

Oak Park River Forest League of Women Voters Eyewitness Report

Observed by: Ameri Klafeta

Date: September 12, 2017

Meeting Length: 3 hours

Meeting Name: District 97 Board of Education

D97 Board Discusses Changes in Building Usage Fees

What did the Board decide?

- The Board approved a **contract with the National Equity Project** for up to \$50,000 for Cultural Proficiency Professional Development.
- The Board approved a contract for the **sale of the 541 Madison warehouse.**
- The Board approved a lease purchase agreement with the Providence Capital for the **lease of Acer Chromebooks.**

What else did the Board discuss or refer to committee?

- The Board discussed **implementation of changes to building usage charges.** There is a need to review the policy for building usage charges to (1) address inconsistencies between schools as to how groups are treated (i.e. variations in how nonprofit organizations are charged) and (2) allocate costs of overhead (i.e. additional utilities and supplies) that are currently being absorbed by District 97. The Policy Committee will review the proposed changes. In the interim, the Board discussed limiting increases to 10% of the rate paid by organizations last year, or “category c” charges for organizations that were not paying anything. A motion will be made at the September 26, 2017 meeting along these lines.
- The Board discussed changing **Columbus Day to Indigenous People Day.** The Board discussed legal concerns related to replacing a holiday, the possibility of designating Columbus Day as also Indigenous People Day and adopting a resolution encouraging teachers to incorporate diversity and indigenous people into lessons regarding that day. The Board asked the administration to obtain more information regarding the process that would be required for these options.

Unexpected Votes, Events, Testimony or Items to Watch for in the Future

- The Board heard public comments from members of the Secular Jewish Community School regarding **increased building usage fees**. They stated that they were not notified of the new fee schedule until shortly before their first meeting, and the change would increase the weekly charges from \$192 to upward of \$2100 per Sunday. Representatives from scouting organizations also spoke regarding the fee changes.
- The District's policy review team has identified proposing **changes to various policies, including school district philosophy, the charter school application policy, website accessibility and the Board's positions on economic development in the community**. Expected action to be taken at the September 26, 2017 meeting.