

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOMERSET  
December 17, 2007**

President Allison Klis of the Somerset Board of Education called the meeting to order in the District Office Board Room at 6:00 p.m. Members present included Allison Klis, Brian Moulton, Marie Colbeth, Catherine Cranston, Sharon Germain, and Tim Witzmann. Mike Connor was absent.

Superintendent Randy Rosburg introduced Jim Murray from Virchow Krause to report on the school district's 2007 Audit Report. VK audits 12 other school districts in addition to Somerset. Mr. Murray mentioned the audit was performed with a new accounting model known as "Gasby 34." He stated the school district is doing well financially, noting the short-term note has been paid down, reflecting that the district has had enough operating capital. Murray suggested the district consider an actuarial study to determine post employment benefits as it nears the 2009-2010 school year; he said some districts have already hired firms to help with that concern, stating whatever the liability is can be amortized up to 30 years. Murray also reported that Internal Controls language will be modified a bit from what is currently before the board as a result of new audit standards. He noted major control points need to be documented, stating VK could provide a number of Excel spreadsheet templates for documenting control points. He said using the templates to find weaknesses and putting controls on them is best for the district. Bank reconciliation is going better with the district's new accounting software, stating that reconciliations need to be tied to the general ledger. Murray stated it is crucial for the district to have checks and balances through every account at the end of the year to avoid material journal entries; he also suggested the district minimize adjustments. Witzmann asked where Murray felt the district fell with regard to size compared to other districts. Murray said the district is approaching mid-size.

Director of Pupil Services Darren Kern introduced school staff Pat Edgar, Laurie Lasure and Jessica Olson to demonstrate a patented amplification system by Lightspeed; two systems were recently purchased with a P.I.E. (Partners in Education) grant award and special education funds. Ms. Lasure stated the amplification system would provide a way for all students to be able to hear their teachers much better since the amplification system distributes sound equally throughout the classroom. Ms. Olson and Ms. Edgar demonstrated how the system worked. They stated results of the amplification system from a student survey were very positive. Board members asked Kern and the group to keep them informed on continued classroom use of the amplification system.

President Klis then moved to the groups or individuals wishing to be heard portion of the agenda. None came forward.

High School Vocal Music Instructor introduced Johanna Smith as the State Honors Choir participants for positive recognition; High School Band Instructor Andrew Emerson introduced Katie Carlson and Allie Butler as the State Honors Band participants. Certificates were given in recognition of their accomplishments. The meeting was recessed at 7:25 p.m. for refreshments.

President Klis called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

Colbeth moved, with second by Witzmann, to approve the following Consent Agenda items:

- A. Approval of Minutes of the Regular Session of November 19, 2007 of the School Board
- B. Approve payment of November/December Board Bills
- C. Approve hiring of High School Health Care Provider Patricia Schachtner, 7/hrs./day student contact days
- D. Approve resignation of Alternative Education Teacher, Karen Vermillion
- E. Approve Winter Coaching Assignment
- F. Approve SDS Contract Agreement for study of Somerset Schools space needs
- G. Approve hiring of Dawn Spafford as the District Census Taker for 2008 at a cost of \$2,325.00
- H. Approve Facilities Use Fee Schedule
- I. Approve Support Staff 2007-2009 Agreement

Motion passed unanimously.

Tim Witzmann reported that—at the direction of the full board—the Facilities Committee has been looking at space options for a referendum question. Witzmann felt the Facilities Committee was moving forward in coming to a referendum option or options to present to the board at its January meeting. He stated that the committee looked at melding together demographics with options over a 10-year timeline, while working with an enrollment number of 2,300 students over ten years. He stated using this enrollment figure, though conservative, would not put the district at risk for over-building. Witzmann said SDS Architects had presented the Facilities Committee with various build options; those options which the committee did not feel were a good fit for the district were eliminated. He said because of enrollment growth at both ends of the elementary and high school scales, the Facilities Committee focused on Option E2, which includes a new high school building to accommodate 700 students, and an addition to the elementary school. Witzmann stated the committee's presentation to the full board at the January meeting will make clear why other options were disregarded. Board members discussed issues including consequences of not building out far enough into the future, constituents' concerns with property taxes, the current state of the economy, and the district's struggle to continue to provide quality education in the face of rising classroom sizes and dwindling common space areas. Board members voiced additional areas of concern regarding short-term solutions at the elementary building, including use of portables, off-site areas, and elimination of programs.

Rosburg reported the Wisconsin State Education Convention is scheduled for January 22 through January 25, 2008; board delegate representative is Sharon Germain. Resolutions will be brought back to the January BOE meeting.

President Klis reported that the Governance Committee has been working on board liaison guidelines. She assigned the following board members as school liaison representatives: Moulton at the high school, Connor at the middle school, and Cranston at the elementary school. Klis stated an alternate for the elementary school may be needed. She also asked members to contact her if their schedules do not fit with their assignments.

Rosburg reported on current student enrollment numbers. He stated there had been movement at different grade levels, but total enrollment numbers remained the same for two months. He reported the next board committee meetings scheduled for January 7<sup>th</sup> include Business Services at 5:00 p.m. to discuss funding and mill rates, and Facilities at 6:00 p.m. to discuss budget and long-term space solutions. Facilities Committee will meet again on January 14<sup>th</sup>.

Rosburg then reported on the district technology pilot program project, stating two different groups of nine teachers working with smart boards and tablet pc's were formed. He said the groups spent half a day meeting with IT Manager Ryan Sicard and the district's media specialists to discuss progress of the project. Rosburg will share their feedback at a future board meeting.

Colbeth reported on two-way communication goal, stating that the high school's coffee house entertainment was very nice, but not well attended as there were many other events scheduled for that evening. Board members discussed the importance of attending as many school events as possible.

Student Council Representative Hanna Newman reported on current high school activities including fundraisers with Sophomores raising \$1,200, Freshmen raising over \$2,000, and Juniors raising \$1,775.00 with their campaigns. She stated Juniors have also been meeting each week to discuss upcoming prom plans. The prom committee continues to research prom banquet locations. Student Council is sponsoring a food drive for Somerset's Grace Place. Senior representatives have been looking at suggestions for their class motto, song, colors and flowers, and hope to vote on those early next month. Cystic Fibrosis benefit dance to be held on Saturday, January 5<sup>th</sup>; three area bands have agreed to perform at the benefit.

High School Principal Shawn Madden reported on buildings goals, stating high school staff had reviewed the building goals and objectives at a recent high school faculty meeting. Colbeth asked what is happening with regard to staff at alternative education. Madden stated aide Vonda Johnson, along with a substitute, is currently working with students until an instructor could be hired. He said the program has gained some students and enrollment for alternative education is currently at 12 students.

Middle School Principal Rick Lange reported the middle school's building goals were included in the board packet for board review. Klis stated she liked seeing the completed items pointed out on the sheet.

Elementary School Principal Cherrie Wood stated the elementary building goals were also included in the board packet, and that elementary staff have been doing numerous action steps to help reach those goals. She said elementary staff continues to work on goals all year long, making a positive impact on the students.

Business Manager Jan Carlson reported on finance and budget, stating that the district received special education aide funding and aide for the lunch program. She also stated her office has been working on setting up account functions in the new Alio software, and that administrators will soon be receiving monthly reports for their departments.

Director of Pupil Services Darren Kern reported that overall enrollment numbers in special education have not changed, however, 20 students are currently in the initial 60-day long assessment process. He said it was difficult to predict how many of these students will qualify for services, but even if only half qualify, will bring enrollment to over 200 special education students in the program. Witzmann wondered if the enrollment report could be expanded to view growth on a monthly basis. He asked if additional staff would be needed to compensate for the growing special education numbers. While Kern stated additional staff may be needed, however, due to the nature of the student's disability it is very difficult to say what type of future staff coverage will be needed until the student's assessment was complete.

Director of Curriculum & Instruction Ron Berg reported on the district alternative assessment tests stating the special education population receives a different assessment test than the general student population. The WAA (WI Alternate Assessment) test will be administered in January. Next year this test will be administered in November along with the general assessment tests.

The 2008-2009 Somerset High School Course Offering booklet received its 2<sup>nd</sup> reading. Klis motioned to approve the 2009-2009 Somerset High School Course Offering booklet, with second by Germain. Motion approved unanimously.

Title 1 Parental Involvement Policy IGBC-R received its 2<sup>nd</sup> reading. Germain pointed out only change to policy had been in item #8 to comply with state law. Germain motioned to approve the Title 1 Parental Involvement Policy IGBC-R with second by Moulton. Motion carried unanimously.

Title 1 Student Selection Policy for Somerset School District Proposed Policy #IGBC-R received its 2<sup>nd</sup> reading. Board was informed that, due to federal law, this former procedure is now being made a policy. Germain motioned to approve Policy IGBC-R with second Witzmann. Motion carried unanimously.

Virtual School Students Proposed Policy #IIBH received its 2<sup>nd</sup> reading. Motion to approve Virtual School Policy IIBH by Germain with second by Witzmann. Colbeth felt policy may be too vague. Rosburg said virtual school was the topic addressed at a recent CESA meeting, where the proposed policy for virtual school was considered acceptable. He noted Somerset schools looked to proceed with a policy similar to what other area districts have in place for their virtual schools. Rosburg also stated that, as long as the coursework stays within the state and because all district teaching staff is Wisconsin certified, the district would remain within virtual school policy. He explained out-of-district enrollment for virtual school would be considered open enrollment which is not allowed for Somerset's virtual school. Motion carried unanimously.

Board members discussed proposal to a change in procedure with regard to the posting of Facilities Committee meeting minutes and agendas on the district's web site. Members felt the Facilities Committee minutes and agenda should be posted since a school referendum is a large concern for the community, and posting of Facilities Committee minutes and agendas would be a good way to keep community informed. All Facilities Committee minutes, however, will include a disclaimer stating the document is a draft and not considered an official board document until full board action is taken. Motion to post Facilities Committee meeting minutes and agenda on the district web site by Cranston with second by Germain. Motion carried unanimously.

The Facilities Committee requested approval to hire Vonasek & Schieffer as the district's General Contractor contingent on a passed referendum. Colbeth questioned why the general contractor would not be put out to bid. Witzmann said that the district has had a long-standing relationship with the general contractor as well as SDS Architects. He asked the board to look over a handout summary of project construction delivery methods, and explained the pros and cons of each. Witzmann said the Facilities Committee, after review of the various construction delivery methods and discussion with SDS Architects, felt the negotiated general prime was the best fit for the district. SDS suggested having a general contractor come in earlier in the project would assist the district with putting tighter numbers on the referendum question; therefore, Facilities Committee members felt the district's best interests would be served by V&S. Motion to approve Vonasek & Schieffer as the district's general contractor contingent upon a passed referendum by Witzmann, with second by Moulton. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion to adjourn at 8:55 p.m. by Colbeth, with second by Witzmann. Motion carried unanimously.