

Monroe School District #1J
Regular Board Meeting
Held at Monroe High School
September 13, 2010

The board meeting was called to order by Chair Robert Warden at 7:30 P.M.

Members present: Robert Warden, Tony Stroda, Tim Warden, Superintendent Randall Crowson, and Secretary Christine Manley.

Member late: Mylrea Estell.

Member absent: Nancy Burnett

Also present: Tri-County Tribune reporter Sadie Moser; employees Brenda Goracke, Mary Baird, Whitney Welch, Patty Hanchett, Kathy Smith, Leslie Perdue, Christina Walker, Fern Jensen; and patrons including: Abbey Gamache, Sara Ballard, Brady VanCleave, Lance Horning, Kim Horning, Bryan Lynn, Laura Warden, Stefanie Monroe, Katie Bateman, Jennifer Potterf, Elton Strunk, Heidi Sutton.

Tony Stroda moved to approve the minutes of August 9, 2010 as presented. Second: Tim Warden. Motion carried 3/0.

The agenda was reviewed and the following corrections made: 3.C. 1) Rachele Nute, K-2 Reading Teacher, not K-8; 3. E. 2) Robbie Younger, 7/8 Football Volunteer Coach, not Bill Crowson. The following items were added: 4.C. Communications, letter from Sara Ballard; 6.C. Kindergarten discussion.

The bills list was reviewed and discussed.

Mylrea Estell arrived at 7:35 P.M.

After further review, Mylrea Estell moved to approve the agenda as modified. Second: Tony Stroda. Motion carried 4/0.

A thank you letter to Gary Hallett was read and discussed. Mr. Hallett painted the high school and grade school hallways a few years ago and returns once a year to touch up the paint at no cost to the district. He also pressure washed the football/track grandstands at no cost. His work is very much appreciated.

The OSBA Regional meeting will be held at Linn-Benton-Lincoln ESD on September 22. Most members indicated that they are unavailable to attend.

The letter from Sara Ballard was reviewed. Randall Crowson explained that the new parking and student drop off configuration at the grade school was not communicated to the public very well. Mistakes were made while trying something new for the safety of the students. Last year a child was almost hit by a bus because of low visibility. A parent meeting was held to discuss the situation. Another meeting will be scheduled.

Stefanie Monroe suggested utilizing the grass area in front of the grade school for possible vehicle parking and turn around space. She would like to be able to park as they always have until a solution is found. She doesn't like the idea of kids being dropped off at Orchard Street unless there was an aide with them. She doesn't want her child to walk a block in the rain. Lots of parents like to go into the school after dropping off their kids so they can talk to the teachers and they need somewhere to park.

Randall Crowson explained that years ago students who walked home were dismissed at one time while those students who rode the bus were dismissed at a different time. The huge pickups some people drive are sometimes parked in the diagonal spots, making it difficult for other vehicles to get around it. One possibility is to remove the gate.

Bryan Lynn expressed concern that kids won't stay out of the mud and dirt if they walk from Orchard or Dragon Drive. He feels it is extreme to shut down the entire campus because of one close call in the past. He suggested pushing back the time such as getting the buses to school earlier or starting classes later. Denying parents' access is not right. The biggest mistake was in not notifying the community. When the sheriff's deputy was at the grade school on the first day of school, it looked like he was there for enforcement, not safety.

Concern was voiced about the fireman on campus with the police. Mr. Crowson explained that the "fireman" was a district employee who was wearing a Monroe Fire t-shirt.

Mr. Crowson explained that another problem is when parents double park their vehicles they block in other parents.

Mr. Lynn pointed out that the traffic will always be there. He suggested having someone walk the kids into the school to make sure they don't dart out in traffic. Many parents walk their kids up Dragon Drive. Many parents are on their way to work and only have a certain amount of time. The window of time to drop off their kids has narrowed. He suggests dropping off the kids at the door, turning around at the clinic, then keep moving.

Mylrea Estell asked if the traffic congestion was as bad in the afternoon as in the morning. Brenda Goracke explained that it is worse. There is even more traffic from parents picking up their kids. It is dangerous because kids are darting between cars, vehicles are backing up and visibility is limited because of the height of the students. K-8 parents are very safe but things happen.

Laura Warden suggested engineering a drop off zone where cars are constantly driving through. Could the grassy area in front of the school be used for parking or part of the loop?

The area between Orchard Street and the parking lot was discussed (the old railroad right of way.) Could this area be used as a walk way from Orchard? Concern was voiced about the students getting wet in the rain. Parents are concerned that it was hard enough to get the kids to wear a coat, let alone carry an umbrella. Could this area be used as a drive way from Orchard and exit on Dragon Drive?

Sara Ballard announced that she has written a letter to the church asking that they reconsider the use of their parking lot. All community members are welcome to sign the letter. Mr. Crowson again offered maintenance and insurance to the church's lot. He believes the church is facing pressure from areas other than local.

Elton Strunk introduced himself as a St. Rose Church Council member. He explained that the archdiocese is saying no to sharing the parking lot. He explained that the lot is not a proper parking lot. The driveway is not code approved from the State. The City has said no to a permit. Mr. Crowson explained that the City has granted a permit to the Church onto Dragon Drive from the parking lot for both private and public access. He was told by City Manager Jim Minyard that the City granted the permit last March in the hopes that the district and the church could come together and use the lot. He will get a copy of the letter to Mr. Strunk.

Jackie Essner announced that she is not personally responsible for closing the church parking lot. Her son was told by a district employee that she was responsible. She wants to do what is the safest for the children, but she is not responsible for this situation. Mr. Crowson assured her that no one is blaming her. This is the first that he has heard of it.

There was general discussion regarding the increase in the amount of staff parking (48 spaces are needed), detouring to the back of the building, and the traffic flow on Dragon Drive. Kathy Smith, speaking as an employee and a bus driver, believes that parents parking and/or dropping off their kids in the back with the school buses is not a good idea.

Randall Crowson suggested approaching the City to see if they would mind if the district graveled a pathway from Orchard Street.

Leanne Martinez suggested keeping someone at the gate to direct traffic instead of closing the gate. Mr. Crowson assured her he would see that the traffic flow keeps going.

Fern Jensen, School Nurse explained that she is interested in safety as well as health. Prevention is better than a cure. She sees this situation as a marvelous teaching opportunity for parents to follow rules and kids to wear their rain gear. Walking won't hurt; we also have a problem with obesity.

Board members thanked everyone for coming and voicing their concerns and suggestions in such a conversational manner. Another meeting will be scheduled and parents will be notified. Notices will be sent home with the kids as well as a message on the reader board. Mr. Crowson asked for a show of hands from the audience: how many visit our school website? Several hands showed and comments made "once in a while." To increase communication, audience members would be happy to see a school level newsletter mailed home. Students do not bring newsletters and flyers home.

The board recessed from 8:35 P.M. to 8:45 P.M.

There was no further public input.

Randall Crowson included the following in his administrative report:

- Enrollment is up to 476 students, the highest since 1999.
- He received a \$9,000 rebate check today for the heat pumps.
- He received a \$500 rebate check today for safety programs through PACE, our insurer.
- He received a \$1,700 reimbursement check today from SAIF. Christine Manley had applied to SAIF's injured worker program. This program assisted with job modifications for an employee last year.
- The federal programs audit has been cancelled for this year.
- He received word from the Oregon Department of Education that the district has received a \$48,000 grant for the energy savings lighting project for the grade school.
- The district has saved \$82,000 in energy costs in the past two years between diesel, propane, electricity, new windows, cutting off some of the boiler lines, adding heat pumps, and the new lighting.
- Future projects could include gym heat pump replacement, grade school window replacement, and parking at the grade school.

Mylrea Estell reported that the LBL-ESD Board has been researching distance learning programs. She recommended looking at Oregon Colleges on line.

Christina Walker reported on KC Advanta Distance Learning program. After working with the program for a few years, they have found consistency in the classes, ease of enrollment, students starting without a wait, and reasonable costs. They are able to get progress reports on all students enrolled. Currently there are eleven students enrolled in twelve advanced classes. Credit recovery is also available. This summer eleven students were enrolled, thirteen classes were taken, and seven students were successful in recovering credit.

Mr. Crowson reported that Jennifer Allen passed her Praxis exam in Physics and Chemistry. She has applied to TSPC for the additional endorsements. Patty Hanchett received her certificate with endorsements for middle school and high school language arts, middle school social studies, and middle school multiple subjects.

Peggy Contreras has added a Writing 115 high school course which is eligible for college credit. This is a semester course.

Mylrea Estell excused herself from the meeting.

Mr. Crowson reminded the Board that Budget Committee Members need to be appointed. Tony Stroda moved to appoint Greg Wright to Zone 5. Second: Tim Warden. Motion carried 3/0.

Mylrea Estell returned to the meeting.

Randall Crowson explained that there are 29 students enrolled in Kindergarten. Different options were discussed including splitting the classes to Monday, Wednesday, Friday or Tuesday, Thursday, Friday or five days a week with all students in one class. The Board recommended surveying the parents.

The interdistrict transfers for Kassandra Mills and Kylie Whitmer were reviewed. Tony Stroda moved to approve the transfers as presented. Second: Tim Warden. Motion carried 4/0.

Mr. Crowson explained that he recommends the inter-district transfer for Sadie Chestnutt be approved for one year only. She will enroll next year as a Freshman at Monroe High School. Tony Stroda so moved. Second: Tim Warden. Motion carried 4/0.

The Drug and Alcohol report for 2009-10 was reviewed. A copy is attached.

Brenda Goracke explained the Safe Routes to School Grant. This grant is worth \$40,000 over two years. The overview was reviewed and discussed. A copy of the Guide is attached.

Policy JEBA Early Entry of Students was discussed. Another reading will take place in October.

Mr. Crowson explained that when work on the new lighting project begins, the grade school teachers are willing to move out of their classrooms temporarily as needed.

There being no further business, Chair Warden adjourned the meeting at 10:08 P.M.

Robert Warden, Board Chair

Christine Manley, Board Secretary