

MANITOWOC PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Education Meeting Minutes
November 22, 2022

The special meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by Board President Stacey Soeldner at 6:00 p.m. Members present were: Mr. Collin Braunel, Mr. Matthew Phipps, Ms. Stacey Soeldner, Mr. Matthew Spaulding, Mr. Tony Vlastelica, and Ms. Kathy Willis. Board member Kerry Trask was absent. Interim Superintendent James Feil, Directors, and Board Secretary Laurie Braun were also present.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance. Network connection and access to BoardBook were confirmed.

Public Input began at 6:01 p.m. The Board received eighteen (18) requests from the public to speak. The Board heard input regarding disappointment with not conducting a national superintendent search and appointing the Interim Superintendent in the permanent role, and adding a new Assistant Superintendent position, the Board's lack of trust with our educators in selecting curriculum for our district, a letter was read that was submitted by five former MPSD Board of Education Presidents and their disappointment with choosing a permanent Superintendent with little or no public or staff input, one member of the public stated the emphasis for student learning should be focused on the fundamentals; reading and grammar. Several members of the public thanked the Board and expressed their support for the Board and support for the Interim Superintendent to fill the permanent position. One veteran staff member asked the Board to follow through with what was promised by being transparent and involving all stakeholders in the Superintendent search, another parent within the district expressed concern for the culture of fear being put forth from the School Board and the fear of teachers and staff losing their jobs, other members of the public shared their support of the teachers and the 450 plus years of combined experience that researched the proposed ELA Curriculum and lack of transparency the Board promised. Another letter submitted was read expressing concern with the level of political angst surrounding the Board that is dividing the district and the need to come together for the best interest of the district. Public input concluded at 6:52 p.m.

On motion from Tony Vlastelica, seconded by Matthew Spaulding, the Board unanimously approved (6-0) the Consent Agenda as presented, consisting of the minutes from the November 8, 2022 Regular and Closed Session Board Meetings, the November 14, 2022 Personnel Committee Meeting, the November 16, 2022 Finance & Budget Committee Meeting, the November 16, 2022 Special Closed Session Board Meeting, and the November 17, 2022 Curriculum Committee Meeting.

The Personnel Report was presented to the Board. The Personnel Report consisted of one (1) retirement, hiring three (3) professional staff, and numerous extra-curricular stipends. On motion from Collin Braunel, seconded by Kathy Willis, the Board approved the Personnel Report (6-0) as presented.

Board President Stacey Soeldner shared an Out-of-State Travel Request for staff of the two pilot schools; Franklin Elementary and Washington Middle Schools, to travel to Steubenville, OH to visit schools that are currently using the SFA model. On motion from Matthew Spaulding, seconded by Tony Vlastelica, the Board unanimously approved (6-0) the out-of state travel request.

Board President Stacey Soeldner shared there is no new information to share regarding the Strategic Plan at this time. We remain on schedule for the Strategic Plan to be presented at the December 13, 2022 meeting.

At the request of the Board, additional information regarding Municipal Baseball Field was presented. A summary of potential projected expenses and a timeline was provided, along with annual consumable expenses. Director of Buildings & Grounds Chris Dupre explained the cost to insure the property would be an annual expense of approximately \$2,000. The next step is to determine if the Board would like take action and move forward with the acquisition of this property from the City. The Board had the opportunity to ask questions regarding the costs involved that were presented and the other options that would be available if we didn't proceed with the acquisition of the property. Lengthy discussion surrounding the acquisition of Municipal Baseball Field took place. A motion was made by Matthew Phipps to move forward with the acquisition of this property provided there is a management plan with a timeline put in place set by the Director of Buildings & Grounds, along with coordinating efforts of the Athletic Director and the Superintendent, Matthew Spaulding seconded the motion. Discussion continued surrounding the motion including having an obligation to the students in our district to excel in and enjoy our extra-curriculars. Discussion also included how the district will budget expenses for the field moving forward and the possibilities of incoming donations. Varsity Baseball Coach Bruce Steinbecker spoke on behalf of the program sharing the district has not had it's own facility for the boys to play on for 75 years. Through the efforts of the city, school district, coaches, parents and players we have at a minimum maintained the Municipal field to play on. The improvements that were made by the district this past year will allow us to play on it for approximately 5 years with continued normal maintenance. If we do nothing, we will be forced to play all 26 games away and not have any home games. Mr. Steinbecker also shared the cost to build a new facility would cost approximately 1.8 million dollars. The Board voted unanimously (6-0), to approve the motion presented to move forward with the acquisition of the Municipal Baseball Field with the stated management plan as mentioned above.

On recommendation from the Finance & Budget Committee, a motion was made by Matthew Phipps and seconded by Tony Vlastelica, to execute the sale of the district owned property located at 8th and Columbus Streets for the price offered of \$4,000. The motion unanimously passed (6-0).

A motion was made by Collin Braunel, seconded by Matthew Spaulding to accept the recommendation to create the new position of Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning. The motion unanimously passed (6-0). On motion by Collin Braunel, seconde by Tony Vlastelica, the Board unanimously accepted (6-0) the recommendation of candidate Jame McCall as presented on the Addendum to the Personnel Report to fulfill the newly approved Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning position.

On motions brought forward from the November 14, 2022 Personnel Committee Meeting, the Board unanimously approved (6-0) the additional Special Education Paraprofessional Position at Madison Elementary School. This added position is due to the increase of incoming students with significant needs and IEP's.

On motions brought forward from the November 16, 2022 Finance & Budget Committee Meeting, the Board unanimously approved (6-0) the donation from Bank First National for the Manitowoc Strength & Speed Program at Lincoln High School.

On motions brought forward from the November 16, 2022 Finance & Budget Committee, the Board approved the annual Depositories for District Funds.

On motions brought forward from the November 17, 2022 Curriculum Committee Meeting, the Board unanimously approved (6-0) the course proposals AP English Language & Composition, Anatomy & Physiology, Expanded AP Chem, Figure Drawing, Exploring Art 2, Stats, AP Pre-Calc, Advanced Interior Design, Music Theory, Music History (1 year approval), and Beginning/Secondary Band & Orchestra as presented.

On motions brought forward from the November 17, 2022 Curriculum Committee Meeting, the Board unanimously approved (6-0) the Out-of-State Travel for the Track/Football Consortium in Elmhurst, IL. On motions also brought forward from the November 17, 2022 Curriculum Committee Meeting, the Board unanimously approved (6-0) the Washington DC & Gettysburg trip for 8th grade students from Washington and Wilson Middle Schools.

On motions brought forward from the November 17, 2022 Curriculum Committee, the Board unanimously approved (6-0), the Board Room upgrade as presented.

Board member Matthew Spaulding made a motion to enter into contract negotiations with Interim Superintendent James Feil for the remaining current school year and the 2023-2024 school year. Collin Braunel seconded the motion and the motion was open for discussion. In the absence of Board member Kerry Trask, Board President Stacey Soeldner read a letter submitted by Mr. Trask expressing his support to conduct an open search to fill the Superintendent Position as the Board previously agreed to do. Each Board member had the opportunity to speak, sharing their support for the work Mr. Feil has done in the short time he has been in the district, support for not wasting any more time or money to conduct another Superintendent search, and support for putting the focus on the kids, the literacy concerns and the achievement gaps we are facing in the district. With no further discussion, the Board unanimously voted (6-0) to approve contract negotiations with Mr. James Feil in the role of Superintendent for this remaining school year and for the 2023-2024 school year.

Board President Stacey Soeldner wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and thanked the public for attending and tolerating the long meetings.

Future meeting dates include the Buildings & Grounds Committee December 7th at 4:30 p.m., Executive Committee December 7th at 5:30 p.m., Personnel Committee on December 12th at 5:30 p.m., the Board of Education December 13th at 6:00 p.m., and the Finance & Budget Committee on December 21st at 5:30 p.m. The Curriculum Committee is working on scheduling a date and time for their next meeting.

A motion to adjourn from open session was made by Matthew Spaulding, seconded by Matthew Phipps, and unanimously carried (6-0). The meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m. The Board did not convene into closed session.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurie Braun, Secretary



Board President, Stacey E. Soeldner