million grant money entails keeping the Freshman Center; the court said that could not be done, and 2) stated the new Board will be held accountable and she looks forward to working together. In response, Mr. Williams stated: 1) Thornridge will remain a 4-year high school and he will travel to Springfield to meet with ISBE in an attempt to keep the \$18 million for the schools.
- Lynette (Dolton): 1) asked for the address of Balfour; 2) was the attorney position put out to bid or what was the process; 3) is it an individual or a firm. In response: 1) Mr. Browder stated the address of Balfour is 18333 Burnham Ave., Lansing; 2) Mr. Williams stated bids were not sent out; there was no contract available for the current attorneys of 15 years; attorneys interested were directed to call the District Office. The process was that during the last 4 months, there were opportunities for attorneys to step forward; 3) it is a school firm working collectively handling contracts, school law and litigation.
- Felita Crayton (Dolton) stated she had a problem with the previous law firm who stated they had not read the grant. She does not want anyone representing a \$112 budget who has not read the grant. She emphasized transparency regarding the new law firm. The new Board needs to come together for the betterment of the students and community and the community will hold the Board accountable.

Evelyn Sorrell (Dolton) asked if she needs to submit a FOIA to obtain information on the new attorneys. Mr. Williams stated that attorney information will be made available to the public. Some of the recent communication throughout the district is not good for the community. The new Board is not looking to replace anyone and is looking forward to working with staff and faculty. Everyone including teachers, community, students and Board members, need to be motivated to make District 205 the best in the State.

Edward Crayton (Board member) stated that the selection of the attorneys was not made haphazardly; they will be under extreme scrutiny and are expected to perform at a high level immediately.

At 7:27 p.m., Mr. Crayton moved, Mr. Banks seconded, to **Adjourn the Meeting**. On roll call, Members Banks, Crayton, Lawrence, Robinson, K. Williams and T. Williams voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT

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President

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Secretary

rp(spec brd mins 5-5-11)  
**REGULAR SESSION**