

School board calls two closed sessions

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
Thursday, 15 November 2012 14:47 -

Personnel, real estate discussed

The press, public and a handful of administrators stood outside the entrance to the high school media center twice Monday.

At the noon meeting of Gothenburg School Board, the board, superintendent and some administrators remained in the room two different times to discuss a personnel issue and a potential real estate purchase.

Under the open meetings law, both are reasons the board can meet behind shut doors.

Before the board closed the meeting for the first time, former bus driver Wendy Williams said she had been a good employee and bus driver for the district.

Williams said her job had been terminated more than a week ago because of several complaints.

She told the board that she'd driven a bus for the district for 16 years and a van for two years.

While living in Atlanta, GA, Williams drove a school bus for 10 years.

After nine minutes, the board reconvened and said they recognize and appreciate Williams' work in the district.

However board president Scott France said they found it difficult to overturn her supervisor's decision without further exposure to the district.

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Members met behind closed doors for 12 minutes to discuss real estate. They took no action.

Action was taken when the board accepted the 2011-12 audit prepared by McDermott & Miller, a certified public accounting firm from Kearney.

Superintendent Dr. Mike Teahon noted that a finding that comes up each year has to do with the lack of segregation of duties because of the school's small staff.

Because the addition of personnel would be costly, Teahon said the district now has an additional employee check random invoices each month.

The board took no action on a frustrating issue involving a portion of the Community Building gymnasium floor damaged by rainwater during a roofing project last summer.

Teahon said the district will receive an insurance settlement, of a depreciated amount, but the delay in receiving the money means that the floor cannot be repaired until after the winter sports season.

Options are to repair the damaged part (about 400 square feet) for \$23,000-\$25,000 or replace the floor (about 8,200 square feet) for up to \$90,000 plus architectural fees.

The area has already been sanded and refinished.

On another matter, board member Amber Burge asked what the district could do about making the pick-up and drop-off area safer on the west side of Dudley Elementary.

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Teahon said he would take the concern to the safety committee.

In other business, the board:

approved a request by kindergartner Kaitlyn Hecox of Brady to enroll in the district next year.

was told that insurance rates for 2013-14 will increase 6.4% and that the deductible for the Blue Cross & Blue Shield plan will increase from \$600 to \$750.

decided to replace and revise district job descriptions.

learned that the east doors of the Community Building have been replaced.

were informed of the district's new mission statement which is that Gothenburg Public Schools, in conjunction with the entire community, is to prepare all students within a positive, innovative learning environment to be lifelong learners for the 21st century.

heard that administrators will meet with student body leaders to discuss appropriate and positive displays of enthusiasm dealing with sportsmanship.

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