

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING
Manitowoc Board of Education
July 9, 2013

A special meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by President Linda Gratz at 4:00 p.m. Members present were Ms. Karen Rohrer, Ms. Catherine Shallue, Mr. Dave Longmeyer, Mr. Dave Nickels, Mr. Keith Shaw, and Ms. Linda Gratz. Also present were Superintendent Marcia Flaherty and Board secretary Rebecca McLafferty. Members absent: Mr. Lee Braunel

Superintendent Flaherty began the meeting by introducing Consultant Tom Joynt. All in attendance introduced themselves and proposed challenges that the MPSD will face in the year ahead.

Flaherty distributed and discussed the District mission statement which reads, "The MPSD will provide rigorous learning for all students within a safe and orderly environment. We will educate pupils in the basics and help them develop as self-reliant citizens. Our students will: Read with comprehension; Communicate in speaking and writing using standard English; Use number skills; Solve problems; Use computers and other technologies; Gather, evaluate, and use information; Apply learning to different situations; Work with people of diverse backgrounds and opinions; Live as responsible citizens." The five components of the district mission were the mission's foundation, with additional bullets added.

Flaherty asked Board members and administrators to provide powerful adjectives that describe our district. Distinct words may be combined with the mission statement to update it.

Joynt stated that educators face great challenges in education. Additionally, the MPSD has multiple factors which can be overwhelming—a new superintendent of schools, new school board members, and new mandates.

Joynt had his principals read *Shackleton's Way* (by Margot Morrell and Stephanie Capparell), which contains leadership lessons from the man (Sir Ernest Shackleton) who saved the lives of 27 men stranded in the Antarctic for almost two years. He highly encouraged the reading.

Board members completed a self-assessment for the Board of Education, choosing two statements they each thought should be the focus for 2013-2014 Board goals. Statements chosen were:

- The Board works to establish effective school district policy to assure quality district operations.
- The Board clearly communicates expectations to the superintendent and annually evaluates the superintendent based upon performance outlined in the communicated expectations.

- When Board decisions are made, regardless of differing opinions, board members work to support it.
- Board members strive to attend all regularly scheduled board meetings and to become informed about items to be considered at those meetings.
- Board members understand that they have authority only when convened in a legally conducted board meeting with at least a quorum present.
- Board members channel communications that require action through the superintendent and refer all concerns, complaints and other communication to the superintendent.

Joynt feels this will be a time of accelerated communicating for our district, not just between the Board and Superintendent, but also between the Superintendent and administrative team.

Transparency is currently “the word”—being honest and open. When Board members finish a discussion, they may not all agree, but they can say that it was discussed and a decision was made. Disagreement can be healthy.

The decision process is important. A need must be identified. Before the Board looks at solutions, they must look at criteria.

Joynt talked about the important of boards performing a self-assessment, which implies that they can improve.

Discussion revolved around Board policies. Joynt discussed Seattle Public Schools Policy No. 1620, Board-Superintendent Relationship. The MPSD does have a policy relating to superintendent-board relationship, but Board President Gratz didn’t think that it went into significant detail. MPSD policies are online and are reviewed by NEOLA.

Joynt discussed transparency of Board/Superintendent communications. A board member expecting special treatment can violate the transparency of other board members. Joynt sent out weekly newsletters and Board members were overloaded with information. They requested less information.

Joynt said that we could contact the WASB Director of Policy Services for sample policies. The Board needs to be proactive, not reactive. They also need to examine how the superintendent is evaluated. There needs to be good communication. The assessment should be healthy, not oppressive. Joynt also stressed the importance of establishing a relationship of trust between the School District and media.

Joynt distributed and discussed a handout of the Team Development Wheel: STAGE I – FORMING, testing, polite, impersonal, watchful, guarded; STAGE II – STORMING (which is not bad...it helps us discuss expectations), infighting, controlling conflicts, confronting people, opting out, difficulties, feeling stuck; STAGE III – NORMING, getting organized, developing skills,

establishing procedures, giving feedback, confronting issues; and STAGE IV – PERFORMING, mature closeness, resourceful, flexible, open, effective, close and supportive.

Joynt reiterated that the focus is on the School Board as a team, the Board and Superintendent, and Superintendent and administrators. Board members need to agree with norms of (ten) things they would hold themselves to. It would allow Board members to assess if they are performing as an effective team.

Board members discussed a policy of confidentiality or signing a code of conduct/ethics before taking office. Joynt indicated that it would be part of the communication of trust. It is important for the Board to do a group analysis. Joynt said that there would be strength in an Affidavit coming from the Board, saying “when you become a member of (the Board), this is how we operate.”

Directors Debby Shimanek and Joanne Metzen discussed district goals for Staff, Student Learning, Operations, and Communication. Administrative staff had given input on the status of each goal.

Director of Buildings and Grounds Jeff Schulz gave an update on current District projects and hail damage repair.

On motion by Karen Rohrer, seconded by Catherine Shallue, the meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca McLafferty, Secretary

Linda Gratz
Board President