

**Board of Education
Worth School District 127
Dr. Rosemary Lucas Administrative Center**

In-Person and Zoom Video Conference

Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting
February 10, 2021

1. MEETING OPENING

A. CALL TO ORDER

President Drew Sernus called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Drew Sernus, Michelle Egan, Danette Keeler, Stephanie Peltzer

Members Present on Zoom: Meghan Sisk, Dave Blanks, Vince Flores

Administrators:

Dr. Mark Fleming, Superintendent

Cindy Dykas, Business Manager/CSBO

Linda Esposito, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Dr. Joe Zampillo, Worth Junior High Principal

Maureen Eichstaedt, Worth Elementary Principal

Robert Jeffers, Director of Technology

Administrators on Zoom:

Ashley Toms, Assistant Principal, Worth Elementary/Worthwoods

Jason Tooth, Assistant Principal, Worth Junior High

Dr. Sinead Chambers, Director of Special Education

JoAnne Albrecht, WEA President

JoAnne Tyree, WEST President

Others Present

Jill Moore, Board Recording Secretary

Ed Wright, DLA

John Jordan, RSM

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Drew Sernus led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. AUDITOR'S REPORT

Ms. Cindy Dykas introduced John Jordan, from RSM, to give an overview and cover the highlights of the 2020 Audit. Mr. Jordan stated that our process was a little different this year due to Covid restrictions and the audit took longer to complete. Overall, the financial performance of the district is strong and the operating results for the year were positive and the general fund balance is stable and secure. The District's Annual Financial Profile score submitted to ISBE is 3.9. Mr. Jordan greatly appreciated all the efforts from the district team to accommodate us and overall it was a very smooth and clean audit.

B. WORTH ELEMENTARY CONSTRUCTION PROJECT UPDATE BY DLA

Mr. Ed Wright gave an update regarding the contractor bids for Worth Elementary. We received 13 bids and overall Troop Construction was the lowest qualified bidder. The base bid amount came in at \$4,437,000 which is higher than the original budget and is due to the soil, septic tanks that need to be removed and drain tile work. Mr. Wright stated that there are some allowances: \$75,000 for any further soil issues; and a \$50,000 allowance for the decorative tree that will be put in the middle

of the media center. There may be some additional allowances that need to be accounted for and Mr. Wright stated he will bring those to the Board next month. Several of the contractors were concerned about the October completion timeline so we pushed back the date to December to avoid any overtime costs. They are a Veteran-owned company and have several Veterans working for the company. The cost to remove the playground equipment from the district office to Worth Elementary was going to cost \$12,000 less than having new equipment. It made more sense financially to have newer equipment and keep the playground at district office. Ground breaking will take place as soon as the ground thaws.

Board Member asked for clarification regarding the equipment usage at district office since preschool students have moved to Worth Elementary. Ms. Dykas and Dr. Fleming stated that the neighborhood kids use the equipment quite frequently. Mr. Wright reiterated that tearing everything out would not be cost effective for the district.

Mr. Wright engaged the Board with information regarding his knowledge of air filtration. Mr. Wright has been having conversations with engineers regarding the guidelines and how much fresh air needs to be brought in rooms. If your mechanical systems are operating the way they are supposed to, they are already meeting those guidelines and you can upgrade your school filters as much as they can tolerate air flow. There is no evidence to prove that the filters work as advertised. Our current school filters are already doing that in the rooms and wearing a mask is stopping at the source.

Board Member asked what type of filters we are using now. Ms. Dykas stated that we just upgraded to the 13 as we were previously using the 7. That was the recommendation from Precision Controls back in November and we also have 20% fresh air coming into the rooms. Dr. Fleming stated that as an admin team, when new initiatives have come out, we have not been real quick to act on those things as the science is not there and we are taking our time to make sure those things work.

C. E-RATE PRESENTATION BY ROBERT JEFFERS

Robert Jeffers presented a detailed PowerPoint Presentation regarding the E-Rate Process. E-Rate helps ensure that schools and libraries can obtain high speed internet access and telecommunications at affordable rates. This is managed by Universal Service Administrative Co. (USAC). Telecommunications companies pay fees that fund E-rate and discounts can range from 20% to 90%.

Category 1 – 90% Discount – Data Transmission Services and/or Internet Access

Category 2 – 85% Discount – Internal Connections; Managed Internal Broadband Services; Basic Maintenance of Internal Connections

The E-Rate Process

Step 1: Competitive Bidding

Step 2: Selecting a Service Provider

Step 3: Applying for Discounts

Step 4: Application Review

Step 5: Starting Services

Step 6: Invoicing

Mr. Jeffers covered all the previous projects the district has done from 2015–2020 as well as cover current projects that are planned for 2021 and beyond. Ms. Dykas stated that we have an E-Rate Consultant that has been very helpful and they contact us every December to go over what projects we want to do for the year. Ms. Dykas shared the 10-year history of funding applied for and budget committed since 2015 to now. In 2014 the district had 25 Mbps and in 2021 we have 1 Gig. Ms. Dykas stated that compared to where we were, this is wonderful considering that schools are using more internet and streaming.

Over the years, our district has saved a substantial amount of money. Below outlines the amounts the district has saved from 2015–2020:

- 2020: \$89,175.43
- 2019: \$106,443.31
- 2018: \$70,194.66
- 2017: \$79,819.60
- 2016: \$112,302.10
- 2015: \$43,775.97

Board Member asked for clarification regarding the invoice that is \$112,396, what will the district portion be in the end. Mr. Jeffers stated that 85% of that cost will be covered and the district will pay 15%. Ms. Dykas stated that the district office is not eligible for reimbursement as there are no students housed in the building.

D. 2021/2022 CALENDAR PLANNING

Dr. Fleming stated that the calendar committee will meet on March 17 and we will bring the calendar to the April Board Meeting to take action. H.S. District #218 has published their calendar and we will be reviewing their calendar. At this time, we are still waiting on H.S. District #230 to publish their calendar. Dr. Fleming stated that he has heard positive feedback regarding the 2020/2021 calendar especially with the structure of Thanksgiving week.

Dr. Fleming commented on the framed photo that each Board Member received this evening. Dr. Fleming stated that each photo was taken individually and superimposed in one picture due to Covid.

E. BUILDING UPDATE/REPORT

Dr. Joe Zampillo introduced Assistant Principal Jason Tooth to share how the art assembly went. Mr. Tooth stated that Mr. Mark Anderson was wonderful with the kids and engaged them the entire time. They were very excited to show off their art work and have a time to be creative. We hope to bring Mr. Anderson back when kids are in-person. Dr. Zampillo stated that we had a great turnout of kids attending.

Dr. Fleming expressed his appreciation to all staff members. It was wonderful to see students back in the building. 1/3 of all staff have received the first vaccine or have an appointment to receive one. The health department is very overwhelmed and we are hopeful that by May 1 that most will be vaccinated; however, we can't let our guard down and still need to be diligent in wearing masks, washing hands, and using hand sanitizer.

Linda Esposito stated that the first day back went great and everything went smooth. It's just amazing to see what has been done in such a short amount of time. Ms. Esposito received a phone call from a parent at Worthwoods that called to say "thank you" and express her appreciation for what staff members are doing. Teachers shared that there have been some technology glitches and we need lots of patience.

Ashley Toms stated that everyone is adjusting and working well together and "patience" is key. The transition has been really smooth and attendance has been great for remote and in-person. Teachers are really doing their best and trying to include remote students and make them feel a part of the process.

Maureen Eichstaedt met with teachers and they stated that patience is key for staff to work through all the challenges. Teachers stated that it's great to have students for four uninterrupted hours. Ms. Toms and I walked the building and it's been wonderful to see teachers supporting each other---the collaboration is incredible! Our teachers don't give themselves enough credit for all their hard work.

Ms. Eichstaedt shared with the Board that there was a caretaker taking a student to school and the other child was crying. Ms. Eichstaedt approached the family and she was sad her sister was going back to school.

Dr. Zampillo stated that we asked teachers our teachers what is going well; what are the challenges; what do you need? Teachers are so excited to have students back in the building. Kids are excited to be back with each other – lots of smiles and are so happy to be back. Patience is key! Challenges are connecting with live and remote students and they are concerned about the students at home who feel left out. They are strategizing how they can make them feel included. What do they need – teachers would like longer HDMI cables.

Dr. Fleming stated that Kathy Deruiter was doing a great job multitasking. She looked like a DJ shifting from multiple computers assisting students with logging on. It's been wonderful to see all the staff working together.

Board Member stated that she had her kids have a good breakfast as they will be at school for four hours and she was thinking they would come home hungry. Board Member was surprised that her kids didn't come home hungry. They were just so happy to be back school. A big thank you to everyone.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

A. BUSINESS MANAGER – TWO WAY RADIO

Ms. Cindy Dykas shared with the Board that our walkie talkies are currently 10 years old and the batteries are dying. The district submitted a proposal to several companies and we published it in the newspaper as well as the district webpage. We had a walk-thru/meeting today at WJH with five companies in attendance. The main antenna is currently housed at the WJH and we only need the handsets. The request for proposals will come back in about two weeks and we will present them to the Board in March. Ms. Dykas stated that we plan to purchase 36 and will use approximately 30 of them. Each school will have their own channel and we will have a district-wide channel in case of extreme emergency.

Dr Fleming stated that two-way radios are critical to have for safety at each school building.

Board Member asked who currently has the walkie talkies. Dr. Fleming stated that each building principal, teachers have them for recess, teachers outside for arrival and dismissal, nurses, custodians, and paraprofessionals.

Board Member asked what is the encryption level. Dr. Fleming stated that in his previous district the encryption level is minimal and stated he is not sure of the exact level, but assured Board Members that we've never had any problems.

B. DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL SERVICES

No report

C. DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Ms. Esposito's update was given in E. Building Update/Report

4. CITIZENS' REMARKS – AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Jolanta Sikora – Parent – Zoom

Ms. Sikora stated that she is very grateful students are back in school for a half day and expressed how happy her daughter is to be back. She stated that she is still confused regarding the Phase 5 reopen plan and what will need to be done to get students back in full time. Will teachers be getting vaccinated? Are there any other options to get to Phase 5? How will the school remodeling affect school attendance? Will the remodel cause a school closure? Ms. Sikora addressed Board Members that they are here to represent our children, are here for our community, have been chosen under an oath of office and one day these students will be in your position.

Mr. Adam Bednarz – Parent – Sent e-mail

1. How soon will we know when our children will be attending school regularly full time?

5. 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 listed below in 5b – 5d

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Motion by David Blanks, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Action (Consent): B. BOARD BILLS PAYABLE

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the Accounts Payable for \$144,995.38 (EDUCATIONAL); \$94,114.91 (OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE); and \$5,039.88 (TRANSPORTATION) for a total of \$244,150.17."

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as listed below in 5b – 5d

Motion by David Blanks, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

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 \$582,882.49, the Building Fund in the amount of \$35,088.87, and the FICA/IMRF/Medicare in the amount of \$43,464.02."

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as listed below in 5b – 5d

Motion by David Blanks, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

6. MOTIONS

Action: A. REGULAR BOARD MINUTES – 01.13.2021

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the January 13, 2021, regular meeting."

Motion by Michelle Egan, second by Danette Keeler.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Action: B. CLOSED SESSION MINUTES – 1ST SESSION – 01.13.2021

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the January 13, 2021 first closed session minutes."

Motion by Stephanie Peltzer, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Action: C. CLOSED SESSION MINUTES – 2ND SESSION – 01.13.2021

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the January 13, 2021 second closed session minutes."

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, Stephanie Peltzer

Action: D. APPROVAL BID FOR MARCH 2021 WORK AT WORTH ELEMENTARY, AS DESIGNED BY DLA, LTD.

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education authorize the creation of bid specifications and release bid documents for summer 2021 projects, including the addition and remodel work at Worth Elementary School."

Motion by Stephanie Peltzer, second by David Blanks.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: David Blanks, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Michelle Egan, Vince Flores, Stephanie Peltzer

No: Drew Sernus

Action: E. ACCEPTANCE OF AUDITOR'S REPORT FOR FY2020

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education accept the Auditor's Report, as recommended by the Business Manager/CSBO and the Superintendent".

Motion by Danette Keeler, second by Michelle Egan.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Action: F. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING NOTICE OF DISMISSAL (NON-FINAL YEAR PROBATIONARY TEACHERS) – SHANNON GARBIE & LISA STRZEMPA

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the Resolution Authorizing Notice of Dismissal (Non-Final Year Probationary Teachers)."

Motion by Michelle Egan, second by Danette Keeler.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Action: G. CLOVER LEAF MILK CONTRACT

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the contract with CloverLeaf Farms Distributors for milk delivery for the 2021/2022 school year."

Motion by Danette Keeler, second by Drew Sernus.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Action: H. PROPOSED WORTH JUNIOR HIGH GRADUATION DATE

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the proposed 8th graduation date for June 2, 2021, for Worth Junior High School with the ceremony to be held in the Worth Junior High Gymnasium at 7:00pm."

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, Stephanie Peltzer

Board Member asked for clarification regarding the 8th grade graduation date. Dr. Fleming stated that we are okay with the wording of the motion as it states proposed.

7. BOARD DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION

Board Member stated that while kindergarten is difficult over remote, Ms. Kordas has been doing such a wonderful job with her son. She is outside during any type of weather handing out packets with a smile on her face and also passing out gloves and hats. Kids from little to big are getting everything they need. A huge thank you to her and all the staff as they are doing a great job.

8. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS AND REQUESTS

There were no reports and/or requests.

9. CITIZENS' REMARKS – AGENDA ITEMS

There were no citizens' remarks.

10. CLOSED SESSION

Action: A. ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education adjourn to closed session at 7:27 p.m. to discuss the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees and security

procedures, school building safety and security, and the use of personnel and equipment to respond to an actual, a threatened, or a reasonably potential danger to the safety of employees, students, staff, the public, or public property."

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, Stephanie Peltzer

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."

Motion by Danette Keeler, second by Vince Flores.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

11. ADJOURNMENT

Recommended Motion (voice vote): "that the Board of Education motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:34 p.m."

Voice Vote: All Yes

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Respectfully Submitted,



Meghan Sisk
Secretary, Board of Education



Drew Sernus
President, Board of Education