

MINUTES — SPECIAL MEETING MARCH 2, 2010

- 1) A special meeting of the Hillsboro Community Unit School District No. 3 Board of Education was called to order by President Bill Clinard at the Unit Office at 7:00 p.m.
- 2) The following members of the Hillsboro Board answered present to roll call: Barbara Adams, Greg Bellaver, Trina Britton, Lynne Hutchison, Bill Jurgena, Earl Meier and Bill Clinard.
- 3) Agenda Item 2.0. Hillsboro Unit Education Association Comments on Proposed Budget Cuts. Pres. Clinard asked Hillsboro Unit Education Association President Terry Trader to address the Board. HUEA Pres. Trader stated, "I am speaking on behalf of the Hillsboro Unit Educational Association. We do appreciate the opportunity that you have given all the public and our organization to offer suggestions in a public forum. We also respect the Boards commitment to fiscal responsibility. With that in mind, we know you are faced with some very difficult decisions. The suggestions, we bring to you do not come without hardship. We do feel our suggestions provide the Board with options that we think can reduce cost, with a minimal impact on classroom instruction. As educators, we want what is best for kids. With that in mind, we place these proposals before you." Copies of the recommendations for budget deficit reduction were given to the Board members. Theses recommendations included the following; begin the school year after Labor Day, implement an energy savings plan, close the unit office building, reduce internal suspension and utilize a substitute teacher, discontinue the Saturday detention program at the high school, reduce administrative positions, reduce administrative pay at all levels through the use of "furlough days", take advantage of cost control measures that have been collectively bargained, condense bus routes, eliminate late bus routes, increase athletic fees, eliminate building use fee waivers, increase the fees for behind the wheel driver's training, explore additional grant funding, increase tax levies to replace state funding, and sell the unit office building and relocate. HUEA Pres. Trader stated, "We know that the proposals, we have placed before the Board will call for sacrifice. We know that a reduction in administrative staff, in light of increasing mandates, will cause our administrators to do more with less. We know that because, we have been and are being asked to do the same. The burden of new state mandates falls heaviest on the shoulders of the teachers. The teachers are called on to revise their curriculums and provide differentiated instruction, to implement the testing and remediation requirements of RtI, to develop standards aligned curriculum, and to design and implement the changes needed to make AYP. We know our proposals are modest in terms of cost savings in comparison of what you already have. We know they do not off-set the proposals you already have entirely. However, we do feel these options if accepted by the Board would allow you to keep more teachers in the classroom. Teachers are the front-line of the education system and we urge you to keep that line strong."
- 4) Supt. Powell thanked, "HUEA Pres. Trader for the union's proposals. These proposals will be considered and questions asked."
- 5) Agenda Item 3.0. Discussion of Proposed Budget Cuts. Supt. Powell addressed the questions that were asked at the previous Board meeting. Supt. Powell first addressed the question of the unit office facility. Supt. Powell stated, "This buildings utilities are about \$8,000 a year. The insurance is part of our package, which is about \$1,000 a year. The building maintenance is in pretty good shape. We will have 6 staff next year and also need to house a lot of records. Looking around the District, I have not seen the space. The meeting space is not necessary. We can meet anywhere. Workspace, office space, and record storage space, that we have to have access to, I haven't seen it anywhere. If anyone has a specific location, I would be open to that. If we could move someplace, where we could conduct the District's business at a savings, I would be the first to do that. Also, we talked about contacting the legislators, on the

school web-site is the contact information for Senator Demuzio and Representative Hannig. If anyone wants specific information, please call and I will talk to you and help you formulate a letter.”

- 6) Agenda Item 4.0. Public Comment.  
Pres. Clinard opened this part of the meeting to the public.
- 7) Former Board Member Doug Donaldson addressed the Board and the audience. Mr. Donaldson stated, “Today, Witt was presented with the Spotlight Award, which recognizes a high poverty school where academic performance is closing the achievement gap. It was one of only 425 schools in the state slated for this. It is a big deal for Witt. I just want to tell the Board, you have a tough decision ahead. I thank you for serving and good luck.” At this time, Mr. Donaldson presented the Board with a petition with 365 signatures.
- 8) Lillian Clayton asked, “Last year, when you hired the assistant superintendent it was brought up that Mr. Gaither was paid by a Risk Management grant. If his position is cut, how will this save the District money?” Supt. Powell responded, “His pay does come from District funds. What you might be recalling is that it comes from not the Education Fund but the Tort Fund. It is District money, tax payer money, and local money. It is not state money. It is local tax money. It doesn’t come from the same fund teacher’s salaries come from but it is District money. When we cut that administrative position, it will be a savings for the District.”
- 9) Witt resident Keith Altevogt asked, “Is Witt School the only one being threatened with closing?” Supt. Powell responded, “My recommendation in the beginning was to look at closing a school and the best way to allocate salaries and staffing for elementary students. We looked briefly at closing Coffeen, Witt, or both. My recommendation was to close Witt because of the number of students. Coffeen is more fully utilized and the age of the building was another consideration.”
- 10) Parent Shawna Horn stated, “I did some research pertaining to the funds we have and the recommendation to close Witt School. When I left last Tuesday, I didn’t see how it was possibly to close a school. Unfortunately, I have concluded that you are correct. There is no money in the state or the federal government. We are not going to find any money except through grants or possibly our county legislators, with a sales tax.”
- 11) HHS graduate Ben McDonald commented, “I know, there has been some consideration about changes to the foreign language department. I would like to say, I am taking a foreign language class in collage. In high school, I attempted to use a computer program to learn a language. I would like to say many collages do look favorably upon students having two years of a foreign language and there aren’t a lot of options other than having a high school class.”
- 12) Shawna Horn stated, “I found switching from a title program to a school-wide program takes time. But, this will give Mr. Powell and the Board more room with the budget and then they will be able to serve more children.” Asst. Supt. Hacke explained, “Currently, our Title Program is a targeted assistance program and what Ms. Horn is talking about is switching to a school-wide program, which does not get us any more funds but does allow us to use them in a broader way.”
- 13) Penny Dixon stated, “We probably do need to look among ourselves for financial resources. We all have to tighten our belts in our own homes. I work for a health department and when it comes to funding from the State of Illinois, we are looking at what programs can we close. I think parents have to be willing to put money into their child’s education other than taxes.”

- 14) Ralph Niehaus stated, "What I would like to say to you is, when you go home sit down and write a letter to your legislators and remind them they were elected to serve you and me." Pres. Clinard closed the public comment portion of the meeting at this time.
- 15) Agenda Item 5.0. Consideration of Closure of Witt School.  
Pres. Clinard asked for discussion. Trina Britton stated, "Twelve years ago, I fought hard as a community member for Witt School to be annexed to Hillsboro. My family and others went through a difficult time by taking a stand. In fact, the bitterness is still present. We accomplished the job and the Hillsboro District realized over \$2,000,000 for Witt's annexation. The comments you have heard over the last two weeks to save Witt School is not over Witt School not being good enough. It was about the want and need to keep school open. The faculty and staff at Witt School are much more than educators. They administer to our children. So, from the bottom of my heart, I say, 'Thank you.' I as a Board Member wanted to be included on something as important as closing Witt School. I believe when undertaking something such as closing a school, it needs much preparation and planning. If this was done, I was not part of it. My main concern was not for me for I have no more children to go to Witt. My concern now and always has been the 116 boys and girls, that is 76 elementary students and 40 Pre-K students, who are safe, secure, and loved in that building. I take the education of young children very seriously and I hope and pray that neither politics, nor personal agenda had any part in this decision." Upon a motion by Bill Jurgena, seconded by Pres. Clinard, approve the closure of Witt Elementary School at the conclusion of the 2009-2010 school year. On roll call the following voted yes: Barbara Adams, Greg Bellaver, Lynne Hutchison, Bill Jurgena, Earl Meier, and Bill Clinard. The following voted no: Trina Britton. Motion carried 6-1.
- 16) Agenda Item 6.0. Consideration of Reducing Pre-Kindergarten Program.  
Pres. Clinard asked for discussion. There was none. Upon a motion by Vice-Pres. Adams, seconded by Secy. Hutchison, approve the reduction of District #3's Pre-Kindergarten Program to one special education section only, through reduction in force proceedings, until such time as the grant allocations for the program is known. At which time, the Board will reconsider its staffing level. On roll call the following voted yes: Greg Bellaver, Trina Britton, Lynne Hutchison, Bill Jurgena, Earl Meier, Barbara Adams, and Bill Clinard. Motion carried 7-0.
- 17) Agenda Item 7.0. Consideration of Reducing Title Program.  
Upon a motion by Vice-Pres. Adams, seconded by Secy. Hutchison, approve the reduction of District #3's Title Program, through the reduction in force proceedings, to a staffing level which can be supported fully by its anticipated fiscal year 2011 grant allocation. On roll call the following voted yes: Trina Britton, Lynne Hutchison, Bill Jurgena, Earl Meier, Barbara Adams, Greg Bellaver, and Bill Clinard. Motion carried 7-0.
- 18) Agenda Item 8.0. Executive Session.  
Upon a motion by Secy. Hutchison, seconded by Bill Jurgena, move to go into executive session at 7:38 p.m. to discuss personnel. On roll call the following voted yes: Lynne Hutchison, Bill Jurgena, Earl Meier, Barbara Adams, Greg Bellaver, Trina Britton, and Bill Clinard. Motion carried 7-0.
- 19) Agenda Item 8.0. Executive Session.  
Upon a motion by Secy. Hutchison, seconded by Bill Jurgena, move to go out of executive session at 9:54 p.m. Voice vote. Motion carried.
- 20) Upon a motion by Secy. Hutchison, and seconded by Bill Jurgena, move to adjourn. Voice vote. Motion carried.

21) Meeting adjourned at 9:56 p.m.

Hillsboro, Illinois  
March 2, 2010

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Thomas William Clinard, President  
Board of Education

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Lynne Hutchison, Secretary  
Board of Education

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Date minutes approved