City School Liaison Committee

May 9, 2013

Present: District 65: Board Members Claudia Garrison and Candance Chow; Superintendent Hardy Murphy, and Communications Director Pat Markham; District 202 Board Member Gretchen Livingston, Chief Financial Officer Bill Stafford, and Safety Director Sam Pettineo; City of Evanston: Alderpersons Jane Grover and Mark Tendem, City Manager Wally Bobkiewicz, Deputy City Manager Joe McRae, Chief of Police Richard Eddington, Assistant Director for Evanston Parks and Recreation Department Bob Dorneker, and Public Works Director Suzette Robinson.

Meeting called to order at 5:05 p.m.

Meeting minutes from the February 28th meeting were approved as presented.

**Safe School Zones and Draft of City Ordinance** - a copy of the draft ordinance was distributed. Chief Eddington, Mr. Pettineo, and Mr. Bobkiewicz led the discussion, explaining that the state does not identify safe school zones. It is done through local ordinance such as the one they are working to adopt and implement. The effect of the ordinance would be to give school security staff the right to inform bystanders that they may not stand around on the sidewalks across the street from the high school. Bystanders first would receive a written warning notice that they are in violation of the safe school zone ordinance. If they fail to move after the warning notice is issued, local police may take action. This would aid the high school in preventing altercations that may occur around the school at the end of the day, for example.

Several clarifying questions were asked ranging from how the boundaries of the safe school zone are defined, whether other school districts/municipalities have similar ordinances, and how enforcement would be handled. Chief Eddington said that the ordinance would be judiciously enforced and that it is a way to relieve the problem before it escalates. Now they have to wait for an incident to occur before they can intervene. The goal is to help prevent gang conflict outside the school. It was mentioned that Alderman Holmes has expressed concern that community meetings should occur prior to presenting the ordinance for approval.

Dr. Murphy indicated that he would be interested in talking with the District 65 school board to determine whether they are interested in a similar ordinance, particularly for the middle schools. City Manager suggested a separate ordinance that uses the final one for ETHS as a template. The topic will be brought to the District 65 board under the committee reports in May. Chief Eddington noted that since District 65 schools do not have school security like Evanston Township High School (ETHS), the school resource officers would have to manage the safe school zones.

**Resident Rates for Camp Programs for all D65 Families** –
Dr. Murphy explained that during the discussion of the school calendar, it was noted that the District 65 school calendar differs from the Village of Skokie’s calendar. Thus, District 65 families who reside in Skokie may not be able to take full advantage of summer camp programs. Also, on the school
improvement half days, only Evanston Recreation (not Skokie) offers programming. The Skokie families are required to pay non-resident rates, making the offerings more expensive for them. The District 65 Board asked to bring the topic of whether it is possible to arrange for these families to pay Evanston resident rates for recreational programming. The City Manager said that the City’s position is that they are not eligible because they do not pay Evanston recreation taxes. He mentioned that Evanston and Skokie have a reciprocal agreement for beach tokens (Evanston) and pools (Skokie). He said that if the Village of Skokie were interested to help subsidize offering Evanston rates to their families, then perhaps this is something the City would be willing to consider. He noted that the Park District is a separate government entity. Dr. Murphy said that the District would broker the conversation about this topic.

**Summer Youth Employment** – Mr. Dorneker said that 641 youth participated in the two job fairs held. There are 300 positions to fill, including some private business positions at places like Home Depot and Best Buy. The youth who were selected to fill these positions will be notified on May 10th. Last year 165 were hired. This year it is almost double. Mr. Tendem asked if follow up is done with the adults to see how things went and if there are opportunities for continued or future employment.

**Summer Recreation Program** - Mr. Dorneker said that this year they would again hold the Super Summer Program at various sites. Activities will include open volleyball at lakefront, open gym at the recreational centers, open mic nights across the city, youth entertainment nights. Mason Park Fieldhouse will be open. There will be pool, ping-pong, video contests, and in addition to the traditional high school basketball league, there will be 3 on 3 leagues for middle school youth. Members at the meeting offered suggested ways to get the word out about all the activities, including sharing with ETHS on Facebook, using the City’s Facebook page, and submitting for distribution through the District 65 digital backpack.

**Gun Violence Prevention Legislation in Springfield** Ms. Livingston said the deadline was extended for Springfield to come up with a concealed carry law. There is no definitive bill at this time. Mr. Bobkiewicz added that the Governor continues to push the local control piece.

**Meeting Schedule for 2013-14** - Dr. Murphy said that he, Eric and Wally would put a schedule for next year’s three meetings and share with their respective representatives.

**Pension Reform** – Dr. Murphy shared the documents summarizing the pension reform legislation, noting preference for the Cullerton bill that does not shift costs to the school districts. The group discussed the status of the senate bill that just passed and it was noted that Madigan said there will definitely be a cost shift.

**Project school district enrollments** – Dr. Murphy and Dr. Witherspoon both shared that they expect increased enrollments this year. The preliminary numbers for District 65’s kindergarten enrollments show an uptick and the high school’s pre-enrollment numbers for incoming freshman are also up. Dr. Murphy said he would send out updated enrollment information when it becomes available.

**Other:** Suzette Robinson said that she and Mr. Stafford have been working together on the some improvements including increased lighting between Mason Park and Pitner and increased pedestrian
lighting along the sidewalk adjacent to football field. The goal is to have the project done in time for the football season. She also spoke about widening the sidewalk and bike path in the area along the high school, and about lighting that is associated with that project would be installed along Dodge Avenue. In the discussion, Suzette explained that they are working with the high school to identify the type of lighting and how much wattage. When hearing that the high school is also adding lighting she suggested the City will try to match the design.

Ms. Grover noted that other improvements planned include resurfacing and sewer work along Prairie near Haven Middle School. She said that Suzette has been working with District 65 staff regarding that project and the redesign of the drop off area at the school to help improve traffic flow. A community meeting is scheduled for May 16th in the Haven Middle School Library.

Dr. Murphy asked the Chief of Police if it is possible for local law enforcement to park in school parking lots during the times when they are doing paperwork to help provide a more visible police presence on school grounds. He also invited them to stop into the school buildings during lunch times. Chief Eddington said that they can do walk throughs at schools and can also use school parking lots as suggested.

*Adjournment:* 6:10 p.m.