

Minutes  
Regular Board Meeting  
Hawthorn Board of Education  
April 9, 2007

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Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Hawthorn Community Consolidated School District Number 73, Lake County, Illinois, held in the Conference Room at 841 West End Court at 7:30PM on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of April 2007.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Tim Shanahan, President, at 7:35PM. Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call:** Debbie Limer called the roll, with the following members of the Board of Education answering present: Tom Boehm, Donna Gaidamak, Anne Hoffman, Tim Shanahan, Jose Hernandez, Bill Coli, and Mary Jane Rattner.

Tim Shanahan explained that at the last meeting Mary Jane Rattner resigned her position as President; Bill Coli resigned his position as Vice President. Board members were elected to new executive positions. He stated that he looks forward to having another election in May with the new board members. He thanked Mary Jane Rattner, Jose Hernandez, and Bill Coli for their time on the School Board. The election is April 17<sup>th</sup>. He encouraged all to go out and vote.

**Public Comment period:** None

**Student and Staff Accomplishments, Recognitions:** None

Dr. Yomtoob told the Board that we were recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education. All of our schools have received certificates for financial recognition. Tim Shanahan added that this recognition is the highest level that we can get.

Dr. Yomtoob stated that we have teachers here tonight to receive tenure. Karen Cencula, Townline co-principal, told the Board that she is representing all of the school administrators. There are 20 tenure candidates that she would like the Board of Education to approve. The descriptors of the tenure class include: passionate, flexible, effort, kid-centered, humor, look for strengths, relationship oriented, and embody the District philosophy. She thanked them for their four years of dedication. Each school principal introduced the teachers from his or her school. Each candidate, if present, came forward to receive a certificate and shake hands with members of the Board. Karen Cencula introduced Alice Grubb, Samuel Jaramillo, Catherine Lanyon, Kristina Lippert, Jennifer Mietus, and Ann Shah. Brian Greene introduced Cara Hunwick and Lori McKenzie. Jennifer Glickley introduced Joy Hagel and Diane Motley. Jill Martin introduced Patrice Lagos, Pamela Lutter, and Kathryn Waggoner. John Ahlemeyer introduced Jennifer Harris and Audrey Hawn. Joy Mullaney introduced Sally Busse, Matthew Cameron, and Michalle Vazquez. Dr. Yomtoob introduced Joy Mullaney and Thomas Springborn.

**Consent Agenda:**

Tom Boehm moved to approve the consent agenda. Jose Hernandez seconded the motion.

04/07.82 2006/07 Calendar Amendment

04/07.83 Paper Bid

04/07.84 Personnel Report

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Boehm, Hernandez, Gaidamak, Hoffman, Shanahan, Coli, Rattner

Nays: None

Motion carried – 7– 0

Joy Kane introduced Kristine Dechter a newly hired bilingual school psychologist.

**Staff Presentations:**

Dr. Yomtoob told the Board that the middle school principals are here to present the extracurricular activities at the schools. Dr. Ahlemeyer stated that they looked at several things: a historical perspective, where we are headed, our mission, current offerings, and future plans. He explained that our mission was developed in conjunction with the National Alliance for Youth Sports, the Center for Sports Parenting, the Suburban Middle School Conference, and the Hawthorn Athletic Department. That goal has several aspects. The first is to provide all students the opportunity to explore an extra-curricular activity to foster social, emotional, and physical development. The second is to offer a balanced program of cut and no-cut activities. The third, which has to do with our Conference, is to provide maximum opportunities in a variety of co-curricular activities with schools that share common middle school beliefs. Dr. Ahlemeyer stated that the fourth has to do with our vision and belief. It is to promote maximum student participation while developing skills, self-confidence, and sportsmanship.

Joy Mullaney went over the Conference athletic activities, intramural sports, clubs, and music activities. Connectedness with social and emotional engagement is the number one predictor of academic achievement. As she went over the intramural sports she added that not all of the sports were offered due to a lack of interest in some. The reasons that some of the sports lacked interest could have been cost, community opportunities, and if a student did not make a school team he or she may not then want to participate in that intramural sport.

She also went over the seasons for each of the sports. Donna Gaidamak asked how many kids participate in extra curricular sports. Dr. Ahlemeyer commented that the number is low, about 70-75%, in the past. There are no numbers yet this year, but we would like around 90%. Donna Gaidamak stated that some of the teams allow 5<sup>th</sup> graders. She questioned how the 5<sup>th</sup> graders find out about tryouts. Tom Springborn explained that 5<sup>th</sup> grade is a part of the Conference, so they are allowed. The coaches find students who may be interested. Donna Gaidamak asked if all grades, 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>, are allowed in all of the clubs. Ms. Mullaney stated that they are. Donna Gaidamak questioned how it is determined if the club will be before or after school. Ms. Mullaney stated it has to do with parent support and getting kids to school ahead of time or picking them up after. Dr. Ahlemeyer commented that if there are less than ten kids involved in a club or intramural, we take a closer look to see if it is viable. Ms. Mullaney stated that sometimes it is up to the kids. Donna Gaidamak asked if there is a formal mechanism for starting a new club. Ms. Mullaney reported that there is not. It usually comes from the students through the student council or presented to the administrators. Donna Gaidamak asked how we got into the Conference that we are in. It does not seem to be neighboring teams. Mr. Springborn explained that there are several different conferences. This is the one that we got into based on the size of the school and number of kids participating.

Mary Jane Rattner commented that it has happened that a 6<sup>th</sup> grader has tried out for a team and a 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grader has lost his or her spot on the team. She questioned if there is some way to strike a balance. Dr. Ahlemeyer stated that the open slot should first be for a 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grader. Mary Jane Rattner reported that we have to be diligent about that. It should be understood by all. She added that the fee for intramural sports is an issue as well. We may need to explain why there are fees. We may want to make scholarships available, but some will still be uncomfortable with that. She added that sometimes the fee motivates students to come because it is a commitment. Dr. Ahlemeyer stated that this subject has been debated within the District for years. It deserves a separate discussion. Mary Jane Rattner suggested that it be discussed with budgeting. She questioned if ten is the number for an intramural sport to run as well as a club. Dr. Ahlemeyer stated that it is. Mary Jane Rattner commented that for intramurals the gyms at other schools are used. Ms. Mullaney responded that facilities are the major concern and issue. Mary Jane Rattner commented that intramural basketball is not during basketball season., obviously because of space issues. Dr. Ahlemeyer stated that we try to figure out why things do not take. We offer a lot and there are different things pulling kids' interests and time. We need to reconcile that issue, but we still want maximum participation.

Mary Jane Rattner commented that although we cannot require all children to participate in an extra curricular activity, she wanted to know if participation can be tracked. Dr. Ahlemeyer stated that we need to dig deeper as to why kids do not participate. We are looking at the transportation issue. Mary Jane Rattner told the Board that when kids are more involved they are less disruptive in other areas. She questioned if there has been any push for kids who need motivation. Ms. Mullaney stated that we want all kids involved. They do better academically when they are involved. We ask kids at conferences what they would like to join. Anne Hoffman commented that maybe we need to communicate to the larger population. She stated there are a lot of opportunities on the list of clubs and sports that she was not aware of. She questioned if the information is on the web site. Dr. Ahlemeyer reported it is discussed at parent orientation, there are daily bulletins on the web site that the kids see, there is a special area on the web site for athletics, and we send things home. He commented that communication can always be better. Anne Hoffman stated that we need to improve our communication because she, as a middle school parent, did not know about all of the intramurals. Dr. Ahlemeyer added that intramurals are usually promoted in PE. The teachers talk about it every day and we try to put upcoming intramurals in the newsletter. We are open to suggestions. It is great to have student buy in, but we also need parents to be aware.

Mary Jane Rattner commented that we walk a fine line with our communication. We want kids to be responsible for themselves, but parents want to know about activities so that they can encourage their children. We may want to think about more directly communicating activities on a more regular basis to parents. Dr. Ahlemeyer stated that we are trying to figure it out. Mary Jane Rattner added that we may need to run activities that have less than ten kids to try to encourage participation. You might start with less than the desired amount the first year, but word of mouth and success of an activity can increase interest the next time. Jose Hernandez asked if the kids who are in the cut sport are eligible for the same intramural sport. Ms. Mullaney stated that they are. Jose Hernandez commented that may interfere with the participation for kids who are cut from a team. Ms. Mullaney stated everyone is taken for the intramural. Bill Coli questioned if there is anyway to do intramurals as part instructional – part competitive. He also suggested that we work on the fees. He would hate to see a student not participate because of the cost. He added that he understands a fee for a team sport since there are uniforms and transportation costs.

Dr. Yomtoob told the Board that he wanted to compliment Mary Jane Rattner. She is the person that suggested the tri-fold brochure that was handed out tonight. Donna Gaidamak commented that there are a lot of great clubs offered, but they are different at each school because of the student interest. She questioned if any kids from Middle School North go to Middle School South for an activity and vice versa.

Ms. Mullaney stated that happens sometimes. The students at Middle School South are going to present on starting an environmental club. Mary Jane Rattner commented that, with regard to the cut teams, some students go from one team to another. They are known as good athletes, and other students are overlooked. Some kids only have one sport that they are good at; while others have several. There has been a discussion among parents about limiting the number of cut sports that one student can be on. She commented that as many kids as possible should be given the opportunity to represent their school. She said that she knows coaches are diligent during tryouts etc, but the talk at times in the community should not be ignored. Ms. Mullaney added that the coaches spend a lot of time on try outs. Kids who do not make the team are sometimes allowed to practice with the team or work on the team as a manager.

Tim Shanahan commented that both teams are Hawthorn Eagles; one is gold and blue while the other is blue and gold. He questioned how that is working out. Mr. Springborn stated that the distinction of the colors is working fine. He has seen positive rivalry this year. One team is not putting the other one down. Dr. Ahlemeyer added that the kids have done a good job with that this year. Bill Coli commented that one of the objections to the change in the schools was the rivalry. He was glad to hear that everyone is being respectful. Parents should be recognized as well because they are the example. Tim Shanahan thanked the principals for their presentation.

**Action Items:** None

**President's Report:**

Tim Shanahan explained that the Board is starting a new committee structure. We are now going to have a three-committee system. It will reduce the number of committees and change their function. This reflects that many issues overlap more than one committee's current area. We will be using the expertise of all of the Board Members to form their own goals for their committees. The Committee Chairs will be Tom Boehm in charge of the Financial Policy Committee, Donna Gaidamak in charge of the Constituent Relations Policy Committee, and Anne Hoffman in charge of the Human Resource Policy Committee. Every member of the Board will sit on two committees. In May there may be changes based on the new Board Members and their skills.

**Superintendent's Report:**

Dr. Yomtoob told the Board that the Superintendent reviews are due. He has given everyone hard copies and blanks.

**Discussion Items:**

Anne Hoffman stated that the Policy Committee met. The people present at the meeting were Donna Gaidamak, Mary Jane Rattner, Tim Shanahan, Dr. Yomtoob, Dr. Zook, and Anne Hoffman. They met to discuss transportation and animal policies. We will no longer be paying to transport any students to private schools. There will be a new policy, but we are going to hold that for the new Board. There was a large, varied discussion on the animal policy. It went in a lot of different directions. She stated that she wants the thoughts of the Board. Jose Hernandez commented that we are looking at two different policies that go one way or another. We should look at the differences. Tim Shanahan stated that currently animals may be brought in for educational purposes. Students have the right not to participate in experimentation. The policy is very open. Bill Coli commented that we need to approach this as exclusionary. We do not want to wait for something bad to happen. The policy depends on what our goals are. Tim Shanahan told the Board that we have an example of an exclusionary policy in the packet. There are five categories of animals. We need to look at the parameters. Anne Hoffman went over one of the parameters. Any animal coming into the school must come with an adult and have adult supervision at all times. Tim Shanahan commented that currently a child who has a problem with an animal, being allergies or other issues, does not have to participate and may leave the lesson. This punishes the victim by excluding the child not the animal. Anne Hoffman asked where that child goes during the educational program.

Donna Gaidamak stated that we need to clarify why and when the animal is coming in. Mary Jane Rattner commented that she felt the policy needs to be exclusionary with expectations. It is way too open ended now. It needs to be consistent and administered consistently in all our buildings. She added that she likes the policy that has been presented. Tom Boehm commented that he is comfortable with the exclusionary policy, but he did not want it to be too exclusionary. It is okay if we list excluded animals. Donna Gaidamak stated that she wants clarification. She likes the idea of animals allowed into the schools for certain reasons, but it needs to be consistent from building to building with a protocol. Bill Coli added that the animals need to be for educational purposes. The policy covers the issues. We want to be reasonable, fair, and safe. Donna Gaidamak stated that she would like the educational aspect to be determined by the teachers. Anne Hoffman told the Board that she would like to consider micro-management. She wants to make sure that the proper procedures are determined by the administration. She is not sure we want to be exclusionary, but the administration should consider the issues. Tim Shanahan added that it needs to be educational, but the administration should be able to say yes or no. The Board should set a policy the administration can live with.

Mary Jane Rattner commented that the policy that we are looking at is "exclusionary" but sets up expectations and guidelines and really allows for just about any animal to be brought into school. It keeps safety and education in mind. We want the feedback of where, when and why. It is important for the use of any animal to be purposeful in regard to the curriculum.

Anne Hoffman questioned if the Board was interested in including therapy animals. It would be an additional category. Bill Coli questioned if we would do that for all buildings and whether or not we would bring them from the outside or house them in the buildings 24/7.

Anne Hoffman left the meeting at 9:10PM.

Donna Gaidamak commented that she would like to see a program for therapy animals. She was not sure that we have a need at all buildings. Mary Jane Rattner added that animal assisted therapy would be a separate category. It goes along with special education, IEPs, social work, and psychology. We should have a program and a plan and then a policy. Jose Hernandez suggested not restricting it now. It should be left open ended. Bill Coli added that the policy can be amended later. Mary Jane Rattner reported that we should be supportive of ideas and let the administration know. We can hold it to the side until it is needed. Jose Hernandez stated that we do not have to say one way or the other now. Mary Jane Rattner told the Board that we do not want the staff to think that that the Board is or would not be supportive of their interest to pursue animal assisted therapy.. Again, it needs to be purposeful, and having a plan would be important. We would be open to the idea, if it was brought to us. Tim Shanahan commented that the consensus is to pursue a more definitive structure to the policy that is open ended on therapy animals for the administration to pursue if they want.

#### **Committee Reports:**

##### **SEDOL**

Bill Coli stated that he went to the SEDOL meeting in Donna Gaidamak's absence. SEDOL is interested in pursuing some take backs. There are eight classrooms of all District 73 students or classrooms at District 73 schools where SEDOL provides the teachers. They want us to provide the teachers. He explained that at first look this would cost us about \$.5M. That does not account for the extra teachers for art, music, and PE. We may need to add staff for speech, social work, and psychology aspects. Bill Coli commented that some of the people at the meeting objected to the plan; himself included. He suggested a meeting with Dr. Delp, of SEDOL, Dr. Yomtoob, Dr. Zook, Alan Hahn and Joy Kane. He stated that he feels that they are trying to balance their budget on us. If we do not do this, they are going to charge us an extra \$5K tuition charge per student. Dr. Yomtoob asked why we are trying to fix something that is not broken. We need to look at our 5-year plan to see what we have to do. We need to investigate how much this is going to cost us. Nothing will be done for the 2007/2008 school year. Bill Coli stated that we need to be aware of this for the 5-year plan because we would need more teachers. Tim Shanahan asked if we would be taking back any of the grant money. Dr. Yomtoob told the Board that SEDOL is changing its mission. They want to serve kids who can't be served at other schools. The answer to the issue is somewhere between their plan and the current structure. Alan Hahn and he will work with them. It may not be as expensive as we think. We need to look at it from our needs and concerns. Bill Coli commented that there must be a balance.

Donna Gaidamak asked how many of the 36 member districts SEDOL is planning to do this with. Bill Coli stated that there is a group of districts. Dr. Yomtoob commented that this plan is bigger than anything they have looked at before. Donna Gaidamak reported it would be a good idea to have the committee look at this. We do not know from year to year what types of students we are going to have. SEDOL provides some great services. We also need to look at that. Dr. Yomtoob stated that we should look at who we can service ourselves. Joy Kane commented that we can't have a program with two kids. It is not feasible. We try to keep kids close to the District. SEDOL is a cooperative, so we can be flexible. Bill Coli added that there should be a consistent way to do this.

##### **Human Resources**

Bill Coli stated that if any one has any feedback for the superintendent contract, he or she should get it back to him by April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Dr. Yomtoob questioned if the contract should go back to the lawyer. Bill Coli commented it should if there are any additional changes.

#### **Unfinished Business:**

Mary Jane Rattner stated that we have been working on an intergovernmental agreement with the Park District for two years. We finally have an agreement. Dr. Yomtoob commented that we will get it to the Park District tomorrow. We will act on it at the next meeting. Mary Jane Rattner reported that fees for Hawthorn students will be the same whether or not they are part of the Vernon Hills Park District. Tom Boehm asked if the Park District will be giving refunds. Mary Jane Rattner stated fees will not be retroactive.

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Bill Coli reported that we have agreed to make things "wash" between the two organizations. Tim Shanahan thanked Mary Jane Rattner and Bill Coli for their effort and time. Bill Coli stated that he appreciated the time that the Park District put in as well. He added that we are going to try to combine some things, so both organizations can save some money. We are going to look into a combined landscape bid.

**New Business:** None

**Announcements:** None

**Informational Items:** None

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business, Tim Shanahan requested a motion to adjourn.

Jose Hernandez moved to adjourn the meeting. Mary Jane Rattner seconded the motion. Voice Vote: 7 ayes: 0 nays. Motion carried

Adjourned: The meeting was adjourned at 9:40PM

Respectfully Submitted,  
Debbie Limer

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Timothy Shanahan, President

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Anne Hoffman, Secretary