

## **MORTON UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709**

**March 31, 2015**

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Morton Unit School District 709 held March 31, 2015, at the Morton Education and Administration Center.

### **REGULAR MEETING –**

#### **Call to Order and Roll Call –**

President Michelle Bernier called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

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

#### **Reports –**

##### **Administrative –**

###### **Freedom of Information Requests –**

Dr. Hall reported there have been no Freedom of Information requests.

###### **Recognition of Girls 7<sup>th</sup> Grade IESA Volleyball State Champions –**

The Board of Education recognized the 7<sup>th</sup> Grade girls' volleyball team for their accomplishments throughout the season culminating with winning the state championship. Head Coach Mariah Bly and Assistant Coach Dawn Schielein commented that they knew this team would go far. They also thanked the parents for their support. President Bernier thanked the team for representing Morton and the school district well.

###### **MPTV Recognition –**

Dr. Hall noted that the volunteers and some district staff are a big part of the efforts to live stream/broadcast on MPTV. They were recently recognized at the Winter Sports Awards night at the high school. The MPTV crew includes: Camera/Tech – Bill Schock, Lynn Coverstone, Carol Jankowski, Hailey Hochstettler, Blake Hochstettler, Becky Christianson, Jeff Stephens, Janet Stephens, Barry Rapp and Scott Brown. Announcers – Craig Wright, Brian Gordon, Jonathan Farrell, Kirk Schick, Deidre Ripka and Lynn Rudin.

###### **PTO Reports –**

PTO presidents from Jefferson (Abby Kaufman), Morton Jr. High School (Shannon Killion) and Morton High School (Candy Walters) reported on activities that have taken

place this school year at their respective schools.

Dr. Hall thanked them for what their organizations do for the schools and for their support throughout the school year. She noted that the board will hear reports from the PTO's at Grundy, Lettie Brown and Lincoln Schools at the next board meeting.

**Facilities Update –**

Dr. Hall reported that demolition has begun at the high school on the outdoor athletic facilities. She noted that the Facilities Committee met recently with village officials and both have reached an agreement for off-street parking on Kay Street near the new tennis court complex. Plans are to include a 24-space parking lot and a sidewalk along Kay Street. Board members agreed to proceed with this plan.

A possible new exit out of the student parking lot on Jackson Street to line up with Kansas Avenue is in the planning stages, but village officials need to work with IDOT on this project, which would be completed at the end of the athletic facility renovation.

**Update from Unland Insurance – Risk Management –**

Mr. Afton Booth of The Unland Companies gave an overview of the company and explained its services and coverage for District 709. Services provided includes an annual review of coverage with the district administrative staff/business manager prior to renewal each year; annual safety presentations for the maintenance staff/summer workers; benefits consulting. Mr. Booth thanked the Board for allowing him and The Unland Companies to serve Morton School District.

**President's Report –**

President Bernier reported that the Labor Management met recently on March 18.

**Discussion Items –**

**2015-2016 Student Fees –**

Dr. Hall reported that the administration is recommending a slight increase in lunch prices for 2015-2016. No fee increases are being recommended for textbook rentals, technology fees, co-curricular activities, drivers' education, student parking, library fines, athletic gate receipts, I.D. replacements and Marching Band. The increase in lunch prices is due to the increase in food costs and the federal requirement that the district close the gap in the difference between its lunch prices and the federal reimbursement rate for free/reduced lunches. If approved, student lunch prices will increase by .05 cents.

Mr. Taylor asked Dr. Hall to research the possibility of student activity fees passing through the Community Foundation "Build 4 the Field" fund.

#### **Board Goals Discussion – Communication –**

Dr. Hall reviewed the Board goal of communication which is to provide open and meaningful two-way communication with all members. At the April 28<sup>th</sup> Key Communicators' meeting, she will focus on point 2 of the goal by offering a session on School Finance 101. Point 2 states:

- The district will continue to enhance and utilize communication through a variety of tools to promote transparency and understanding, with a focus on facilities and finance.

Dr. Hall emphasized she is always willing to meet with anyone seeking information concerning the school district.

#### **Board of Education Code of Conduct –**

President Bernier noted there are 12 points on the Code of Conduct for Board of Education members. The fourth point was reviewed this month. It states: "I will take no private action that might compromise the board or administration and will respect the confidentiality of privileged information."

#### **Purchase of Wheelchair Van –**

Dr. Hall reported that the district presently owns two buses that can be used to transport students in wheelchairs. The administration would like to purchase a wheelchair van to provide additional capability to transport wheelchair bound students on field trips and act as backup transportation for the two wheelchair buses. There have been instances during this school year when there have been mechanical difficulties with the wheelchair buses and parents have been asked to transport students.

A used 2012 Chrysler Town and Country van with a Braun side exit ramp is available for purchase from Sam Leman Chrysler Jeep Dodge for \$29,500. It has 23,400 miles and can accommodate two wheelchairs. As a result of lower than budgeted repair and maintenance expenses, there is room in the current year transportation budget for this purchase. Director of Transportation, Nancy Weigle, believes the lower maintenance costs are due to the new bus leases.

#### **Action Item –**

##### **Approve Authorization to Intervene –**

Motion by Mr. Neeley, second by Mr. Taylor that the Board of Education authorize Miller,

Hall & Triggs, LLC, to intervene in the proceeding before PTAB for the Morton Warehouse/G&D Transportation 2013 property assessment appeal.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

**Approve Intergovernmental Softball Agreement –**

Motion by Mrs. Scarfe, second by Mr. Taylor, that the Board of Education bring back from the table the discussion/approval concerning the softball agreement with Morton Park District and MGSA.

Voice Vote: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Heinold, second by Mrs. Scarfe, that the Board of Education approve the Intergovernmental Softball Agreement for the Birchwood Park Softball Complex.

Dr. Hall reported this agreement was drafted using the Intergovernmental Baseball Agreement for Westwood Park as a model. Appropriate revisions have been made to reflect the needs of the entities in the spring of 2015 and beyond. All parties involved have reviewed the agreement.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

**Approve Contract with Farnsworth Group –**

Motion by Mr. Neeley, second by Mr. Bill, that the Board of Education bring back from the table the discussion/approval concerning the contract with Farnsworth Group.

Voice Vote: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Applen, second by Mr. Bill, that the Board of Education approve the contract with Farnsworth Group for work on the softball facility at Birchwood Park.

Dr. Hall reported that in order to move ahead with construction drawings, bid documents and other work affiliated with the development and construction of the additional softball diamond at Birchwood Park for use by the Morton High School softball teams, the contract with Farnsworth Group must be approved.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

**Consent Agenda –**

Motion by Mr. Taylor, second by Mr. Applen, that the Consent Agenda be approved as follows:

- Approve Personnel Report
- Approve Overnight Trip – Varsity Baseball Team
- Approve Re-Employment of Professional Staff
- Approve the Minutes of the March 17, 2015, Regular Meeting; and the March 17, 2015, Closed Session Minutes.
- Approve Bills and Payrolls

	<b>Bills 3-20-15</b>	<b>Bills 3-27-15</b>	<b>Payroll 3-27-15</b>
Ed. Fund	\$104,128.55	\$19,097.00	\$440,569.28
Bldg. Fund	71,707.95	--	32,872.56
Trans. Fund	20,558.06	--	12,845.50
Payroll Accts. Pay.	--	--	392,222.02
Tort	221.00	--	--

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

**Closed Session –**

Motion by Mr. Bill, second by Mrs. Scarfe, that the Board of Education enter into closed session for consideration of appointment, employment, compensation, performance, or dismissal of employees, student discipline, purchase of property, litigation and/or negotiations. (5 ILSC 120/2 115 ILCS 5/18)

Roll Call Vote: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried. The board entered closed session at 8:28 p.m.

Motion by Mr. Applen, second by Mr. Heinold, 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 9:00 p.m.

Dr. Hall reported that she has just learned that the General State Aid is going to be cut this year. Morton School District will be losing just under \$25,000. That amount will be made up in the building budgets, as the principals generally spend around 96% of their budgets. She will be closely monitoring the situation.

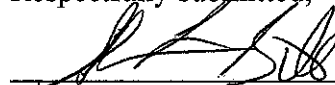
**Adjournment -**

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

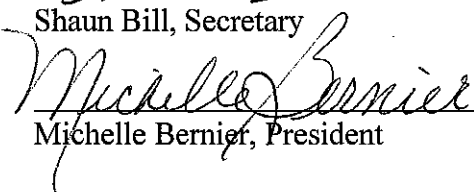
Voice Vote:                      Yea 7                      Nay 0

Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shaun Bill, Secretary



Michelle Bernier, President