

JULY

League of Women Voters of Downers Grove-Woodridge-Lisle

Observer's Report

Governmental Body: Downers Grove Elementary School District 58      Date: July 9,  
2012

Please check answers:

Type of meeting:     Regular     Workshop     Public Hearing  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

Facilities:     Clean     Proper Size (see comment)     Could See  
 Could Hear                       Handicap accessible, yes, but could be better

Media Coverage:     Yes     No    If yes, who was present: Don't know

Public Present:     Yes, 30+ visitors     No              Public Comment:     Yes  
    No

PROCEEDINGS

YES

NO

COMMENTS

Meeting start on time? Yes

All members present? No  
Cooper absent

Sufficient staff present? yes

Presiding officer control meeting?

"Control" not necessary, but failed to direct  
discussion effectively (see below)  
Members prepared and attentive? Yes

Members respectful and courteous to all present? Yes

Adequate discussion of issues? Yes

One main issue, discussed at length(see below)  
Information re issues available to public? Nothing I could find

Sufficient opportunity for public input? Yes

For full agenda and minutes, see the District 58 website: [www.dg58.org](http://www.dg58.org)

Additional observations or concerns:

Comment

The room seemed quite congested, but I do not know that it is usual to have as many visitors as they had this evening.

Non-Action Reports

Technology Update: The District has a new website, with Google. It will give teachers more space for storage and collaboration.

Reports to the Board

A. Superintendent. The new Superintendent, Dr. Kari Cremascoli, stated that this was her third day on the job.

Discussion

A. Gifted Education Program. It was apparent this issue had been discussed before, prior to arrival of the new Superintendent. However, she had been brought up to speed on it and made a recommendation that the program not be changed at this time but be reviewed during the next year. The Board unanimously agreed to this, commenting that the item had been dealt with previously in a "hurried" fashion.

B. Longfellow Center. This issue triggered a lengthy and relatively fruitless discussion among the Board members. The deliberations concerned the disposition of Longfellow Center. Evidently, the issue has been around for some time, and the Board has not been able to reach a decision. The various members had differing ideas which they were unable to reconcile. Some members simply seemed unsure of what to do while others called for additional information. The discussion rambled

and sometimes went in circles as the Board tried to look at all the pieces and how they fit together. The frustration felt by some members was very evident. The new Superintendent apparently had not had time to become fully apprised regarding the issue as she did not provide any guidance to the Board. Finally, the members agreed that they needed to explore options for providing space in the event they dispose of Longfellow and the space it currently provides. They directed the Superintendent to research the cost of expanding the current administration building, as well as other space options.

#### Reception of Visitors

This item appears twice on the agenda. Each was a time designated for public comment. After the Longfellow Center discussion, several visitors addressed the Board. Each of them named his or her attendance area. One gentleman, who stated he was a former member of the District 58 Board, told the present Board what he believed they needed to consider to resolve the Longfellow issue. Other visitors strongly urged the Board to keep the public informed, particularly if changes with Longfellow might result in school boundary changes. These remarks were made, and heard by the Board, with respect and courtesy..

#### Closed Session

After making several routine announcements, the Board went into closed session, setting forth the reasons for the session, both on the agenda and verbally. No action was taken after the Board re-convened in open session.

Observer: Peggy Healy

Date submitted: July 21, 2012