

MORTON UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709

October 15, 2013

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Morton Unit School District 709 held October 15, 2013, at the Morton Education and Administration Center.

REGULAR MEETING –

President Clint Heinold called the regular meeting to order at 7:18 p.m.

Members present: Mr. Clint Heinold, Mr. John Applen, Mr. Shaun Bill,
Mr. Tom Neeley, Mrs. Kelly Scarfe, Mr. Tim Taylor

Reports –

Administrative –

Freedom of Information Requests –

Dr. Hall reported there was one Freedom of Information request from Mr. Charles Farwell of Morton. Mr. Farwell requested all correspondence between board members, sellers, district employees and attorneys for the recent land purchase of 125 acres on S. Fourth Ave. The request was denied by Dr. Hall and the FOIA officer, Dr. Troy Teater for the following reasons – According to Illinois school code these types of requests are exempt from release if the records, documents and information related to real estate purchase negotiations have not been completed or otherwise terminated. Technically, the land purchase has not been completed, as a final vote will be taken by the Board of Education on November 5, 2013.

Jr. High Baseball Team Recognition –

Jr. High Assistant Principal, Chris Carter, announced that the Jr. High baseball team had just completed a 22 – 4 season and recently placed 2nd at the IESA State Tournament. He noted the boys performed well and represented Morton with honor and respect. They are great citizens and great teammates.

Coach Jesse Crawford reported that on Friday evening of the Pumpkin Festival, the baseball team volunteered time at the Pumpkin Grille Drive Thru. He introduced each player and the Board of Education congratulated them.

President's Report –

Mr. Heinold reported that the Board of Education met with the Jr. High teachers earlier in the evening. He noted the board's appreciation for the teachers' embracing the changes and new initiatives recently introduced.

Mr. Heinold asked Board members to share feedback they have received from the community concerning the land purchase. They shared that they have received mostly positive comments and many good questions. They agreed to continue to work to communicate information via the district website, Facebook page and with those they come in contact with in the community. Dr. Hall commended the Board for putting a 5-week window between the public announcement and the vote for approval.

Discussion Items –

2013 Auditors Report -

Dr. Hall introduced Chris Atkinson of CliftonLarsonAllen. The State of Illinois requires that the school district financial records be audited by an auditing firm. CliftonLarsonAllen has audited our books and provided a report to the Board of Education. Dr. Hall reported that the financial statements have been reviewed with the auditors and they have prepared the Management Discussion and Analysis as part of the report. Mr. Atkinson thanked the Board of Education for allowing his firm to work with the school district this year. He reviewed the funds and noted that state and federal funding was down slightly. Property taxes make up 79% of the district's income. Mr. Atkinson reported it was a very clean audit and there was nothing significant to report.

Action Items –

Approval of Rising Star District Indicators–

Dr. Teater explained the Rising Star process for the District. The Rising Star Continuous Improvement Plan is based on the evaluation of indicators that have shown, through scientifically based research, to promote effective educational programs. The process involves analyzing state and local assessment data and then applying the analysis to the assessment of the indicators. Two to three indicators are then identified as a starting point for improvement.

Plans are developed for improving each of the selected indicators. The plan involves defining how the indicator should look in the district, creating tasks, along with a timeline and a responsible person for completing each task. When the tasks are completed, and the performance on the indicator has been improved, another indicator is identified and the process repeats itself.

Dr. Teater noted that as part of the Rising Star Continuous Improvement Plan, the local school board must approve the district plan.

Motion by Mr. Taylor, second by Mrs. Scarfe that the Board of Education approve the Rising Star District Continuous Improvement Plan.

Roll Call Vote:

Yea 6

Nay 0

Motion carried. The board returned to regular session at 9:27 p.m.

Dr. Hall noted that Ms. Grzanich and ELL (English Language Learner) Coordinator, Bethany Scroggs, will be hosting an ELL Family Night on Thursday, October 17. They both will have a presentation on the District ELL program at the November 19 Board meeting.

Dr. Hall noted that Greg Prichard will have a presentation at the November 5 Board meeting concerning the swimming co-op.

Adjournment -

Motion by Mr. Appen, second by Mr. Neeley, that the meeting be adjourned.

Voice Vote: Yea 6 Nay 0

Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Bernier, Secretary

Clint Heinold, President