



CASS SCHOOL DISTRICT 63

8502 Bailey Road • Darien, Illinois 60561-5333

Board of Education Regular Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 17, 2020

Minutes of The Regular Meeting of the Board Of Education of School District 63, DuPage County, Illinois; Held at Cass School District 63 at 7:30 P.M. on the 17th Day of November, 2020.

Open Session

The meeting was called to order at 7:36 p.m. Upon roll being called, the following members answered present: President Shelly Camden, Vice President Kent Absalonsen, Secretary Alice Esposito and Member Lana Johnson. Member Michael Ockrim arrived at 7:38 p.m. Member McCollian was absent.

Also in attendance:

Mark R. Cross, Superintendent of Schools

Gayle Wilson, Recording Secretary and Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Regular Meeting Agenda

Superintendent Cross requested that the Board approve the Regular Meeting Agenda as presented.

Secretary Esposito moved and Vice President Absalonsen seconded a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Agenda as presented. Voice Vote. All Ayes. Motion carried 4 to 0.

Appointment of Candidate to Fill a Board of Education Vacancy

The Board of Education appointed Dr. Rinku Patel to fill the vacated Board of Education seat of Brad Carrino who resigned when he moved out of state. Dr. Patel took the Board of Education Oath of Office and assumed his seat with the Board of Education.

Recognition of Audience, Announcements and Correspondence

President Camden welcomed:

Scott Kondraschow

Yamini Patel

Arjun Patel

Navya Patel

Fiyaz Khan (*through Zoom*)

Deepak Baskar (*through Zoom*)

Other Unidentified Individuals who attended through Zoom



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Public Comments

There was no public comment.

Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of October 20, 2020 Board of Education Regular Meeting Minutes
- B. Approval of October 27, 2020 Board of Education Special Meeting Minutes
- C. Approval of October 27, 2020 Board of Education Closed Session Minutes
- D. Approval of November 2, 2020 Board of Education Special Meeting Minutes
- E. Approval of November 2, 2020 Board of Education Closed Session Minutes
- F. Approval of Budget, Cash Flow and Investment Reports
- G. Approval of Payroll Reports
- H. Approval of District Bills

Secretary Esposito moved and Member Johnson seconded a motion to approve the Consent Agenda to include Additional Bills as presented.

Roll call

Aye

Nay

President Camden

Vice President Absalonsen

Secretary Esposito

Member Johnson

Member Ockrim

Member Patel

Motion carried, 6 to 0.

Reports, Updates and Informational Items

- A. Administrative Report

Superintendent Cross shared that things continue to go well with the hybrid learning. For teachers and staff, it is American Education Week and today the district provided lunch for staff and tomorrow they will be providing dessert. It is



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also Board Member Appreciation Day and each Board Member was presented with a small token of appreciation.

B. Facilities Committee Report

Superintendent Cross reviewed the Facilities Committee Report which highlighted future needed capital improvements. He also shared specific HVAC needs. In an effort to ensure the most cost effective financial options, the Facilities Committee discussed the possibility of going out to bid on the next HVAC project rather than automatically working with the district's performance contractor.

C. CARE Reports and Grant Funding

Lana Johnson shared that CARE is currently planning restaurant fundraisers and continuing to explore other ways they can fundraise for the schools.

D. Presentation of Tentative 2020 Tax Levy

Superintendent Cross reviewed the tentative tax levy with the Board. This year there is \$3.2 million in new commercial construction within the District. When there is new construction it does not fall under the property tax extension limitation law. The overall estimated increase, including new construction, is just over 3% which does not require a Truth in Taxation Hearing. The total proposed tax levy excluding debt service is just over \$9.8 million dollars.

E. Presentation of Employee Health, Dental and Life Insurance Proposals

Superintendent Cross commended Director of Fiscal Services Deb Dolehide for the work she has done obtaining health insurance rates. The district was informed that the premiums are dropping 2%. Additionally, the dental insurance presented is a change to MetLife due to a savings in premium. Finally, there was an 8% decrease in long-term and life insurance with this insurance renewal.



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F. Presentation of Proposed ARAMARK Food Service Contract Amendment

Superintendent Cross reviewed the amended ARAMARK food service contract which includes a cost increase per lunch. The cost increase is due to the additional costs associated with the food preparation during the pandemic and has been approved by both the Federal and State government and is fully refundable to the District.

G. Update Regarding Health Guidance, Remote Learning and Return to Learn

Superintendent Cross shared return to learn updates. Last week administrators met with teachers in both buildings to hear any concerns and continue to work together cooperatively as the district constantly makes adjustments to keep students and staff safe and educate our students through the COVID-19 pandemic. He stated how proud he is of the teachers, administrators and staff for working so hard to make this as successful as possible.

Discussion was held regarding the current surge and expected numbers as it relates to the two holidays. Superintendent Cross stated that after researching and planning and working with our staff, the recommendation is to remain in person under the blended learning framework, change to remote learning for one week prior and two weeks after the winter holiday break, and then resume with blended in person learning again immediately after the Martin Luther King Holiday in mid-January. The main purpose of the two-week adjustment following winter break is to help avoid the spread of COVID-19 after families have gotten together for the holidays.

Member Ockrim asked if the administration is considering options for the 2021-22 school year should the pandemic continue. Superintendent Cross shared that while the administration is hopeful that the next school year will be more traditional, they are also looking at multiple options for how best to continue to address the pandemic.

Discussion included references to portable classrooms, summer school and calendar adjustments. Mr. Cross also emphasized that a high percentage of the time and resources so far have been toward making the school year as successful



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as possible so far, but that the leadership team will continue to think ahead and plan as needed. The optimism over a potential vaccine was also discussed.

Board President Camden stated that the District should not view this brief adjustment to remote learning as a change in our goal but rather a need to adapt to the current circumstances to continue to allow the District to be successful. She summarized the Board's consensus and asked Superintendent Cross to move forward with communicating the plans to staff and parents as soon as possible.

Recommended Action Items

A. Approval of Tentative 2020 Tax Levy

Member Ockrim moved and Secretary Esposito seconded a motion to approve the Tentative 2020 Tax Levy as presented.

Roll call

Aye

Nay

President Camden

Vice President Absalonsen

Secretary Esposito

Member Johnson

Member Ockrim

Member Patel

Motion carried, 6 to 0.

B. Approval of Employee Health, Dental and Life Insurance Proposals

Vice President Absalonsen moved and Member Johnson seconded a motion to approve the Employee Health, Dental and Life Insurance Proposals as presented.

Roll call

Aye

Nay

President Camden



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Vice President Absalonsen
Secretary Esposito
Member Johnson
Member Ockrim
Member Patel

Motion carried, 6 to 0.

C. Approval of ARAMARK Food Service Contract Amendment

Member Ockrim moved and Secretary Esposito seconded a motion to approve the Amended ARAMARK Food Service Contract as presented.

Roll call

Aye

Nay

President Camden
Vice President Absalonsen
Secretary Esposito
Member Johnson
Member Ockrim
Member Patel

Motion carried, 6 to 0.

D. Employment of Recommended Personnel

Vice President Absalonsen moved and Member Johnson seconded a motion to approve the Employment Recommendations as follows:

*Justin Iglesias, Cass Junior High School Teacher Assistant
Kayla Briant, Long-Term Substitute Fourth Grade Teacher*

Roll call

Aye

Nay

President Camden



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Vice President Absalonsen
Secretary Esposito
Member Johnson
Member Ockrim
Member Patel

Motion carried, 6 to 0.

Conclusion

A. Public Comments

- There was no public comment.

Board Member Remarks

- Member Patel thanked the Board of Education for appointing him to the role and he looks forward to serving the students, staff and community of Cass School District 63.
- Secretary Esposito stated that the next Regular Board of Education Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 15, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.

Adjournment

Secretary Esposito moved and Member Johnson seconded a motion to adjourn this Regular Board of Education Meeting of November 17, 2020 at 9:20 p.m. Voice vote; All Ayes. Motion Carried, 6 to 0.

Shelly Camden, Board of Education President

Attest: _____
Alice Esposito, Board of Education Secretary