

REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Monday, April 19, 2010

Chair Ron Pagel called the regular meeting of the Dover-Eyota Board of Education, District #533, to order at 7:02 PM in the Dover-Eyota High School Media Center. Board members present: Don Andring, Julie Austinson, Dan Johnson, Gene Loftus, Ron Pagel, Gary Pedersen, and Superintendent Bruce Klaehn. Absent: Molly Rieke. Also in attendance were Principal Todd Rowekamp, Principal Jeanne Svobodny, Curriculum Director Jane Johnson, Activities Director/Principal John Ostrowski, Chris Berg, Gary Betcher, Sue Cordes, Deb Donnay, Becky Houghton, Karen Schultz, Pete Stellflug and Marlys Tritten.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Agenda

Supt. Klaehn asked that the resignation of Joe Baures as "C" Soccer Coach and a leave of absence request from Brian Harris be added to the agenda.

A motion was made by Member Pedersen, seconded by Member Johnson and carried unanimously to approve the amended agenda.

Visitors to Address the Board

There were no visitors to address the Board.

Board Minutes

A motion was made by Member Loftus, seconded by Member Austinson and carried unanimously to approve the March 8, 2010 Regular Board Meeting Minutes.

Board Minutes

A motion was made by Member Andring, seconded by Member Johnson and carried unanimously to approve the March 22, 2010 Special Board Meeting Minutes.

Regular District Bills

With Member Andring abstaining, a motion was made by Member Loftus, seconded by Member Pedersen and carried unanimously to approve the Regular District Bills totaling \$100,133.88.

Special District Bills

A motion was made by Member Pedersen, seconded by Member Johnson and carried unanimously to approve the payment of the Special District Bills totaling \$499,487.56.

Treasurer's Report

A motion was made by Member Andring, seconded by Member Johnson and carried unanimously to approve the Treasurer's Report with liquid assets totaling \$1,275,904.35, as well as the March electronic transfers.

CABINET COMMUNICATIONS

Elementary Principal – Jeanne Svobodny relayed the following: 1) In regard to Carol Bedtke's resignation she said, "I am happy for her but saddened for the school district. Carol is everything a principal would want. She had great relationships with the students, her colleagues and the parents. She tackled technology; demonstrated cooperation, caring and good common sense; and was a very balanced professional;" 2) Publicly thanked Business Manager Gary Betcher for working on the elementary budgets so that she could complete various reports that were due that month; 3) A brief survey sent to parents regarding the Kids Against Hunger event resulted in 55 responses to see it continue and 5 "maybe not" with one suggestion to hold it every other year due to the cost; 4) Kindergarten Open House on Wed., April 21 will provide the elementary with a firm number of kindergarteners expected this fall; 5) Participation in the open computer lab supervised by Mrs.

Peggy Swenson on Tuesday nights has increased. One evening there were 31 computers being used. Whole families, as well as community members, are taking advantage of this opportunity.

High School Principal – Todd Rowekamp shared the following: 1) Fifty candidates applied for the Science Instructor position and the interview committee met with eight of them and is currently checking references and making a decision; 2) There are many strong candidates among the 32 applicants for the Business Education Instructor position; 3) Knowledge Bowl recently finished 10th in the state. Participants were Caleb Hammel, Travis Schreier, Ty Stroope, Megan Peda and Jon Miller. Mr. Rowekamp congratulated first-year advisors Sarah Johnson and Alberto Vera; 4) Last week the 8th grade class held a welcome home ice cream event for Levi Lastine and his family; 5) The Band, Choir and Theatre Departments have been busy. Band Director Ryan Anderson was a judge and clinician at a recent middle level band festival, which gives him beneficial experience and promotes Dover-Eyota. The SE Minnesota Honors Choir visited five schools today, including D-E where they presented an amazing half-hour performance to our concert choir. DE students Travis Schreier, Ethan Erickson, Laura Fierro, Jenna Skalisky and Sonny Komaniecki are members of this elite Honors Choir. The theatre students are practicing for the *Fiddler on the Roof* performances to be held Friday and Saturday. Mr. Rowekamp encouraged everyone to attend; 6) All four of our academic groups went to state competition this year with the Grade 5/6 Academic Triathlon Challenger team placing 8th. Team members were Ben Callahan, Kalli Schaefer, Madison Devine, Tristen Miller and Garrett Studer.

Since Student Board Member Travis Schreier had attended many activities recently including the state Knowledge Bowl competition last week and the SE MN Honor Choir today, he could not attend the Board meeting since he had homework to complete. Mr. Rowekamp reported that the High School Student Council had met with the Board that evening and relayed the events they had participated in so far this school year. Still remaining was their second annual retreat in May wherein high school and middle school student council members clean up area parks and then enjoy time at the House of Bounce. One purpose of the event is to encourage middle school members to stay active as they move into high school student council.

Activities Director – In his written report, John Ostrowski had addressed the possibility of boys' soccer being added. He relayed that out of 246 surveys returned, 35 boys expressed an interest in boys' soccer. Mr. Ostrowski reviewed with the Board the guidelines in place to consider when considering adding a sport or activity. The discussion included possible costs, participation loss to other fall sports, and a possible cooperative agreement with an area district. The Board consensus was that the number of students interested did not support adding boys' soccer at this time.

Customer Compliments, Concerns, Complaints

Superintendent Klaehn shared that no Customer Compliment, Concern, Complaint forms had been received that month.

REPORTS

Insurance Refund Usage

Karen Schultz, Marlys Tritten, Sue Cordes, Deb Donnay and Becky Houghton came before the Board to discuss use of the insurance refund. Mrs. Schultz said that the employees felt that the appropriate course of action would be to put the money toward employee premiums. She went on to say, "We believe the insurance contributions were made in good faith and, because of the wellness of our membership, insurance usage was far below Southeast Service Cooperative's projected expenditures. We believe we are deserving of this return because of the members' efforts to hold down utilization." They were recommending that the portion for individuals no longer employed or no longer on the insurance plan be placed in their VEBA account or a set aside fund for wellness activities of current employees.

As a member of the SSC's Board of Directors, Member Andring explained the refund and added, "It is a great compliment to the district as a whole of their wellness."

Supt. Klaehn relayed that a division of 58% of district contribution and 42% of employee contribution had been determined. He would research if any pay backs to the individuals would be taxable.

The Board will consider the proposal brought forward by the employees and later advise of their decision.

First Reading of Capital Expenditures List

Supt. Klaehn provided an updated, prioritized capital expenditures list for the Board's first reading. The Cabinet will review the list and this item will be brought back to the Board for a second reading.

Teacher Presentation of Math 8 Program

High School Math Instructor Becky Houghton talked about Math 8, the longest running course enhancement at the high school. It was created as an intervention to help students who were at risk of failing the 8th grade MN Basic Standards Test. At that time, our BST passing rate was 63%. The following year it went to 92%. Even after it was no longer required to pass the BSTs, the math skills mastered in this class became essential to the success of students in subsequent Algebra classes. Mrs. Houghton explained the factors used in placing students in the Math 8 class and the effect of tracking them.

Supt. Klaehn explained that last month the administration had talked about possible enhancements. The Math 8 program was a successful enhancement program already in place. He thanked Mrs. Houghton and all of the Math Department staff for the encouraging results.

OLD BUSINESS

Operating Referendum Planning

Supt. Klaehn provided some scenarios of possible operating referendums. Renewing the existing \$126.79 operating referendum, replacing the lease levy and replacing the refunding sale, would result in total new annual revenue of \$155,000 to the district. This would mean no tax increase for the taxpayers, **as long as their valuations don't increase.**

He provided the Board with several options regarding an operating referendum:

- seek a renewal of the current referendum this fall, then possibly seek an additional referendum if finances deemed it necessary in the future
- seek an operating referendum the Fall of 2011 when the district's fund balance may have been reduced and more is known about the legislative funding of education

It was the consensus of the Board that no action would be taken this fall regarding an operating referendum. Supt. Klaehn will write an article explaining the tax savings with refinancing of the bonds and a future operating referendum vote.

Staffing for 2010-2011

Supt. Klaehn shared that the staffing needs for 2010-2011 would result in a net staffing increase of 1/12th of a position at the high school, which he considered budget neutral. His report included 6-12 student pre-registration numbers for elective classes and staff placement in remaining classes.

Principal Rowekamp and Curriculum Director Johnson came forward to talk about possible middle school enrichments such as an IBM Lego Robotics team, the Stock Market Game, National History Day, and the National Geography Bee.

It was Supt. Klaehn's recommendation to proceed with the staffing needs as reported. The Board agreed that this staffing level should be factored into the final budget that will come back to the Board for final approval.

NEW BUSINESS

Approve 2009-2010 Auditing Contract with Larson, Allen, Weishair & Co.

A motion was made by Member Andring and seconded by Member Loftus to approve the 2009-2010 auditing contract with Larson, Allen, Weishair & Co.

Member Pedersen recommended seeking bids for auditing services. The Board had discussed such a move in previous years but did not act on it. It was noted that LAWCO is a very reputable firm that provides training for other auditing firms.

A vote on the motion to approve the LAWCO contract resulted in a split vote. Those voting for the same: Loftus, Johnson, Pagel, Andring and Austinson. Those voting against the same: Pedersen. The motion carried 5 to 1.

The Board determined that seeking bids for auditing services would be placed on next year's January Organizational Board Meeting agenda for further consideration.

Request for Student Travel Outside of the District

A motion was made by Member Pedersen, seconded by Member Andring and carried unanimously to approve the Class of 2010 travel outside of the district for their boat trip on the LaCrosse Queen May 21, 2010.

Reduction in Contract Request

A motion was made by Member Andring, seconded by Member Austinson and carried unanimously to approve the request from English Instructor JENNIFER RYG to reduce her contract from 1.0 FTE to .833 FTE for the 2010-2011 school year.

Leave of Absence Request

A motion was made by Member Loftus, seconded by Member Pedersen and carried unanimously to approve a leave of absence for BRIAN HARRIS from August 30 through November 5, 2010 under the Federal Family Medical Leave Act.

Consent – Accept Resignations

Chair Pagel asked that the resignation of CAROL BEDTKE as Elementary Instructor be voted on separately.

A motion was made by Member Austinson, seconded by Member Loftus and carried unanimously to accept the resignations of AIMEE FINELY as part-time Business Education Instructor, BRAD MORGAN as Varsity Wrestling Coach, and JOE BAURES as “C” Soccer Coach.

A motion was made by Member Andring and seconded by Member Johnson to accept the resignation of CAROL BEDTKE as Elementary Instructor. Member Don Andring said, “How do you say thank you for 37 years of service and a job well done except to extend a heartfelt thank you.” Member Dan Johnson added, “**Many** jobs well done!” Chair Ron Pagel joked, “You can always tell when an elementary teacher signs their name because you can actually **read** it. Congratulations to Carol.”

A vote on the motion carried unanimously.

Consent - Approve Hires

A motion was made by Member Andring, seconded by Member Johnson and carried unanimously to approve the following hires: 1) AIMEE FINLEY as Long-Term Substitute 10/12th time Business Education Instructor for the remainder of the school year; 2) ERIC AVERBECK as Long-Term Substitute Mathematics Instructor; 3) WAYNE MILAND as Long-Term Substitute Custodian; 4) JACOB HALLORAN as “C” Baseball Coach for the 2009-2010 season only.

Consent - Accept Donations

A motion was made by Member Pedersen, seconded by Member Austinson and carried unanimously to accept the following donations: 1) DARE Program -- \$100 from EASTWOOD BANK, \$276 from the OLMSTED COUNTY DEPUTY'S ASSOCIATION, \$250 from KWIK TRIP, \$100 from HIAWATHA SNO-SEEKERS and \$200 from the EYOTA AMERICAN LEGION; 2) High School -- \$208.14 in KWIK TRIP rebates; 3) Archery in the Schools Program -- \$100 from the STEWARTVILLE SPORTSMAN'S CLUB.

Chair Pagel noted that a thank you letter sent to a local veterinarian for participating in the Pfizer Program was acknowledged and left a good impression of the school district.

HEARING OF REPORTS

Superintendent's Report & Communication

Supt. Klaehn provided the following information: 1) With approval from the Board, the letter to the snowmobile group would be sent; 2) A community church group will use the elementary facilities this summer for their annual bible camp; 3) He felt the recent National School Board Association Conference had been very beneficial and he will soon be sharing with high school staff information he learned about Internet and cell phone sexting; 4) Gave an update on a lawsuit and relayed that the district was receiving good representation from its attorneys and from the insurance company; 5) The Board directed the superintendent to prepare the insurance rebate dollar amount percentage and bring it to the May meeting at which time a vote will be taken; 6) The School Board Election filing dates are May 18 through June 1.

National School Board Conference

Board members Pagel, Andring and Johnson talked about their experiences at the National School Board Conference recently held in Chicago. It included many interesting breakout sessions and main speakers. It was a great chance for the Board Members to talk to their peers from other states and to realize how lucky our district is when hearing of issues of which other districts are dealing. The members who attended expressed their appreciation to the district for allowing this opportunity for them to grow as a Board.

Board of Education Committee Reports & Communication

Loftus – The Dollars for Scholars Committee would soon meet. Mr. Loftus congratulated the academic teams. In regard to Mrs. Bedtke's retirement he said, "What do you say to Carol except thank you. Think of how many student lives she positively touched in all those years!" It was with regret that he accepted Brad Morgan's resignation as Wrestling Coach. He added, "He has been a big part of the program and it will be pretty big shoes to fill." Member Loftus ended his report by thanking Mrs. Carrie Frank for all of her work with the Kids Against Hunger project this year.

Pedersen – Mr. Pedersen thanked Carol Bedtke for a "great job for 37 years." He added, "It is hard to see her leave the district but she deserves it (retirement)." In regard to the 8th grade math presentation he relayed that this shows how our administration and staff work to benefit the kids. He felt that Mrs. Johnson's presentation on new programs was another great thing happening in the school. He added, "Again, nothing but benefits for our kids. Thank you."

Johnson – Mr. Johnson relayed that the school board convention gave him perspective. He also said, "We have good teams and a good extra-curricular sports program. To do the knowledge related competitions as well adds a nice additional level of opportunity for kids." Member Johnson thanked everyone for their professional input: transportation, custodial, teachers, everyone. He added, "This is a family oriented school district and this was renewed in all of the things we dealt with tonight." He appreciated the math presentation and stressed the importance of identifying ways to enrich kids through remediation and opening doors for all students.

Andring – Member Andring expressed his heartfelt thank you to Carol Bedtke. He added, "This is another monumental change in our district as 37 yrs is a long time." In regard to Brad Morgan's resignation as wrestling coach and Brian Harris' leave of absence request he said, "Families come first and that is probably part of their decision. I wish them both the best." Mr. Andring welcomed Julie Austinson back and was glad to see she was feeling better. He thanked the Student Council for meeting with the Board that evening and said, "It was a rewarding time." He stated that the Board had previously discussed making a contribution to the Student Council and asked that it be reconsidered so that the members didn't have to "shift their enthusiasm to fundraising."

Austinson – Mrs. Austinson thanked everyone who "connected" with her while she was out. She congratulated Mrs. Bedtke on her retirement and the teaching staff who would be tenured this spring. Member Austinson noted the amount of grant writing being done and thanked those responsible for their efforts which provide additional opportunities and funding. She ended her report by saying that she was excited about possible gifted and talented opportunities being implemented.

Pagel – Chair Pagel relayed that there was a lot of "shuffling" of superintendents from one district to another within southeastern Minnesota and across the state. In regard to the Hiawatha Valley Education District Board he said that they were working on next year's budget. Mr. Pagel thanked the district for the opportunity to attend the national conference.

CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS NEGOTIATION STRATEGIES

A motion was made by Member Loftus, seconded by Member Pedersen and carried unanimously to go into closed session at 9:55 PM.

A motion was made by Member Pedersen, seconded by Member Austinson and carried unanimously to end the closed session 10:55 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Member Andring, seconded by Member Johnson and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:56 PM.

Daniel A. Johnson, Clerk
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