



# City of Madison

## Meeting Minutes - Final

City of Madison  
Madison, WI 53703  
[www.cityofmadison.com](http://www.cityofmadison.com)

### BOARD OF EDUCATION - COMMON COUNCIL LIAISON COMMITTEE

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Wednesday, March 29, 2006

4:30 PM

210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.  
Room 103A (City-County Building)

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#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

**Others in Attendance:** Judge Dan Koval, Ted Ballistreri

**Present:** George Twigg, Ald. Cindy Thomas, Mary S. Gulbrandsen, Lawrie Kobza and Ruth Robarts

**Absent:** Ald. Isadore Knox, Jr.

#### 2. PUBLIC APPEARANCES

No public appearances.

#### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes were approved.

#### 4. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Truancy Report from Madison Municipal Court

**03258** Report of Madison Municipal Court - Truancy Report: Cases filed January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2005

**Accept**

**Dan Koval, City of Madison Municipal Court Judge, presented a brief overview of truancy court. He explained that "habitual truancy" is defined as a student who has five or more full or partial days of unexcused absences during a semester. "Regular truancy" is defined as a student has an unexcused absence for one or more class periods in a day.**

**MMSD indicated that they have reviewed and revised their truancy policy and procedures. They are concerned about attendance of all students, whether excused or unexcused. After reviewing the procedures for habitually truant students, they determined that court referral did not necessarily improve a student's attendance. Therefore they did not refer cases to court last year. They changed their procedures and now require a multi-pronged approach to providing resources and support for a student to change their attendance behavior.**

**Example: The school has a conference with the child and parent and provides counseling and evaluation to determine if there is a learning problem or a social problem.**

**MMSD indicated that sending a student to truancy court is now considered a last resort if nothing else works to improve the student's attendance. Enforcement of the changes to the Habitual Truant Policy began January 2006. Regular truant disposition is to attend school, a forfeiture or community service.**

**The Board of Education-Common Council Liaison Committee members requested that the Truancy Report be run from September to June of each school year. Middle school is not part of this policy but the members thought that level should be considered in the future. Judge Koval will be invited back to a future meeting sometime in the summer 2006.**

b. Madison Metro Issues:

i. The costs related to Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) students using Metro buses

ii. Additional Metro bus service to La Follette High School

iii. MMSD students creating problems on Metro buses

iv. The placement of video cameras on Metro buses

**Members asked the following questions:**

- 1. Why was LaFollette reinstated for after school bus service?**
- 2. What data was used?**
- 3. How can we make these decisions in the future?**
- 4. The MMSD and the City need to communicate more effectively to determine if we need new routes at schools. The City's decision-making process relative to increasing bus pass prices is done in the summer to help MMSD. What else does the City need to do?**
- 5. Why the huge buses when smaller vans could be used to save money?**

**The Council recently passed a resolution allowing cameras on City buses, particularly on school routes. Fifteen buses will have cameras.**

**Ted Balistreri spoke about MMSD 's interest in this issue. As incidents of misbehavior have increased, MMSD has attempted to improve communication between the principal and the Metro. Part of the problem is a legal issue in determining who is responsible for a student after they leave the curb of the school building and enter a bus. Schools can't provide consequences if a student is not in school or being supervised. Metro doesn't have the ability to restrict access to the bus. MMSD has developed a policy that should help restrict access for those students who show poor behavior on a Metro bus. The school can review the video of students causing problems after cameras are installed or bus drivers can point out students. MMSD can write a letter to parents. In the future it is hoped MMSD can give the student's name to Metro.**

**Metro is training drivers on how to handle these incidents and how to provide reports to MMSD about incidents.**

c. How the City of Madison and the MMSD can coordinate efforts to serve new residential developments

**MMSD is looking into changing the laws on impact fees for developers. Current law does not allow any payment for land for future school construction. This needs to be pursued at the state level. MMSD would like to see that one condition of approval be that the developer pays something for school facilities that would be needed as a result of the new homes being built. Currently there can be a conflict between city and school due to land needs --i.e. fire station or school building.**

**MMSD wanted to know how the City feels about the addition to impact fees. George Twigg indicated he would check with city staff and report back to the committee on this idea.**

- d. Identify agenda items for future Board of Education-Common Council Liaison Committee meetings.

**School Board members appointed to the Board of Education-Common Council Liaison Committee occurs after the new School Boar chair is selected. The chair determines committee assignments. Ruth Robarts and Lawrie Kobza indicated an interest in staying on this committee.**

**Ald. Cindy Thomas, current chair of the Board of Education-Common Council Liaison Committee, expressed her view that the effectiveness of the committee rests with longer MMSD term assignments. The Common Council members change assignments on the off years of the School Board elections. This creates gaps in knowledge regarding previous conversations by the committee and in pursuing topics that allow for good decisions.**

**Next meeting date will be determined after the MMSD assignment of members. A new chair will be selected from the MMSD members at that meeting.**

**Agenda item for future meeting:**

**Ted Balistreri: Problem Solving Summary**

## **5. ADJOURNMENT**

**Meeting was adjourned.**