

**Dist. 205 Board of Education**  
**Jan. 5, 2006**  
**7:05 pm – 9:00 pm**

**No Carlquist**  
**Public: 200 Staff: 3 Press: 3**  
**Observer: J. Dorner**

A special meeting of the Board of Education was called to order and the pledge of allegiance recited.

Dr. Morris started with a recap of the two referendum questions. The first, an educational fund tax rate increase of \$0.30 per \$100 of assessed valuation (EAV), would:

- Provide funds to hire staff and provide supplies for maximum of 24 students per K-5 classroom, 27 students for core curriculum in middle school, and maintain current high school class size.
- Restore cuts in supplies, staff development, and library books.
- Increase support and certified staff due to enrollment increases.
- Annually provide:
  - \$500,000 for technology expenditures.
  - \$100,000 for music equipment replacement cycle.
  - \$80,000 for instructional equipment replacement cycle.
  - \$35,000 for athletic uniform replacement cycle.
  - \$50,000 for substitute cost for teacher training.
  - \$40,000 for vehicle replacement.
  - Funds for curriculum cycle and textbook replacement.
  - Funds for furniture replacement cycle.
- Funds for preventative maintenance cycle after 2010 (life safety bonds used until then).
- Restore field trip cuts and maintain current programs.
- Provides funds to resolve cash flow issues beginning in 2010.

The second referendum question, a building bond request is for \$41 million to construct and furnish:

- 4 classroom additions at Edison for \$1,606,660
- 4 classroom additions at Emerson for \$1,606,660
- 4 classroom additions at Field for \$1,826,000
- 4 classroom additions at Fischer for \$1,606,660
- 3 classroom additions at Jackson for \$1,314,500
- 6 classroom additions at Jefferson for \$3,225,500
- 4 classroom additions at Lincoln for \$1,782,000
- Remodeling of Hawthorne for \$18,000,000
- 6 classroom additions at Bryan for \$3,004,800
- 6 classroom additions at Churchville for \$3,163,200
- 8 classroom additions at Sandburg for \$3,707,200

If the ed fund rate increase is approved, it will cost an additional \$450 in taxes on a home with a fair market value of \$450,000 (\$150,000 in EAV). If the building bond request is approved, and the District restructures the existing debt, the 2006 levy bond and interest tax rate is projected to be \$0.31, which is the same rate as the existing rate. (In other words, for the first year, the tax rate would be the same as it currently is.)

**Public Comment:** Twenty-five individuals spoke. The first citizen complained that the School District already gets too much money and that salaries should be cut by 25%. Another member of the community was confused about the additions at Field and Lincoln and the rehabilitation of Hawthorne. When were these additions added? About 12 of the remaining individuals spoke about supporting the two questions

but asking that the Board make sure that enough of an increase is asked for the education fund rate increase. One man complained that there were no City officials in the audience and was “astounded that the mayor isn’t here.” The City Manager spoke of the City’s help in the past and their commitment to assist, wherever possible. Others had questions about maintenance levels, hiring of teachers with experience and/or masters, the distribution of technology (K-12), the reinstating of supplies, literary and math coordinator, and the housing of Hawthorne students during the rehab. Others still underlined the importance of class size, the music program, foreign language, and vocational training.

### **Superintendent’s Communications:**

Dr. Morris answered some of the questions that were asked by the public.

- Initially, boundary changes were suggested to solve the overcrowding at Lincoln, Field, and Hawthorne. The Board decided that adding on to these schools would be more appropriate.
- Hawthorne will primarily be renovated throughout the summers.
- The District hires the best teachers that can be found. Sometimes teachers with masters are required for a position.
- Technology will be leased for the grade and middle school levels. The technology at the High School will be refreshed.

### **Board Communications:**

Dr. Lindberg stated that he is proud to be a citizen of Elmhurst. The central theme of most of the comments was education and community. Mrs. Davy said that the District has a positive message to share and has not asked the community for a tax rate increase in 28 years. She also said that the District is not overspending, it is under funded and that she is committed to re-opening discussions with the City on TIF and obligated to lobby Springfield for additional funding. Mr. Spaeth reiterated some of the points that Dr. Morris made earlier. Mrs. O’Neill observed that those that spoke were a cross section of the community – from every section of the City, from Retired people to a student from York High School. She has been saying for some time that a rate increase is needed. Mr. Thrall stated if Elmhurst elects to fund education, the District will continue the way it has. If the chose is not to give money for education then the Board will have to cut in excess of \$2 million of programs. This is not a scare tactic it is a reality check. Mrs. DeRonne recapped and said that boundary changes are not feasible due to every school being overcrowded.