

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOMERSET
Regular Board of Education Meeting
October 29, 2007

The Regular Session of the Somerset Board of Education was called to order in the High School Instructional Media Center by Board President Allison Klis at 7:05 p.m. Other members present: Marie Colbeth, Sharon Germain, Brian Moulton, Tim Witzmann, and Michael Connor. Catherine Cranston was absent.

Witzmann moved, with second by Germain, to approve the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

President Klis opened the meeting to groups or individuals wishing to be heard. Mary McComb stepped forward informing the board that she had been disappointed to learn that the district is charging facility use fees for use of the school building. She stated that she has been holding Girl Scout meetings in the school buildings in the past but has not been told there is a fee charge until recently. She said her biggest frustration was that there was no set fee schedule for building use. She said she was told to make an offer, but was concerned that there was no accountability for those funds. She would like to see a fee schedule finalized and made public. Klis stated they would look into this situation more at an upcoming Facilities Committee meeting.

In honor of National School Bus Safety Week, the Safe-Way Bus Company was recognized by the Board of Education for their dedicated service to the Somerset School District. Several Safe-Way employees attended the meeting and shared their experiences and gratitude with the Board. Rosburg thanked the drivers for keeping the students safe on their way to and from school. He introduced Safe-Way owner/operator Dan Stiles, who had all of the bus drivers introduce themselves.

The Board also recognized State Cross Country Participant Cambrya Belter for her recent participation in state cross country. Witzmann presented Belter with a certificate and stated that participating at state level is a testament to Belter's will and drive to succeed.

President Klis recessed the meeting at 7:16 p.m. President Klis reconvened the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Germain moved, with second by Witzmann, to approve Items V. A-K of the Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval of Minutes of the Regular Session of September 17, 2007 of the School Board
- B. Approval of Minutes of the Special Session of September 24, 2007 of the School Board
- C. Approve payment of September/October Board Bills
- D. Approve Youth Options Applications
- E. Approve recommendation of snow removal bid contract to Belisle Excavating for the 2007-2009 season
- F. Approve winter coaching assignments for the 2007-2008 season
- G. Accept resignation of Crossing Guard Christine Leyden
- H. Approve hiring Special Education Aide Kathryn Pike
- I. Approve the hiring of student Senior Tyler Dullea as a Crossing Guard
- J. Approve the hiring of Curriculum & Instruction/Technology Department Secretary Lisa Wolff
- K. Approve the 2007-2009 Teacher Contract Agreement

Motion was carried unanimously.

Connor provided an update on the recent Governance Committee meeting. He stated that the committee reviewed a proposed policy on K-12 virtual school. Ron Berg and Shawn Madden gave a general presentation on this subject, and will come back to the Governance committee at a future

meeting date with a detailed presentation for the first reading to be considered. Rosburg stated that WASB will notify the district on policy changes which the Governance Committee will meet on next month to discuss. Witzmann asked what the timeline was for the virtual school. Rosburg stated that the district would like to formally start by second the semester this year (January, 2008). The proposed policy will come back with a second formal reading for the board members.

Germain told the members that a group was being formed to discuss growth in the Somerset area; the group was having its first open meeting on November 7, 2007 from 11:00 a.m. through 2:00 p.m. at the River's Edge to discuss what Somerset may look like years from now, and how to best shape this fast-growing area for the future. Interested parties were encouraged to attend.

District Administrator Randy Rosburg reviewed the enrollment data as of October 26, 2007, which showed 1580 students. He also stated tentative committee meetings on Monday, November 5, 2007 will be Governance at 5:00 p.m., Teaching & Learning at 5:45 p.m., and Facilities at 6:15 p.m.

Director of Pupil Services, Darren Kern, reported that the Gifted Talented students are involved in Destination Imagination competition groups. Nine teams from the Somerset School District will participate this year; he stated Somerset normally has two teams each year for this event. In November, Gifted-Talented students will focus on engineering projects. Kern stated that his report for the special education portion of the meeting was to be shown via DVD through the web to show board members thematic lessons that some of the special education students will be learning, however, the DVD web was unavailable to them at this time. Kern went on to say that the thematic lessons the students are working on have incorporated motor skills, sciences, social pieces, math, and music. Kern stated that elementary ELL students are working hard on sentence structures including contractions, color words, writing paragraphs in English on items such as the State of Wisconsin and the Mayan Aztecs. Klis asked Kern if he had any updates on space accommodations. Kern stated that the special education enrollment numbers continue to grow, but the complexities of each student varies. Witzmann asked if space for the special education area has increased. Kern said that it has in the past.

Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Ron Berg, reported that he will be attending a CESA seminar, along with guidance counselors, to implement the careers piece for the curriculum. He stated the Smart Boards Pilot Project training was underway and going well. Berg also stated the new MAPs (Measures of Academic Progress) testing at the high school has been completed, while elementary and middle schools were currently still testing. He mentioned that staff have indicated they were impressed with the MAPs product.

High School Principal, Shawn Madden, reported on high school enrollment numbers. He stated that space accommodations were made last summer for special education students. Considerations and possible solutions have been discussed at length for space, equipment and staffing needs. Madden also thanked the high school staff for their help with the new high school "Student of the Month" program. He said it has been a wonderful incentive for students. Madden then introduced high school teachers Heidi Haugen and Kathy Brakke to discuss the environmental thematic project that high school students are working on. Rosburg stated that high school staff had asked to bring this presentation forward to the board members so that the board would know how they are supporting the strategic plan. Witzmann said he was happy with the high school's effort, which will have a positive impact on the area.

Hanna Newman, Student Council Representative, reported that the Senior Class has completed their fundraising campaign and raised over \$1,500. She said the Junior Class has finished their fundraising campaign as well with nearly \$2,000 in sales. The Freshman Class will be turning in their orders soon for their fundraiser. As part of the environmental theme, Newman said that Student Council representatives have been composting along with the high school Biology classes. She also indicated that the student council is currently looking at holiday plans.

Middle School Principal, Rick Lange, reported on space accommodations. He stated that there has been some shifting around of special education classes and scheduling to accommodate increasing enrollment of special education students. Lange stated that next year it is anticipated there may be five sections in all grade levels for the first time at the middle school. He stated that additional class sections will adversely affect space for encore sections. Witzmann asked about projected enrollment numbers; Lange stated that, unless the enrollment numbers level off—and based on past projections—there will be more students enrolled at the middle school next year.

Elementary School Principal, Cherrie Wood reported that the elementary school is now at 700 students. Wood stated that most of the offices or rooms that have been intended, or were being used for other areas, have been turned into classrooms to accommodate the increasing student enrollment. She also mentioned that class sections may continue to grow. Past history indicates there could be 140 students in Kindergarten next year, or seven Kindergarten sections. She stated that, in addition to the Kindergarten class growing, there may be a need to hire another Jr. Kindergarten teacher for the next school year. She stated that space accommodations off campus may need to be looked at with possibly moving the 4th grade class off campus. There were other building concerns as well, including the need to upgrade the current security system, and the need for an additional copy machine. Wood said that all of the elementary students have been very busy with a variety of different projects since the start of the school year. She stated that 3rd grade students spend an entire day with Somerset Fire and Rescue and 1st Responders as part of the classroom's thematic unit. She said the students had a great time spending the day with Somerset's emergency responders.

Witzmann spoke on behalf of the facilities report and said that a possible referendum question for space was discussed at the Facilities Committee meeting. After some discussion on space needs at all three of the district's buildings, Witzmann moved, with second by Moulton, that the Board of Education move forward with placing a referendum question, yet to be determined, for space accommodations on the April 2008 general election ballot. Motion carried unanimously. Witzmann stated it became obvious during meeting discussions that all of the district's school buildings are becoming full. He said whatever decision is made now to correct building problems will not be timely enough to correct the current or near future space concerns, and that the district will need to deal with short-term space problems now. Klis stated she wanted to be sure that community involvement in the process not be skipped, as the district has had community involvement in the past. Witzmann agreed he would like to see the community have every opportunity to be heard. Members then discussed best ways to inform the community of growing space needs. Connor felt the district needs to do a better job of informing the community with the current needs of the district, and especially the elementary school's current lack of space. He said St. Croix County continues to grow, even while the economy is not doing as well. Germain felt the community may want the board to make some decisions based on the figures they've already seen. Moulton agreed with Connor, stating that while another elementary building is needed, the board must look into doing something now. He felt it would not be a good idea to move fourth grade classes off the premises.

Witzmann reminded members that there is a need to accommodate all three buildings now, not just the elementary building. Board members continued to discuss other alternative learning options available to handle current space problems including the Youth Options Program, virtual school, etc. as space relievers. Witzmann stated the Facilities Committee will have an intense meeting schedule, with approximately three meetings per month to resolve the space situation. He hoped that other board members will attend the committee meetings as well.

Business Manager, Jan Carlson, reported on the current cash flow and budget report. She also reported on today's bid results for short term borrowing. She said the district sent out bids to eleven companies and received three bids. Bankers Bank out of Madison was the bid winner, where they provided a lower rate this year than what the district received at last year's 3.82 rate. Colbeth moved, with second by Witzmann, to approve the short-term borrowing bid from Bankers Bank, Madison, in the amount of \$700,000 at an interest rate of 3.6%. Motion carried unanimously.

Board members then discussed the budget; Colbeth moved, with second by Witzmann, to approve a tax levy as calculated with a mill rate of 7.75%, or .00993, for a total levy amount of \$7,859,637. Motion carried unanimously. Witzmann stated he would like to see an explanation of the real affect of the state budget and what the impact is to the district with regard to the budget's late settlement. Rosburg explained that the state budget was due to be completed on or before July 1, 2007. He said that the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) told school districts to use the 2006/07 budget amount until the current budget was passed. Members also learned that the state will be putting a lottery credit in place. Local tax payer may see a reduction of approximately \$96.00 on taxes due to the credit. Discussion continued regarding budget concerns and showing fiscal responsibility. Some members expressed concern about some of the facilities areas (such as the middle school food service kitchen needs) being overlooked to the point of insufficiency. Rosburg cited some of the figures provided by SDS Architects with regard to replacing footprints within the middle school food service area, etc. He said a board motion for a referendum would take out about \$300,000 that could be used towards facilities replacement/projects. He asked the members to consider which would be more cost effective—a referendum question or operational dollars. He said he did not ask the question to confuse them, but to help them when making their decision. Board members discussed that the district had not levied to the full amount in over two years.

Motion by Germain to move into closed session at 9:29 p.m.

Allison Klis, President

Sharon Germain, Clerk