

MORTON UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709

FEBRUARY 7, 2012

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Morton Unit School District 709 held February 7, 2012, at the Morton Education and Administration Center.

REGULAR MEETING –

President Tom Neeley called the regular meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Members present: Mr. Tom Neeley, Mrs. Joyce Kaiser, Mr. Clint Heinold,
Mr. John Applen, Mrs. Michelle Bernier,
Mrs. Michelle Kaeb, Mr. Tim Taylor

Reports –

Administrative –

School Highlights –

Dr. Kilpatrick noted that MAP testing took place in January. An inservice is being planned for this summer for Common Core Standards training.

Facilities Update –

Dr. Kilpatrick reported that bids will go out this week for the window lintels at Jefferson School. Bids for the new classrooms at the other three elementary schools will go out for bid next week.

Food Service Update –

Dr. Kilpatrick reported that the food service contract is up for bid this year. Mrs. Getz is awaiting approval from ISBE of the documents to put the contract out for bid. With the federal government's changes in the lunch program, the cost of lunches will increase.

School Facilities Sales Tax –

Dr. Kilpatrick reported that the county school districts have been pursuing interest in bringing the sales tax for school facilities to the ballot in November. It requires that districts representing 50% of the student population pass a resolution in support of the referendum. The group that is heading the process is asking that districts approve the resolution in February or early March so that all of the participating districts have time to organize a solid campaign. At this point, districts representing between 20-25% of the student population have approved the resolution. He explained that if the referendum is approved, each school district can define how their funds will be used. Funds must be used on building construction or to repay outstanding bonds. Based on student

population, Morton would receive approximately 1.5 million per year.

Freedom of Information Requests –

Dr. Kilpatrick reported that there have been no Freedom of Information requests.

President's Report –

Mr. Neeley reported that he and Dr. Kilpatrick recognized Nadine Wortstell earlier in the day. Mrs. Wortstell recently received the "One Classroom at a Time" grant of \$1,000 from WHOI-TV.

Mr. Neeley announced that all four elementary schools received the Academic Excellence Award from the State. He congratulated the teachers, principals, parents and students for the ongoing excellence in the classroom.

Mr. Neeley reported that he had recently received correspondence concerning our vocational, agriculture and music offerings. He will be sharing the correspondence with Dr. Kilpatrick. He also noted that it was rumored Tremont is starting an ag. program. Dr. Kilpatrick will be checking on the feasibility of a possible co-op with them. Mr. Neeley expressed the board's desire to find options for students interested in the agriculture field of study.

In response to Mr. Mallinson's request at a prior meeting, Mr. Neeley sought the board's approval to gather information on recording board meetings. All agreed to research the pros and cons and to explore the options. Dr. Kilpatrick will gather information including checking with other school districts that record meetings.

Dr. Kilpatrick reported that there had been an incident recently at Jefferson School with a student retrieving a ball from the street during recess. He and Ms. Grzanich will be researching possible barriers to prevent this from happening.

Discussion Items –

Board Student Policies Compliance Report –

Mr. Neeley reported that the Student Policies have been reviewed by him and Dr. Kilpatrick and have determined that the district is in compliance. He will sign the form and place it in the Master Compliance binder in the District Office. Dr. Teater explained the student discipline handbook procedure. After revisions are made each spring by administration and approval by a teacher/parent committee, the board reviews and approves the handbooks in May.

Action Items -

Strategic Planning/Community Engagement Charge and Consultants -

After discussion on the timetable for the Community Engagement process, it was decided to table this item until the next meeting.

Motion by Mr. Taylor, second by Mrs. Bernier, that the Board of Education table Action Item A until the next meeting.

Roll Call Vote: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

Approve Distribution Center Proposal –

Dr. Kilpatrick reported that a national wholesaler to agriculture and logistic/distribution companies is considering a site in Morton to build a 120,000 sq. ft. warehouse/distribution center. The developer experienced a financial gap of approximately \$150,000 due to soil conditions and consequently additional costs to remove the soil. He explained the project will include over \$6,000,000 in new construction and will bring 35-40 new jobs to the area. It will bring over \$113,000 in new property tax income to the community of which the district's portion would be approximately \$93,000. The school district is being asked to consider a 60% real estate tax abatement for two years to help close the financial gap. Economic Development Director Jennifer Daly was present and noted that even with the abatement, the district would realize more in taxes than what we are currently receiving for the vacant property.

Motion by Mr. Applen, second by Mrs. Bernier, that the Board of Education approve the 60% abatement of real estate taxes for the construction of the warehouse/distribution center as proposed for a period of two years.

Roll Call Vote: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

Consent Agenda –

Motion by Mr. Heinold, second by Mrs. Kaiser, that the Consent Agenda be approved as follows:

- Approve Suspension Reports for Filing
- Approve December Treasurer's Report
- Approving and Signing Minutes of the January 24, 2012, Regular Meeting

Motion by Mrs. Bernier, second by Mr. Applen, that the Board of Education return to regular session.

Roll Call Vote: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried. The board returned to regular session at 8:45 p.m.

Approve Closed Session Minutes –

Motion by Mrs. Kaiser, second by Mr. Applen, that the Board of Education approve the closed session minutes from the January 24, 2012, regular meeting.

Roll Call Vote: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

Mr. Neeley asked the board to delay their annual planning meeting until after the Administrator’s Retreat in June in order to include Dr. Hall. All agreed. The board will set a date at the next meeting for a brief Saturday morning meeting in the spring to review goals.

The board briefly discussed technology resources available at all of the buildings. Dr. Kilpatrick assured the board that the administrators do their best to balance the resources available with the needs of each building.

Adjournment -

Motion by Mr. Taylor, second by Mr. Applen, that the meeting be adjourned.

Voice Vote: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Clint Heinold, Secretary

Thomas Neeley, President