

Monroe City School Board of Education
2006 Tower Drive
Monroe, Louisiana 71201

MINUTES

The Monroe City School Board met in regular session, Tuesday, March 21, 2023 at Monroe City School District Central Office, 2006 Tower Drive, Monroe, Louisiana 71201. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Board President Bill Willson. Board Member Jennifer Haneline offered prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Item 1C – Roll Call

Present: Mr. Michael Sampognaro, Ms. Jennifer Haneline, Mr. Bill Willson, Mr. Daryll Berry, Ms. Betty Ward Cooper, Mr. Brandon Johnson, and Mrs. Brenda Shelling

Action Item 1D – Adoption of the Agenda

On a motion by Ms. Haneline and seconded by Mrs. Cooper, the Board approved the agenda as printed. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Agenda Item 2 – Point of Pride Wossman High School Girls Basketball Team -State Champions

Wossman High School Girls Basketball Team was recognized for being State Champions for Division II non-select (photos taken)

Agenda Item 3 – Presentation Financial Audit Report as of June 30, 2022 – Josh Trahan of Carr, Riggs & Ingram LLC

Mr. Josh Trahan, Carr, Riggs & Ingram, LLC, gave a financial overview of the audit report. This included four reports: Independent Auditors, Internal controls and financial reporting on compliance and other matters or governmental entities, Internal audit report over the compliance on each major federal program that was tested. The main three audits, financial overview, financial statements and governmental balance sheet increased 4 million dollars approximately over the last year. The general fund which is the biggest and most important fund increase 1.4 million dollars over the prior year to bring the balance fund to 21.2 million dollars.

There were six minor findings:

- school activity funds: they are working with all the school's staff to coordinate and get on the same page and progress is being made.
- Non-compliance for professional leave which is a carryover from last year.
- Ethics discrepancies on who's responsible for getting ethics training, this falls under any employee or substitutes, this is required as well as sexual harassment training as protection from the school district.
- Issues with teacher certification pay where teachers were paid improper sales tax, this was resolved and taken out of general funds
- Special education had two findings, first was a time sheet discrepancy of 0.25 hours; second is in the suspension department and has been corrected and moving forward.

Mr. Trahan complimented Mrs. Davona Howard and staff on good communication, organization and providing things in a timely manner. Everything that must be turned in is always right the first time.

Action Item 4 – Consent Agenda

On a motion by Ms. Haneline and seconded by Mr. Johnson, the board approved February 14, 2023, board meeting minutes; approved the 2023-2024 school calendar; awarded bid #MC23-03 purchase and installation of playground equipment – MCSB elementary schools; J.S. Clark choir permission to travel to Hot Springs AR and Carroll Jr High School Jr. Beta Club permission to travel to Memphis TN.

Action Item 5 Consent Items for Separate Consideration

On a motion by Ms. Haneline and seconded by Mrs. Shelling, the board approved travel to Orlando Florida for J.S. Clark 6th grade class of 2023. The motion carried on a majority vote.

Mr. Johnson recuse.

Agenda Item 6A New Business - Policy Handbook

Mrs. Shelling stated she would like each Board Member to review the policy handbook. She stated each committee is to review a particular section of the policy handbook that applies to their area and meet with her to go over ideas.

Action Item 6B – Action on Superintendent’s Contract Renewal/Extension

It was moved by Ms. Haneline and seconded by Mr. Sampognaro, to extend Superintendent Vidrine’s contract term as presented through June 2025.

President Willson opened the floor for discussion.

Mr. Johnson asked Dr. Vidrine if there is a plan in place to help improve test taking skills for African American students. Dr. Vidrine responded, yes, it’s all in place, and stated he can visit with him to show exactly what is being done.

Mrs. Shelling stated to Dr. Vidrine that State Representative Moore offered Monroe City Schools an opportunity to have an early age curriculum daycare for three (3) year olds and asked if they could consider this themselves instead of the district sourcing it out to the state department. Dr. Vidrine responded this is cutting into what Head Start is paid to do for the federal government, but they are currently looking to see what can be done.

Mrs. Cooper stated a constituent asked, what is Dr. Vidrine specific plan to improve the academic performance of black students above one percent in the next two years and his answer should determine your vote. Dr. Vidrine responded we have improvement; the district works hard. We have phenomenal custodians, cafeteria workers, parents, bus drivers, teachers and administration across our district and everything the constituent stated they are not doing the district is currently doing.

Public comment: Mrs. Sandie Lollie stated she would like to see something in the Superintendent contract for employees that will give them a substantial increase so they can see it and not be absorbed with insurances and other similar things. She noted the employees are underpaid. Mrs. Lollie stated she would like to see the cafeteria workers start out with the minimum of fourteen or fifteen dollars an hour. She concluded she would like to see the superintendent do something to let our employees know they are appreciated and deserve only the best. Dr. Vidrine noted they are currently looking at salary schedules along with Mrs. Howard to make sure of this.

Mrs. Shelling stated she believes it will be a great idea to start again having an appreciation for employees at the Civic Center.

The motion carried on a majority vote. Mrs. Cooper opposed, Mrs. Shelling Abstain.

Agenda Item 7A – January 2023 Financial Reports

- Auditor reported financial report.
- All financial reports are located online.

Agenda Item 7B – Report of Superintendent

- A sub bonus for all employees will be brought to the finance committee next month, custodians, cafeteria workers and substitute teachers.
- Dr. Vidrine met with INK this morning who's taking over Prime Time June 1st.
- The test schedule will be sent out for the upcoming monthly test.
- Staff meeting will be held after spring break.
- Cody Chase from Neville High School has been recognized as the state semi finalist teacher of the year.
- Dr. Vidrine looks forward to attending COSSBA.

Dr. Vidrine thanked the Board for their support and continuous work.

Mr. Johnson asked will there be an increase in sub bonuses. Dr. Vidrine responded, yes, they are looking into increasing sub bonuses.

Mr. Berry stated he would like to see an increase in employees' pay under the watch of Dr. Vidrine. He stated it's good for Dr. Vidrine to still be here for the next two years to make sure all open projects are completed, and employees are paid the right salary. He looks forward to working with Dr. Vidrine and the Board Members.

Agenda Item 7C – Report of Board Members

Mrs. Cooper – No report

Mr. Sampognaro noted the school board and School System are headed in the right direction and stability is going to help.

Mr. Johnson – No report

Mrs. Haneline – No report

Mrs. Shelling noted she had an interesting month visiting her district schools. She had an opportunity to visit Roy Neal Shelling to read to the fourth-grade students and enjoyed her time there. Mrs. Shelling visited Barkdull Faulk Elementary School Black History Program where the students were depicted throughout the entire program and attended the crowning of their Royalty. Mrs. Shelling had an opportunity to visit Carroll Jr High School where she was elated to receive a plaque in appreciation of many years of dedicated service, devotion, and commitment to the community. Several community leaders were recognized, Dr. Sanders, Dr. Valerie Fields, Roy Neal Shelling, and Julian Gray. Mrs. Shelling noted she attended the press conference on the flag presentation of the new banners specified by the city of Monroe Chambers, ULM Department and Delta Community College. Mrs. Shelling thanked Mr. Willson for the hard work he presented. Mr. Berry, Mr. Willson, Chamber of Commerce President Roy Heatherly, and herself attended.

Mr. Berry – No report

Mr. Willson reminded everyone Mrs. Marie Brown is helping with the Juneteenth Celebration to be held June 17th. Mr. Willson is a proud sponsor of this Celebration. He noted part of this celebration is a salute to Educators. Mr. Willson thanked Mrs. Brown and reminded everyone the Board Members will be out of town March 29th – April 3rd for the first annual COSSBA (consortium of state school boards association) conference.

Agenda Item 8A – Future Meetings

Board of Education Meetings – April 11, 2023, and May 9, 2023, at 6:00p.m.

Agenda Item 9 – Executive Session

None

Action Item 10 – Recess/Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the board, on a motion by Ms. Haneline and seconded by Mr. Johnson, the meeting adjourned at 6:57p.m.

 /William Willson/
William Willson
Board President

 /Brent Vidrine/
Dr. Brent Vidrine
Superintendent

Note: These minutes summarize the final decisions made by the Board at the referenced meeting. This meeting was also audio recorded and that recording is available for review by contacting the Board clerk at tonya.robinson@mcschools.net.