

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF BELOIT**  
**December 20, 2011**

The Board of Education held its regular meeting on December 20, 2011 at the Kolak Education Center in the Board Room. President Scharmer called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

Members Present: John Acomb, Nora Gard, Missy Henderson, Tia Johnson, Michael Ramsdail, Shannon Scharmer and John Winkelmann. Also present: Steve McNeal.

Ramsdail moved approval of the agenda. Seconded by Henderson. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.

Acomb led the group in the pledge of allegiance.

Johnson announced upcoming activities in the district.

Badger recognized the members of the Beloit Memorial High School Lady Tide and coach Kim Orr. The team has had another consecutive year of national academic honors. Coach Orr also shared season accomplishments. Badger also recognized the City of Beloit Fire Department and Chief Brad Liggett. Recently, the fire department partnered with the district to offer OSHA certification for students.

Scharmer opened up the podium for citizens to speak on items not on the agenda. No one came forward.

McNeal presented updated information on the proposed referendum. He covered background information, physical plants, educational advantages, financial cost and savings, and plans for retired buildings. He explained how the plan was developed and changed with every presentation made to the community. He then explained the referendum plan in terms of the physical plant. He explained the lunch preparation and serving areas, gymnasiums, grade configuration and location of intermediate schools. He then explained the high school pool portion of the referendum, explaining the cuts and revisions made to lower the cost but still providing a regulation pool for hosting conference meets and competitions. He explained the need for replacing the tennis courts and the plan to relocate them. He also explained the relocation of the fitness center from the current classrooms to the current pool location. McNeal shared information about the future of district owned buildings.

Lynée Tourdot and John Humphries explained the educational advantages of the proposed referendum. Advantages include alignment of expertise, collaborative opportunities, fewer transitions, higher parent involvement, students in one location for more years.

Janelle Marotz explained the cost of the proposed referendum. She explained the impact on the average taxpayer in Beloit. She then reviewed the cost savings in rent, utilities, reduction in personnel, facility and building maintenance, property services, technology, transportation, and staff travel.

Board members asked clarifying questions on the information presented. Questions clarified pool use, class sizes, school and student relationships, fewer transitions, building sizes, kitchen repairs, pool renovation, building a new pool, fund 50 food service, and borrowing less funds than \$70,000,000.

Gary Witzack, 2127 Shopiere Road, asked about the interest on the referendum, class size and location of the intermediate school no longer proposed at Morgan.

Student board members were unable to attend the meeting. Ramdail read the submitted report about activities.

Winkelmann reviewed the topics of the December Finance, Transportation and Property Committee meetings.

Acomb reviewed the topics of the December Curriculum and Instruction Committee meetings.

Johnson reviewed the topics of the December Special and December Regular Policy and Personnel Committee meetings.

Ramsdail moved approval of the consent list: 1) Bills, Payroll and Cash Position Statement; 2) Special Board Meetings of November 22 and December 6; and 3) Regular Business Meeting of November 22, 2011. Seconded by Henderson. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.

Winkelmann moved approval of the tuition agreements for Easter Seals Autism Therapeutic School-Rockford, IL. Seconded by Ramsdail. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.

Acomb moved approval of the new courses and course changes for 2012-13 in the Physical Education Department, Mathematics Department, English/Language Arts Department, Music Department, and Industrial Technology Education Department pending on budget priorities. Seconded by Henderson. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.

Humphries clarified state statute and the process for developing and revising the Code of Conduct.

Ramsdail moved approval of the revision and layover of the Code of Conduct with checking with legal counsel to clarify the state statute. Seconded by Gard. Members asked clarifying questions and asked for additional clarification to be added to the code itself.

Winkelmann moved to extend the meeting to finish the agenda. Seconded by Ramsdail. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.

One member shared concerns with the flexibility in the proposed code. Laurie Medina, Pre-Hearing Officer, shared her concerns with the current code and stated why she feels strongly that the proposed code will be clearer and better for students and staff.

The motion on the Code of Conduct revision carried 6-1, with Scharmer voting in the negative.

Winkelmann moved approval and layover of Policy 443.4 dc Student Alcohol and/or Other Controlled Substances Use for first reading. Seconded by Acomb. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.

Winkelmann moved approval and layover of Policy 662.3 Fund Balance for first reading. Seconded by Henderson. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.

Winkelmann moved approval of the revised personnel recommendations, Exhibit A with corrected date of 2012. Seconded by Acomb. Motion carried unanimously of the members present.

Scharmer indicated that the board was now at the items for resolution on the proposed referendum. One member shared his thoughts on the work that has been done, presentations, feedback, involvement, community interest, etc.

Ramsdail moved approval of the Initial Resolution Authorizing General Obligation Bonds in an Amount Not to Exceed \$70,000,000. Seconded by Henderson.

Another member shared his thoughts on the referendum, the quality of our schools, competing with other districts in various aspects, and district affects on property values. One member shared additional thoughts including city's work at improvements even with the loss of big companies in Beloit. He stated he wants something better for the children of the future and not just things patched up.

Scharmer opened up the podium for public comments.

Andre Dekok, 3587 Minnie Lane, Beloit commented on the pool as a teaching space as well as an athletic event location.

Jeff Schroeder, 1829 Carlisle, Beloit addressed board members with regard to the pool, proper facility and grade point averages. He also talked about recruiting swimmers from other communities.

Melissa Corum, 535 Moore Street, Beloit shared her thoughts on the opportunities available in the district, high school and what that will do for the vision of Beloit.

Arnie Brostuen, 1870 Lee Lane, Beloit, addressed the board members thanking them for not using Morgan as an intermediate school. He also suggested considering Morgan for the new Kolak Education Center location.

Kate Severson, 1631 Morgan Terrace, Beloit, shared her concerns with the district not having a vision when she first moved here, but now feels that the referendum is a long term solution for the district and the plan looks very functional. She also spoke to the pool concerns and as a parent who does not have a swimmer, supports the pool proposal.

Mary McNulty, 1245 Eaton Avenue, Beloit, proud mom of a swimmer, stated that the referendum will not benefit her children as they will be graduated and gone by time it is in place. She does feel it will affect her grandchildren in the future. She stated that the pool is a facility and deserves the attention like any other facility. She also stated that she worked on the strategic plan and that part of that plan is to bring families into the district.

Gary Witzack, addressed board members again and addressed the pool item. He also talked about watching factories in Beloit closing and moving overseas. He also talked about the housing purchasing cycle. He stated that he would recommend going to referendum with the pool as a separate question.

Pam Charles, 2227 Carnforth Lane, Beloit, addressed the members about the pool. She also addressed the question about if the pool cost comes in lower, what happens with the "extra" or "leftover" monies. She stated she would hate to see the referendum fail and asked that the members consider reducing the overall cost of the referendum.

Harry Wiersgalla, 2500 East Ridge Road, Beloit, addressed the members thanking them for their service on the board. He stated that his concerns were addressed tonight. He did state that he and his wife supported the high school referendum in 1992. He did ask how it is educationally sound to

put 2 more grade levels in buildings that are larger than we currently have. He asked where the input was from the teachers. He asked for caution and guidance from the teachers as the board makes decisions.

Debra Prowse, 2056 Cobblestone Ct., Beloit, addressed the board members about the pool, great students, being willing to give up something to help pay for the referendum. She shared how much she loves the district and teaching here and is asking everyone to invest in our kids, our future.

Josh Wehring, 1721 Morgan Terrace, addressed the board members stating that the skills he learned from being a part of the high school swimming team was more than just how to swim. He stated that he is in naval academy and pursuing a career in education.

Jason Dowd, 2052 Bootmaker Drive, Beloit, stated that he was impressed seeing the kids here tonight fighting for this referendum. He is happy that the board members are listening to the students. He stated that the referendum is about thinking, leading, moving, we are tomorrow and thinking beyond now. He also stated that he came from Janesville and is happy to be in Beloit. He would like the board to consider the question and to let the community decide. He stated to put it on the ballot.

Debbie Hemerly, 2252 Bootmaker Drive, Beloit, stated that she has a daughter who tried out for the swim team. She hopes the referendum passes.

Board members discussed the referendum proposal and shared their thoughts. Those items included the economic development in Beloit, thanking the students, parents, and community for coming to the meeting, using local help and workers wherever possible, having some questions on the details of the project, separating the pool from the referendum. Other comments or concerns included business perspective of the referendum, feedback from the community, interest rates, taxes and no increases, providing for the next generation, investment in the district, length of time since we last asked the community to help, keeping in mind the responses from the community throughout this process, developing the strategic plan forcing us to think about beyond now, and doing what was stated in the strategic plan, ie., doing something with the facilities.

Members also asked for clarification on the revisions to the proposal and the details. It was asked if the board members then decide on the details of the plan. Another member stated that it's important to have complete transparency with the cost and the affect on the taxpayer. One member also stated that she would be much more comfortable with concrete numbers and actual bids.

Scharmer urged that the motion be tabled in order to continue discussions about collaboration with the city and community. She stated that the referendum needs to be fully considered and the figures need to be solid. She did state that she supports a referendum, but would like more answers and to continue collaborative discussions.

Johnson asked when Senator Cullen's bill goes to vote. She also asked for some clarification in the taxes discussion.

Ramsdail shared his thoughts on the taxes, the affect on the taxpayer and feels strongly that the collaboration on the pool with the city will be turned down again. He also talked about the referendum being a cap to the amount of money the district is asking for in the question.

Scharmer asked what the rush is in making the decision when we have until January 24, 2012 to make the decision. She stated she wants to make sure the numbers are what we really need.

Winkelmann stated his opinion on the taxing, collaboration on the pool and what the public is clearly saying as to the monies.

Scharmer moved to table the motion until after the meeting with city council. Seconded by Johnson. Motion failed on a roll call vote 2-5 with Acomb, Gard, Henderson, Ramsdail and Winkelmann voting in the negative.

McNeal addressed the board with his thoughts on the concerns, questions, referendum amount, opportunity, feedback, dollar amounts, needs, collaboration, and letting the taxpayers make the decision.

The original motion carried on a roll call vote 7-0.

Winkelmann moved approval of the Resolution Providing for a Referendum Election on the Question of the Approval of an Initial Resolution Authorizing the Issuance of General Obligation Bonds in an Amount Not to Exceed \$70,000,000. Seconded by Ramsdail. Motion carried on a roll call vote 7-0.

Items for consideration at future meetings requested included sign language classes and student body votes as requested by the student representatives. It was also requested that the referendum always be on the agendas. Leadership training was also requested as a future item.

Scharmer announced future meetings on Tuesday, January 10, and the Board Business meeting will be held on January 24, 2012. There will also be a joint meeting with the city council on January 9, 2012.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 p.m.

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Michelle Shope, Board Secretary

Approved at the regular meeting of January 24, 2012

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Shannon Scharmer, President