

School District of the City of Highland Park
Highland Park Renaissance Academy
15900 Woodward Avenue
Highland Park, Michigan 48203

Schedule

Regular Board of Education Meeting

Minutes

Tuesday, November 12, 2013

7:00 p.m.

**School District of the City of Highland Park
Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
Highland Park Renaissance Academy
15900 Woodward Avenue
Tuesday, November 12, 2013
7:00 p.m.**

Minutes

I. Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of the School District of the City of Highland Park was called to order by President Edwards in the Highland Park Renaissance Academy, 15900 Woodward Avenue, Highland Park, Michigan 48203, on Tuesday, November 12, 2013 at p.m. at 7:05 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Secretary McDonald conducted the roll call.

Present: Members: Jamille Edwards, John Holloway, Debra Humphrey, Glenda McDonald and Kurt Griggs-Swanson

Absent: Member Robert Davis and Soyini Williams

A quorum was present.

Also present were: Gregory Weatherspoon- Emergency Manager, Barbara Oliver- Administrator and citizens of Highland Park.

III. Acceptance of Offices for Board Member Appointed at the October 08, 2013 Regular Board Meeting

Suggested Motion:

- A. That the Board of Education approves the acceptance of office for member Kurt Griggs-Swanson.

President Edwards called for a motion for the acceptance of appointment of Kurt Griggs-Swanson.

Moved by: Secretary McDonald

Supported by: Vice President Humphrey

Ayes: Members: Edwards, McDonald, Holloway and Humphrey

Nays: None

Absent: Member Davis and Williams

Motion Carried

IV. Approval of Board of Education Minutes

Suggested Motion:

- A. Approval of October 08, 2013 Special Meeting Minutes
- B. Approval of October 08, 2013 Regular Meeting Minutes

President Edwards called for a motion for the approval of October 08, 2013 ; Special Meeting Minutes and the approval of the October 08, 2013; Regular Board Meeting Minutes.

Moved by: Secretary McDonald

Supported by: Member Swanson

Ayes: Members: Edwards, McDonald, Holloway, Humphrey and Swanson
Nays: None
Absent: Member Davis and Williams

Motion Carried

V. Communications

None

VI. Public Hearings

Request for public hearings must be submitted in writing and must state purpose.
"Employees and employee groups are not authorized to appear before the Board of Education to discuss contract issues or negotiable items." (See Board Policy #1360)
No request was submitted.

None

VII. Citizen Participation

Each citizen will be allotted two minutes to voice their concerns regarding items on the agenda.

No citizen participation

VIII. Consent Agenda

None

IX. Educational Presentation

None

X. Old Business

None

XI. New Business

None

XII. Any Other Items that Might Probably Come Under the Heading of Old and New Business

None

XIII. Administrative information

Introduction of the new Emergency Manager, Mr. Gregory Weatherspoon

President Edwards welcomed Mr. Weatherspoon on behalf of the Board.

Mr. Weatherspoon introduced himself to the Highland Park Board members and the Highland Park citizens. During his introduction, Mr. Weatherspoon highlighted the following:

- He was asked by Vicky Markavitch from Oakland ISD, to assist in Pontiac, he declined the offer. The Treasury Department offered him the position of Emergency Manager for Highland Park and Muskegon Heights of which he accepted and started October 16th.
- Works with the Michigan Treasury Department and the Governor.
- Brings with him 40 years of school and administrative experience.
- Is glad to work with the Highland Park School District.
- Working with Willow Run, Cassopolis, and Lansing, which are low achieving schools districts and working Michigan Department of Education has prepared him for this position.
- When working with districts that are experiencing crisis, he asks himself, "If what he is doing is best for kids?"
- His assignment is for 18 months as stated in Public Act 436.
- The goal is to leave before the 18 months has concluded.
- Educational plan should be worked on, building utilization need improvement.
- Emergency Manager and PSA Boards will work together to present a collaborative and cohesive plan to the Governor and Treasury Department.
- Present a plan, in December, to Treasury Department describing what the year of 2014-2015 will entail for the Highland Park School District.
- Meetings will be set, where problem solving will take place.
- The future of the estimated 1,353 students in this district is at stake.
- That all board members attended the meetings to ensure that everybody participates to ensure the roles are coherent and understood.
- A factual report is being created to ensure that everybody is on the same page. A story has to be told regarding the history of the Highland Park School District.
- Looking forward to the regeneration of Highland Park.
- To contact him, call Barbara Oliver or use the business cards that were placed on the tables.

A. Board of Education Affairs

Submitted for consideration: Glenda McDonald Board of Education Secretary

A. Form Committees

Discussion: Secretary McDonald stated that according to Board Policies and Procedures, the Board should form committees. She proposed that the Highland Park Board work closely with the Charter Schools, under the guidance of Mr. Weatherspoon to form a collaboration to disseminate information for the community. According to Secretary

McDonald, the community would like to be informed on what is happening with the school district, the finances of the school district, and want to know how does this affect their taxes.

Secretary McDonald expressed that at least one committee should be formed to bring schools, community, and the Board together to move forward in unison.

President Edwards responded by stating that in a meeting with Mr. Weatherspoon, Mrs. Oliver, The Council President, the Council Pro Tem, the Mayor, and Ms. McDonald an alliance was proposed to be formed with George Washington Carver, Northpointe, PSA, and the Leona Group, to come together to meet collectively once a month to discuss problems. The community and other stakeholders will be invited to participate. This will start with Mr. Weatherspoons' Town Hall Meeting. From there, direction from the Emergency Manager will be given to ensure we all work together. President Edwards assured him that the Board has an excellent relationship with George Washington Carver, Northpointe, and the Leona Group as well. She proposed that the Highland Park Board and the PSA Boards come together and share services.

Member Swanson inquired about the role and relevance of the Board under the supervision of the Emergency Manager.

Secretary McDonald said that her intention is to establish a collaborative relationship with the Public School Academies (PSAs) to discuss ways to communicate information to the community. This could be a part of the school newsletter, item B.

President Edwards replied that at the next board meeting all stakeholders will come together to discuss the problems. She explained that in a meeting on Friday, she spoke to Mr. Weatherspoon about having a Town Hall Meeting to explain the processes and procedures for moving forward. President Edwards responded to Mr. Swanson by explaining that the role of the Board of Education was to ensure that the education of the students in the Highland Park School District is carried out.

Vice President Humphrey asked if there is a timeline?

President Edwards replied by saying that the Town Hall Meeting will be before the next Board Meeting.

President Edwards said that the Board and PSA boards should have a web page or some means to provide information to the community and asked Ms. Oliver to respond to her earlier request from Friday's meeting.

Barbara Oliver stated that a suggestion box has been created to provide a means for citizens to express questions, concerns or complaints in between meetings. She added that a bulletin board will be displayed with information that is of importance to the community with respect to the PSAs.

Member Holloway stated that the Emergency Manager has the power during this process. He asked Mr. Weatherspoon if he had suggestions or could he address the concerns of the taxpayers with respect to receiving information.

Mr. Weatherspoon responded by saying that he understands the question and he will address this matter at a later time.

B. City Wide Newsletter

Secretary McDonald explained that a city wide newsletter could be developed with information from all PSAs and compiled into one newsletter to inform the community about what is happening in their school and in the district with respect to the Emergency Manger and other topics.

Citizen Participation

Ms. Bernice Mia

Ms. Mia said she is concerned about how her tax dollars are being spent. She is confused about the difference between the Charter and Public Schools. As a senior she stated that she cannot continue to pay taxes to support a private management company. What are your goals for the students; why are the buildings not sold; why is the water still running in buildings; what is a PSA; what is the plan for the empty buildings; are the questions she wants answered. She also asked to see a budget.

Mr. Khursheed Shafii

Mr. Shafii stated that he agrees with starting a newsletter and/ or a web page. He is concerned if the truth will be told and would like for the communication to be truthful.

President Edwards

President Edwards responded by inviting Mr. Shafii be a part of the process for forming a committee.

Ms. Linda Wheeler

Ms. Wheeler said the Citizens of Highland Park Public Schools was formed in response to library books being destroyed. Their mission is to return the public schools back to the community. The lost of the books is known nationally and internationally. Three meetings were held with the former Emergency Manager, Dr. Weatherspoon a mutual respect was reached, we requested retribution to the children of Highland Park for the lost of the books. She asked Mr. Weatherspoon to meet with the Citizens of Highland Park School to discuss some form of retribution.

Mr. Weatherspoon

Mr. Weatherspoon said that 20 boxes of books were taken to the Charles H. Wright African Museum.

Ms. Wheeler

Ms. Wheeler asked, whose decision was it to remove the books from Highland Park?

Mr. Weatherspoon

Mr. Weatherspoon responded by saying that Chris Woodard assisted Dr. Weatherspoon in plan to preserve the books by sending them to the museum.

Mr. Weatherspoon

Mr. Weatherspoon asked that Ms. Wheeler schedule a meeting with Mrs. Oliver to discuss the transfer of the books to the Museum.

President Edwards

President Edwards invited Ms. Wheeler to attend the Town Hall meeting to express her concerns and to join a committee.

B. Adjournment

Moved by Secretary McDonald and supported by Vice President Humphrey to adjourn the Board of Education Meeting. Following proper procedure, President Edwards adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:55 p.m.



Ms. Glenda McDonald, Secretary
Board of Education

Minutes Adopted: 1-14-14