

AUGUST

League of Women Voters of Downers Grove-Woodridge-Lisle

Observer's Report

Governmental Body: Board of Education District 99 Date: 08/20/12

Please check answers:

Type of meeting: Regular Workshop Public Hearing
Other _____

Facilities: Clean Proper Size Could See Could Hear
 Handicap accessible

Media Coverage: Yes No If yes, who was present: Patch - Amanda

Public Present: Yes No Public Comment: Yes No

PROCEEDINGS

YES

NO

COMMENTS

Meeting start on time? yes

All members present? yes

Sufficient staff present? yes

Presiding officer control meeting? yes

Members prepared and attentive? yes

Members respectful and courteous to all present? yes

Adequate discussion of issues? yes

Information re issues available to public? yes

Sufficient opportunity for public input? yes

For full agenda and minutes, see this government body's website: www.csd99.org

Additional observations or concerns

8/20/2012 Dist 99 Board Meeting Report

The meeting was preceded at 7:00 PM by a closed information and discussion session regarding the lease or purchase of land for use by the district. Board

Chairman Bill White called the public portion of the meeting to order at approximately 7:30 PM.

Major Agenda Items:

2012-2013 Budget and Five-Year Financial Projections

Mark Staehlin, Comptroller, gave an overview of the budget and financial projections.

- * The budget is balanced, the revenues and expenditures are in line with previous years, and projections were made conservatively because of the current economy.

- * Interest income has not grown as they hoped, and state funding will be flat. Property taxes are the main source of revenue for the district, and those have been more stable.

- * Payments were made on the long-term debt, and debt service is being taken care of through the operating budget.

- * Enrollment will increase in the next few years, and then it will begin to drop again.

- * The FTE ratio (student-teacher ratio) of 21:1 will be maintained currently.

- * They have seen an increase in special needs kids, and an expense for new staff to support these students (Title 1 etc.) is included in the budget.

- * The increase in the meal rate to \$2.50 was required by the State Board.

Public Hearing and Adoption of the Budget + Once the hearing was opened and comments were requested (none), the budget was adopted by a 7-0 vote.

Suggestion for STEM Summit

Superintendent McDonald stated that, with his knowledge, Chairman White had made a presentation to the township regarding a brainstorming meeting with other districts to see whether a regional STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) initiative is feasible, as some things are beyond our district's capabilities. Because this meeting would transcend district boundaries, Mr. White felt that District 99 was not an appropriate sponsor for this meeting; he asked the Township to sponsor it. Mr. White stated he had made this presentation to the Township as a private citizen, not the Board Chairman. Some of the board members felt the decision-making process regarding this presentation was flawed, and this aspect was discussed at length. There appeared to be consensus that the idea has merit, however, and Superintendent McDonald will contact the Regional Office for Education (ROE) to determine whether they would become involved, and possibly sponsor the meeting. He will keep the Board informed.

Board Information/Open House

This is suggested as a substitute for Bagels with the Board, which has had sketchy public attendance lately. The superintendent stressed the importance of transparency, and will contact the Board legal staff to avoid any violations of the IL Open Meetings Act.

Public comments during visitor recognition (Three)

One Downers Grove resident commended the Board on their payments on the debt, freeing up additional funds for education/student expenditures. One resident supported Mr. White and his presentation; one resident discussed the flaws in the process.

The complete agendas and the approved minutes of the Board meetings are posted on the Board's website, www.csd99.org.

Observer: Kitty Stokes Date submitted: 08/23/12