

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

**Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting**

**December 8, 2021**

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

President Drew Sernus called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

**B. ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Drew Sernus, Meghan Sisk, Danette Keeler, Stephanie Peltzer, Michelle Egan, Dave Blanks, Vince Flores

**Administrators:**

Dr. Mark Fleming, Superintendent  
Cindy Dykas, Business Manager/CSBO  
Linda Esposito, Director of Curriculum and Instruction  
Dr. Sinead Chambers, Director of Special Education  
Dr. Joseph Zampillo, Worth Junior High Principal  
Jason Tooth, Assistant Principal, Worth Junior High  
Ashley Toms, Assistant Principal, Worth Elementary/Worthwoods  
David Dvorchak, Director of Facilities and Grounds  
Melissa Wills, Assistant Principal  
Robert Jeffers, Director of Technology

**Board Recording Secretary**

Jill Moore

**Others Present**

JoAnne Albrecht, WJH  
Mary Zirngibl, WE  
Keri Gonciarz, WE  
Jim and Carol Derkacy  
Missy Sinclair  
Rogzk Notal  
Beata Piekarewicz  
Elizabeth Bandola  
Nikolaos Stathopoulou  
Mr. & Mrs. Bouse  
Rev. Leonard Ottartz  
Sandy Jager  
V.J. Danko  
J. Naughton  
Rich Dzigdzic  
Barb Dzigdzic  
Alyssa Zirngibl  
Lisa Strzempa  
Lisa Bray  
Jospeh Plepetto  
Blanca Repetto  
Ama Buiklu  
John Cerrone  
Emma Sartin  
A. Martinez  
Grace Giampa

Kevin Sisk  
Dorota Drab  
Jim Peltzer  
Vicki Ramirez  
Janis Heigl  
Jolanta Sikora  
Jadwiga Hajnos  
Paul Rowell  
Megan Dresden

### **C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

President Drew Sernus led the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **2. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Fleming opened by introducing Janis Heigl to speak regarding her time with staff. Ms. Heigl stated its nice to have this opportunity to share how teachers are learning alternate ways to help kids become more comfortable being mathematicians. Teachers were using Math Academy this past summer during summer school. When she began teaching, my students did not know how to add fractions, I had one strategy "slower" and "louder". Teachers have been very receptive and are excited about the curriculum. One teacher even sent me a "thank you" note with some Lifesavers.

Dr. Fleming stated that Early Childhood and Pre-K classes start back on Tuesday, January 4, but classes will be shortened by 30 minutes. Dr. Chambers called those parents and they will also be receiving a letter. This aligns with most of other districts and across the state.

Dr. Fleming stated that we have received two FOIA requests and the district has responded to them in a timely manner.

### **A. DLA RENOVATION UPDATE/PHASE 3 BID**

Dr. Fleming stated that the new addition is set to open January 4 along with the new pick up and drop off pattern. Mrs. Eichstaedt is working on a letter that will be sent to all parents explaining the new drop off and pick up procedures. Dr. Fleming is asking for patience as it will take some time for everyone to get adjusted to the new drive pattern. If you would like to see the new addition, Worth Elementary will open at 5:00 p.m. on January 12, an hour before the 6:00 p.m. Board Meeting. There will a ribbon cutting ceremony and Worth officials will be present. The Board will take action this evening for the Phase III 2022 work which will be completed in summer 2022.

### **B. FIRST READING OF BOARD POLICY**

Dr. Fleming stated that starting tonight we have implemented a much more efficient plan to review and update Board Policy on a more consistent basis. The second reading and action to adopt the policies will take place in January.

### **C. 21/22 HEALTH/LIFE SAFETY INSPECTION**

Dr. Fleming stated the district performed very well on the safety inspection. Worthwoods, Worth Elementary and Worth Junior High were all violation free. The Administration Center had minimal violations and most of them have been addressed or will be during the renovations next summer. A special thank you to David Dvorchak and Cindy Dykas as they worked a lot of extra hours. Thank you to all staff for paying extra attention to the details on safety concerns.

### **D. K-9 FUNDRAISER PRESENTATION BY SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER COZZI**

Office Cozzi, the district School Resource Officer, shared a presentation regarding the upcoming K-9 Fundraiser. Officer Cozzi stated that they would like to have a therapy dog in the district and shared pictures of his dog, Louie, that will officially finish his K-9 evaluation in January. Benefits to having a therapy dog include social and emotional, cognitive therapy, while decreasing anxiety. Officer Cozzi shared examples of how beneficial this therapy has already been to a student they visited at one of the schools that was having a meltdown and even visited a student in the hospital to offer support and encouragement. Through the efforts of the fundraiser, this program will be funded and will be successful. The fundraiser will take place on January 29, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at the Garden Chalet and tickets for the event are \$30.

### **E. HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM WORTH JUNIOR HIGH**

Dr. Zampillo introduced JoAnne Albrecht, the Worth Junior High Art Teacher. 7th grade students, Emma Sartin and Amberle Hoezl, presented Holiday cards to the Board of Education.

Dr. Zampillo shared a video of the Worth Junior High winter band concert. The band concert included several holiday songs as well as several solos by students. A special thank you to our Band Director, Kelly Gansauer who did a wonderful job with the band.

### **3. ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE**

#### **A. BUSINESS MANAGER**

##### **Property Tax Levy Process**

- The Property Tax levy for 2021 was presented in detail at the last board of education meeting on Wednesday, November 10<sup>th</sup>.
- At that meeting, it was explained why this year's levy is \$10.9 million, and further explained why the Property Tax extension will be much less than that, probably closer to \$10.5 million
- As a reminder, this year's levy increase over the 2020 extension is 4.83%, which is less than the PTELL limit of 105% over prior year.
- The actual extension will most likely be around 2% over last year's extension.
- The Property Tax Levy hearing will take place later in this agenda.
- The vote to approve the levy will take place after the hearing.

##### **Property Tax Relief Grant**

- As you recall, we were awarded the PTRG in Spring 2020 which reduced tax rates for tax years 2019 and 2020
- PTRG through ISBE will be available again.
- We will apply for it in Spring 2022
- If we receive the grant again, it will be for tax years 2021 and 2022
- A home in Worth with a market value of \$175,000 saw a \$222 reduction each year for two consecutive tax cycles.

We will discuss further at the January or February meeting.

### **4. PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2021 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 2021 Tax Levy."

Motion by Stephanie Peltzer, second by Michelle Egan.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Hearing no comments, Cindy Dykas recommended that the 2021 Tax Levy 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, Stephanie Peltzer

### **5. CITIZENS' REMARKS - AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

#### **Information: A. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mrs. Hajnos - PTO/Book Titles with authors/Letter distributed to Worth Community/IL Culturally Responsible Standards/Gender Identity/Racism.

Alicia Martinez - CRT (Critical Race Theory) / Racism

Ms. Sikora - CRT/Social Emotional Learning (SEL) - 2nd Step/ ISBE Equity Journey Continuum / Racial Bias / CRTL/ Sex Education

Ms. Sinclair - Thank you to the Worth Schools/Board Members

Ms. Dresden - Mask Breaks during winter / Minutes for September/October / School Lunches (President Sernus commented that the September and October minutes are on the district webpage)

Mr. Jim Peltzer - Parent Letter / CRT (Critical Race Therapist) / Sex Education

Mr. Rowell - CRT (Critical Race Theory) / Sex Education / Parent Letter

Mr. Kevin Sisk - CRT (Critical Race Theory) / Sex Education/Parent Letter

## **6. 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 outlined in 6. B - 6. G."

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as outlined in in 6. B - 6. G."

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

### **Action (Consent): B. PAYROLL SUMMARY**

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the Payroll Summary for the Education Fund in the amount of \$653,307.31, the Building Fund in the amount of \$42,094.60, and the FICA/IMRF/Medicare in the amount of \$46,976.03."

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as outlined in in 6. B - 6. G."

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

### **Action (Consent): C. BOARD BILLS PAYABLE**

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the Accounts Payable for \$439,025.76 (EDUCATIONAL); \$836,193.47 (OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE); \$17,808.34 (TRANSPORTATION); and 66,392.00 (TORT IMMUNITY) for a total of \$1,359,419.57."

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as outlined in in 6. B - 6. G."

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

### **Action (Consent): D. RESIGNATION OF CERTIFIED STAFF - MICHAEL LONDOS - 8TH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER - WORTH JUNIOR HIGH - EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 3, 2021**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as outlined in in 6. B - 6. G."

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

**Action (Consent): E. EMPLOYMENT OF CERTIFIED STAFF - LISA SMITH - LUNCH ROOM SUPERVISOR-  
EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 19, 2021**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as outlined in in 6. B - 6. G."

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

**Action (Consent): F. FIRST READING OF BOARD POLICY**

Resolution: Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the first reading of the policies as listed below."

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as outlined in in 6. B - 6. G."

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

**Action (Consent): G. CALL LIST OF SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS AND SUPPORT STAFF**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the following Consent Agenda Items as outlined in in 6. B - 6. G."

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

**7. MOTIONS**

**Action: A. REGULAR BOARD MINUTES**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the regular November 10, 2021 meeting."

Motion by Michelle Egan, second by Stephanie Peltzer.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Abstain: Danette Keeler

**Action: B. CLOSED SESSION MINUTES**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the November 10, 2021 closed session minutes."

Motion by Stephanie Peltzer, second by Michelle Egan.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Abstain: Danette Keeler

**Action: C. 2021 TAX LEVY**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education adopt the Resolution providing for the Tax Levy for the Year 2021, adopt the Resolution providing for 2021 Tax Levy for Working Cash; adopt the Resolution providing for 2021 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 2021 Levy Year, as recommended by the Business Manager/CSBO and the Superintendent."

Motion by Vince Flores, second by David Blanks.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

**Action: D. APPROVAL BID FOR PHASE III 2022 WORK AT WORTH ELEMENTARY, AS DESIGNED BY DLA, LTD.**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education authorize the Phase III 2022 remodeling work at Worth Elementary to the lowest qualified bidder, Henry Bros. Co., for a base bid total of \$2,132,000."

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

## **8. BOARD DISCUSSION/ACTION AND/OR REPORTS/REQUESTS**

- Board Members commented that they appreciate the comments and opinions from the public and that there are positive things happening in our district.
- Board Member commented that she is really excited about the Worth Elementary remodel and the new traffic pattern it will offer. Since being a Board Member, the horrific traffic pattern and the cafeteria has been a problem and will now be addressed with the renovation. The remodel will also not impact tax payers.
- Board Member stated that at the Tri-Conference he attended the delegate assembly regarding the resolutions. We had a large representation of the districts with 411 delegates; however, it was the longest delegation I've attended and was 2 hours and 45 minutes. The Resolutions went the way we wanted for the exception of the School Safety and Protection Plan and this is due to some schools wanting to have guns in school due to not having enough police coverage in the schools. Last year, this resolution got voted down substantially and this year it was a very close vote. Some of the districts opposing this are the ones that have very well funded police departments. It still did not get adopted.
- Board Member shared her appreciation to the staff and how amazing they are especially since they have their own lives and the time they take to protect the lives and care for the students as well.
- Board Members commented that they went to the Tri-Conference and found the workshops very helpful and educational and attended the following workshops: mental health in the schools, cyber bullying, expulsion hearing, school safety, school data, and strategic plans.
- Board Member thanked the staff for working so hard trying to educate the kids and she was so impressed with the band performance this evening.
- Board Member stated that she spoke with her children and they commented that they have never seen anything moldy from her child's food.

## **9. CITIZENS' REMARKS - AGENDA ITEMS**

Jolanta Sikora - Questions regarding the departure of Michael Londos / Tri-Conference costs and hotel / how much money will be used for the class action lawsuit / number of Transgender students in our school.

Paul Rowell - Tri-Conference costs / how much is being spent regarding Transgender issues.

## **10. CLOSED SESSION**

**Action: A. ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION**

Recommended Motion (roll call): "that the Board of Education adjourn to closed session at 7:50 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; the collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees; and student disciplinary cases.

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by Stephanie Peltzer.

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 at 9:05."

Motion by Meghan Sisk, second by David Blanks.

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 9:06 p.m."

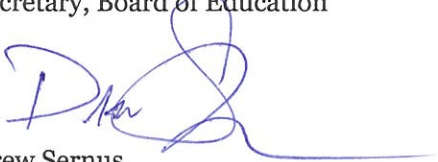
Voice Vote: All Yes

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'MS', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Meghan Sisk  
Secretary, Board of Education

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'D Sernus', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Drew Sernus  
President, Board of Education