

## **EDUCATIONAL COMMISSION MINUTES**

The regularly scheduled Meeting of the Educational Commission scheduled for January 2<sup>nd</sup>, was rescheduled to Tuesday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018, due to the holiday.

### **INTRODUCTIONS AND WELCOME:**

Chairman Pro Tem Veazey called the meeting to order at 6:32 P.M.

### **Members Present:**

Tonya Davis, Dr. Doris Langon, Kjuana Marshall, (Arrived at 7:05 P.M.), Kelvin Oliver, Trustee Liaison, and Dr. Delores Woods.

### **Commissioners Absent:**

Cheryl Rutherford  
Don Ransford

### **Guests:**

None.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There were no members of the public present for Public Comment.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM EDUCATIONAL COMMISSION MEETING – DECEMBER 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017:**

**Motion by Commissioner Woods, second by Trustee Oliver to Approve the Minutes of  
December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017, as Presented.**

**Voice Vote: (All Ayes)**

**Motion Carried.**

### **DISCUSSION ON FUTURE MISSION OF THE EDUCATIONAL COMMISSION:**

Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated that he thinks that the first thing we need to do is to define what our purpose is. Commissioner Woods inquired do we know why the Commission was originally formed? Chairman Pro Tem Veazey and Trustee Oliver explained the history of the forming of the Educational Commission to those that were not previously aware of it.

Chairman Pro Tem Veazey inquired, if we were starting an Educational Commission right now, what would its mission and focus be?

Trustee Oliver stated that he came up with something which includes the Guiding Principles as directed by the Village President. His goal is: "To assist the school age children of Olympia Fields in reaching their optimal level of education and career building pursuits, through the supplement of parental involvement, classroom enrichment, and exposure to real world experiences."

Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated that he came up with a Mission Statement. It is a two-part thing. He looked at it from the viewpoint of what the community expects. This is an above average community. We want our performance in everything that we do to be above average. His Mission Statement is: "To impact improvement and sustain above State Average Performance for the School District that our resident students attend. Also, to make available resources which will allow Olympia Fields students to achieve at the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile of students at the State of Illinois." The second part is more specific. He thinks that parents in every house in the Village would hope and expect that their child would be above the State Average. He thinks that is the kind of mindset the community has. He thinks that they would expect their School District to be above State Average. We are an above average community economically.

Commissioner Woods stated that the majority of the students that live in the Village do not attend the schools in Olympia Fields. Trustee Oliver stated that they pay taxes. Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated that the objective is going to be to find out what the kids in the Village are doing wherever they are. Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated that the first part of his Mission Statement is broader for the School Districts that serve our community. There's no reason why we can't focus attention on the students that live in the Village. Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated that he is going to visit the principal at Marian. Wherever our kids are at, we need to try to make contact and gather information.

Trustee Oliver stated that he is hoping that we can put online, the scores that the kids in the Village achieved in their School District. That would allow the Village to market how their community is doing. That would fit in with two of the Guiding Principles of the Village President.

Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated that if the Village is able to demonstrate that the students that grow up here and live here thrive academically, we can brush off any other perception of the larger communities. Commissioner Woods stated that she does not agree with that. You can't just focus on that small group. You have to look at the broader picture. We are not an island here.

Commissioner Langon stated that she has repeatedly talked about regional, and partnerships. If you work with feeder elementary schools you get better bangs in terms of that whole high school elementary pipeline, and Higher Ed which we have not done a good job having two in our backyard that we don't work with. She stated that in a two-prong kind of way we could pick out "ours" and provide them with additional support, monitoring, Scholarships, career paths, apprenticeships, and summer opportunities. Within a school, there are often multiple kinds of programs that capture specific students for whatever reason, and provide additional resources, services, and monitoring. Her fear is we are becoming more of an elitist. That bothers her.

Trustee Oliver stated that he listened to what Commissioner Langon stated at the last meeting. It is important that we partner with the superintendents.

Chairman Pro Tem Veazey inquired what do the citizens of Olympia Fields that pay the taxes for all of the services here, what do they expect if their Village has an Educational Commission? He thinks that they would expect that whatever we do would help their kids first, and then all the other kids in addition to. What do you do to appreciate the values of Olympia Fields?

Commissioner Langon stated that she wants her property to appreciate. You cannot get away from the impact of education on a community.

Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated that we have a moral responsibility to help everyone that is within our reach. Our mission doesn't have to be one faceted, it can be broad and then narrow. If we are going to be appreciated and valued, we have to deliver outcomes for the citizens. You can send things out to the community to let them know where there are resources for taking the SAT Exam, where there are resources for additional tutoring. We can be a resource. That is one of the functions that we should be performing. Commissioner Langon stated that is why we should partner because we are paying the salaries of people whose job is to have information readily available. Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated that is one way to get the resources to them. There are other ways. We have Millions of Dollars going to School Districts that should be doing these things. We have achieved efficiency when we get them to do what we expect to be done. That's when we are 100% efficient. While we are getting them to do it, if there is some delay, we should be doing it. Commissioner Langon stated that you have to weave education into the growth and development of any Municipality. Those that don't do it well, fall by the wayside. We need to set our goals and put a focus on yes, our children, but also, we cannot neglect District-wide what is going on.

Commissioner Marshall stated where her kids go to school, they do the Scholarships. They make sure that the testing is at the top of the list like the Blue Ribbon at Arcadia. Everybody should want to go to our schools here because this is like the cream of the crop. She wants to know that her kids are being taught above and beyond. The Educational Commission should be a part of making all of that happen.

Chairman Pro Tem Veazey inquired of Commissioner Davis what she expects and thinks the Educational Commission should be about. Commissioner Davis stated that she expects as a citizen, and a taxpayer, that the Olympia Fields Educational Commission, if it exists, is capable of the same status that we always compared with Homewood-Flossmoor. Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated to promote a level of education that is similar to what is achieved at H-F. Commissioner Davis stated and culture and climate.

Commissioner Langon stated that the citizens want a high-quality of education and they want their kids to be in a safe environment. Commissioner Woods stated that we have to focus on a purview of which we can have some impact. Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated don't worry about that. You decide what you are about first and then you determine how can I get there.

Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated that we have a consensus that the citizens want quality schools, and a safe environment, and results that are above average. We agree that we want to pay particular attention on the children that are in these homes, and in our neighbors' homes, and in this particular community. There are things that we can do for the kids in this community because we can access them that we should be doing. There's nothing elitist about that.

Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated that our mission and what our citizens expect of us, is that we will do things that will support above average performance in the schools that serve our community, and the Districts that serve our community. And we will provide some particulars,

whatever that might be, to the students that reside in the homes in Olympia Fields. We can reach these kids.

Commissioner Langon inquired of Commissioner Marshall what would make her bring her kids to the schools here. Commissioner Marshall stated that if she saw that the test scores went up. If she sees that there is safety. She stated more organization. She stated that perhaps if we had a bigger school with more kids, and more things in the school like computer systems, better teachers, better principals, and better programs period maybe she would consider it. Commissioner Langon inquired of Commissioner Marshall how she would hear about that change in three or four-years from now. Commissioner Marshall stated that you hear about it from the kids that go there and the parents talking about it. You have to put it out there.

Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated the Educational Commission. Commissioner Langon stated that she is trying to draw that timeline with Commissioner Marshall's one-year old son. If things got better and things were communicated, and you had some trend data, maybe by the time he is getting ready to turn four or five, you would look at that. Chairman Pro Tem Veazey inquired of Commissioner Marshall where she gets her information from. Commissioner Marshall stated from the District. The first way is through the parents talking.

Chairman Pro Tem Veazey inquired whether or not we have a consensus that we have two focuses that we want to go after in the Mission Statement. He and Trustee Oliver will get together and come up with something that they will email to the Commissioners. He stated that we can work this via email before our next meeting.

Commissioner Langon stated that she gets it from an economic development point of view, because we are all on a timeline. It is a marketing issue. We want to be able to say what is happening real time for a real student who actually would be your neighbors in Olympia Fields. We have to do some projecting in terms of what needs to be done. She knows what needs to be done. Commissioner Woods knows what needs to be done. She has seen examples where Municipalities say they are going to be the Education Governor. They are going to be the Education Mayor. They are going to put dollars into services and monitoring.

Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated that if we have to stand out and be the one Village that has achievement of its students in these Districts, then so be it. We're not going to hold ourselves back because Matteson, Country Club Hills, and Richton Park are not doing anything. We've tried for 11-years to get them to form an Educational Commissions. They say, "Forget about it. We're not thinking about it." So why should we keep worrying about whether they are coming along with us?

Commissioner Langon believes that we could create a model. You can go to Finland. You can go all over the country. France just declared no more cell phones in schools. You can go all around the world and see where there are unique focuses on growing their own, and where the dollars and programs are right there. In the State of Colorado every student can get an apprenticeship. In San Francisco you can get two-years of college. We could come up with some unique models. There are models that can track the kids in Olympia Fields and provide support. Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated that is what we should be doing.

Chairman Pro Tem Veazey asked Trustee Oliver to send his Mission Statement to everybody. Chairman Pro Tem Veazey provided a copy of his Mission Statement to everybody. He and Trustee Oliver will get together and condense their statements into one.

Commissioner Woods stated let's think about some creative marketing. Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated that after we have our statement done, we will talk about how we achieve the mission. He is going to hold off on a discussion about the three things that we will do.

### **REPORT OF SUB-COMMITTEES:**

#### **Mini Grant Updates:**

Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated that Karen McCray resigned effective January 1<sup>st</sup>. She was the Chair of the Mini Grant Committee. We are going to conduct the work of the Mini Grant Subcommittee, as a Committee of the whole. We will make the determinations together and that way everybody knows what is going on. The deadline for submissions was Friday, the 5<sup>th</sup>. We had a total of 25 submissions. District 227 produced one. Southland produced six. The Elementary School District of Flossmoor produced four. District 170 which is the Elementary School District for Chicago Heights where the Wysteria kids would go, produced one. He stated District 206 which is Bloom, produced one. District 162 produced 12. He would like to have a meeting before the February Meeting, to work on this. The Applications will be given to everyone in advance. You can do your own estimation on which ones you think are the best, and that follow in what we are trying to do with following President Burke's directives, and our own focus on what this should be about. The objective should be to reward good work. He will find the old Rubric. We will look at it and determine if it is adequate or not. If it is not, we will add to it and make a Rubric for this situation based upon our marching orders. Let's work the Rubric out before the February Meeting.

Commissioner Woods inquired whether or not this would be the last year that we do the Mini Grants. Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated possibly.

#### **College & Career Readiness Program Update:**

Chairman Pro Tem Veazey inquired can we agree that we aren't going to have the College & Career Readiness Program this year? Commissioner Langon stated that it is fine with her. She can't speak for the Subcommittee Chair though.

**Motion by Trustee Oliver, second by Commissioner Marshall that we table until further discussion, the notion of having a College & Career Readiness Fair for the year 2018; and that the monies that have already been incumbered be returned to the Village's Finance Director. Chairman Pro Tem Veazey will speak with the Subcommittee Chair.**

**Voice Vote: (All Ayes) Motion Carried.**

Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated that if we can get our Mission honed down to something that we believe in, and that the residents will believe in, we can make some decisions before the end of the year, and maybe we can use the money for something else.

**School Report Card:**

Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated that for the School Report Card, we will probably work that as a Committee of the whole too. Right now, we need to focus on our mission.

Commissioner Woods inquired when are we going to ask the superintendent to come here? Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated that we have to get our mission straightened away first. Once we have that done, then we can sit down and talk to them. He had stated at a previous meeting, that if we can get this mission issue straightened away by February, we could sit down with them in March.

**Annual Report to the Board:**

Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated that Commissioner Langon had stated that it should be produced more than one time. He agrees with that. We should be sending a representative to the Village Board Meeting. Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated that he heard that Reginald Ford resigned from the Educational Commission.

Commissioner Langon stated that when she thinks about the Report Card and the Annual Report, and listening to you as a parent, we need some kind of communication so it is not just to the Board, but some kind of an update of the state of education with some key data points, attendance achievement, and extracurricular activities. Maybe all of that can be combined. In the past, we took those scores. You can get those in the newspaper and online. She gets that we have to market ourselves as a Village. It has to be slick, and highlight key, good points about us. She suggested taking the Annual Report, or Bi-Annual Report, and the Report Card, and package it in some slick, high-quality way that markets and promotes the state of education.

Commissioner Woods would like to see an Education Forum open to the community. Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated that we have to engage the community on education. They have to be aware. If we are going to be taken seriously by our Village Trustees and our Village President, and the community, we do need to be at these meetings giving a report. We are going to report more than once a year. We will report in a manner that is what people need to hear.

Trustee Oliver stated that as part of his role as a Village Trustee, as part of an Agenda item, he will be discussing each time he can, what it is that we are currently doing.

Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated and not just Trustee Oliver. We need to rotate. They need to know who the people are that are volunteering their time and doing these things.

**OPEN DISCUSSION:**

Commissioner Woods inquired whether or not we are recruiting new members. Chairman Pro Tem Veazey stated yes. We are down to eight members. He stated that by Ordinance we can go up to 15. What do we want in a Committee Member? We want people that are passionate about education. They can contact Village Hall to get an Application or they can get it online. Just because they fill one out doesn't mean they are selected. You have to be a resident of the Village. We need to make sure that people are dedicated.

Trustee Oliver stated that the President makes a Motion to the Board that he is recommending this person to a Commission.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion by Trustee Oliver, second by Commissioner Langon to adjourn at 7:50 P.M.**

**Voice Vote: (All Ayes) Motion Carried.**

Respectfully submitted by Faith Stine.