

# **SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES**

Monday, August 28, 2017 5:45 PM

## **Delano Public Schools**

Independent School District #879, Delano Minnesota

### **1. Call to order**

A. Record of members present or absent

Members Present: A. Johnson, C. Black, A. Briesemeister, R. Depa, M. Larson and L. Seguin

Members Absent: C. Milano (arrived at 6:14 p.m.)

### **2. Approval of Meeting Agenda**

Upon motion by A. Briesemeister, seconded by R. Depa, the Board of Education approved the meeting agenda after removing item 12C, a Delano-Hennepin County MOU for foster care transportation. Motion passed 6-0.

### **3. Work Session**

Gary Olsen of Ehlers & Associates, Inc. presented the results of the bidding to refinance \$3.4 million in general obligation alternative facilities bonds from 2008. The board had discussed the matter in July, and at the time Ehlers had projected a savings about \$431,000 over 10 years, with the interest rate expected to fall from current levels between 4 and 4.625 percent. G. Olsen said the bidding was very competitive, with a total of 10 bids received. Typically Ehlers wants to see at least three bids, and hopes for five or six. In this case, the lowest bid from FTM Capital Financial Markets out of Memphis, Tennessee, had an interest rate of 1.74 percent, and no bids were above 2 percent. As a result, G. Olsen said the savings generated by the refinancing would be \$508,441.50, which is about double what Ehlers normally wants to see. Supt. M. Schoen asked if the district could keep making the same payments in order to pay the debt off sooner. G. Olson said that would have had to be arranged ahead of time, but that most districts set up the refunded bonds for the same time span. M. Schoen credited Business Manager Mary Reeder for being well prepared for the rating call, and thanked the city for providing good information. C. Black said that the district's high rating of Aa3 is confirmation that it is run properly.

M. Schoen explained that the MOU with Hennepin County can be approved next month, but that the district's legal counsel needed more time to review the document completely. A. Briesemeister asked if there would be any impact on students as a result of delaying the approval. M. Schoen said he did not believe any students were presently served by the arrangement, but the impact would be limited to simply delaying a potential reimbursement payment from the county.

Board members reviewed their recent retreat. M. Schoen said the facilitator was appreciative and complimentary, noting that all members were fully invested in the activities. Both M. Schoen and the facilitator thought the evening went very well, and M. Schoen said he appreciated the opportunity to be a participant rather than the facilitator. L. Seguin said the retreat was time well spent and that some good topics were brought up for discussion. A. Briesemeister agreed that it was good to have an outside facilitator, and said he was pleased that another retreat was being considered for later in the fall because there was much that could still be accomplished. C. Black said he appreciated the process the facilitator walked the group through, noting that some information could have simply been presented

much faster, but allowing the members to discuss matters and reach conclusions themselves was helpful. M. Schoen agreed that the facilitator shared good perspective at times, but that the group members generally came to similar conclusions after working through the issues, which was the intention.

Chris Rear of ICS Consulting discussed turnover dates for various areas of the secondary building ahead of the Sept. 5 starting date for school. The science area was expected to be one of the last turned over to teachers, but the handover was expected by the final days of August. C. Rear said the music, tech. ed. and restroom areas were largely complete. In response to a question from A. Johnson, C. Rear explained that there have not been any surprises on the mechanical side of the project. New boilers have been installed and water heaters were nearly operational. A. Johnson asked if previous concerns about heating and cooling would be mitigated by new equipment. C. Rear said that problem should be alleviated to an extent, but reminded the board that the mechanical projects were split over two years, so some upgrades will not occur until next year. He added that the new climate system will be tied together, while in the past some areas of the secondary building did not communicate with others, leading to temperature disparities.

In other facilities updates, C. Rear said that about 60 percent of the lunch room and commons would be complete in time for school, and the rest of the commons in front of the auditorium would be ready in October. That schedule was according to plan, and there would be plenty of seating for lunch. C. Rear said a temporary wall would be in place to protect students from the construction area. The digital commons was also expected to be mostly done before school. C. Rear added that the loading dock would not be ready until mid-September due to utilities issues and soil conditions, but M. Schoen said a contingency plan was in place to handle deliveries.

Board members discussed parking and traffic flow arrangements to accommodate student traffic and ongoing construction, including staff presence and blocked off areas. M. Schoen shared that a few last punch items are being completed at the elementary school and that some leaks have been fixed.

As for construction occurring during the school year, the new locker rooms should be complete in mid-October before the hockey season begins, and the new district office area is also scheduled for completion in December. Board members also discussed safety measures needed for the digging of the diving well, including the closing of the middle school entrance when the main secondary building entrance is open. The diving well project will likely necessitate the closing of the pool during the spring and summer of 2018, beginning in March. Other projects that will continue through the school year and into the summer of 2018 include, but are not limited to, the performing arts center and the expansion of the Tiger Activity Center.

M. Schoen said the new intermediate school remains on schedule, and perhaps a slightly ahead of schedule. The plan is to have it enclosed before winter arrives. Significant sheetrock work has already taken place inside.

M. Schoen shared that the campus turf projects are substantially complete. The first games have taken place on the fields, and L. Seguin said that Activities Director M. Lindquist has been pleased that the fields remain available for practice and play in wet weather. M. Schoen said that if recent heavy rains had fallen on the previous natural fields they would have been unusable. C. Milano asked how students can practice on the fields after hours since they are locked. M. Schoen said that at present use of the fields must be supervised by Community Ed., and pointed out that the fields had only recently been released by the contractor and the district was still in the process of determining how it would regulate use. C. Black said it would be a free-for-all if the fields were left open. C. Milano said she did not like that the fields were locked and asked how this was determined. A. Johnson said the board should let M. Lindquist work with the affected coaches on practice opportunities. M. Schoen said the district needed to strike a balance between making the fields a community place and guarding against liability issues.

M. Larson said he felt it was strange that the fields were locked, but acknowledged that the fields might draw extra traffic at present because they are a novelty. L. Seguin said fields in Rockford were locked every time she was there, and C. Milano said she had not seen those fields locked. A. Johnson said the district would need to decide which areas would be open to the public and when, and said that would be a process. R. Depa suggested that extra nets be added to natural fields for practice purposes. M. Schoen added that the district is in the honeymoon stage with the turf fields and it would take time to figure out usage policies. He added that the district has made a large investment in the fields, and wants to protect them and make sure they are used appropriately.

Upon motion by C. Milano, seconded by L. Seguin , the Board of Education called the meeting to recess at 6:56 p.m. Motion passed 7-0.

Board Chair A. Johnson called the meeting out of recess and to order at 7:13 p.m.

#### **4. Pledge of Allegiance**

#### **5. Program Review - Construction Update**

M. Schoen presented a construction update as both the program review and his administrative report. Projects completed to date were highlighted, and M. Schoen also provided updates regarding ongoing work. Completed work includes the expansion of the elementary school vestibule and cafeteria, the Community Ed. entrance and elevator, the two turf fields and the visitor side bleachers at Tiger Stadium, the new track, two additional tennis courts, asphalt pathways and better lighting – including pedestrian lighting, at the stadium. M. Schoen said the improvements have allowed the former football field to serve as much more than that, with stripes included for multiple sports, including lacrosse and soccer. Additional projects outside those covered by the bond funds have included the cement pad at the softball fourplex, the new scoreboard and sound system at Tiger Stadium, and new flooring in six rooms at the high school.

Projects scheduled for completion at the end of August included eight new science classrooms for grade 7-12 students, a new family and consumer science classroom, two redesigned special education rooms, a new business education and computer programming lab, new flooring in the music area and a redesigned music storage area, refurbished bathrooms, two redesigned special education rooms, and a new serving area in the cafeteria. Projects scheduled for completion in October include the new main entrance at the secondary school, the high school office area, new locker rooms and a boiler project. Completion dates further out include the district office in December, the intermediate school in May of 2018, and the performing arts center, diving well and more by August of 2018.

A. Johnson said the district has done its best to share additional information about the projects and their progress. She cautioned those who would be traveling on campus to be careful and keep an eye out for construction traffic and students. She asked for continued patience, said that the work completed so far looks good, and that the completion of work next summer will be an exciting time.

#### **6. Consent Agenda**

Upon motion by L. Seguin, seconded by A. Briesemeister, the Board of Education approved the Consent Agenda. Motion passed 7-0.

##### **A. School Board Minutes**

1. July 24, 2017
2. Aug. 7, 2017
3. Aug. 23, 2017

##### **B. Financial Affairs**

1. Current Budget Status with Year-to-Date Adjustments
2. Investment Transactions
3. Construction Bond Investment Transactions
4. Wire Transfers
5. Minnesota Liquid Asset Fund
6. Cash Report
7. Revenue Report by Fund
8. Expense Report by Fund
9. Expense Report by Program
10. Expense Report by Object
11. List of Bills Presented for Payment

**7. Resolution for Acceptance of Gifts**

**Upon motion by C. Milano, seconded by C. Black, the Board of Education approved the Resolution for Acceptance of Gifts. Motion passed 7-0.**

**8. Personnel Matters:**

**Upon motion by L. Seguin, seconded by M. Larson, the Board of Education approved the Personnel Matters. Motion passed 7-0.**

**9. Public Comment: School patrons are given the opportunity to address the school board regarding items that are not on the agenda. All patrons will be asked to state their name and address for the record. None.**

**10. Administrative Reports**

A. Superintendent

M. Schoen's report was combined with the program review outlined above.

B. Principals:

1. Mr. Voight

B. Voight thanked M. LaBeau, M. Lira Landa and the rest of the custodial crew for managing the extensive transition that is part of the construction projects. He said that staff, students and families would roll with the changes and emphasize safety while making learning the priority. B. Voigt said that one issue has been a shortage of lockers, with three grade levels including well over 200 students. The middle school was about 40 lockers short, but was able to use others from different parts of the building to make up the shortage. B. Voigt thanked the students who had been willing to share lockers before that solution materialized. He also shared information about the school open houses, class meetings and picture day.

2. Dr. Heil

S. Heil reported that the high school was being put back together in the final week before school, and that all were working hard to prepare for the start of classes. He also welcomed new staff members Amy Voss, Elise Boleman, Ethan Preisler, Sarah Hancock, Robert Stocker, Paige Entzi, Carley Spiese and Miriam Augsburg. S. Heil thanked the parents of choir students who had come in to help M. Augsburg get moved in. He said that all but 11 teachers are in new rooms at the high school, while more than 30 have moved. S. Heil provided open house information and invited all students to come and see where their teachers are located. The new room assignments are interdisciplinary, meaning there are no particular English or social studies wings, for example. S. Heil said a number of teachers have discussed the ability to do new things by reaching across curriculums.

S. Heil also reported on the parking situation and described the accommodations for students and staff. He complimented Stahlke for its help in getting the parking area properly marked, and asked all students and other drivers to be aware of their surroundings, drive slowly and stay off their phones while negotiating the parking lots.

In other construction-related items, S. Heil said that there would be plenty of room for students to eat lunch even though the commons area will not be complete until a few months into the school year. He added that athletics have started and that the turf fields have allowed competitions to take place despite wet weather. He wished Delano athletes the best of luck on their seasons.

In closing, S. Heil thanked M. LaBeau and the custodial crew for their hard work in preparing the building for classes. While they were doing strenuous work, S. Heil said that students would benefit a great deal. He encouraged students to take the example of construction workers and the amazing things they are doing this summer to attempt big things and see what they can accomplish during the school year.

### 3. Mr. Schuler

Unlike the other facilities, D. Schuler said the elementary school has largely been construction free this summer. He introduced new Assistant Principal Greg Hinker. G. Hinker addressed the board and said he was excited to be a part of the Delano community, and mentioned that his family is moving to town and his children will be students here. D. Schuler said G. Hinker's skill set fits well with what is needed at the elementary. D. Schuler also said that new lead custodian Lucas Esler has provided strong leadership and that the building is looking better than it has for a long time. D. Schuler added that the elementary has nine new staff members, including three brand new individuals and six with previous experience, which provides a good mix of experience among newcomers. D. Schuler said that the school has gained a total of 26 new students moving in this fall, and is at about 900 students total. He said that a large fourth grade class left and the kindergarten class was relatively small, but the overall enrollment news is good in that the number is higher than expected. D. Schuler also shared information about the upcoming orientation days, the first day of classes and the first PIE event of the year.

### C. Business Manager

M. Reeder informed the board that the audit starts Monday, Sept. 25. She also complimented the district's IT staff for their work during a difficult summer.

### D. Community Education Director

D. Johnson reported that the fall brochure had been sent off in the mail, and that registration is open for all programs except gymnastics. She highlighted a special event in the brochure hosted by Delano United, a community book read of "A Good Time for the Truth: Race in Minnesota." D. Johnson said

the editor and a contributing author would be at the Delano library on Oct. 7, and that a community discussion would take place before then on Sept. 23. D. Johnson also reported that there were 55 students in Wee Tiger Preschool, and that space remained available for both the 3-4 and 4-5 age groups. She added that ECFE classes begin with open houses on Sept. 25, and that student screening is taking place in September. Preparations were being made in the Tiger Kids Clubs rooms for the school year, and that anyone interested in using that service should reach out to Community Ed. D. Johnson also reported on participation in gymnastics and youth football, adding that the football program has implemented a heads up safety program that requires coaches to get certified in safe tackling and blocking, preparedness, cardiac arrest and proper fitting equipment. That training could provide some assurance for parents, she said. D. Johnson added that the Tiger Activity Center desk would be moving back to the Middle School commons like last year, and that the desk would assume its permanent location once the new entrance is open.

## **11. Board Reports**

### **A. MAWSECO (Board Minutes 8.22.17)**

A. Johnson reported that several specialized positions still need to be filled. If new staff with the appropriate specializations cannot be found in time for the school year, third-party sources will be used. That costs member districts more, but is what needs to be done to serve the students. A. Johnson said that hopefully two or three critical positions would be filled within the next few weeks.

### **B. Wright Technical Center (Board Minutes 8.1.17)**

A new executive director, Brian Koslofsky, was hired at the Wright Technical Center on Aug. 7, according to A. Briesemeister, and began his duties on Aug. 28. A. Briesemeister said it was a busy search process and the school was fortunate to get B. Koslofsky. He added that B. Koslofsky is excited to be a part of Wright Tech and to work with the member districts. A. Briesemeister added that summer work, including updating the phone system and installation of LED lighting for outside areas, shops and parking lots, had been completed. Additional cameras have also been put up for security in the parking and shop areas. Overall enrollment is steady, if not slightly up. Board members also discussed the possibility of touring the facility either in person or virtually.

## **12. New Business**

### **A. 2017-2018 Resolution for Membership in the Minnesota State High School League**

Upon motion by C. Black, seconded by R. Depa, the Board of Education approved the Resolution for Membership in the Minnesota State High School League. Motion passed 7-0.

### **B. Approve Resolution Awarding the Sale, Determining the Form and Details, Authorizing the Execution, Delivery and Registration, and Providing for the Payment of General Obligation Alternative Facilities Refunding Bonds, Series 2017A**

Gary Olsen of Ehlers explained that the action is similar to refinancing a mortgage to obtain lower interest rates. He said the 10 bids received were high, and that three to five bids had been expected, meaning there was strong competition to obtain low interest rates. As a result, G. Olsen said the actual savings will be about \$508,000 rather than the projected \$431,000, and taxes can be reduced in 2018-27. A. Johnson thanked Ehlers for the company's guidance and diligence through the process. Upon motion by M. Larson, seconded by C. Milano, the Board of Education approved the bond refunding. Motion passed 7-0.

## **13. Adjournment**

**Upon motion by L. Seguin, seconded by A. Briesemeister, the meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m. Motion passed 7-0.**