

REGULAR MEETING - BOARD OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOMERSET
December 21, 2009
7:00 p.m.

Board President Tim Witzmann called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Roll Call was taken. Members present were Tim Witzmann, Catherine Cranston, Marie Colbeth, Mike Connor, Robert Gunther and Marin Hansch. Absent was Brian Moulton.

Approval of Agenda

Colbeth moved, with second by Connor, to approve the amended agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Groups or Individuals Wishing To Be Heard

President Witzmann read off the rules for this portion of the meeting. No one came forward.

Positive Recognition

The board recognized Dana Carlson for her recent participation at State Honors Choir. Vocal Instructor Rachel Erickson introduced Carlson, stating she represented Somerset very well doing an excellent job at state level. After high school graduation Carlson plans to attend college for choral conducting and choral education. Colbeth presented Carlson with a certificate of recognition. Witzmann also thanked instructor Erickson for the positive things she has done for the music program, stating he is looking forward to the Dynamics performance at the upcoming Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB) education convention.

Witzmann called for a recess at 7:12 p.m. Meeting reconvened at 7:24 p.m.

Consent Agenda

Cranston moved, with second by Colbeth, to approve the Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval of Minutes of the Regular Session of November 16, 2009
- B. Approval of Minutes of the Special Session of December 7, 2009
- C. Approve payment of November/December Board Bills
- D. Approve hiring of Dawn Spafford as the District Census Taker for 2010 at a cost of \$2,500.00
- E. Support proposed WIAA Football Plan for 2010
- F. Approve Somerset Middle School Asbestos Removal Plan, March 15-17, 2010
- G. Approve installation of HVAC actuator units in the east wing of Somerset Middle School
- H. Approve coaching/advising assignments
- I. Approve hiring Angela McVitty as the elementary school computer lab aide for the 2009-2010 school year
- J. Approve hiring Cheryle Nelson as the 2-hour a day special education aide for the 2009-2010 school year

Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion

Governance Committee

Junior Kindergarten Policy IGAB: Connor stated the committee reviewed the policy and unanimously agreed to continue the Jr. Kindergarten program. Connor cited research supporting early childhood education, stating there are tremendous benefits to the program.

2010 WASB Delegate Assembly Resolutions: Connor said President Witzmann will participate at the WASB delegate assembly representing Somerset. Witzmann stated 14 resolutions were included in the handout and asked board members to review each of the 14 to discuss support or non-support of them. Several board members indicated difficulty supporting the resolutions without hearing their discussion at assembly. Board members said they trust Witzmann's judgment with the resolutions, and are looking forward to hearing him report back after the January education convention.

Facilities Committee

Middle school main breaker replacement project, December 29-30, 2009: Gunther reviewed committee considerations, stating the circuit breaker replacement at the middle school will take place after Christmas. Rosburg stated this will affect servers and phones district wide. Vendor anticipates completing the task in one day.

Information

Superintendent Rosburg reviewed enrollment numbers, stating the numbers are maintaining. Committee meetings tentatively slated for Monday, January 4, 2010 include Facilities Committee, Human Resources Committee, Business Services Committee and Teaching & Learning Committee. Rosburg stated a clarinet was donated to the music department, thanking the donor for their generosity.

Race to the Top (RttT): Superintendent Rosburg explained the “Race to the Top (RttT)” program, a \$4.35 billion dollar education reform program enacted as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Grants are awarded to states from the U.S. Department of Education through a competitive application process. A limited number of states are expected to receive awards. If a state does not apply, it will not receive any RttT funding. Rosburg stated this grant is an optional endeavor, and part of the process is signing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and putting the application together. The state will forward the MOU to the federal offices to determine if Somerset is eligible. With the RttT program, Somerset could be eligible for \$60,000 to start. Board members agreed to sign the MOU as long as the district has the option to opt out.

Board Report

CESA 11 Update: Cranston will participate on the CESA 11 search committee for a new director due to the resignation of current director Jesse Harness.

Community Involvement: Colbeth stated there are lots of opportunities and school activities happening – concerts, wrestling, and the middle school band and choir concert.

School Liaisons: Witzmann attended author Katie McKai’s presentation at the elementary school. Hansch attended the school holiday concert.

Curriculum and Instruction Report: Ron Berg, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, was unavailable for the meeting, however, a handout report was provided for board review. Cranston felt that the elementary school may be better off taking the MAPs test three times a year rather than just twice a year, stating instruction is very driven when teachers are able to assess in January. Wood said Somerset still participates in the WKCE assessments, making it three times a year students are tested.

High School Report: Student Council Report: Student board representative Johanna Smith was unavailable to report this evening, however, High School Principal Madden reported on various activities at the high school including fundraisers, graduation motto, prom, annual talent show and fundraiser for March of Dimes, and a fundraising campaign for the WI Leukemia/Lymphoma Foundation. Madden went on to recognize November student of the month recipients, thanking them and the high school staff for their positive support and efforts in this area. Madden then reported that high school instructor Eric Olson attended a Project Lead the Way (PLTW) seminar where the school district was recognized and awarded for excellence in technology and engineering education leadership. Madden congratulated the high school guidance counselors for their recent STAND grand award.

Middle School Report: Sara Eichten said the recent “penny wars” fundraiser raised over \$1,200 and was used to help five families through the Salvation Army. The recent middle school dance saw the largest attendance to date. St. Anne’s students were invited to attend as well. Profits from the dance went to playground funds. Rosburg stated tonight’s meeting was middle school principal Rick Lange’s last board meeting, and thanked Lange for all of his years on staff at the school district.

Elementary School Report: Elementary School Principal Cherrie Wood stated staff is reviewing school goals report cards, and parent feedback, as well as looking at changing descriptors for encore classes. Tomorrow the Kindergarten class will be doing dress rehearsal for Wednesday’s parent program. Also the third grade will be finishing a unit on immigration and will host a naturalization ceremony. On January 15th third graders will be doing their annual program as well.

Business Services and Operations: Director of Business Services and Operations Robert Avery was unavailable to report tonight, however, Rosburg stated attachments were provided for board review, and any specific questions should be directed to Avery.

Pupil Services: Director of Pupil Services, Darren Kern said the Gifted/Talented area formulated an advanced reading class for 6th grade students. ELL students will be involved in the annual Access testing time between now and February 15; results will be reviewed in spring. In special education early childhood three-year old numbers have been small compared to previous years. The department conducted a child-find activity this year and have seven referrals of new children. Kern stated the special education is good on staffing currently. This month there were 18 initial evaluation referrals; 90% of those usually qualify for service. Kern said Wisconsin released a new study on Autism; the study indicated a 46% increase in autism amongst elementary kids in the state.

Teaching & Learning Committee

Cranston moved, with second by Witzmann, to approve the 2010-2011 High School Course Offering Book. Motion carried.

Cranston moved, with second by Hansch, to approve the 2010-2013 Information and Technology Plan. Motion carried.

Facilities Committee

Gunther moved, with second by Witzmann, to approve an expansion to the middle school playground. Motion carried.

Gunther moved, with second by Hansch, to approve up-front district funds of \$33,730 to purchase playground equipment with reimbursement from playground committee solicited funds and grants. Eichten stated the Somerset Fire Department has volunteered to do the installation, worth \$1,797.00, bringing the funds needed to \$28,380. Several groups including Partners in Education (PIE) and Somerset Village expressed interest in donating funds to the middle school playground. The community playground committee has also applied for grants including the Anne Marie Foundation and Target. Student council is also raising money. Other fundraising endeavors include a possible middle school store, with proceeds going towards the playground fund and several dance fundraisers. Lange stated having the playground equipment will help to get students outside and more active. Gunther amended the earlier motion, with second by Hansch to approve up-front district funds of \$28,380 to purchase playground equipment with reimbursement from playground committee solicited funds and grants. Motion carried.

Special Session

Witzmann moved, with second by Gunther, to approve space solution using existing administrative offices for high school classroom, special education classrooms and special education offices. Colbeth asked Kern if the current district administration office space will work for special education space needs. Kern said the space would be adequate for special education classroom space. Motion carried.

Board reviewed document provided by attendees John Huenink and Rich Jacobson of Kraus-Anderson Construction Company. Huenink gave background information about the construction management (CM) process, stating the district will be very involved with the construction of a stand-alone building. Huenink stated one hundred percent of the savings from the CM process goes back to the district.

Witzmann moved to approve space solution for district office administration. There was no second, and the motion failed.

Real estate agent David Bracht provided updated information from the Collova space the district was looking at for possible off campus rental for administrative offices. Bracht indicated that, although the Collova building was in financial difficulty, Collova was not interested in renting the space, only selling it. Bracht said the district was not interested in purchasing the Collova space. Witzmann concerned about whether the administrative offices should be moved off campus, and asked Rosburg how the schools would be affected. Rosburg stated many teachers and

support staff, as well as parents, students and vendors, visit the administrative offices, and it would be a challenge for those groups if the office was moved off campus. Rosburg stated having the district administrative offices off campus could work, but is inconvenient and is not the only option. Witzmann discussed the difference in costs between rental and construction of a stand alone building, and felt keeping administrative offices on campus was the best solution.

Rosburg provided a document from Derrick Construction Company depicting several cost options for a stand-alone building on campus. Rosburg stated the cost of a stand alone building could be kept low as the quality would not need to be the same quality of the school buildings. Rosburg stated if the board decided to go with one of the stand-alone structures as optioned by the handout from Derrick, Kraus Anderson could help the district accomplish that. Witzmann stated the district would need to move quickly to make space accommodations happen by the 2010-2011 school year. Huenink was asked how much time he could put solution options together. Huenink felt he could provide a stand-alone building construction process within the next thirty days. He stated bidding could be done in April, with construction completed by fall. Connor stated the district is looking for the most economical solution in the short term to accommodate space needs, and felt adding on to the school would create a domino affect with core facilities becoming inadequate. Colbeth felt the board should concentrate on a stand-alone building to accommodate two classrooms, with alternative education coming in at night, and have administrative offices off campus. Witzmann stated the board needs to determine tonight what the space solution will be. Some board members were concerned that a stand-alone building would cost over \$1 million. Huenink said it is Kraus Anderson's job to keep the building within the district's budget. Witzmann asked members what a separate, stand-alone building would contain, keeping in mind that the immediate need is 6,000 square feet and establishing a budget for that. Members discussed the need for space for early childhood and Jr. Kindergarten classrooms, special education, and alternative education.

Witzmann moved, with second by Cranston, to approve utilized funding from the district's fund balance in an amount not to exceed \$1million for selected space solutions. Motion carried.

Witzmann moved , with second by Gunther, to approve space solution for elementary classrooms which will include Jr. Kindergarten and Early Childhood as well as district office administration offices, in a stand- alone building. Board discussed the alternative education program as an optional item to this motion. Motion carried.

Cranston moved, with second by Hansch, to approve Kraus-Anderson as the district's construction management (CM) company for the delivery process for the space solutions for 2010-2011. Motion carried.

Cranston moved, with second by Gunther, to adjourn at 9:36 p.m. Motion carried.

Tim Witzmann, President

Catherine Cranston, Clerk