

Rochester Board of Education
Special Meeting
May 10, 2006
5:30 p.m.

Minutes

Attendance: Commissioners Brennan, Elliott, Evans, Garcia, Henley, Powell, Thompson, Student Representative Dominique Simmonds; Dr. Rivera.

President Garcia convened the meeting at 5:30 p.m.
Act of Reverence led by Commissioner Elliott.

Discussion:

Motion to adopt Resolution 2005-06: 746 adopting the 2006-07 Budget made by Commissioner Powell, Seconded by Commissioner Thompson.

President Garcia invited the Commissioners to comment on the resolution.

Commissioner Evans: I'm pleased that this budget maintains librarians and non-instructional items that are sometimes not equated to education but are critical to our students' development. When students are in our care they get the essentials; there are things the community has to do too.

Commissioner Powell: The District owes a debt of gratitude to our State elected officials for coming through with the State funding. It essentially allows us to keep our programs whole. Although there were some shortcomings, the impact was we had to scale back initiatives and efforts to try new things. That's sad. We're constrained when we try to do things that we hope will make a real difference. I'm pleased that we have funding to continue our educational programs and forward some of Dr. Rivera's initiatives.

Commissioner Brennan: I'd like to thank staff for their work. We're a new board with an unusually high number of new members. We put you through your paces and I appreciate your help and consideration. Our overarching responsibility is that we spend the taxpayers' money as frugally as possible and get the best bang for buck, now and throughout the year. We have to have access to the information we need. We are very mindful of our responsibilities.

Commissioner Henley: I'd like to thank our State and local leaders. It's a progressive budget; proactive and not reactive. I'd also like to thank my colleagues for all the hard work put into budget, section by section.

Student Representative Ms. Simmonds: I'm glad to see art and music in the budget.

Commissioner Garcia: I appreciate the budget process and the Superintendent's work. I'd also like to thank Commissioner Powell for her work preparing discussion sessions and sticking to a schedule.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Brennan - Yes
Commissioner Elliott - No
Commissioner Evans - Yes
Commissioner Garcia - Yes
Commissioner Henley - Yes
Commissioner Powell - Yes
Commissioner Thompson - Yes

Adopted 6-1 with Commissioner Elliott dissenting.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2005-06: 747 Capital Improvement Plan 2006-07 made by Commissioner Powell, Seconded by Commissioner Evans.

Commissioner Powell: The Finance Committee discussed the Capital Improvement Plan two months ago. We did not have a large number of questions because of the high-quality presentation. We approved for forwarding to the full Board a few moments ago.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Brennan - Yes
Commissioner Elliott - No (*Commissioner Elliott preceded her vote with the comment that she did not have the expertise to ask the kind of critical questions required by this resolution.*)
Commissioner Evans - Yes
Commissioner Garcia - Yes
Commissioner Henley - Yes
Commissioner Powell - Yes
Commissioner Thompson - Yes

Approved 6-1 with Commissioner Elliott dissenting.

President Garcia invited Superintendent Rivera's comments.

Dr. Rivera: I'd like to thank the Board for its support. Changing and redirecting public education really is a team effort and includes all staff. Having the budget available on-line helped the Board complete its due diligence. Now we will begin looking at how can we improve the process even further. I'd like to thank our State delegation. I cannot say enough about the terrific work by the Dean of our delegation, David Gantt. We sincerely appreciate his efforts and all of their efforts to help us keep a budget that is sound. It continues to enable us to advance, continue our good results, and initiate some new directions for high schools. Addressing the drop out rate has to be a whole-system effort. I'd also like to thank my staff for their hard work.

Final adjustments to the budget include position freezes; I hope to complete a priority list by next Friday of restorations should we receive additional grant funding. We should also establish a cut-off point and build a reserve should we receive additional revenue.

Adjournment:

President Garcia called for a motion to adjourn. Motion made by Commissioner Thompson, Seconded by Commissioner Powell, carried at 5:47 p.m.