

# ***Spotlight on the Board***

## **Notes from the District 15 School Board Meetings**

### **April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

This was a Regular Board of Education meeting. All members were present at Roll Call.

### **Election of Board Officers**

#### **Election of Permanent Board of Education President**

**Board member Jim Ekeberg nominated Gerald Chapman** for Board of Education President, seconded by Board member Nancy Lee Carlson.

#### **Board discussion –**

**Board member Tim Millar** - concerned over possible conflict with having a new superintendent and having a former superintendent in the BOE President position.

**Carlson** – doesn't see a conflict under any circumstances

**Approved 4:3** (Yes: Carlson, Chapman, Ekeberg, Keenan; No: Millar, Quinn, Rowden)

#### **Election of Permanent Board of Education Vice President**

**Board member Nancy Lee Carlson nominated Kelly Keenan** for Board of Education Vice President, seconded by Board Member Jim Ekeberg.

**Approved 4:3** (Yes: Carlson, Chapman, Ekeberg, Keenan; No: Quinn, Rowden, Millar)

#### **Election of Permanent Board of Education Secretary**

**Board member Nancy Lee Carlson nominated June Becker** for Board of Education Secretary. Unanimously approved.

### **Board Discussion and Reports**

#### **First Reading – BOE Policy 4:55 Operational Services: Bidding Procedures**

*Reference:* [www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15\\_policy\\_4\\_55\\_bidding.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15_policy_4_55_bidding.pdf)

#### **Board discussion –**

**NOTE:** Discussion began while a majority of the audience was leaving the room and talking after various recognitions took place. It was very difficult to hear the Board's conversation for approximately five minutes which included the ED-RED report, D15 Educational Foundation report and the beginning of the discussion on this policy.

**Millar** – Concerned that the district doesn't have a policy on bidding procedures. Said the key to having a policy is to remove any doubts from the district and the Board and to make sure the district has the best success with the process and that there is no questioning the process. He knows that some concerns were raised regarding technology – said that piece of the policy can be pulled.

Referred to last year – the district used architectural services to put in carpeting; \$35K could have been saved on that. Regarding electric – the district is now paying 30% less because it was bid out. The State doesn't believe we needed to. Regarding banking – the district saved a lot of money there. Bonds and legal services were bid out the first time, but it wasn't done the second time in the same way. Millar thinks it is important to find a way to move this policy forward instead of to keep delaying it. This issue has been out there for a long time.

**Board member Wendy Rowden** – It is her understanding that this policy did go to the Policy Committee this past Monday. Suggests that the Board make a motion to approve this and then hear what the concerns were, then the Board can decide whether it wants to keep it for First Reading "as is" or have recommendations for modifications because it is on first reading. She would like to know what the concerns are from Dr. Sophie (part of Policy Committee) and then possibly make those changes in

the First Reading so it comes back changed for Second Reading. Rowden wasn't at the last Policy Committee meeting, so would like to hear what the discussion was. Said that if the Board doesn't hear what the concerns are and be able to discuss them, then this issue will be postponed another month. Let's make the recommended changes so that they can go into the policy meeting to review.

**Superintendent Dr. McKanna** – The Policy meeting discussion was summarized by Dr. Sophie, Asst. Superintendent and emails sent to Board members in the Finance and Policy committees. McKanna sent out the information again this afternoon to all seven Board members so that everyone could see the six concerns that were raised in the meeting. The biggest concern that was raised was how some administrators were feeling as to some of the levels that were put in there (policy).

**Carlson** – Would like this put off because she did not have time this afternoon to review the information. She has some questions over all of the legalities of this issue (bidding procedures). There was a lawsuit concerning this that was dismissed and there is a lot of wrangling about this before we have a policy governing something we have to live by. She really has some grave concerns and presumed that it would go from the Finance committee to the Policy committee. Carlson would like to listen to the Policy committee concerns. She has some very grave concerns of her own and a lot of questions. Her main concern is the lawsuits that were dismissed concerning basically these same exact issues. Doesn't quite understand why the Board is having this policy because school code does provide the district with being able to bid. In her mind, she doesn't understand why we have to have a policy.

**Keenan** – Asked Carlson is she was referring to the D211 lawsuit?

**Carlson** – There has been a couple of different lawsuits on purchasing. She hasn't seen the legal opinion; perhaps she missed it concerning any of these issues.

**Millar** – Again, we want to model success and the State of IL is not exactly his ideal model of success when it comes to doing business. The school district has certain guidelines and it says that you don't have to (bid), it doesn't say that you can't (bid). By doing that (bidding in the past), we saved a lot of money, we put teachers in the classroom.

Mentioned that there was another issue that came up – D214 just had an issue where they had a No-bid contract that made the news. Again we (D15) don't want to be in those situations. It is better to be proactive than wait for laws to come out to say that it is better to bid these things.

Millar really does not understand the logic of why you wouldn't want to bid unless it is problematic for administration. Again those are the things we need to work out.

Asked why would you not want to bid things like Workmen's Compensation which could have saved us \$1.5 M dollars? Or electric, which could have been one million dollars on that. Doesn't understand why you wouldn't want to do something that will guarantee you an element of success than not doing it.

**Carlson** – Doesn't necessarily think it will guarantee you that. The way the law is written it is not required one way or another to bid. It gives us the flexibility to do that. Her concern is how this juxtaposes with the present state of law in IL and do we even need this policy. Doesn't know if we even need it. She has some grave concerns. Not sure where Millar is coming up with all of those numbers but Carlson thinks before the Board can actually discuss this entire policy - since this came from the Finance Committee which is fine. She has some questions that she would like to have answered and she doesn't think we can do this quickly. Would like to have an opinion as to some of these issues that she has.

**Rowden** – Said that if Carlson has questions, she needs to ask the questions in order to get the answers. Rowden doesn't hear the questions, just hears that she has grave concerns other than pointing to the fact that school code only requires "X". We have higher expectations in this district than the majority of schools around the state. If we set our expectations at minimal standards than that is all we are ever going to get. Said that Millar is absolutely correct that we saved well over a million dollars for this district because we bid out electricity (last year). And had we not, we would have spent more than a million dollars with what was brought before us. Rowden said that this isn't the first time

the Board has had this conversation. All she is asking is if Carlson has concerns or if anyone has questions, we can't get answers if the questions are not put out there.

**Keenan** – Did hear one question from Carlson – why do we need this policy? Keenan thinks Rowden answered it – while they don't have it in (school code) for energy contracts, we did save a lot of money over what the going rate was. That is why we need it (the policy). However, she agrees that it shouldn't be over burdensome to the person in the district that has to do the work.

**Chapman** – His concern: The Finance Committee has recommended a policy; the Policy Committee reviewed it and is not recommending it in its current state. He thinks it should go back to the Policy Committee for a rewrite based on what the Policy committee has discussed.

**Board member Sue Quinn** – Thinks that this (policy) is a great idea and a great first step. Thinks there are great ideas in there but the details need to be hashed out. Suggests that if the Policy and Finance committees can get together as a joint committee, the process can be expedited. Maybe there could be one or two joint meetings before the next Board meeting.

**Chapman** – Asked if there were any objections? (none)

## Capital Expenditures and Annual Budget

*Reference:* Capital Expenditure 5-Year Plan [www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15\\_capital\\_plan.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15_capital_plan.pdf)

**McKanna** – A concern was raised by a Board member that there wasn't any substantial capital improvement dollars in the budget – only enough to make repairs, not really to make improvements. There is a Life/Safety list of \$30M that needs to be done and the Board can argue whether that is legitimate or not. The Board has to agree that there is several million dollars that needs to be done. The question is – how to you fund it? Do you fund it out of the regular budget; do a referendum to get bond money or whatever technique needs to be used? McKanna thinks that is a Board decision to decide how to fund that. There is concern being raised that there needs to be some money put in there.

Word from the Finance committee, as he understands it, one of the big issues is \$3M for the curtain walls in three different buildings. Bob Strande and George Lingel, Business Managers said it can't be done this summer because of all of the bids, specifications, etc. so they did not put that into the budget. McKanna thought it should go to the Facilities Committee, other Board Members said no, it didn't belong there so that is why McKanna put it on the agenda for tonight.

He thinks the decision should be – is the Board comfortable/satisfied with the money that is in the budget for capital improvements or does it want money added in? If so, for what?

**Quinn** – The question she would like answered before the Board decides finally what the budget is going to be for 2008/2009 – is we have \$3.9M for the five-year projection, in terms of capital improvements for large capital projects – not just maintenance.

We have about \$1.4M in capital for Operations and Maintenance for next year.

Quinn wants to know – What if any of that \$3.9M will be taken care of under that \$1.4M that we currently have in the budget?

**Keenan** – Said that she looked at some of the numbers and also from being in the Facilities committee. Regarding the shared lot between the church and Winston Campus, she noticed the \$200K for asphalt. Keenan knows that Craig Phillips, Maintenance used that number if the district had to make their own parking lot at Winston Campus. But that is not the actual number if the lease (with the church) turns out to be correct. She thinks there are a lot of other numbers that are like that. So, Keenan would like the Facilities and Budget committee to get together and go through some of these numbers to make sure these are the numbers the Board wants to do – which are hard numbers and which are fuzzy numbers?

**Quinn** – Asked, so the Facilities committee doesn't want to do that by itself?

**Chapman** – Wanted to know if the Budget committee was open to that?

**Millar** – Said that what precipitated this issue – the projections that we did for our forecasting for budgeting our financial position had absolutely no dollars allocated. That was his big concern. We are planning now with these budgets for the next five years. Nothing was put in there.

We also had a bond deal a couple of years ago that was supposed to do these improvements and we have only spent about \$1.5M of it.

**Quinn** – Asked if she could get an answer to her question (above)?

**Bob Strande, Business Manager** – As McKanna alluded to, the money that is in the budget which is over \$1M is for so called capital improvements. It is for items that are not yet designated per se – we know that some may go to our parking lot, or a roof but it is not specifically this item or this item.

In a district this size – for the properties that we have – we know from tradition/history that over the course of a year, this much money will be spent just to fix and report capital items. It is not a total roof replacement or total parking lot renovation.

**Keenan** – It is the difference between being reactionary and proactive.

**Strande** – The proactive is the question the Board has before it.

**Keenan** – Exactly, the reactionary is the \$1M, the proactive is the other.

**Strande** – If we spent \$30M, we would need less money year to year because all of those items we are trying to patch together would be taken care of.

**Chapman** – Another fact – to get the Finance committee together (with Facilities) is take a long-term look at all of our facilities. You don't want to spend a significant amount of money on maintenance for a building that has a long-term plan for something else.

**Quinn** – Thinks the joint committee is a good idea but her immediate concern and it ties into doing the joint committee is which of these items Craig Phillips would really consider needs to be done.

**Chapman** – That's where the committee can be helpful because we have had a preliminary discussion of the issues and we have not set priorities but we have to do that exactly.

**Quinn** – Doesn't want to set the priorities, wants Phillips to set them.

**Chapman** – Phillips is on the Facilities committee.

**Quinn** – Agrees as long as that is the focus of it, just discerning what the priorities are – then discussing money and where it needs to come from because there is only so much and to balance the budget for next year.

**Chapman** – Asked if there were any objections? (None)

## Committee Reports

### Finance Committee

**Millar** – The committee hasn't met. There was one item that was suggested which would be the Workmen's Compensation options. That would be the Boards' decision if they would like to have that put to the Finance Committee or just have it presented by staff.

**Chapman** – Asked what is the issue with the Workmen's Compensation?

**Millar** – We were able to go out and get options on that. That's where the \$1.5M gain comes from. One of the options is to do a self-insurance plan which would save us about \$1.5M over the last few years as well as get bids to find out what the tradeoffs and the risks would be.

**Chapman** – So the question is does the Board want to give the Finance committee that charge to look into those options? No objections from any Board members? Then, the Board will look forward to the committee's recommendation.

### Communications Committee

**Quinn** – There haven't been any Communications committee meetings and we are coming to the close of the school year. We need to have a discussion at the next Board meeting about what the charge of the Communications committee is – it was originally envisioned as a one-year trial. Maybe we can talk together about where it is going.

## Facility/Architectural/Real Estate Committee

**Keenan** – The committee met yesterday (April 8<sup>th</sup>), Chapman, Quinn and Keenan were present. Two park district contracts are up for approval tonight and the last one will be next month. Regarding the audit – 15 principals have completed their interviews. At the June Board meeting, Mr. Craig Phillips (maintenance) is going to bring a preliminary/updated report – the mid-way report that tells us the progress. The committee is still looking at improving sidewalk access to schools. There will be a report from Phillips next month. Still looking into the lease between the church and Winston Campus. The committee's next meeting is (Tuesday) May 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Quinn** – Commented that she was glad to hear that there will be a preliminary report in June before the full Board. Thinks that the facilities audit is so all-compassing and something the full Board needs to be involved in as we go forward. It is going to tie into the strategic planning and everything else.

**Keenan** – It will probably go to the Facilities meeting first and then it will be to the full Board. There will be an update and format as to how it is presented to the Board.

## Action Items

### Personnel Report – Including Establishment of Salaries for Non-Union Employees

#### Non-Reemployment of Probationary Teachers

Motion to hold votes until after Executive Session. Unanimously approved.

### Establish Ending Date – 2007/2008 School Year – Friday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008

Unanimously approved.

## Transportation

1. Performance Benchmarks *Reference:* [www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15\\_trans\\_benchmarks.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15_trans_benchmarks.pdf)
2. Bus Drivers' Children Riding on Buses
3. Mid-Day Parking of School Buses in Driveways

**Chapman** – There have been three transportation issues that have been brought forward. One is establishing performance benchmarks for the transportation department. Another one is concern about the policy of bus drivers' children riding on buses and also an issue about whether we should continue to allow our bus drivers to park their vehicles in their areas near their homes. It is allowed now if their second route is considered to be more efficient to allow them to park the bus rather than return it to the bus yard. Chapman's suggestion is that the Board refer these issues to the superintendent and ask him to review them with staff and come back with a recommendation at our next meeting. Chapman would like to hear what the impact is in terms of the administration's review. He is open to all three issues but thinks we should find out the impact before taking action on the items.

**Quinn** – Stated that she wrote the transportation performance benchmarks. She put them together because we have been going through a lot of transportation issues and she wanted it to serve a couple of purposes. One is to provide benchmarks that would give us a common language when talking about whether we are achieving success in our transportation department. So when we talk amongst ourselves as Board members but also with the administration in the transportation department, we can all be talking about the same thing and know whether we are meeting benchmark or not. Hopefully the administration will bring to us proposals on ways to meet those benchmarks. Thinks it is dependent upon the Board to set some goals to be strived for and thinks that is entirely appropriate as the Board's job.

Said that she gave these benchmarks early enough to the administration and felt confident she would get some feedback before tonight. But if we want to take some more time to look at it and get more feedback, Quinn is fine with that. Thinks it needs to be a discussion but ultimately the responsibility lies with the Board.

**Chapman** – Absolutely, no disagreement with that at all. He just feels that it is important to get the administration's recommendations on the issues.

**Keenan** – Said that she has some different benchmarks that she would like to see – for example: no routes over 45 minutes long. Asked how we are going to craft the best benchmarks for the entire Board to agree upon? Also, regarding issue #2 (Bus Drivers' Children riding on buses), she asked if the district's lawyers know this is happening?

**Rowden** – Stated that she wrote issues #2 and #3 (Mid-day parking of school buses in driveways). She would echo what Quinn just said – Rowden brought up these issues long ago with the administration. She sees no problem waiting for some feedback on that if she is actually going to get some feedback. What Rowden has been told is that this has not been a policy, it has just been a practice that the district allowed. She has serious concerns from her own personal experience of observation with both issues. These issues don't revolve around her personal experience but having had the opportunity to have that as a personal experience, it concerns her as to how many other people have these issues. If this is brought back, how do you see Dr. McKanna being able to go to the transportation department and get feedback on what are the actual liabilities of doing these practices.

**Chapman** – Thinks there is an issue relevant to, as Keenan indicated, to the legality, legal issues – there are also liability issues as Rowden indicated. Thinks all of those have to be investigated and thinks that process will include transportation.

**Keenan** – Her concern with #2 is that she thinks that should stop tomorrow. That makes her very nervous so while she would love to hear what the administration has to say, she can't believe that is a healthy practice. It is a practice that could put us in a huge liability, didn't even know it was going on. This is the first she is hearing of it. From a liability standpoint, possibly from a legal standpoint – that #2 should be stopped tomorrow.

**McKanna** – It has been a long-standing practice. Asked George Lingel, Business Manager how many drivers the district would lose? **Lingel** – Doesn't know exactly, but thinks there are about 20 drivers that have their children on the buses. They are on the bus for the whole route.

**Rowden** – Said that it varies, some carry their own children who happen to go to the school, and some are carrying pre-school aged children. **Lingel** – they have to be in a seatbelt, they have to be secured on the bus.

**Chapman** – His feeling is that it has been a long-standing policy, obviously we have been doing it – it doesn't mean it is right that we are doing it. He just thinks that before we pull the plug on it, we ought to have the superintendent's recommendation and we don't have that. Thinks that those are related that is his point. **Keenan** – Said alright, as long as we can have the recommendation by next month.

**Millar** – Thinks that you have to get more information from administration on the pros and cons. Same as that there are some great ideas on the benchmarking but again you have to also have some management flexibility because if you can't find drivers, what is worse that or the alternative. He would like to understand it first. **Keenan** – Whether we can find drivers or not, the liability issues are there. You can't do it, whether you can find drivers or not.

**Millar** – we don't want to jump to conclusions. Make sure the administration has the opportunity to give the recommendation. Does he prefer it doesn't happen, sure.

**Chapman** – Asked if the Board wanted to put this in the form of a motion to address these issues at the next meeting? **Keenan, Rowden and Lingel** – all suggested that the items should be reviewed by the district attorney and insurance company.

**McKanna** – Said that in terms of Keenan's comments in regards to benchmarks. Whatever benchmarks the Board wants to set; the administration can make them happen but needs the resources to make it happen. So that would be the review that he has not done because he didn't know if the Board was going to go with this issue tonight because there are a variety of benchmarks.

The administration can do all of these and tell the Board what they will cost. McKanna could certainly get the Board some feedback.

Regarding the children issue (#2) – if the Board implemented that tonight, there would be 20 fewer drivers and transportation still doesn't have enough drivers even today. They are still doing some double route pickups occasionally. This would not be the time to make a change between now and the next six weeks of school.

McKanna said that he will get the information on insurance and liability. He'll get it in writing so the Board can see it and will come back with a recommendation in reference to all of these benchmarks. He will be glad to come back with specifics on these issues for the Board.

**Quinn** – Asked McKanna that when he is ready to work on the benchmarks, she would like to work with him to make sure that her intent was understood and what she was trying to say.

**McKanna** – Agreed, said that Quinn did a good job with it.

**Millar** – Commented that on the performance benchmarks, the Board has to also decide where it wants to set its priorities because this is either going to cost more money that is going to come out of education or.... That is why it is difficult for him to say you can set anything specific because again, it has to be up to management. We (Board) have to make decisions as to where our priorities are. And this is a big item, we are already a \$1.5M over this year.

**Chapman** – Just to clarify, the motion is that these three items be referred to the superintendent for recommendation with an understanding that the Board will have a legal and insurance review on the items and any recommendations brought forth at the next meeting. **Unanimously approved.**

## **Resolution – Advocating Against SB2288 and HB750**

Reference: [www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15\\_bill\\_resolution.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15_bill_resolution.pdf)

**Quinn** – Would like to make the motion that the Board accepts the resolution as presented. Stated that she wrote the resolution because she believes that it is part of the Board's job to advocate to our elected officials on issues that our important to us. Within the resolution, she wrote reasons why we are advocating against both bills.

**Rowden** – She agrees that one of the Board's responsibilities is to advocate to the State of IL when there are things coming before them that are good or not good for our district. She believes that both of these bills are particularly harmful to our district. The resolution as written, to her, just explains every reason why. Rowden would like to accept this.

**Chapman** – Asked McKanna is the district ever took a position before.

**McKanna** – Said that on house bill 750 which has been before us for a couple of years. He had not been aware of 2288 until this past week when it all evolved. Thinks it is somewhat similar to what is going on with 750. Thinks that everyone knows that these bills are not beneficial to anyone north of I80.

**Carlson** – Thinks that taking a position at this point may be premature. Doesn't think that either bill will actually be on the floor, in a final form for quite some time. Thinks the Board should wait and see what the final form of the bill is and at that point in time, have a resolution as to whether we agree or disagree with it. She would like to see the final form of the bill.

**Rowden** – Doesn't think that people who are advocating for these bills are sitting back and waiting for the final bill to be written. Rowden would like to be proactive.

**Keenan** – HB750 has been around for a very long period of time. Carlson might say that about SB2288 but certainly not about HB750.

**Carlson** – HB750 has been around a long time but doesn't seem to be going on the floor any time soon.

**Keenan** – They are not going to call us and tell us when they are putting it on the floor.

**Chapman** – Let's keep our comments to the entire Board here.

**Carlson** – Believes that you could have a legislator call you and tell the district when the bill is finally in its final form. Suzie Bassi was on this Board for several years, is familiar with D15 work and involved in education issues. We can certainly call her offices and ask them to notify us when the bills are moving forward.

**Chapman** – Has a concern, perhaps it is philosophical. If the Board takes a position on a specific bill and if it doesn't take positions on other bills as they are introduced, are we giving the impression to the legislators that those bills are less important, or we have a less significant interest? This resolution focuses on one, which he thinks the intent is to provide a stronger base for lobbying against the legislation. But Chapman would hate to think that as a school Board we would have to take positions on every bill that is introduced outside of what our legislative group is doing. And in addition to that, giving our legislators the impression that we are only interested in isolated bills.

**Quinn** – Has a response to Chapman and also to what Carlson had been saying. Last year, HB750 moved quickly at the end of May because they were trying to get action before the legislature received their deadlines. These things can move quickly long before we could ever be able to come back as a Board and make some kind of resolution about it. Agrees with Rowden that being proactive against the general idea of what these bills represent is in our interest.

And Quinn doesn't think it is now going to be a problem that the Board has to advocate for or against all bills. We belong to IASB and it does a fine job most of the time. In instances where our interests in the NW suburbs differ from what the statewide advocates are advocating for or remaining neutral about – where D15's interests differ, this is a dramatic bill. This is sweeping reform for education and has a dramatic affect, she thinks it is in our best interest to take a stand on this issue.

**Keenan** – These bills are important to her and these bills might be more important than some other bills. Guesses that some people could read that into it and in her case it might even be true.

**Millar** – It is important that we act on this tonight. We will not have the opportunity to react in time. We meet every month, it would be impossible for us to get the timing down. There is a lot of money behind this bill. This is probably the largest money grab in the State of IL history. Thinks that it is imperative that the Board act and he knows that a lot of other school boards are going to be taking a similar action in the near future. Millar would rather be ahead of the curve rather than being behind the curve.

### **Motion is to approve the resolution advocating against SB2288 and HB750 as presented**

Approved 6:1 (Carlson abstaining)

## **NEA April 12, 2008 Program/Building Usage**

Millar made a motion to charge the NEA (National Education Association) for building use as is standard policy in our contract.

### **Board discussion –**

**Millar** – If you look at the current contract that we have, which stipulates that if any of these meetings are not held at regular times they would be billable just like anyone else – if they are on Saturdays, Sundays when we don't have staff. That is the discussion that came up.

**Keenan** – If we decide to have them use our facilities, she definitely thinks that they should be charged, it is in our policy. There is no exception for that group not to be charged. But she said, more importantly when they are using our buildings, what she is concerned about is that they are sending a message from our schools that maybe isn't the Board's message.

**Rowden** – Has a concern that this is a political group, in the form of a political action committee and if we open our doors to allow such to take place – then what prohibits us from allowing other political committees to hold their forums in our buildings. How can we discriminate between them?

**Ekeberg** – Said that he talked to Mrs. Watts and it is not a political group. It is a group that wanted to discuss in a forum format the change in education in Illinois in the last 30 years and the lack of change in how the state sees education. It was simply put together in September.

**Rowden** – Thought she read that the topic was school funding. Is that incorrect? There is not going to be any discussion about school funding?

**Ekeberg** – He thinks there will be discussions on how the state responds.

**Rowden** – She thinks that is a political focus because the issue of public school funding is all about politics. It is either not enough or in some minds, it is too much. She thinks that everything about that is political. The NEA (National Education Association) is one of the biggest political action committees out there.

**Millar** – Thinks it would be naïve to think that it isn't a precursor to these bills (previously discussed) but again, everyone has a different opinion. Doesn't think we can discriminate against who is using our building. We have a policy and we should just stick with that policy.

**Keenan** – Said that we can absolutely discriminate as to who uses our buildings or groups of people, political and others that are against what we believe in from the extreme to something that is just a difference of opinion like this. People want it funded this way, others want it funded another way.

**Chapman** – From a procedural issue: Asked – Was there a request to use the facilities and it went through some administrative channels?

**McKanna** – Said not exactly – Two of our own staff came in and asked him if we would be willing to participate in a Saturday program and talk about what he (McKanna) has seen in education as it relates to how schools have been funded and program changes over the last 30 years. Said yes and volunteered the building.

To McKanna - the NEA, IEA, state superintendents, etc. are all part of the same partnership. He views this differently that the Board does. He thinks these people are what we are about as a profession. Said that sure they take stands, you guys take stands in terms of policies and laws you try to change. But he wouldn't exclude another professional agency that is closely related to us because our CTC is under the IEA/NEA. He is shocked to think that "you guys" would look at another professional group and think that they don't have rights to come in and use our facilities.

**Rowden** – Thinks McKanna brings up some really good points. We do want to have partnerships and good relationships. First off, we did have a large discussion about building use. Had the forum taken place during the day when custodians are on staff like after school that would be different because we wouldn't be paying extra fees for people to come in on the weekend. So regarding the cost issue – why wouldn't we charge for use of the building - that is one point that Millar brought up.

The other point is that in forging relationships, it is important that this is something that the entire district would be aware of as an opportunity to collaborate on and it wasn't information that was given out to Board members let alone parents in the community. A select group of people were given invitations to this. There is this perception - that is why she shares what the perceptual concerns are – that there is a politically motivated agenda. That may not be true but as you know, and have experience – perception is reality. So when concerns are brought forth, it is because that has been shared – the perceptions have been shared that this is a politically motivated agenda.

**Chapman** – Well speaking of perceptions – if we are going to charge them, that isn't a perception, it is a reality. That indicates a lack of our appreciation or our willingness to cooperate with them which he thinks is paramount to causing a riff in the relationship rather than to build it.

**Carlson** – She recalls several years ago that this building has been used for political purposes on more than one occasion. It has not been this sanctity where nothing political has happened because there have been, she has been involved in political matters that have happened in this building.

She personally thinks that having an association – we are about education, education is about thought and teaching our children to think. Carlson does not believe that she has the absolute right to dictate to everybody the way that she believes is the only right way. If she did then she would not be

living here in the United States. She would go somewhere else where she could tell everybody that you are going to think the way I do.

We try to teach our children that we live under the Constitution with something called Freedom of Speech. And with that Freedom of Speech, she thinks that we as an institution, which is supported by taxpayers, which is supported by the community, to allow all community members the same rights that we give to any person and any school child, or any teacher in our district.

Carlson thinks by saying, well we don't like your political agenda – anybody can have a political agenda, anybody can have a religious agenda that somebody would object to. And if they want to talk for or against a bill, they are allowed to do that – it is called the Constitution. We are here to teach the children about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. That is what education is about – that is what this country is founded on was freedom issues.

She was very upset when she saw this – as she said, whether or not you agree with the House Bill and she has stated that it is premature at this point. She would like to have the full thing - that is why she abstained, not because she agrees or disagrees with it. She wants to make sure she has all of the data before she speaks. But the fact that there will be a discussion on funding – there should be a discussion on funding of education in Illinois. That discussion should go on every street corner, it affects everyone, every community whether you pay taxes or not. If you don't pay taxes, you pay it one way or another. If you lease, you still pay real estate taxes.

Everybody should be concerned about education because if you are in the hospital, she hopes that your nurse and doctor graduated from District 15 and graduated from one of the fine high schools and one of the fine programs in the State of IL.

And she thinks it is appalling that we are saying you can't come in because we don't like your political agenda. She wants that discussion to happen here and she is proud that people want to come to our district instead of running away and not coming. She wants to be able to welcome people with ideas in this district and not cut them off at the knees. She wants that done here so personally she is very pleased that they would like Dr. McKanna as a speaker on funding. Feels pleased that they felt comfortable enough to come to this district and that there would be a discussion. Was very concerned when she saw this on the agenda because this is a partner in education and the educational process which she thinks is very important to every member in this community.

**Chapman** – Asked what would the charge be if we charged them?

**Strande** – Said that it is about \$45 to \$50 an hour to bring in custodians.

**Chapman** – So less than \$150

**Quinn** – Said that there are some prohibited political activities that cannot occur in our buildings and this does not fall under that. This is not our own CTC (Classroom Teachers Council) so this does not fall under the contract. This is an organization that advocates for all sorts of things. She doesn't think that we can discriminate against this particular organization's view as opposed to another organization's view on the issues of the day.

However Quinn does think that we need to charge a fee because if our PTA wanted to hold functions on Saturdays – we are certainly in partnership with PTA and she is sure that they would love to have Saturday activities. But it is costing the district money so we need to at least receive our cost in that – even in a partnership there needs to be respect. PTA does that, it tries to hold events during the week when they don't have to put us out and cost the district money. She understands that this is a different kind of event, it probably works better/draws better on a Saturday – that's fine, but there is a fee associated with that. She doesn't think there is any vast injustice done by charging an appropriate fee.

**Keenan** – In regards to some of Carlson's comments, Keenan thinks that Carlson misunderstood her point of view. Her point of view is not to quiet anyone but Keenan's concern was, after looking at the agenda and list of participants, that only one viewpoint was being represented. There is more than one viewpoint and she is not trying to quiet anyone but if you want to form a partnership and build a relationship, then all points of view hopefully could be expressed and discussed and not just one point of view. That is what she was getting at. Not to stop anyone from speaking, but to have everyone speak.

**McKanna** – To reiterate, the Board has received numerous emails from everyone connected with that and HB750 will not be voiced. If a politician wants to speak on it, they will not be allowed. That is all he can do. McKanna has it in writing from everyone who will be there and McKanna will be there and he would stop and interrupt anyone that starts to try to talk about those bills. That is the pledge that the Board got from everybody. To say it is politically motivated – to say it is not would also be naïve because they have political agendas. But that is not the intent, he doesn't believe.

McKanna said that in the future, he would shy away from doing these kinds of things. He would tell our people that if they want to use our facilities, it is not worth the time and effort. McKanna says he has spent hours on emails with a lot of the Board and talking to people and it has been an absolute aggravation that he doesn't think needed to be there for a variety of reasons.

**Motion to charge for use of the district's facility by the NEA (National Education Assn.)**

Approved: 4:3 (Yes: Keenan, Millar, Quinn, Rowden; No: Chapman, Ekeberg, Carlson)

**Search Firm Selection for Human Resources and Transportation Positions**

Vote to be held until after Executive Session.

**Consent Calendar**

Items H: Bus Driver Settlement Agreement; I: Student Settlement Agreement; and J: Security/Custodian Settlement Agreement were removed at the request of the superintendent and would be voted on after Executive Session discussion.

**Remainder of Consent Calendar – Unanimously approved.**

**Correspondence**

**Freedom of Information Request – FOIA**

Reference: [www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15 FOIA apr 9 08.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/d15%20FOIA%20apr%209%2008.pdf)

**Executive Session**

The Board went into Executive Session after a short recess beginning at 9:10 p.m.

Voting was expected to take place on several items after Executive Session including 08-419 Personnel Report; 08-420 Non-Reemployments of Probationary Teachers; 08-427 Search Firm Selection for Human Resources and Transportation Positions and removed items from the Consent Calendar.

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