

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING AND COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORK SESSION**

May 10, 2010

The special meeting of the Board of Education of Portage Public Schools held on Monday, May 10, 2010, was called to order at 5:32 p.m. by President Whyte in the Instructional Services Conference Room of the Administration Building, 8111 S. Westnedge.

Board Trustees Present: Kevin Hollenbeck, Melanie Kurdys, Deb Polderman, Rusty Rathburn, Bo Snyder, Randy Van Antwerp, and John Whyte

Board Trustees Absent: None

Others Present: Marsha Wells, Superintendent; Tom Noverr, Assistant Superintendent of Operations; Ric Perry, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction; and Tom Zahrt, Director of Human Resources

CLOSED SESSION

Motion offered by Mr. Rathburn, supported by Mrs. Polderman, that the Board of Education move into closed session for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining strategy [Section 8 (c) of the Open Meetings Act]. Upon a roll call vote, all Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

The Board moved into closed session at 5:32 p.m.

The Board returned to open session at 6:15 p.m.

Recess was called at 6:15 p.m.

The committee of the whole work session of the Board of Education of Portage Public Schools held on Monday, May 10, 2010, was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by President Whyte in the Community Room of the Administration Building, 8111 S. Westnedge. He welcomed an audience of 10 people and all in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board Trustees Present: Kevin Hollenbeck, Melanie Kurdys, Deb Polderman, Rusty Rathburn, Bo Snyder, Randy Van Antwerp, and John Whyte

Board Trustees Absent: None

COMMENTS OR COMMUNICATIONS

President Whyte offered thanks to the community for supporting the Building and Site Sinking Fund. He also congratulated the newly elected Trustees, Mrs. Joanne Willson and Mr. Geoff Howe and welcomed them to the Board.

Superintendent Wells echoed President Whyte's comments, thanking the Community for supporting the Building and Site Sinking Fund renewal. She invited the Community Relations Manager, Mr. Tom Vance, to provide information recently published by The Center For Michigan. Mr. Vance shared the publication titled *Michigan's Defining Moment*. This summarizes three years of feedback from focus groups totaling 10,000 Michigan citizens about transforming the State for Michigan's future. One of the Southwest Michigan sessions was hosted by Portage Schools.

Superintendent Wells reminded the Board about the District Substance Abuse Task Force working with the County Task Force to get the word out about how adults can help young people make safe choices during proms and graduations. She shared yard signs entitled, "Parents Who Host Lose The Most" that will be visible throughout the District and acknowledged this campaign, designed by the Drug Free Alliance, focuses on liability and legal issues related to serving alcohol to under age drinkers.

President Whyte opened the comments and communications portion of the meeting and asked if there were any citizens who would like to speak to the Board. Mrs. Polderman explained guidelines the Board uses for this portion of the meeting.

Dr. Millie Taraszka, 410 Marylynn Court, a citizen, shared concern for carpeting in the schools, inquired about a Portage Education Fund, discussed maintenance of existing District facilities, and advocated for swimming pools in the middle schools.

President Whyte opened the floor for Board Trustee comments.

Mrs. Kurdys thanked the Administration for conducting the community survey and the Extra-curricular Activity Fee survey.

Mr. Snyder acknowledged the positive atmosphere recently encountered while attending swim meets in the middle schools.

Mr. Rathburn discussed the Bond Construction Committee meeting and thanked the Trustees for the efforts on the strategic priorities.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Bond Project Updates. The Assistant Superintendent of Operations, Mr. Tom Noverr, provided a report on the completion of the Lake Center Elementary building; the progress being made at Central High, noting the Centre Street and Courier Drive entrance will be completed for the start of the school year this fall; and the ongoing work and occupation of the Science wing at Northern High. Discussion followed and Mr. Noverr and Superintendent Wells responded to Trustee questions regarding: contingency items at Northern High causing concern for support of future Bond projects and the Lake Center ground completion plans. Superintendent Wells noted the Trustees would receive an updated list of contingency items in time for the June 7th meeting.

The Information Systems and Assessment Director, Mr. Dan Vomastek, shared details on the District technology updates. Mr. Vomastek responded to Trustee questions regarding: building update timelines and the Technology Plan available on the web site.

2010/11 Financial Discussion, District Update. Superintendent Wells discussed the 2010 fiscal planning goals, principles and guidelines for budget development and program reductions. Mr. Noverr shared a budget development update containing guidelines for budget development and program reductions, significant assumptions, uncertainties, impacts, a detail of prior year reductions, and the next steps in budget development. Dr. Richard Perry, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, provided background on the Extra-curricular Activity Fee recommendation and participation fee survey results. Superintendent Wells, Mr. Noverr, Dr. Perry, and the Business Manager, Mrs. Karla Colestock, responded to Trustee questions regarding: a multi-year perspective, program costs and benefit analysis, retirement rate increase, enrollment loss and Stanfred projections, taxable value, borrowing parameters, the budgeting process, keeping cuts as far away from the students as possible, class sizes, planning for further reductions, Activity Fee survey and Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) on the District's web site. Superintendent Wells confirmed it was the desire of the Board to receive an extended listing of possible budget reduction options to review.

Project and Service Bid Considerations: 12th Street Elementary Sidewalk / Trail Project Bid. Mr. Tom Noverr provided background information on the bid from Peters Construction Company for the 12th Street Elementary sidewalk / trail project in the amount of \$37,746.72 from Bond Fund #2. Mr. Noverr responded to Trustee questions regarding: bussing and contacting property owners.

Project and Service Bid Considerations: Northern High School Cafeteria Furniture Purchase Bids. Dr. Perry shared details about the cafeteria furniture purchase proposal for Northern High from American Furniture Contractors, Inc. for an August delivery totaling \$37,490.32 from Bond Fund #1. He responded to a Trustee question noting the current furniture at Northern High will be utilized in other buildings or sold by the District.

Project and Service Bid Considerations: Recommended Approval of Roofing Contract. Mr. Noverr presented background information on the roofing contract for the Community Education Center and Central Middle School by J & L Roofing Company, Inc. in the amount of \$181,780 from the 2010/11 Building and Site Sinking Fund. Mr. Noverr and Mr. Mark Reile, Architect from TMP Associates, responded to Trustee questions regarding: timing for the project, necessity of the repairs, other District projects, and warranties.

Project and Service Bid Considerations: Food Service. Mrs. Colestock provided historical background information on Food Services in the District. She shared the recommendation to approve the contract with Chartwells School Dining for food service management through June 30, 2011, and authorize the Assistant Superintendent of Operations to execute all necessary agreements. Mrs. Colestock responded to Trustee questions pertaining to pricing, variables, and profit margins.

Project and Service Bid Considerations: Custodial Services. Mr. Noverr provided detailed information on the proposal from Grand Rapids Building Services, Inc., for first shift custodial services effective June 28, 2010 at a fixed yearly cost of \$743,688.00 and one month pro-rated at

\$61,974.00. This contract would expire on July 31, 2012. Furthermore, that the Assistant Superintendent of Operations is authorized to negotiate and execute a contract for these services. Trustee discussion and questions pertained to: the number of employees affected, importance of key contacts with the students and community, variance in cost, satisfaction with the vendor, contractual obligations, and delaying this recommendation. Superintendent Wells discussed a list of possible alternatives to cover the \$250,000 in lieu of triggering the custodial recommendation.

2010/11 Strategic Planning Priorities Draft. President Whyte requested Trustees continue to forward comments regarding the 2010/11 Strategic Planning Priorities Draft to the ad hoc committee.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Edna Kent
Recording Secretary