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SCHOOL BOARD

Macht leaves Board; Banks gets raise

By PAUL EVANS

The bi-monthly session of the Board of School Commissioners held last evening at the Department of Education's headquarters on Twenty-fifth St. was an unusual session in that it was both symbolic and unruly.

A tense atmosphere pervaded the meeting, which has been usual, since the conflict between the five-man liberal majority and the "conservative" elements of the board has killed any pretense of reconciliation and harmony among the members.

* * *

The Board is now openly split into "liberal" and "conservative" blocs. This rift has transcended itself into the audience's reaction to board votes.

There is open laughter and cheers and cries of derision as time and time again the liberal majority defeats the conservatives, usually by a 5-2 vote.

Since the other conservative member Mrs. Maree Farring is hospitalized and has not attended the last two board meetings, this has been the vote.

* * *

However the five-man liberal majority was symbolically ended last night.

Philip Macht, the Jewish member of the Board, who has helped round-out the majority for the last year, attended his last meeting Thursday evening.

As known before, Mr. Macht expressed to Mayor D'Alesandro that he desired not to be reappointed to another term. The Mayor has agreed to this.

Mr. Macht bid his adieus to members of the Board last night announcing that he was headed for a trip to Spain and would be abroad until January.

This now leaves Mayor D'Alesandro with THREE vacancies to fill as of December 31st. The terms of: Samuel Daniels and Nicholas "Boy" Mangione also terminate.

* * *

With the exit of Mr. Macht, there remain Commissioners: James Griffin, Larry Gibson, Samuel T. Daniels and Mrs. Elizabeth Murphy Moss of the progressive view while Commissioners: John Sweeney, Farring, Mangione — and now possibly President of the Board, Robert L. Karwacki remain — to exercise the less progressive point-of-view.

Board votes could now be 4-4 and thus a tie if Mr. Karwacki chooses to exercise his right. However, there is only one more scheduled board meeting to go (Thursday, December 17th at 5 p.m. at the University of Baltimore's Langsdale Library Auditorium) before the Mayor must make his three new appointments (or reappointments if he should so desire).

* * *

The entire complexion of the board's meeting was colored on those impending appointments and the future role of the School Board in Baltimore as the Commissioners deliberated on policy for 3 hours (4 p.m. until 6:45 p.m.) yesterday with the finalizing of several items tabled two weeks ago.

Dr. Thomas D. Sheldon, superintendent of schools, agreed to recommend to local authorities in his department and in the city government that Samuel L. Banks, who heads the Social Studies, Revision Commission, be given the $5,193 raise approved by the board, and accorded the title of "Acting Director" of the Commission.

The Superintendent complied with board policy after stipulating that Mr. Banks' job be advertised for others to compete for, and that he only occupy the temporary position until February, 1971, when it would again be up for grabs.

* * *

Mr. Sheldon told the Board that he would recommend after careful examination, two undergraduate students for use as Commissioner aides (not Assistants) and they be accorded regular departmental personnel standing and be paid from $1.90 to $2.10 hourly.

The Commissioners had asked for 5 aides, but as of yesterday Dr. Sheldon could only recommend two.

Others will be named, the superintendent said, upon the receipt of necessary letters of reference for the remaining three.

* * *

The audience hearings which usually end the meetings were the most lively and informative last night. Several speakers came before the Board. They were:

Norman V. A. Reeves, chairman of the Concerned Citizens for Black Political Progress; Howard P. Rawlings, co-chairman of the Black Coalition of the University of Maryland Campuses; Verdell Adair of the Hilton Elementary School, and Irvin J. Conway, director of Citizens United to Revitalize Model Cities Area "E" Inc.

Others scheduled to speak were John B. Ferron and Miss Ella Johnson, who both — by way of written letter — relinquished their time to Mrs. Angela Lee, a concerned parent and activist.

* * *

Reading a letter which he had sent to the Mayor after school disruptions, Mr. Reeves said that there "must be an end to chaos and confusion" within the school system.

He calmed for the naming of two additional black board members and noted that "community support of the public schools is essential.

He said that the superintendent was "entrusted with the minds of the children" of the city and that he must strive to improve relations between the school and the community.

"We will not have a superintendent who is unresponsive. We will either have a superintendent who is responsible and responsive or we shall have no superintendent at all," Reeves told the capacity audience.

* * *

At this point several black women in the audience startled the entire assemblage when they shouted: "Fire Sheldon, go back to New York!"

Speaking in quiet, confident, yet determined tones, Reeves said that "either the superintendent live up to the salary the taxpayers are paying him, and his responsibilities or move on." Scattered applause, from a few vocal blacks in the room, greeted this remark.

Mr. Reeves ended with a strong expression of a black majority on the board and the "right for black children and parents to determine the destinies of their children."

* * *

Mr. Rawlings of the University of Maryland expressed views similar to Reeves'. Reading from a prepared text, he added his support for the Commission on the Revision of Social Studies and that Samuel Banks be allowed to continue his work as chairman.

He admonished, in particular, Commissioner Nicholas "Boy" Mangione for "having shown blatant disrespect to our black School Board members."

* *

Mr. Adair of the Hilton School requested that the PTA and the school administration at Hilton wished to be assured that there would be a permanent senior teacher assigned to the school. At the present a senior teacher exists in the school, but is technically assigned to another school.

* * *

Mrs. Angela Lee concluded the hearings by asking the Board and specifically the superintendent why was there such a variation in the curriculum offerings between the schools in the city.

Mrs. Lee felt that many of the blacks schools had curricula offerings forced upon the children which were narrow and "irrelevant." She asked why did the curricula offerings seem to be broader in integrated and all white schools, and more constricted in schools of predominantly black students.

The liberal members of the board expressed special interest in this statement and queried the superintendent, who admitted that some school offerings were not as broad as others. He promised to immediately act on Mrs. Lee's question.

* * *

Larry Gibson finally said that the problem may be that many students on the junior high level are not made aware of the curriculum offerings in all of the public schools, only those in the particular school which they attend.

Parents from the audience concurred that their children are not told of the curriculum offerings of the other junior high schools in the city, and are often forced by school counselors to place their children in unasked-for curricula. This was the case of Mrs. Lee's son.

Mrs. Lee asked why police were called while a group of 25 parents demonstrated in front 7 school headquarters before the meeting. Superintendent Sheldon said he did not know who called the police.

Commissioners Moss and Griffin both pointed out peaceful demonstrations are lawful and said they did not support calling for police.

* *

In other matters, the Department of Education agreed to continue its two-year contract with the Metropolitan Transit Authority, pending its ability to provide a fleet of 300 buses to serve the school population in the city.

Mrs. Lee ended the meeting with the suggestion that a Mrs. Cooke, a staff person at "25th St." be fired for her alleged hostile attitudes to members of the black community coming into the building.

She left the audience — including the Commissioners, the board President and the Superintendent, gasping for breath when she calmly recommended that Dr. Sheldon be replaced by William Pinderhughes, presently associate superintendent for Personnel Services, as head of the school administration.

Reaction to this from the audience was mixed. Some laughed; some looked astonished; others embarrassed while others were puzzled.

William Lewis, 76, Zion Hill deacon

Funeral services for William Lewis, 76, 1323 N. Fulton Ave., were held Thursday at the Arlington Phillips Funeral Home Chapel.

The Rev. James Wilkins, pastor of Zion Hill Baptist Church where Mr. Lewis was a deacon and longtime member, officiated.

Burial was in Arbutus Memorial Park.

Mr. Lewis died suddenly Sunday in his home.

Born and educated in Capron, Va., he came to Baltimore in 1930.

In 1968, he retired from Ford's Restaurant where he was a first-class cook for 25 years.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. E. Marie Lewis; two sisters, Mrs. Inez Stevenson, Franklin, Va., and Mrs. Minnie Wardell, of Uniontown, Pa.; one brother, the Rev. Emmanuel two stepsons, Calvin A. and Sterling A. Johnson.

Mrs. Norah Miller services Thursday

Funeral services for Mrs. Norah Miller, 72, of 2200 Braddish Ave., will be held at 10 a.m. Thursday at Union Memorial Baptist Church where she was a longtime member.

The wake will be from 7 until 8 p.m. Wednesday at the Chaires Law Funeral Home.

Mrs. Miller died of tuberculosis Sunday in the Mt. Wilson Hospital.

She was born in Trinity, N.C. and came to Baltimore in 1927.

* * *

At Union Memorial she was on the Commission of Evangelists and in the Gospel Choir.

She is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Margie Luttrell and Mrs. Marilyn Williams; three sons, Joseph, Charles and James F. Miller; one sister, Mrs. Catherine Goodland, of New York; one brother, the Rev. Clinton Brower, of Cincinnati; 18 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

Burial will be in Arbutus Memorial Park.

CEREMONY FO[illegible] REV. GEORG[illegible]

Ceremony for Rev[illegible]

An institutional [illegible] for the Rev. [illegible] V. George, by [illegible] Harry Lee D[illegible] the Diocese [illegible] has been pla[illegible] day, 4 p.m. at the [illegible] St. Mary the Virgin, 3721 Walbrook Ave.

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