

**BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SPECIAL AND REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**January 22, 2007**

The special meeting of the Board of Education of the Portage Public Schools held on Monday, January 22, 2007, was called to order at 5:32 p.m. by President Shirley Johnson in the Professional Development Center of the Administration Building, 8111 S. Westnedge.

Board Trustees Present: Tom Eddy, Kathy Howland, Shirley Johnson, Linda Lueth, Wendy Mazer, Deb Polderman, and Jennifer Whistler

Board Trustees Absent: None

The Board members conducted an orientation session for individuals interested in becoming a candidate for Board Trustee. The Board received an update relating to the facilities and technology bond campaign and budget information from the Revenue Estimating Conference.

The regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Portage Public Schools held on Monday, January 22, 2007, was called to order at 7:25 p.m. by President Johnson in the Community Room of the Administration Building, 8111 S. Westnedge. She welcomed an audience of 70 people and all in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Johnson welcomed the Northern High School Wind Ensemble, directed by Mr. Dave Papenhagen, who treated the audience to a performance prior to their concert at DeVos Hall on Friday, January 26, 2007.

The Board welcomed West Middle School principal Mr. Larry Killips, teacher and student leader advisor Ms. Mari Nowak, and received a building activities update from several students.

A motion was offered by Mrs. Whistler, supported by Mrs. Polderman, that the minutes of the January 8, 2007 Special and Regular Meetings be approved. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was offered by Mrs. Whistler, supported by Mrs. Howland, that the Board of Education approve the following new and revised Policies as follows: 7000 series Policies pertaining to Physical Facilities – minus Policy 7140 Selection of Architect; and Policy 4330, Safety and Security. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was offered by Mrs. Lueth, supported by Mrs. Polderman, that the Board of Education approve the retention of the following companies for professional services related to the bond issue in February: Architects – TMP Associates, Inc., and Bond Underwriters – AG Edwards & Sons, Inc. Motion carried 6-0 with President Johnson abstaining.

This concluded the action portion of the agenda. Mrs. Johnson then opened the meeting for comments.

Mrs. Mazer congratulated both Central and Northern's wrestling teams on their recent competition.

Mr. Eddy discussed the bond issue, the high expectations for our District, how we support those expectations, utilize what is important and needed.

Mrs. Polderman informed the audience of all the community meetings being planned to discuss the Bond throughout the District and stated these are not just for parents and urged all citizens to attend these meetings and ask questions.

President Johnson reported on the Center for Michigan Town Hall meeting she attended and shared thoughts and facts from these sessions. She commented on the Bond meetings scheduled throughout the District and encouraged all community members to attend or visit our web site for further information. President Johnson stressed this Bond request is strictly funding for infrastructure only and can not be used for salaries or textbooks. She also informed the audience that the District does not have a "Plan B" and if the millage is defeated the entire plan goes back to the drawing board.

Mr. Dave Felicijan, 8134 Black Forest, a parent, thanked the Board and Administration for all the information he has received on the Bond issue. Although he is in favor of the Bond request, he does have concerns about redistricting after Waylee Elementary is demolished. Superintendent McFarlane responded to the redistricting question stating the earliest any information could be available would be fall of 2007, prior to the opening of two new elementary schools in 2008. President Johnson informed the audience of the public meeting at Waylee on the Bond presentation would take place tomorrow evening (January 23) at 6 p.m. at the school and urged citizen attendance.

Mr. Mark Anthony Martin, 10519 Dandale, a citizen, stated he is specifically focusing on "no voters" for the Bond millage and will try to let these citizens know what sort of benefits they will receive from the improvements.

Ms. Mildred Taraszka, 410 Marylynn, a citizen, discussed the Bond millage and outsourcing.

Ms. Judi Santek, 7537 Autumn, a citizen, discussed the demolition of schools on the south side of Portage and the proposed demolition of Waylee Elementary.

Ms. Melanie Kurdys, 2267 Preserve, a parent, discussed support for the math curriculum and reading, as well as concerns with MEAP scores and the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program.

Ms. Sharon Houseman, 5718 Deerfield Street, a bus driver, voiced concern for a fair and equitable contract for bus drivers.

Mr. Joel Frederickson, 10603 Dandale Street, a bus driver and the union president, voiced concern for a fair and equitable contract for bus drivers.

Mr. Richard Brien, 2528 Angling Road, a bus aide, voiced concern for a fair and equitable contract for bus drivers.

Initiating the reports portion of the meeting, Mrs. Lueth presented the Treasurer's Report of Bills Approved for Payment as of January 10, 2007, General Fund bills in the amount of \$3,163,206.37, and Building & Site Fund bills in the amount of \$834.00, for a grand total of \$3,164,040.37.

Superintendent McFarlane informed the audience that January is "Board of Education Recognition Month" and applauded our Trustees for their dedicated commitment to the students of our community.

Received Board Committee reports from Mrs. Howland regarding the Curriculum and School Improvement Committee, Mr. Eddy regarding the Facilities and Technology Committee, and Mrs. Lueth regarding the Finance Committee.

A motion was offered by Mrs. Whistler, supported by Mr. Eddy, that the Board of Education move the request for permission to plan the Northern High School Choirs trip to New York, NY for June 13-18, 2007 to an action item. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was offered by Mrs. Whistler, supported by Mr. Eddy, that the Board of Education approve the request for permission to plan the Northern High School Choirs trip to New York, NY for June 13-18, 2007. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was offered by Mrs. Whistler, supported by Mrs. Howland, that the Board of Education move the request for permission to plan the Central High School French & Spanish Department trip to France and Spain from June 23 – July 5, 2008 to an action item. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was offered by Mrs. Whistler, supported by Mrs. Howland, that the Board of Education approve the request for permission to plan the Central High School French & Spanish Department trip to France and Spain from June 23 – July 5, 2008. Motion carried unanimously.

A brief legislative update was received from Mrs. Whistler pertaining to the dire news from the recent Revenue Estimating Conference and the budget shortfall. She reminded the audience to contact their legislators to show support of education and to find out how they plan to protect school funding. President Johnson reminded the audience that our budget year begins in July and now that we are more than half way through the year, we receive news of these cuts.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Edna Kent  
Recording Secretary