

Oak Park River Forest High School Board

September 24, 2015

Marilyn Cantisano, Observer

Present: Jeff Weissglass-President, Jackie Moore-Vice President, Steve Gevinson, Sara Dixon Spivy, Fred Arkin Tom Cofsky and Jennifer Cassell who attended the meeting via telephone.

Mr. Weissglass called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m. He announced the Budget for 2015-16 has been placed in Wednesday Journal August 19 and was on display for the required 30 days.

Introductory Reports: Hattie Green, student, said Homecoming had sold 1600 tickets. The halls of the school are all decked out. Dr. Steven Isoye, superintendent, reported on the accolades of many students...National Merit Semi-Finalist and commended students, Marching Band, Swimming and Diving and Football.

Consent Items:

All items were passed with a 6-0 vote.

Action Items:

There was a long discussion on approving MENTA contract for next school year. The finance committee passed it with a 2-1 vote (Cofsky dissenting vote). It follows a report presented in May 2015. Mr. Cofsky wanted the vote brought to entire board. He emphasized thinking about looking at the total plan for spending of resources and if this contract of service fit into total plan. MENTA is an educational service provider that works with districts across the country to provide flexible programming based on individual district, school, and student needs. These services are available as needed to both general and special educational students. Menta is starting a site in Oak Park. An internal study showed several students who could benefit by this program, especially general education students who have been suspended. These students could attend this alternative site, receive education and counseling services instead of staying home and attending the library program for an hour of instruction. VP Moore was especially questioning the need for this program since it seemed to be in conflict with the philosophy they are trying to instill in the school to provide more services for students within the walls of the school rather than sending them out for

services. She preferred the money be spent improving their internal programs. It was reported that this would be for only very specific and difficult cases some of which had already been identified. The motion was put to a voice vote. 5 yes, 2 no...dissenting votes Moore and Cofsky.

Discussion:

A long presentation was made regarding different options for funding the building of the new aquatic center (pool) including the design and timeline. In April the site was approved, and the cost is estimated to be \$37.5 million. William Blair Company presented options for funding and how each option will affect future debt and taxpayer bills. The impact of choosing the non-referendum or referendum bond options was explained and deciding to take the loan for 15 or 20 years. Another option is to take the money from the operating fund.

Design architects Legat Architects showed a sketch of the new facility with a secure bridge leading from the now existing weight room to the new structure. The timetable is 7/2016 demolition of the parking garage, 9/16 laying the foundation and 8/2018 Grand Opening.

President Weissglass said these are issues that need to be decided in October.

In conjunction with building of the pool there was a discussion on setting parameters of long-term facilities. President Weissglass proposed the board think in terms of a 5- year plan (which includes the pool) and prioritize other building needs, (about \$20 M in addition to the pool) along with a longer-term 10-year plan. With enrollment projected to be 3900, new spaces and classrooms will be necessary. Will an operating referendum be necessary? This is something the board needs to analyze.

President Weissglass proposed a special board meeting in October to discuss Long Term Facilities.

Board Member Sara Dixon Spivy brought up the recommendation that board meetings be audio recorded. All Board members agreed.

Student Discipline was discussed by Superintendent Isoye. They are looking at school climate, culture, philosophy and code of conduct. Parents, students and teachers will be involved. It will be looked at from multiple perspectives. Dr. Isoye recommended 2 Board members be involved in the committee and that there be an outside facilitator.

Graduation day will remain May 29, 2016

The meeting was adjourned at 10:57.