

MINUTES

MURFREESBORO CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL CALLED BOARD MEETING--
POLICY WORK SESSION
Tuesday, January 11, 2011
6:30 p.m.—Central Administration Building

ATTENDANCE

Board: Chair Mary Wade, Susan Andrews, Ray Butrum, Butch Campbell, Nancy Duggin, Nancy Phillips, Dennis Rainier. Absent: Council Liaison Ron Washington.

Staff: Director Linda Gilbert, Gary Anderson, Karen Hawkins, Caresa Brooks, Crystal Farris, Kim Fowler, Cheryl Harris, Karen Hawkins, and Priscilla Van Tries.

Others: City Staff Attorney Kelley Baker.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

I. CALL TO ORDER BY BOARD CHAIR

Chair Mary Wade called the meeting to order at approximately 6:34 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

II. ACTION ITEM

A. Approval of Installation of Wireless Internet Service to Remaining Schools without Wireless

Mr. Anderson explained that all but the following schools are wireless: Erma Siegel, Scales, Cason Lane, MNP, Bellwood, and Northfield. The cost to convert these schools to wireless is \$263,512.68; however, if the system contracts within the next couple of days, the cost will decrease for a savings to the system of \$59,110.58. He is asking that the Board approve using \$204,402.10 out of the Technology Fund Balance of \$379,831 to accomplish this. The equipment would be installed by the system's Technology Department.

Mr. Anderson noted that staff is also asking the Board to consider approving the lease of laptops for all of professional educators in our schools after he secures the appropriate documentation from Apple computers. He provided the document titled "Laptop and Wireless Estimated Cost Per School." He pointed out that the agreement would also contain a four-year plus four month warranty. The estimated lease payment per year would be \$143,825. The first year would be taken from the Technology fund balance

with subsequent years to come from the General Purpose Operating Budget. In response to Board questions, Mr. Anderson stated that the laptops would be provided for teachers to use for school business only; emails received cannot be monitored. At schools, the system has filters in place to avoid inappropriate websites from being accessed. Laptops used in the homes of employees on their wireless service would not have the benefit of these filters. Mr. Campbell asked if laptops could be provided to Board members eliminating many paper copies of materials such as board packets, etc. If the Board used a program such as eBoard or TSBA's program, board materials could be transmitted electronically eliminating the need for delivery of paper copies. Dr. Andrews stated that she has two laptops and did not need another one. In response to Mrs. Phillips' question, Mr. Anderson stated that the Technology Fund balance could be rebuilt in reasonable time. Dan Boshers has checked to make sure this is the best purchase price available. The administration will check to see if Council Chambers has wireless access. After additional information is obtained regarding the lease agreement, Mr. Anderson will bring this item back to the Board.

Following discussion, Mrs. Phillips moved to approve the staff recommendation to convert to wireless the remaining six schools at a cost of \$204,402.10 to be taken out of the Technology Fund; Mr. Rainier seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously by acclamation.

III. BOARD POLICY REVIEW -- *Discussion*

1. BO 16—Reimbursement of Expenses for Board Members (Existing Policy)
2. BO 43—Travel Expense Policy (New)
3. BO 44—Reimbursement of Expenses Policy for Murfreesboro City School Board (New)

Mrs. Baker explained that the Board had asked in a previous meeting for her to find out who in other school systems approves board expenditures. This responsibility falls to the director of schools/superintendent in the following school systems with a timeline of 30 days for the submission for reimbursement: Wilson, Cannon, Bedford, Coffee, and Lebanon Special School District. In the Metro-Nashville School System board expense reimbursements are approved by the Chair or Vice Chair of the Board. In Williamson County, this responsibility is delegated to the Finance Office.

BO 16 is the current policy regarding board member reimbursement of expenses. BO 43 and BO 44 mirror what the city government uses. Mrs. Phillips asked about the 50-mile radius and how that would affect having a board retreat that might require lodging. Mrs. Baker stated that BO 43 and BO 44 do not have the 50-mile radius restriction on lodging.

Reimbursement for meals that occur within fifty miles are reimbursed from actual receipts. Reimbursements for meals that occur outside of this radius are reimbursed at the state's per diem rate. Mr. Anderson noted that Board retreat expenses are paid out of a budget line item. Mrs. Baker stated that the Board can develop the policy to include whatever exceptions the Board wishes as long as the policy is officially approved by the Board. She asked that the Board make a motion to include the specific details of how they wish her to revise the policies. Mr. Campbell stated that he did not feel it necessary to add restrictions but leave the policies as they are, without the 50-mile restriction.

Mrs. Duggin moved to approve BO 43—Travel Expense Policy and BO 44—Reimbursement of Expenses Policy for Murfreesboro City School Board as presented. Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. On roll call: Andrews—yes; Butrum—yes; Campbell—yes; Duggin—yes; Phillips—yes; Rainier—no; Wade—yes. The motion carried.

Mrs. Baker clarified that the adoption of BO 44 replaces/eliminates the existing BO 16—Reimbursement of Expenses for Board Members.

IV. REVIEW OF DRAFT JANUARY 25, 2011 BOARD MEETING AGENDA

The Board was provided a DRAFT copy of the January 25, 2011 Board Agenda. Mrs. Wade asked if any Board member wished to discuss an item on the agenda.

Mrs. Wade asked that the Board entertain the use of TSBA to conduct the evaluation of the Director of Schools. The approximate cost would be \$2,000. Mr. Rainier asked if the use of TSBA could be a one-time thing with the Board using the instrument they help develop in subsequent years. Mrs. Wade pointed out that an advantage of using TSBA each year is the one-on-one interviews conducted where a Board member has an opportunity to have in-depth input. She asked that this item be placed on the January 25 board agenda for approval, and if approved, the TSBA representative (Dr. Grissom or Mr. Bennett) be invited to the retreat for a short presentation/discussion. She stated that the evaluation instrument provided by TSBA in the past could be shared with the Board for review. Dr. Andrews reminded the Board that the instrument has been aligned with the system's vision and goals. Suggestions from Board members can be sent to TSBA. The Board would have input and be able to review the final instrument.

Dr. Andrews stated that she would like to revisit having two meetings a month. The past two meetings have been short and could possibly have been combined. Mrs. Wade noted that the policy sessions have been advantageous in that items can be discussed and hashed out before bringing them to a vote at the regular meeting that is televised.

Mrs. Baker explained that the approach she has taken since working with the Board has been to prioritize those policies that need immediate attention; for example, policies that needed immediate attention for inclusion in the parent handbook. She also brings forth policies requested for review/revision by the Board, those requiring revision due to legislative changes, or the need for new policies. To her knowledge during this time, the Board has not reviewed every policy each year. Mrs. Duggin stated that the law has changed and mandates that school boards review all policies within a two-year period. Mrs. Baker stated that this is actually not clear. Different systems have interpreted the law different ways with some saying all policies must be reviewed within two years and with others saying only those policies requiring revision due to legislative changes, revision due to changes in practices/procedures, or at the will of the Board. TSBA suggests a review of all policies within the two-year period. Dr. Butrum stated that as long as he has been on the Board, the Board has not reviewed the policies as required. Dr. Andrews disagreed with Dr. Butrum stating that the Board has reviewed policies in the past due to changes in the law, by request of the Board for a change in practice or procedure, or the need for a new policy.

Mr. Anderson provided the Board handouts entitled “Energy Efficient Schools Initiative, State of Tennessee, Grant Award” and “Energy Efficient Schools Initiative, State of Tennessee, Loan Request and Approval.”

He pointed out that MCS has been awarded a grant totaling \$151,251. MCS will be required to participate in the funding of the proposed project in the amount of \$280,229 as the total cost of the project is \$431,480. The project is designed to install energy efficient replacement boilers at Erma Siegel and Cason Lane. Scales Elementary consumes the most energy of all schools in our district, and this project would also allow for the installation of a “Dedicated Heat Recovery Chiller/Boiler.” These projects have reasonable payback periods so the Board will be asked to approve the use of \$280,229 of its fund balance to pay the required local match portion. Mrs. Phillips and Dr. Andrews asked that Mr. Anderson also look into the possibility of a geothermal system at Scales. Mr. Anderson stated that it is difficult to do because it requires at least four months to do this as well as the issue of duct work inside the building, the small existing control room, etc. There is no quick fix to changing an existing system to geothermal. He will, however, look into this before the next board meeting.

Mr. Anderson also provided the Board information regarding an “Energy Efficient Schools Initiative, State of Tennessee, Loan Request and Approval.” He explained that the State of Tennessee has made available interest-free, ten year loans up to \$1 million to school districts who install Energy Efficient equipment. MCS has applied for and has received approval (pending Board vote and City’s approval for it to be a city-based loan). City Hall has encouraged that the system apply for the loan since it also has a payback

period through energy savings being greater than the total cost of the loan before it has to be fully paid off. The matching amount for the school system is estimated to be \$35,238 to be taken from General Purpose. Full payback is estimated at eight and one-half years. The project would involve: upgrading lighting fixtures at Bellwood, Bradley, Discovery, Hobgood, MNE and MNP; upgrading some HVAC units at Hobgood, Discovery, and MNP. Staff will be recommending that approval be given to proceed with securing this loan and request (State requirement) that the City of Murfreesboro sign-off as the borrower of the funds.

Mr. Anderson provided the Board with a budget development timeline for 2011-12. He also provided board members with a sheet titled "School Board Member Input for 2011-2012 General Purpose Budget."

Mrs. Phillips asked if there is a budget concern with gas prices beginning to increase. Mr. Anderson responded that the transportation budget is good for this year, but he is concerned for next year.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Wade adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:50 p.m.

Director of Schools

MISSION STATEMENT

*To assure academic and personal success
for each child.*