

SOUTHWESTERN COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 9
Brighton, Illinois 62012

REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

March 16, 2021

The Southwestern Board of Education met in regular session on March 16, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. in the Middle School Commons in Piasa, Illinois. Andrew Bagley-President, called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m. and asked Randy Gallaher, Board Secretary, to call roll showing those members present as: Andrew Bagley, Randy Gallaher, Donna Loy, Jason Oertel, Jacob Reno, Dara Simmons, Kyle Hacke, Superintendent, and Kim Albert, Recording Secretary. Tim Baker, Board Member, arrived at 7:06p.m.

Andrew Bagley-President, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment: None

Correspondence and Recognition:

Webb Cunningham, Retired Marine Corp, was present to give an update on the Toys 4 Tots Program performed in December, 2020. Toys 4 Tots has been held for the last 73 years and this was by far the most trying year for the program. No federal money is given to this organization. In December, 2020, Mr. Cunningham reported that 4,632 toys were handed out and 1,441 children were served in the surrounding counties of Jersey, Greene, Calhoun, North Macoupin, and the SW District. \$25,214 was spent obtaining toys. 192 of the children receiving gifts attend Southwestern School District and 735 children reside in Macoupin County. The Medora Intermediate 6th grade classes collected \$2250 and the HS classes collected \$2100, which Mr. Cunningham acknowledged and gave certificates and plaques to each principal for their buildings. Mr. Cunningham expressed great gratitude for the districts efforts towards this program.

Administrators Reports:

Mr. Bearley, High School Principal, gave an update on safely bringing activities back to the High School. Some of those dates are tentatively set for: Senior Awards 4/28/21 which will be live streamed, there will be no Silver Medallion banquet but those students will still receive their medallion, possibly a Senior walk through the other schools within the district, band concert 5/2/21 with two different performances, a talent show possibly with auditions to be held 4/17 & 4/18/21, 4/11/21 will be National Honor Society Induction, and 4/24/21 will possibly be a movie night for Southwestern students only.

Shannon Bowman, Middle School Principal, also indicated that the Middle School is bringing back some social activities as well. She reported on a successful volleyball season and boys basketball season with the 8th grade boys basketball team ending with a 10-0 record. Eight students received Dairy Queen for lunch March 16th for being students of the month. Girls basketball will start March 20th and track shortly thereafter. The middle school will not be allowed to have any dances this year. Mrs. Bowman stated that they have added Fun Fridays during the 4th quarter with the first being Wacky Socks day on March 19th. The middle school will also have a popcorn and movie afternoon right before Easter break.

Mrs. Milner, Shipman Elementary and Brighton North Primary, reported on the different fun days the students have been participating in such as PJ day and the 100th day of school. Shipman has a character board and students randomly put up post-it notes with positive remarks regarding other students. Mrs. Milner was happy to report that she currently has only 11 out of each building now doing remote learning.

Stephanie Renken, Special Education Coordinator, did not have much to expand upon other than the special education department is continuing to run smoothly and there are only 35 IEP's left for the year. She and the teachers have begun planning for next year.

Scott Hopkins, Medora Intermediate Principal, spoke about how busy the gym is at Medora Intermediate right now with the many ballgames and how happy he is to see the activity again. He and Mrs. Wray, Band Director, have begun discussing how to handle having 5th & 6th grade band next year. He reported that the 4th quarter has begun and he has several students in danger of flunking 5th or 6th grade but many of those students could fix it by the end of the year if they would put in the effort.

Superintendent Report:

Mr. Hacke shared that the district's enrollment is down by approximately 30 students. It was reported that some students are moving out of district due to parents obtaining jobs elsewhere as a result of the Covid situation. The Superintendent reported that In-School suspensions are very low and there were no out-of-school suspensions or expulsions. Mr. Hacke updated the board regarding Remote Learning versus In-Person Learning currently and was happy that many remote learners have returned to in-person.

In the district report from Mr. Hacke, he spoke regarding the winter sports ending and the new season starting. The NFHS streaming service is also going to be used for football. Mr. Hacke reported on facility improvements and the summer work schedule. Several grants were discussed in short and will be touched upon later in the meeting.

The Superintendent discussed the school assessments that are normally done in the spring. The guidelines are recommending not testing this spring but to wait and test students in the fall and again in the spring of 2022. Mr. Hacke prefers to test our students this spring as normal.

Thinking ahead to next school year, Mr. Hacke is planning to be on our normal schedule unless the state says otherwise. Any remote students will be required to have a written excuse from their physician next year as per guidelines indicate.

Mr. Hacke indicated that interviews are being held for Special Education Teacher openings for the 2021-2022 school year.

Items for Discussion or Acknowledgement...

Rusty Graham, Custodian, turned in his letter of resignation effective March 22, 2021. The board acknowledged such.

Items Considered for Action...

Consent Agenda:

Items discussed in the consent agenda included the following...the financial report with balances as of February 28, 2021, being: Education Fund \$4,404,619.00, Operations/Maintenance \$1,217,711.00, Transportation \$662,565.00, Working Cash \$3,104,644.00, with the total being \$9,389,539.00, and the County Schools Facilities Sales Tax Revenue was \$38,663.67. February bills...Imprest bills...extra and substitute pay...substitute list... regular board meeting minutes from February 16, 2021...and Closed Session Board Meeting minutes from February 16, 2021, were presented in the consent agenda items.

Mr. Hacke spoke to the fact that the district is 66% thru the current fiscal year. Finances are in good shape per the superintendent. There were no questions regarding the Consent Agenda. Jason Oertel made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Donna Loy made the second motion to approve.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Baker, Gallaher, Loy, Oertel, Reno, Simmons, and Bagley

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

Dara Simmons made a motion to employ Jenna Andres as the new Director of Finance for 2021-22 School Year. Andrew Bagley seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Gallaher, Loy, Oertel, Reno, Simmons, Bagley, and Baker

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

Kim Reed was hired as the Principal of Brighton North Primary and Shipman Elementary for the 2021-22 School Year after Andrew Bagley made a motion with Jacob Reno seconding the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Loy, Oertel, Reno, Simmons, Bagley, Baker, and Gallaher

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

Donna Loy made a motion to employ Jenna Wernsing as the High School Assistant Track Coach for the 2020-21 School Year. Dara Simmons made the second motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Oertel, Reno, Simmons, Bagley, Baker, Gallaher, and Loy

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

Steven Lebro was employed as a High School Custodian after Andrew Bagley made a motion to do so. Jason Oertel made the second motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Reno, Simmons, Bagley, Baker, Gallaher, Loy, and Oertel

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

Tim Baker made a motion to extend the Superintendents, Kyle Hacke, contract for two more years. Donna Loy seconded the said motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Simmons, Bagley, Baker, Gallaher, Loy, Oertel, and Reno

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

The board adopted the 2021-2022 Public School Calendar as presented. Jason Oertel made a motion to adopt and Tim Baker seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Bagley, Baker, Gallaher, Loy, Oertel, Reno, and Simmons

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

The board adopted a resolution agreeing to the Withdrawal of the Jersey Community Unit School District No. 100 from Participation in the Region III Special Education Cooperative. Andrew Bagley made a motion to approve the resolution with Donna Loy seconding the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Baker, Gallaher, Loy, Oertel, Reno, Simmons, and Bagley

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Bearley made a presentation to the school board regarding a Career and Technical Education Pathway State Grant. This is a Teacher Prep Program designed to offer opportunities to students that are interested in becoming a teacher. Other students within our area districts could participate virtually in this program with our district. There are several students in our high school that are very interested in this program. This would give students an opportunity to explore the teaching profession before spending time/money in college. The grant would provide \$45,000 over the next four years to sustain the program. It would only be open to juniors and seniors. Seniors would visit other buildings in the district to observe, perform student teaching module of their choice, and then teach a lesson in a classroom. A CTE Club would also go along with this class and would do activities and compete in competitions. Donna Loy made a motion to approve the grant as presented. Jason Oertel seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Gallaher, Loy, Oertel, Reno, Simmons, Bagley, and Baker

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

A summer school program is being entertained. Mrs. Bowman provided a slide presentation to the board regarding the summer school program that would start the end of May and run through the end of June with a total of 20 days from 8am-12pm. Math, Reading, Language Arts, and English would be the core of the subjects covered. Summer school would also give Seniors a chance to finish any classes for graduation that was needed. Breakfast/lunch would be provided with the sack lunch being sent home with the student. Bussing would be provided from the prospective towns to the other schools. The summer school costs would be covered by a grant.

After some discussion regarding summer school, Jason Oertel made a motion to provide summer school this year. Dara Simmons seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Loy, Oertel, Reno, Simmons, Bagley, Baker, and Gallaher

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

The next item on the agenda was the Jr./Sr. Prom. Mr. Bearley proceeded with a presentation regarding a Prom Event. Lewis & Clark Community College Commons is reserved, but due to Covid restrictions, is unavailable at this time. The Prom Event would be held at the High School on May 8th. It would only be open to juniors/seniors of Southwestern with no outside guests allowed. There would be a Promenade at the front entrance of the high school where parents could take pictures. The attendees would be spread out in the gym and a short coronation would be held lasting approximately 30-40 minutes. The event would be live streamed for other spectators to watch. After coronation, there would be an After-Prom event to be held in the HS gym, MPR, HS cafeteria, and MS Commons. There would be food, activities, and last 2-2 ½ hours.

Jason Oertel made a motion to proceed with the Prom event and Tim Baker seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Oertel, Reno, Simmons, Bagley, Baker, Gallaher, and Loy

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Bearley presented options to the board for the upcoming graduation ceremony to be held May 15, 2021. One option would be to have a drive-up like last year where each student would be given one ticket for a car load. The second option would be to have the graduation ceremony on the football field. And, if the State of IL opens back up, then possibly the normal graduation ceremony in the HS gym. Mr. Bearley will be sending a survey to seniors' parents to help make the decision regarding Option #1 or #2.

Andrew Bagley made a motion to approve the options listed as well as the normal graduation ceremony if the Governor allows for such. Tim Baker seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Reno, Simmons, Bagley, Baker, Gallaher, Loy, and Oertel

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Hacke discussed the remainder of the school year and the schedule to follow. Mr. Hacke recommends the district finish the year out on our current schedule of in-person learning Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday with Wednesdays remaining as remote instruction. With only the last quarter left, Mr. Hacke thinks it would be too disruptive to parents to switch back. The board members agreed with Mr. Hacke regarding this topic.

The Outdoor Sports Venue Capacity Plan was discussed in length. Currently the IDPH allows for 20% capacity at outside venues. A discussion ensued and it was decided to limit attendees to 500 with social distancing and masks to be worn.

Tim Baker made a motion to approve the above. Randy Gallaher seconded the said motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Simmons, Bagley, Baker, Gallaher, Loy, Oertel, and Reno

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

The annual lease agreement with Step-by-Step Inc. to provide “Before and After School Program” at Brighton North Primary is due for renewal. Andrew Bagley and Donna Loy made the appropriate motions to renew the lease agreement.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Bagley, Baker, Gallaher, Loy, Oertel, Reno, and Simmons

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

Due to teacher shortages this year in the Special Education Dept., a memorandum of Understanding with the Southwestern Education Association was discussed and will be implemented after Donna Loy made the first motion and Randy Gallaher seconded the motion to proceed.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Baker, Gallaher, Loy, Oertel, Reno, Simmons, and Bagley

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Oertel made mention of parents who have been home schooling their children this year questioning if their children will be at the appropriate level when returning to school next year. A discussion ensued and testing may be offered sooner now in case certain children need to focus more on one subject to be ready for the new school year. If earlier testing is made available, there will be information forthcoming on social media posts, etc.

Andrew Bagley made a motion to move into closed session. Jason Oertel seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Gallaher, Loy, Oertel, Reno, Simmons, Bagley, and Baker

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

Time: 9:57p.m.

Donna Loy made a motion to move back into open session at **10:52p.m.** Jason Oertel seconded said motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Loy, Oertel, Reno, Simmons, Bagley, Baker, and Gallaher

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

There were no other items to discuss after the closed session. Being such, Jason Oertel made a motion to adjourn the meeting with Andrew Bagley seconding said motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Oertel, Reno, Simmons, Bagley, Baker, Gallaher, and Loy

Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting adjourned at **10:53p.m.**

Kim Albert
Recording Secretary

Board President

Board Secretary