CITY-SCHOOL LIAISON COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting
Thursday, February 16, 2012

Evanston Township High School
1600 Dodge Avenue, Evanston

Committee Members Present:

District 202: Board Members Gretchen Livingston and Deborah Graham, Chief Financial Officer Bill Stafford

District 65: Board Member Jerome Summers, Chief Financial Officer Mary Brown, Transportation Manager Roger Allen

City of Evanston: Alderman Mark Tendam and Alderman Jane Grover, City Manager Wally Bobkiewicz

Staff Present: Matt Swentkofske, Doug Gaynor, Mary Ellen Poole, Knetra Shaw, Beth Arey, Lisa De La Fuente

Others Present: Carolyn Dellutri (Downtown Evanston), Eve Lederhouse (Chamber of Commerce)

Mr. Stafford called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. Introductions were made.

Safe Routes to Schools
Mr. Allen worked with the officials of the City of Evanston to secure and receive a grant for the Safe Routes to School program which will be used for incentives to encourage students to walk or bike to school. The full amount requested for the grant was received and ideas on how to use the grant funds are welcome.

Update on City’s Youth Services
Mr. Gaynor introduced Knetra Shaw, Assistant Manager for City Youth Services. Knetra explained that she will assist in the area of job training and placement for youth and young adults. She has met with Dr. Murphy, Dr. Witherspoon, YWCA and the YMCA about the summer youth program entitled “Mayor’s Super Summer Program.” She has also started a Facebook page complete with a calendar of events and program facts. Ms. Shaw also reported that the Mayor has started a Youth Task Force at ETHS for feedback on improvements to the City and suggestions on summer entertainment. Mr. Gaynor reported that low income students will be able to receive discounted access to the beach via punch cards which are available at the library and recreational center. 1,000 punch cards will also be made available to various community organizations, the parks and recreation department for distribution to needy families.
Approval of October 20, 2011 minutes
The October 20, 2011 minutes were approved.

ETHS Success in College Planning and Placement
Ms. Livingston introduced Ms. Arey, ETHS College and Career Coordinator, who will provide information on how students can successfully complete the college application process. Ms. Arey stated that she emphasizes awareness and access for all students whether it is to a community college or four year college or university. She described the breadth of opportunities that ETHS offers to students in assisting with the college process. Ms. Arey distributed and explained statistical data on college acceptance and programs available for students. She stated that ETHS brings in over 200 colleges every year to encourage and recruit students. A discussion was held on the Good Neighbor program with Northwestern University and how collaboration is growing. Ms. Arey described the Naviance program used at ETHS and the services that counselors provide. She also distributed ETHS's 2011-12 School Profile which highlights the school; graduation requirements; grading scale; graduation rate; curriculum; AP and Honors Courses; AP Exams; National Merit and National Achievement; ACT & SAT Scores; College Attendance Rate and College and University Destinations.

Overview of Services Being Provided for Homeless Students
Ms. Poole provided a report on the Mayor's Task force on Homeless Youth. She stated that while it is especially hard to measure homelessness in the suburbs, homelessness is of concern in the City of Evanston. There are many “kids sleeping on friend’s couches” and a hidden population exists. Y.O.U. in Evanston is one agency that aids homeless families; however they find themselves at capacity to provide beds at the end of the day. The homelessness rate is higher in boys, than girls and can be due to running away from home; being kicked out of the home or the entire family is homeless. There is an agency called The Harbour in Park Ridge that serves as an emergency shelter and they report that 25% of their clients are from Evanston and because of this they had to implement an “Evanston Rule” limiting the amount of clients from one specific area. The Harbor also offers a transitional program for skills, support and parenting. Ms. Poole stated that there is a growing need for services but decreasing resources causing a gap for homeless students. She stated she hoped to work collaboratively with the schools to help aid this problem.

Economic Development
Mr. Bobkiewicz introduced Ms. Eve Lederhouse, new Director for the Evanston Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Lederhouse reported that while the Chamber primarily exists to service businesses in Evanston they would also like to partner with non-profit organizations as well. She distributed copies of the Chamber's membership catalog and gave a recap of their last Executive Board Meeting.
Ms. Dellutri of Downtown Evanston explained that they began as EvMark but then they hired a research firm that created focus groups which included NU and ETHS students, to provide feedback on what downtown Evanston should look like. From that, their name changed to Downtown Evanston which is in partnership with the City of Evanston. She gave an overview of the marketing and management initiatives taking place in commercial, downtown Evanston including “The Maker Fair”; their visitor information center and using ETHS students as interns.

Ms. Dellutri informed the committee that the Evanston Arts Festival would take place on August 4-5, 2012. She also stated that Downtown Evanston is interested in becoming a partner in education with the schools.

Mr. Bobkiewicz gave an update on expanding the Piven Theatre in the Noyes Center.

**Future meeting:**

Thursday, May 17, 2012 at 5:30 p.m. at District 65

Respectfully submitted by Lisa De La Fuente
Administrative Assistant, Evanston Township High School