

DES MOINES PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SPECIAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
BOARDROOM — 1800 GRAND AVENUE
MINUTES—REVISED
April 13, 2010

SPECIAL MEETING – 6:00 p.m.

The Board of Directors met in a special session on Tuesday, April 13, 2010, in the boardroom at 1800 Grand Ave., Connie Boesen presiding.

Present: Boesen, Buckton, Caldwell-Johnson, Link, Murphy, Strong, Woods
Absent: None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Strong moved to approve the agenda. Second by Caldwell-Johnson.

Aye: Boesen, Buckton, Caldwell-Johnson, Link, Murphy, Strong, Woods
Nay: None
Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING/PUBLIC FORUM – 6:03 p.m.

- 4. Proposed FY 2011 Budget ----- 1
- 5. Sale of School Constructed Building — 4001 SE 25th Street ----- 9

REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION – 7:55 p.m.

Mrs. Jeanette Woods requested a meeting explaining the SIL (School Improvement Leaders) process.

CHAIR’S REPORT

Ms. Boesen announced the change from Channel 12 to Red Apple TV.

Ms. Buckton commented she will be going to a training session at the University of Iowa on closing the achievement gap.

Dr. Sebring would like the Board to have a work session on minority achievement, suspension rates, etc. Those trends are moving in the right direction and she would like to see that information shared.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Dr. Sebring recommended that when the Board talks about the school improvement leaders, the Board also has a conversation about the low achieving schools. There will be more information to share in a week or so.

ADJOURN 8:05 p.m.

Item No. 4
Page 1 of 8**Subject: FY 2011 BUDGET****For: PUBLIC HEARING/ACTION****Contact: Patti Schroeder****Attachments: None**

(patricia.schroeder@dmps.k12.ia.us; 242-8527)

Issue: Official public hearing and action on the proposed FY 2011 budget.

Superintendent's Recommendation: The superintendent recommends that the Board hold a public hearing on the maximum district budget (total requirements equaling all funds expenditures and all funds fund balances) of \$535,913,945, which includes an expenditure budget of \$456,931,452 and supporting tax levy of \$17.64277 for FY 2011. The superintendent also recommends that the Board then adopt the proposed maximum budget; and authorize the Board president and secretary to sign and file the necessary documents with the county as required by law.

Presenter: Patti Schroeder will be available to answer questions.

Background: Iowa schools are required by law to adopt a maximum district budget and supporting property tax levy for FY 2011 and file that budget and tax levy with the county by Thursday April 15, 2010. A public hearing must be held on the proposed budget prior to adoption. At the March 9, 2010 Board meeting, the Board set the public hearing for April 13, 2010. Also, the budget summary and notice of public hearing was published on Friday April 2, 2010 in the district's official newspaper, within the time frames specified by statute.

Following the public hearing, the board will take action to adopt the budget and authorize the filing of the adopted budget with the county by the April 15, 2010 deadline.

The adoption of the annual budget authorizes spending authority, resources and establishes a financial direction for the district in line with the district's Ends Statements, the Board budget parameters, priorities and assumptions for the coming year, FY 2011.

Minutes

Speakers: Lorraine McGilvra, Des Moines
 Jeff Riese, 525 SW 5th St.
 Steve Barnes, 614 Virginia Ave.
 Robert Gilmore, 5738 NW 2nd St.
 Sarah Ramsey, 18437 280th St.
 Alan Young, DMEA

Patrick Brennan, 1001 26th St.
 Colby Orman, Crafts
 Shannon Mullins, 4514 Euclid
 Heidi Bagg, 2509 48th St.
 Jim Patch, 2803 Stanton
 Barb Moeller, 1919 Juniper Ct.

Ben Thompson, 1540 E. County Line
 Gretchen Watznaver, 10203 NW 107th PI Granger, IA

Item No. 4**Page 2 of 8**

Dr. Sebring and Patti Schroeder presented the final update on the FY 2011 Budget.

Dr. Sebring introduced the recommendation to hold a public hearing and adopt the proposed budget.

Mr. Murphy moved to approve the proposed budget. Second by Strong.

Mrs. Jeanette Woods asked which middle schools still have industrial technology available to the students.

Ms. Schroeder was able to respond about the two positions that were add-backs: One position of technology integration at Brody: and one technology education at McCombs.

Mrs. Jeanette Woods asked what middle schools remained where students worked with their hands and built things — industrial technology classes.

One of the speakers commented that Meredith and Goodrell were the only two middle schools that offered those classes.

Connie Cook responded that she thinks Meredith, McCombs, and Goodrell offer those classes but she would make certain and get the answer to the Board.

Mrs. Jeanette Woods commented those classes need to be offered to students that are below the poverty level. It's not just academics with those students, they need to survive using their hands.

Mr. Terrence Martin reiterated that Brody and McCombs are both adding those programs. Those classes were a reduction at Weeks. He stated there are other programs at Weeks that are being offered and provide hands on training to help improve student achievement. They are more focused on the core areas.

Mrs. Jeanette Woods asked if Harding and Hiatt still offered the industrial tech programs.

Mr. Bryce Amos responded that Harding cut the program last year, and Hiatt cut theirs this year and that will not be reinstated..

Mrs. Jeanette Woods asked what will be offered to students that need those classes.

Mr. Amos responded there were other hands on activities being offered as well as concentration on the core classes.

Item No. 4**Page 3 of 8**

Mr. Jeanette Woods asked about the home remodeling class at East High School and wanted to know what is planned to assure that the students currently enrolled in those classes do not become dropouts.

Dr. Sebring responded that program is still being offered at Central Campus. The discussion about home remodeling took place last year and this was one of the classes that had very low enrollment numbers so two teachers were combined at Central Campus. Anyone from any of the high schools can participate.

Mrs. Woods asked what is planned for students that choose not to go to Central Campus and drop out of school.

Dr. Sebring responded the home remodeling program at East High School has been labeled as a dropout prevention program. There has never been a screening directing those students to the program. They sign up for these classes the same as they would any other class. It was probably mislabeled as a dropout prevention program. The funding source for the supplies for that program has ended and the teacher at East retired. It's about efficiency; creating more opportunity for more students by centralizing those teachers in that program.

Ms. Jeanette Woods is concerned about the strategies that are in place regarding outsourcing. She has asked for information regarding the cost to maintain our own employees versus contracting services outside the district. She asked if contracted employees go through the same background checks that our employees go through and whether anyone talked to employees about cost saving measures.

Mr. Bill Good, chief operations officer responded he has some benefit and wage comparisons. Without being specific to any employee group, the district's wage and benefit packages are very good in comparison to outside companies that do similar work. The district's expectations are the same regardless of who does the work. An example comparison he made available was the outsourcing of the mowing. Currently the district estimates \$40 an acre with district employees versus \$25 an acre if outsourced. The district has many skilled craft people that work for the district, both internally and externally. The district respects both work forces. He stated there have been problems with both internal and external employees. Those problems will exist anytime there is a large organization with many employees. Mr. Good commented that the district can contract many services at a lesser cost based upon the district's wage and compensation package.

Mrs. Jeanette Woods asked if outside contracts would be bid.

Item No. 4**Page 4 of 8**

Mr. Good responded those contracts will be bid and they will have stipulations regarding background checks, etc.

Mrs. Jeanette Woods commented on the district employee comparisons versus city and believes the district employees are required to have more duties than the city employees so it is not a fair comparison.

Mr. Good responded that outsourcing various contracts is working well for other organizations. The district will not outsource any contracts that will cost the district more money and will bring employees back if that were the case. Under the current opportunities in the community, he believes at times there is a better price for the work that needs to be done.

Mrs. Jeanette Woods asked how the district made the decision on who would be cut.

Mr. Good responded that his preference was to not cut anyone. He used the example that his wife is a teacher in the district and she was placed on the excess list. The across-the-board cut impacts everyone. The priorities of the district have very clearly been teaching and learning; it is not that operations employees are any less important because they are not, but the fact is the district needed to concentrate on the teaching and learning side. The district cannot support every district employee at this time regardless of what group they are in.

Mrs. Jeanette Woods shared comments from painters that they had been told their position would be eliminated and were not given an explanation as to why they were chosen. She stated those employees deserve an explanation as to why they are being laid off.

Mr. Good responded he had not been a part of those discussions. He commented that only one painter has approached him for an explanation and Mr. Good has an appointment with that employee to talk to him. He will be doing that this week. He commented he is very open and will answer any questions to the best of his ability.

Mrs. Jeanette Wood asked why supervisors in the crafts area were not being reduced when other employees are.

Mr. Good was not sure what Mrs. J. Woods has classified as supervisors. There was one director in the craft area.

Mrs. Jeanette Woods had counted five employees that she feels are in the supervisory position that are not being cut.

Item No. 4**Page 5 of 8**

Ms. Boesen recommended Mrs. J. Woods call Mr. Good at a different time to discuss this individual situation.

Mrs. Jeanette Woods stated she had asked this question previously and did not get an answer.

Dr. Sebring stated Mrs. Jeanette Woods had been provided cost comparisons of the district's various positions with county and industry average.

Mrs. Jeanette Woods stated yes, she had been provided that information for negotiations but was unsure if this discussion should take place in the open meeting. She disagrees with the information that was presented.

Dr. Sebring recommended Mrs. J. Woods meet with her and give her more detail and help her understand. She reiterated what Mr. Good said earlier. None of the cuts are easy. All of the employees are valued employees. Hard decisions have to be made during hard times. She stated that the Board had directed the administration to consider out sourcing as a cost saving measure.

Mrs. Jeanette Woods asked if there had been any discussion about transportation employees being able to do the mowing.

Dr. Sebring responded this was a work in progress and is being discussed.

Mrs. Jeanette Woods stated there is a past grievance in that area.

Ms. Nigut stated the administration is still working with the AFSCME bargaining unit with respect to the grievance that was filed as it pertains to the transportation department and having academic bus drivers work part-time hours in the summer.

Mrs. Jeanette Woods asked about the SIL (school improvement leaders) positions and if the Board will be having a meeting that explains this process to them.

Dr. Sebring responded a meeting definitely can take place if that is what the Board requests.

Ms. Buckton commented on how decisions were made throughout the budgeting process. She asked if it was a district or building decision going to the halftime FTE for counselors.

Item No. 4**Page 6 of 8**

Dr. Sebring responded that discussions were taken to the building level for suggestions. Principals were asked to go to their school leadership teams for suggestions. The add-backs were a more hurried discussion process. The focus has been on the classroom and consistency throughout schools. She wanted to clarify that even before budget discussions, all schools were not the same. They were not offering the same electives, programs, etc. It is difficult to say that any one person was responsible for add backs.

Ms. Buckton's concern is the counseling positions. The dropout problem doesn't start in high school and begins much earlier. The national recommendation is 250 students to every counselor. The Iowa model is 350 to one. The Iowa average is just over 400 and the district will be moving to 574 students to one counselor in terms of a case-load ratio. Counselors are invaluable when they do their job well and she feels they are even more important at the elementary and middle school level. She is also concerned about equity among buildings and understanding the situation so she can communicate better with parents on this topic.

Dr. Sebring suggested meeting about this another time. She commented the district has worked very hard the last two years to establish equity in schools. The secondary schools in particular never had staffing formulas. A year ago when administration was looking at budget cuts, they also looked at adjustments in class sizes, electives being offered, etc. There have been adjustments in the schools and it impacts each school differently. Different schools qualify for different grants depending on the poverty rate or other grants they apply for, so that can affect the staffing ratio. It would be inaccurate to say there will be the same number of staff members at every school.

Ms. Buckton commented that the Board not considering the property tax rate was a disservice to the priorities of students and she hopes the Board continues to have that conversation during the next year.

Ms. Strong commented on the budget process for next year and stated the Board did give Dr. Sebring budget parameters to share with staff and they updated the Board regularly so the Board has had opportunity through this whole process to provide input. During the next budgeting process the Board can have more meetings if necessary and alter the budget parameters if they feel they have not had opportunity for input. The Board did give specific parameters and the Board did establish priorities. Ms. Strong asked which two high schools chose to add back Consumer and Family Science.

Dr. Sebring responded the associate superintendents had a work session with Connie Sievers today. In the add backs there are 10 positions in reserve and that is in under discussion right now to determine where it is most practical to add something back.

Item No. 4**Page 7 of 8**

Dr. Sebring commented that the state mandates every student earn credits in the core curriculum so this had to be considered when conversations were taking place on add-backs. This mandate reduces the number of slots that students have access to in their classes

Ms. Caldwell-Johnson commented that most of the questions she had have been answered with the exception of a couple. The Board may be scheduling some work sessions to address future budget issues. Ms. Caldwell-Johnson commented on the difficulty of the budget process and her preference would be to not cut any positions but given the economy, across-the-board cuts etc., that is not possible. She will vote to support the proposed budget recognizing next year the challenges can be even greater. The district needs to do as much as they can at this time to anticipate what the district will be facing next year. The budget process has to be very open and transparent in the future.

Mr. Murphy supports the proposed budget. He commented on preparing for the budget for next year. Academic needs are more demanding, and the budget process may be even more difficult. He stated he would be very interested in a discussion about a tax increase for next year. That issue would have to be the most transparent item because he has received many e-mails favoring a tax increase but also has received negative feedback. He recognizes the community is 64 percent free and reduced lunch. He appreciates community members that have come forward in support of district employees. Mr. Murphy commented the district needs to look at other funding sources. He commented that Dr. Sebring, Connie Boesen and Patti Schroeder have had conversations with legislators and these conversations need to continue.

Mr. Murphy expressed his appreciation to a North High student that came to speak and wanted to clarify to her that textbook money spent has no impact on teachers' salaries. He commented on school budgeting and different silos that money comes from and what it can be spent for. This is a discussion that needs to continue with legislators so districts can have more flexibility with spending. He commended the staff and everyone involved for their work on the budget.

Ms. Link asked about the timeline for employee notification on the status of their position.

Ms. Twyla Woods, chief of staff responded under normal circumstances there are a lot of staff issues going on this time of year. The Human Resources Staff has worked very hard trying to make sure individuals are contacted. The statutory deadline will be met, so by next Friday employees that are slated for layoff will be notified. The process will continue. Normally staff are told of their assignments by the end of May, but because of the nature of where the district is right now, this process will hopefully be expedited.

Item No. 4**Page 8 of 8**

Mrs. Jeanette Woods commented the painters were notified that June 30 would be their last day.

Mrs. Twyla Woods was not present for that conversation so she could not respond. She commented she would be available for questions any time.

Mrs. Jeanette Woods asked why every other position was looked at as an add back but the painters were told there was no chance of that.

Ms. Twyla Woods reiterated she could not respond because she was not present for that conversation.

Ms. Link commented that she and Ms. Buckton suggested the Board have a work session shortly after this process to discuss how the district will move forward and what could be done differently next year. She commented on educating the community and the transparency. Ms. Link feels the Board and district were very open and transparent about the process through public forums and meetings.

Ms. Boesen thanked everyone for the time they have contributed to this proposed budget. She believes the proposed budget supports the Board Ends. Ms. Boesen asked the progress of the school improvement grants and if they are awarded when could the district expect the money.

Dr. Sebring responded the district had just received information on the application process. She was unsure when the district would receive the funds. She is aware the state has been awarded the \$18 million. The district will receive guidance on the application process and hopefully will have those guidelines very soon.

Ms. Boesen reminded everyone that Board members and district administration are meeting with legislators and they will continue to meet to try to come up with ideas on alternative funds for our district.

Aye: Boesen, Caldwell-Johnson, Link, Murphy, Strong

Nay: Buckton, Woods

Motion carried.

Item No. 5**Page 1 of 1****Subject: PUBLIC HEARING: SALE OF 4001 SE 25TH STREET — STUDENT BUILT HOME****For: PUBLIC HEARING/ACTION****Contact: Gary McClanahan/Patti Schroeder Attachments: None**
(gary.mcclanahan@dmps.k12.ia.us; 242-7846/patricia.schroeder@dmps.k12.ia.us; 242-8527)

Issue: Sale of property at 4001 SE 25th Street, which is legally described as:

Lot 13 Easter Lake Plat 5

Superintendent's Recommendation: The superintendent recommends the Board hold a public hearing and approve the sale of the student constructed home at 4001 SE 25th Street for \$162,000.**Background:** Students in the home construction program built the house located at 4001 SE 25th Street. The home has been on the market for approximately two years. The potential purchaser and the district administration believe the price of \$162,000 is a reasonable price for the property given the current market conditions.

Iowa law exempts student constructed buildings from certain processes that school districts must follow when selling real estate. Specifically, Iowa Code Section 297.22 provides that a school district is not legally required to have a resolution to hold a public hearing nor is it legally required to publish the date and time of the public hearing prior to taking action to sell the student constructed building.

The interested buyer for the house located at 4001 SE 25th Street seeks to take advantage of the first time buyer stimulus money being provided by the federal government. In order to do so, the transaction is to be substantially completed by April 30, 2010. That is the reason this matter is being presented this evening as opposed to coming before the Board at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

Minutes

Ms. Boesen opened the public hearing. There being no speakers she closed the public hearing and Dr. Sebring introduced the recommendation.

Mr. Murphy moved to approve the sale of the student built home located at 4001 SE 25th Street. Second by Buckton.

Aye: Boesen, Buckton, Caldwell-Johnson, Link, Murphy, Strong, Woods

Nay: None

Motion carried.