

Newton Community School Board of Education

Regular Board Meeting

E. J. H. Beard Administration Center – East Conference Room

ZOOM 965 4344 5625

November 23, 2020 – 6:30 PM

MINUTES

Call to Order – Board President Robyn Friedman convened the board to order at 6:30 PM.

Roll Call – Christine Dawson, Recording Secretary

Present: Josh Cantu (via Zoom), Donna Cook (via Zoom), Robyn Friedman, Cody Muhs, Travis Padget (via Zoom), Graham Sullivan (via Zoom), Mark Thayer, Tom Messinger, Tim Bloom, and Christine Dawson **Others Present:** Jessica Ferguson, Linda Klepinger (Centre for Arts & Artists), Bret Miller, and Rick Stewart (Artist) **Present via Zoom** (45 including): Jacob Aldrich, Sean Aldrich, Rick Baumhover (Bishop Engineering), Jim Beerends, Chris Braunschweig (Newton Daily News), Jolene Comer, Jon Dunwell, Risa Ergenbright, Jim Gilbert, McKenna Heisdorffer, Michele Heisdorffer, Brenda Hodnett, Chadd Kahlsdorf (Bolton & Menk), KCOB News, Jennifer McCoy (Bolton & Menk), Kristi Meyer, Trisca Mick, Jennifer Norvell, Bill Peters, Jeff Price, Ryan Rump, Todd Schuster, Sandy Scotton, Laura Selover, Lisa Sharp, Eric VanderVelden, and Tara Zehr.

Iowa Code – Chapter 21 (Open Meetings Law) – Chapter 21 states electronic meetings can be held only if meeting in person is impossible or impractical. The November 23, 2020 board meeting was held electronically via Zoom due to the COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic.

Communications – Tom Messinger, Superintendent

Bruce Hoffmeier – Sympathies

Bill Peters, NHS Principal, shared that Bruce Hoffmeier passed away on November 20, 2020. He shared Bruce's employment history with the Newton Community School District, totaling 33 years of service, along with a few highlights of his family and personal interests. Sympathies were extended to his family.

Donation – Newton Clinic, PC Doctors

Superintendent Tom Messinger thanked the Newton Clinic, PC and doctors for their donation of \$1,500 for the food pantries at Berg Middle School, Newton High School, and WEST Academy.

Berg Middle School – Art Bench Project

Linda Klepinger, Centre for Arts & Artists introduced sculpture artist Rick Stewart and thanked him for including Berg Middle School students in Miss O'Lear's class on an art bench project during the 2019 – 2020 school year. Rick spoke about the details of the project, and thanked the Newton Community School District for allowing students to help conceptualize and complete the bench, which will be placed at Berg Middle School. Superintendent Messinger thanked Linda and Rick for their dedication to the students of the Newton Community School District.

All – State Band Recognition

Jim Beerends, NHS Music Teacher, acknowledged Jacob Aldrich and his parents, for Jacob's accomplishment of achieving the elite recognition of All – State Band. He shared that Jacob was not able to fully experience this honor, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Superintendent Tom Messinger congratulated Jacob for his accomplishments.

Red Pride Shout Outs

Superintendent Messinger facilitated campus principals and administrators who shared their Red Pride Shout Outs. **Aurora Heights** (Shane Wheeler, Noah Short, and the SuperHero Tech Team); **Emerson Hough** (Lauren Roush); **Thomas Jefferson** (Ronda Castell, Entire TJ Staff); **Woodrow Wilson** (Leadership Team); **Berg Middle School** (Mike Kremer); **Newton High School** (Ann Nelson); **WEST Academy** (Mike Kremer).

Purpose Statements – Robyn Friedman, President

The mission, vision, district goals (2020 – 2021), collective commitments, and board commitments were reviewed.

Consent Agenda – Robyn Friedman, President – **ACTION #11128**

Cook moved, Padget seconded to unanimously approve the Consent Agenda. Ayes: All Nays: None

Human Resource Update – Laura Selover, Director of Human Resources

Licensed Personnel – ACTION #11129

Jake Bennett - (contract) - 9th Grade Boys Basketball Coach (NHS) - effective November 23, 2020

Kory Leiker - (contract) - Head Varsity Softball Coach (NHS) - effective May 9, 2021

Alora Simmons - (resignation) - Special Education Teacher (BMS) - effective end of 2020 - 2021 school year

Alora Simmons - (resignation) - 8th Grade Assistant Volleyball Coach (BMS) - effective end of 2020 - 2021 school year

Sullivan moved, Cook seconded to approve the Human Resources Update – Licensed Personnel Report. Ayes: Cantu, Cook, Friedman, Muhs, Padget, Sullivan, Thayer Nays: None

Classified Personnel – ACTION #11130

Susan Wendel - (resignation) - Secretary (BMS) - effective December 16, 2020

Leonard Woody - (resignation) - Food Service Driver (Transportation) - effective November 13, 2020

Ronda Castell - (transfer) - from Head Custodian (TJ) to Head Custodian (BMS) - effective TBD

Sullivan moved, Cook seconded to approve the Human Resources Update – Classified Personnel Report. Ayes: Cantu, Cook, Friedman, Muhs, Padget, Sullivan, Thayer Nays: None

Open Forum – Robyn Friedman, President

None

Learning, Leadership, and District Business – Unfinished Business (Current Board) – Tom Messinger, Superintendent and Tim Bloom, Director of Business Services

Consider Recommendation of Final Payment and Release of Retainage to Absolute Concrete Construction for the Newton Athletics Parking Expansion Project in the amount of \$20,218.69 from SAVE Funds – ACTION #11131

Rick Baumhover (Bishop Engineering) was present via Zoom to confirm that the work performed by Absolute Concrete Construction had been reviewed and found to be complete. Muhs moved, Cook seconded to approve the Recommendation of Final Payment and Release of Retainage to Absolute Concrete Construction for the Newton Athletics Parking Expansion Project in the amount of \$20,218.69 from SAVE Funds. Ayes: Cantu, Cook, Friedman, Muhs, Padget, Sullivan, Thayer Nays: None

School Traffic Review and Recommendations for Woodrow Wilson Elementary School and Berg Middle School

Chadd Kahlsdorf and Jennifer McCoy (Bolton & Menk) presented a review that was conducted of school related traffic during arrival and dismissal times on site and on roadways surrounding Woodrow Wilson Elementary School and Berg Middle School. The review looked at the existing conditions including traffic control, site access and circulation, parking, and roadway geometrics, as well as the existing user interactions observed to determine the need for any changes. Kahlsdorf and McCoy also presented solutions for consideration. District Administration plans to coordinate with the City of Newton on the next steps to improve traffic at these campuses.

Consider Setting a Public Hearing for December 14, 2020 at 5:45 PM for the Proposed Window Replacement and Install on Emerson Hough Elementary School – ACTION #11132

Tim Bloom, Director of Business Services, explained that the Newton Community School District is accepting sealed bids for window replacement at Emerson Hough Elementary School. This improvement was included in the district's Capital Improvement Plan in March 2020, and it will require a public hearing and a vote. Sullivan moved, Muhs seconded to set a Public Hearing for December 14, 2020 at 5:45 PM for the Proposed Window Replacement and Install on Emerson Hough Elementary School. Ayes: Cantu, Cook, Friedman, Muhs, Padget, Sullivan, Thayer Nays: None

Board Policy Review – First Reading of IASB Sample Policy Updates (100, 500, 600 & 700 Series) – ACTION #11133

Tim Bloom, Director of Business Services, reviewed the Iowa Association of School Board's (IASB) Policy Primer and policy updates for consideration that have been reviewed by the Board Policy Committee (Josh Cantu, Donna Cook and Cody Muhs). The updates include Changes to Policy Language and Administrative Changes to Note and/or Legal References Only. Muhs moved, Thayer seconded to Approve the First Reading of IASB Sample Policy Updates (100, 500, 600 & 700 Series). Ayes: Cantu, Cook, Friedman, Muhs, Padget, Sullivan, Thayer Nays: None

Denison Culture Survey Update

Superintendent Tom Messinger shared that he has spoken with a representative from Denison Consulting regarding the process for finalizing a survey and having it approved to administer to all district staff, tentatively the end of January 2021. Heartland AEA would assist the district with interpreting the survey results. Board Members Robyn Friedman and Travis Padget serve on the Denison Culture Committee.

Reflections from 75th IASB Annual (All – Digital) Convention

Robyn Friedman, Board President, and Cody Muhs shared their reflections from attending all-digital sessions of the 75th IASB Annual Convention.

Reorganization of the 2020 – 2021 Board of Education

Tim Bloom, Board Secretary, called the reorganization meeting to order.

Nomination of Board President – ACTION #11134

Bloom called for nominations to the position of Board President. Friedman moved to nominate Cody Muhs for Board President. There were no other nominees, and when a vote was called, all board members were in favor of Cody Muhs for Board President. Bloom pronounced that Cody Muhs was elected as Board President.

Nomination of Board Vice – President – ACTION #11135

Bloom called for nominations to the position of Board Vice – President. Padget moved to nominate Josh Cantu for Board Vice – President. There were no other nominees, and when a vote was called, all board members were in favor of Josh Cantu for Board Vice – President. Bloom pronounced that Josh Cantu was elected as Board Vice – President.

Oath of Office

Bloom administered the Oath of Office to the new President (Cody Muhs) and Vice – President (Josh Cantu).

Set Regular Meeting Dates, Times, and Locations for the 2020 – 2021 Board of Education Meetings – ACTION #11136

Bloom explained that the board currently meets for their regular meetings on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month at 6:30 PM at the EJH Beard Administration Center. A proposed 2020 – 2021 schedule of School Board Meetings was included in the board packet for review. Friedman moved, Cook seconded to Set the Regular Meeting Dates, Times, and Locations for the 2020 – 2021 Board of Education Meetings on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month at 6:30 PM at the EJH Beard Administration Center. Ayes: Cantu, Cook, Friedman, Muhs, Padget, Sullivan, Thayer Nays: None

Superintendent's Report – Tom Messinger, Superintendent

Principal's Reports

Each of the campus principals gave a report to the Board of Education. They shared topics on fully remote teaching (AH); grade level meetings (BILs) and essential standards for literacy and math (EH); Preschool (TJ); Social Emotional Learning (SEL) (WW); Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), Parent – Teacher Conferences, keeping students engaged during virtual learning (BMS); fully remote learning (NHS); revamping employability skills (WEST Academy).

New Winter Activities & Athletics Guidelines

Ryan Rump, Director shared guidelines from the Little Hawkeye Conference (Dallas Center – Grimes, Grinnell, Indianola, Newton, Norwalk, Oskaloosa, Pella, and Pella Christian) about Health Practices and Restrictions at LHC Athletic Events. These guidelines will be effective through December 2020 and will be re-evaluated. The Newton Community School District will be livestreaming events on Cardinal TV, and LHC schools will be livestreaming their events as well.

Current Student Information

Bret Miller, Director of Teaching and Learning, shared a table and graphs showing monthly District Enrollment by Grade, Enrollment by Level (and change), and Enrollment by School. He also shared a table of 2020 – 2021 Average Daily Attendance (monthly %) by school, and a comparison before fully remote learning (September 8 – November 5, 2020) and during fully remote learning (November 6 – November 20, 2020).

Return to Learn Plan – Criteria for Evaluation

Superintendent Tom Messinger reviewed information from the District's COVID-19 dashboard regarding students and adults isolated due to a positive test, quarantined due to exposure, and isolated awaiting test results. Superintendent Messinger shared an email from Director Ann Lebo with the Department of Education where the Newton Community School District will participate in providing local COVID information, mitigation efforts, and current learning model. This data reporting portal will open each Monday, and close each Tuesday and will be available to the public.

Three of the team leads spoke on their area of expertise in regards to the district's Return to Learn Plan: Bret Miller, Director of Teaching and Learning, reported on Academic Standards data; Jessica Ferguson, Director of Special Education, reported on Equity data; and Trisca Mick, Principal, reported on Health & Safety mitigation efforts.

Business Services Report – Tim Bloom, Director of Business Services

Approval of Bills – ACTION #11137

Sullivan moved, Friedman seconded to unanimously approve the bills. Ayes: All Nays: None

New Business – Old Business – Tim Bloom, Board Secretary

Future Meeting Dates: December 7, 2020 – 6:00 PM – Board Policy Review Meeting (EJH Beard Administration Center/via ZOOM); December 14, 2020 – 5:30 PM – Regular Board Meeting (EJH Beard Administration Center/via ZOOM) Upcoming Events: November 23 – 25, 2020 (Parent Teacher Conferences – PreK); November 25, 2020 – 1.5 Hour Early Dismissal; November 26 – 27, 2020 (No School – Students & Staff) (Thanksgiving Holiday); December 3, 2020 (Parent Teacher Conferences – NHS)

Consider Open Forum Topics or Future Agenda Items

Equity (Cook); Board Work Session (Sullivan, Muhs) – Friedman suggested starting with communication piece.

Board Highlights

Traffic Review & Recommendations; Board of Education – Reorganization (2020 – 2021); Return to Learn Plan.

Go Into Exempt Session – ACTION #11138

At 8:54 PM, Friedman moved, Thayer seconded to go into an Exempt Session to discuss negotiations. Ayes: Cantu, Cook, Friedman, Muhs, Padget, Sullivan, Thayer Nays: None

Negotiations – Exempt Session

Superintendent Messinger and Mr. Bloom reviewed with the board Supplemental State Aid and budget guarantee implications for the 2022 fiscal year funding. The district is looking forward to further discussions with elected officials on school funding for the next fiscal year.

Adjourn – ACTION #11139

Sullivan moved, Friedman seconded to unanimously adjourn the meeting at 9:27 PM. Ayes: All Nays: None

Minutes Mailed _____

Approved by Action No. _____

_____ (President)

_____, 2020

_____ (Secretary)