

Board of Education
Worth School District 127

Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting
December 13, 2023 - 6:00 p.m.

Dr. Rosemary Lucas Administration Building
11218 S. Ridgeland Ave, Worth, Illinois

Administrators:

Dr. Mark Fleming, Superintendent
Cindy Dykas, Assistant Superintendent, Business Manager/CSBO
Dr. Sinead Chambers, Director of Student Services
Jason Tooth, Worth Junior High Principal
Melissa Wills, Assistant Principal, WJH
Dr. Maureen Eichstaedt, Principal, Worth Elementary
Elizabeth D'Andrea, Assistant Principal, Worth Elementary
Ashley Toms, Principal, Worthwoods
Robert Jeffers, Director of Technology
David Dvorchak, Director of Facilities and Grounds

Board Recording Secretary

Jill Moore

Others Present

Sergeant Cozzi, SRO Officer
Ginny McClure, WE
Shannon Fisher, WE
Leslie Zator, WW
Kaitlyn Ebert, WE
Deb Burghgraef, WW
Ashley Rybovic, WW
Sandy Jaer, WJH
Diana Flerick, WW
Colleen DeGonia, WJH

1. MEETING OPENING

A. CALL TO ORDER

President Drew Sernus called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Drew Sernus, Danette Keeler, Meghan Sisk, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores, David Blanks
Absent: Missy Sinclair

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President, Drew Sernus led the Pledge of Allegiance

2. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Dr. Fleming asked Ashley Rybovic, Social Worker at Worthwoods and Diana Fleric, Nurse at Worthwoods. The week before Thanksgiving, a boy was struggling in the lunchroom and was choking. Diana tried giving the student the Heimlich and it did not come out. Ashley grabbed the Lifevac and gave it to Diana and she then proceeded to use that on the student and was able to save his life. Dr. Fleming shared a video from Elijah extending his thank you to Ashley and Diana for saving his life. Thank you cards made by Eli and flowers were presented to both of them. Dr. Fleming and the Board of Education extended their appreciation and stated that Officer Cozzi is the one that brought the idea of getting the LifeVac in the building.

Dr. Chambers stated that the owner of LifeVac was contacted and Elijah has been added to the lifesaving wall.

B. FOIA REQUESTS

Dr. Fleming stated that since the last Board Meeting we've receive two FOIA Requests and we've responded to them.

3. ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT FOR BUSINESS SERVICES

A. 2023 TAX LEVY

Cindy Dykas stated that the 2023 Tax Levy to be approved at this meeting. All figures are the same that were presented in November, with just a few things to highlight.

Slide 2 - Review basic terms of the tax levy process

With the CPI at 6.5%, greater than 5% for the second year in a row, PTELL is in effect, as is the Truth in Taxation which requires a public hearing today.

Slide 3 - P.A. 102-0895

- New section of the School Code, effective May 23, 2022
- Each School District now must publicly disclose the cash reserve balance of all funds held by the school district related to its operational levy
- Disclosures must occur at the public hearing at which the district certifies its budget and levy for the taxable year
- Worth School District 127 has complied with this by posting this information in Board Docs each month
- As of June 30, 2023, the Operational Cash Reserve Balances (all funds except Debt Service) was near \$15,700,000

Slide 5 – 10-Year History of Revenue Collected

- Corrected slide! Took out the “total row” which was doubling the figures in the slide. Much more accurate.

Slide 9 - CPI (Inflation)

- 2022 CPI which affects the 2023 Levy hit 6.5% (year prior was 7.0%)
- CPI in December 2023 is expected to start to level off (announcement in January 2024), so PTELL will hopefully not be in effect for the 2024 tax levy. November 2023 CPI was 3.1%, so this is an indicator of what's to come.

Slide 10 - Tax Levy vs. Tax Extension

- Doesn't matter what is levied, the district only receives CPI increase plus extra for new property growth.
- Bottom row shows large levy increases over prior year extension
- Row above is a year over year extension increase, which is roughly CPI and very minimal increases
- 2019 was a sharp decline because it was the first opportunity for the Property Tax Relief Grant
- 2020 and 2021 were low increases due to low CPI and continuing to receive PTRG
- 2022 was up as a result of CPI being at 7.0% (again, capped at 5.0%)
- Again, a Levy is an ask, not a guarantee. It will be closer to the 2022 extension times CPI 5%, so closer to \$9.5-9.8 million, not \$11.3 we are requesting.

• Next Steps

- The board conduct a public hearing (Item 6) during this meeting, for the Truth in Taxation requirement.
- The board will vote on the 2023 Tax Levy resolutions (Motions, Item B) which will be filed with the Cook County Clerk's office, prior to the last Tuesday in December.

B. TRANSFER FUNDS FROM THE OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE FUND TO THE BOND AND INTEREST FUND

- Attachment is a sheet created by Raymond James to illustrate the amount of payments of our recently issued Series 2023 Bonds and the corresponding amounts we will abate each year (how much the district will transfer and pay towards bond payments in order to keep the debt amounts flat for our taxpayers.
- We plan to move the funds from the Operations and Maintenance Fund to the Bond and Interest Fund
- This year's transfer and abatement is \$245,350
- You will vote on the resolution under Motions, item C

C. COPIER MAINTENANCE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

- A Request for Proposal for a Maintenance Agreement for our photocopiers was necessary – it was released November 13th
- Our current copiers and the current maintenance agreement were purchased Dec. 20, 2018
 - The maintenance agreement expires next week (5-year agreement)
 - The copiers are in pretty good shape, as along as a maintenance agreement is in place to service them when needed
 - The agreement also includes toner and staples – pretty much everything except the paper
- The plan is to sign a new Copier maintenance agreement for an 18-month period, 1/1/24-6/30/25.
- In Spring 2025 we will evaluate the condition of our current fleet of copiers. We will most likely release a new RFP for machines and maintenance agreement at that time, since we will need additional machines once the additions at WW and WJH are done.
- We are recommending approval of an 18-month agreement with Next Day Plus at \$854 per month, not to exceed \$15,372 for the life of the agreement.
 - We currently work with Next Day Plus – they supply our toner for all the printers in the district.
- The approval is under Motions, item D

4. DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL SERVICES

No Report

5. DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

2023 IL School Report Card

Linda Esposito stated that as you may or may not know, you can go to illinoisreportcard.com and look at our assessment results. On the website you will be able to see various snapshots of district data. The great news is that each of our three schools received a Commendable rating. In order to receive the highest rating, Exemplary, we would need to be in the top 10% of all IL schools. A lofty goal for sure, but know that we even with Commendable designations, we are always looking to improve and grow.

The ratings are based on multiple measures of school performance. These measures include ELA Growth, Math Growth, ELA Proficiency, Math Proficiency, Science Proficiency, English Learner Progress to Proficiency, Chronic Absenteeism, and the Climate Survey. As an admin team, we look at each of these measures to determine where we need to focus our school improvement efforts. The principals meet with their School Leadership Teams and together they develop and implement plans for improvement.

B. MTSS UPDATE - INSTRUCTIONAL INTERVENTIONIST

I am so excited to turn this over to the Interventionist Team for an MTSS update. I am amazed at how much we have accomplished in 1 ½ school years! They have prepared a presentation that summarizes the accomplishments of year one, the updated goals for year 2, and the early analysis of year 2 data. I want you to notice during the presentation, how this team is not only supporting students, but also supporting teachers in using Tier 2 interventions in the classroom, and providing PD for teachers before and after school. Ginny McClure, Shannon Fisher, Leslie Zator, Kaitlyn Ebert, and Deb Burghgraef shared a presentation outlining the results and data in year one of the program.

Dr. Fleming extended a thank you to all the staff as the results are outstanding and incredible how this is benefiting so many students. Dr. Fleming also thanked Linda Esposito for her leadership.

C. JOINT ANNUAL CONFERENCE PRESENTATION UPDATE

Since the Joint Annual Conference, I have had several districts reach out to me to get more information about our summer school makeover and rebranding as EdCamp. I've talked to superintendents, principals, Curriculum Directors, and Directors of Student Services. They've asked great questions like how do we fund it, how to find the consultants and guest teachers, how does the professional learning for teachers carry over into the school year, what impact did it have on students both academically and emotionally, does the student impact carry over into the school year, and what recommendations do you have for a district that would like to try EdCamp. Based on the questions they were asking, I think they really understood what EdCamp is all about. I think our presentation made a difference.

6. PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2023 TAX LEVY

Action, Public Hearing: A. CONDUCT A PUBLIC HEARING

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of education conduct a public hearing regarding the 2023 Tax Levy."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Danette Keeler.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

- The tentative levy was presented at the regular meeting of the Board of Education on Wednesday, November 8, 2023
- A Truth In Taxation public hearing must be held if the estimate of taxes to be levied is more than 105% of the prior year's tax extension. We complied with the law by posting a Public Notice of the proposed 2023 property tax levy in the Monday, December 4th edition of the Daily Southtown newspaper.
- We will now conduct the Public Hearing on the 2023 Tax Levy
- The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public the opportunity to provide comment or ask questions on the 2023 Tax Levy.
- This is now the Public Hearing portion. The public is now invited to make comments.

Hearing no comments, Ms. Dykas recommended the Public Hearing be closed.

Action, Public Hearing: B. CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education close the public hearing and return to regular session."

Motion by Danette Keeler, second by David Blanks.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

7. CITIZENS' REMARKS - AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

There were no citizens' remarks.

8. CONSENT AGENDA

Action (Consent): A. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as presented."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action (Consent): B. BOARD BILLS PAYABLE

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the Accounts Payable for \$339,054.18 (EDUCATIONAL); \$151,137.07 (OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE); \$13,588.38 (TRANSPORTATION); \$120,286.00 (CAPITAL PROJECTS); and \$97,127.00 (TORT IMMUNITY) for a total of \$721,192.63."

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as presented."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action (Consent): C. PAYROLL SUMMARY

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the Payroll Summary for the Education Fund in the amount of \$731,878.96, the Building Fund in the amount of \$47,895.52, and the FICA/IMRF/Medicare in the amount of \$44,810.83."

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as presented."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action (Consent): D. RESIGNATION OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - ENAS JARRAR - LUNCH SUPERVISOR - WORTH ELEMENTARY - EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 8, 2023

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as presented."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action (Consent): E. RESIGNATION OF CERTIFIED STAFF - LISA PERTILE - SOCIAL WORKER - RETIREMENT EFFECTIVE JUNE 30, 2028

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as presented."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action (Consent): F. EMPLOYMENT OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - HARRY JAMES - PART-TIME CUSTODIAN - EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 27, 2023

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as presented."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action (Consent): G. EMPLOYMENT OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - MANAR DARMOUSA - PART-TIME CUSTODIAN - EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 14, 2023

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as presented."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action (Consent): H. EMPLOYMENT OF CLASSIFIED STAFF - MARYANN SOLLIS - PART-TIME CUSTODIAN - EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 14, 2023

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as presented."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.
Final Resolution: Motion Carried
Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action (Consent): I. APPROVAL OF TRAVEL EXPENSES FOR ATTENDANCE AT THE TRI-CONFERENCE IN CHICAGO, IL ON NOVEMBER 16 - 19, 2023 AS OUTLINED IN BOARD BILLS PAYABLE

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as presented."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Drew Sernus.
Final Resolution: Motion Carried
Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

9. MOTIONS

Action: A. REGULAR BOARD MINUTES

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the November 8, 2023 regular meeting."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by David Blanks.
Final Resolution: Motion Carried
Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores
Abstain: Danette Keeler

Action: B. 2023 TAX LEVY

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education adopt the Resolution providing for the Tax Levy for the Year 2023, adopt the Resolution providing for 2023 Tax Levy for Working Cash; adopt the Resolution providing for 2023 Tax Levy for Special Education Purposes; authorize the President to sign the Certificate of Compliance with the Truth in Taxation Law; adopt the Resolution Authorizing Reduction of Certain Fund Levies for the 2023 Levy Year, as recommended by the Assistant Superintendent for Business Services/CSBO and the Superintendent."

Motion by Vince Flores, second by Meghan Sisk.
Final Resolution: Motion Carried
Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action: C. TRANSFER ABATEMENT RESOLUTION

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education adopt the Resolution (i) transferring funds from the operations and maintenance fund to the bond and interest fund of the District and (ii) abating a portion of the tax heretofore levied for the year 2023 to pay debt service on the General Obligation Limited Tax School Bonds, Series 2023, of the District."

Motion by Danette Keeler, second by David Blanks.
Final Resolution: Motion Carried
Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action: D. COPIER MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the Copier Maintenance Agreement with Next Day Plus effective from January 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025 at a cost not to exceed \$15,372.00.

Motion by Michelle Egan, second by Vince Flores.
Final Resolution: Motion Carried
Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

10. BOARD DISCUSSION/ACTION AND/OR REPORTS/REQUESTS

Board Members engaged in conversation regarding the Joint Annual Conference in Chicago, November 16-19, 2023. Board Members shared that they feel that Linda's presentation should gain the single room audience. Dr. Fleming stated that the district will be working on another plan for the conference next year in hopes that our district will receive more audience coverage. Board Members shared the benefits of the programs they attended and the impact it will have in the future for school districts: Resolutions, Literacy, and School Security.

11. CITIZENS' REMARKS - AGENDA ITEMS

There were no citizens' remarks.

12. CLOSED SESSION

Action: A. ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education adjourn to closed session at 7:32 p.m. to discuss the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees"

Motion by Michelle Egan, second by Meghan Sisk.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

Action: B. RECONVENE IN PUBLIC SESSION

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education upon completion of it's discussions in closed session reconvene in public session at 9:34 p.m."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Drew Sernus, David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores

13. ADJOURNMENT

Recommended Motion (voice vote): "that the Board of Education motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 p.m."

Voice Vote: All Yes

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Meghan Sisk", written over the text "Respectfully Submitted,".

Meghan Sisk
Secretary, Board of Education

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Drew Sernus", written below the signature of Meghan Sisk.

Drew Sernus
President, Board of Education