

MINUTES – SPECIAL MEETING – APRIL 12, 2007

- 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 6:00 p.m.
- 2) The following members of the Hillsboro Board answered present to roll call: Barbara Adams, Trina Britton, Lynne Hutchison, Bill Jones, Bill Jurgena and Bill Clinard.
Absent: Doug Donaldson.
- 3) Agenda Item II. Presentation of Appeal Concerning RIF's by HUEA Local #4135.
High School Social Studies teacher/Athletic Director and HUEA spokesperson Terry Trader thanked the board for the opportunity to present their considerations prior to the board's decision of employing non-tenured certified staff for the coming 2007-2008 school year. Other HUEA reps present were High School English/Spanish teacher and HUEA Pres. Patty Heyen, Beckemeyer Elementary School teachers Carol Naylor and Linda Meyer. They didn't realize that their presentation would be made at a special meeting.
Supt. Burton explained that the board would not be able to hear their presentation and give it consideration at the same meeting they would either be hiring or RIFing staff. Spokesperson Trader continued, they appreciated the board members coming back in for another meeting to listen to the union. As the board was aware, there has been a significant reduction in force, all done through attrition in past years. They are teaching with less staff than in previous years. This has impacted their work of teaching because of decreases in preparation time, increases in class load, some curriculum has been cut and this was an area of concern for them. They realized the board had to make hard decisions, based on educational funding and student population. And, the decision to RIF was the board's alone. The reason the union sent the letter to the board in part was to keep their members informed. The question was, are they RIFing all non-tenured staff? This presentation was also requested in order to discuss with the board any RIFs and to use that as part of the decision-making process and give the board information as well. The presentation is not to challenge the board decision, but to give input. If there are RIF's, the superintendent knows the regulations regarding the time-lines on that and the union is willing to work with the superintendent on that. We hoped to not get a reply to this request and that would mean no cuts.
HUEA Pres. Heyen added, at the high school they had 33 full-time staff and 15 teach 6 classes a day. They are looking at the State's required increase in graduation requirements and having extra time to prepare impacts how we succeed at that. That is our greatest fear. We are going to be losing a significant number of teachers this year and when they are not replaced that becomes a heavy burden for the other teachers to handle. Elementary teacher Naylor pointed out they only have a half hour planning time and a lot of times parents need to be called and kids have issues that need to be addressed and that cuts into their planning time.
Elementary teacher Meyer had no comment.
Supt. Burton indicated no decisions had been made at this time. We have laid out a scope and those decisions will be made on Monday evening in closed session, one hour after the bond petition period closes. The two are closely correlated and he couldn't give an exact

number. There could be zero to four positions not filled, or zero to eleven non-tenured teachers not hired back. People should not panic, that decision has not been made. The bond sale heavily impacts that decision. Four days and four evenings, if you look at the agenda you will see board RIFs and employment and at this point, we don't know where we will be at the end of Monday night. Is there a possibility there will be no RIFs, yes.

Spokesperson Trader stated, "If we don't replace the people retiring, that is a RIF."

Supt. Burton indicated, "There could be 15 RIFs, as a worse case scenario."

Spokesperson Trader wondered, "In terms of funds, we are looking at money spent from the Education Fund. Are you only looking at cutting teachers? What are the plans? If the final decisions are to be made Monday, this was the union's last opportunity to give input to the board.

Supt. Burton commented, "If you will notice in regards to tenured staff, it is mandated non-tenured staff be notified 45 days before the end of the school year and non-certified staff be notified 30 days prior to the end of the school year if there are to be RIF's. We haven't even started the real cuts yet. Nor have we talked about cutting supplies, equipment, etc. Unequivocally we are not concentrating on one area. We have to blend into that the worse case scenario, every employee group would be touched, if put into the worse case scenario. The district used all of it's carry-over Title money, and all surplus money, but we will be finishing the year with a balanced budget. We don't have any money to work with next year. All the principals, all the homework has been given out to the board. They know if funding options don't materialize, or if the bond sale doesn't go through there will be cuts. It's illegal to run a deficit budget now and he mentioned this to HUEA Pres. Heyen. He hated to see anyone told that might be RIFed until after Monday night. At this point in time, there is not need to panic on potential cuts.

Pres. Clinard remarked, "We just have 16 working hours to get through. That is why the bond issue is there."

Spokesperson Trader wondered, "If there would be cuts in Title funds? Now we are using district money to fund those grants. This year you went to that practice and past practice always was followed once the money was there."

Vice-Pres. Jones commented, "We don't want to do that if we don't need to. Why put some one through that if you don't have to."

Spokesperson Trader wondered, "What happens if the grant's don't come through?"

Vice-Pres. Jones responded, "Because we have to have a balance budget now, if the bond sale fails, or the Governor doesn't get the money he's wanting for education, if something happens, then we would have scramble, because we told those people they would still be employed."

Spokesperson Trader asked about the bond sale.

Supt. Burton indicated, "If the bond sale goes through there will be no cuts, there will be no RIFs and there will not be cut backs in grant areas this year. Beginning next fall all grants will be self-sufficient. We have other grants that can help in those areas."

Bill Jurgena commented, "The district has been subsidizing the grants the last 4 years, that is where our surplus has gone."

Supt. Burton stated, "He didn't want to panic anyone. In previous years when cuts were made, he came around to each of the buildings and spoke with staff. He hoped that he could come back Monday night, it's all there and it will be a relief when it's all over. The Journal-News reporter Mike Plunkett will call the next day and he didn't see the

point, didn't want non-certified people all sitting there thinking 'Am I going to get axed?', with the board's comment 'keep what we have,' I want to do that, if you can just hang on for 16 working hours. The 30 day petition period is up on Saturday, but it has to be a working day, so we have to wait until Monday at 5:00 p.m."

Spokesperson Trader stated, "We have an obligation to our members too. We haven't laid off tenured people. We had 140 teachers and now we are down to 120 teachers. We have to be vigilant too, as union reps. We have to file this kind of letter and we will speak on their behalf, we see that the union has input. We have got to be vigilant and we are already feeling the pinch."

Supt. Burton suggested, "Meet with the union Tuesday after school."

Bill Jurgena remarked, "Basically what I'm getting at, don't try to meet at all the first week."

Spokesperson Trader indicated, "There had to be a meeting, it would be accurate for us to represent the union, there are too many unanswered questions, what grant level will be impacted next year, you have your preparation for the worse case scenario."

Lynne Hutchison commented, "We don't want to make cuts."

Vice-Pres. Jones remarked, "We have a great system, the State requirement for 4 years of English in order to graduate comes in this coming school year and we tried to do our part on that last year. Hopefully, by next week we will know."

Pres. Clinard indicated, "We hope we don't get petitioned and we hope the Governor comes through with the money he wants for education."

Spokesperson Trader remarked, "We understand where the situation is at. Don't want to present the worse case scenario. This is part of the process. Your very presence here indicates this is part of the process. This is not to make a statement on union strength. Should the worse case scenario or anything short of that happen, we want you to know that we want to be part of the process."

Supt. Burton stated, "We do everything in this State backwards. We have to employ staff before we know what funds we are getting. The grants will be down this year, for the vocational funds Pres. Bush is making huge cuts in those the coming year. Title grant funds have lost \$50,000 in each of the past two years. Student population is down this year. On the other hand, the Governor is saying there will be increases in special ed. and the foundation level of one point two million for District #3. He didn't want to panic staff."

Spokesperson Trader remarked, "The union just wanted to make sure we are all on the same page."

Supt. Burton commented, "Hope we don't have to make the rounds of the schools, that is the worse case scenario."

Teacher Naylor wondered, "Cuts will be made on just the teachers?"

Supt. Burton responded, "They will be on all certified staff. We have not talked about any one else because of the timelines."

Vice-Pres. Jones responded, "We are making the dismissals now that we have to make by law."

Pres. Clinard asked, "If there was anything else?"

- 4) Upon a motion by Bill Jurgena, seconded by Vice-Pres. Jones, move to adjourn. Voice vote. Motion carried.

5) Meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

Hillsboro, Illinois
April 12, 2007

Thomas William Clinard, President
Board of Education

Trina R. Britton, Secretary
Board of Education

Date minutes approved