

Board of Education Regular Meeting
Monday, November 9, 2020 7:00 PM

Mike Bonacci: Present
Mike Conrad: Present
Jon Genoways: Present
Kim Lukasiewicz: Present
Amanda Schrum: Present
Kelli Shaner: Present

ROUTINE BUSINESS

-Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:00. There were 4 administrators, 5 in person visitors, and 53 visitors on Zoom.

-Note Nebraska Open Meeting Laws

-Excused Absences: There were none

Roll Call:

Mike Bonacci: Present
Mike Conrad: Present
Jon Genoways: Present
Kim Lukasiewicz: Present
Amanda Schrum: Present
Kelli Shaner: Present

-Approval of Agenda: Motion to approve Agenda as presented passed with a motion by Mike Conrad and a second by Amanda Schrum. Mike Bonacci: Yea, Mike Conrad: Yea, Jon Genoways: Yea, Kim Lukasiewicz: Yea, Amanda Schrum: Yea, Kelli Shaner: Yea

PRESENTATIONS

-American Education Week Proclamation: President Genoways read the proclamation for American Education Week from November 16 through November 20th.

-Foundation Information: Dr. Johnson was asked by the board to research foundations and give recommendations to revitalize the Pioneer Foundation. He gave a brief introduction about the history and structure of ours which is now basically for scholarships. His recommendations include hiring a director even though we are a small school. He said a few conference schools do, but most don't. Those that do are Grand Island and Wayne, which is closer to our size. Another recommendation is to bring all the organizations under one umbrella so we are not "double dipping" on our donors. The organizations will work together with the foundation. Another area is to take back ownership of the Before and After program under the foundation as it will be an "in house" program in the coming years anyway and it could be self-supporting by increasing the numbers; and to acquire additional funds for other education-enhancing programs including classroom grants, major projects and salaries for foundation staff. No conference schools have a paid person but they also have no after school program. DC West is now redoing their foundation to do more. Wayne has a full time director and is revitalizing their alumni

association and raising funds there. Waverly which is two times larger than Fort Calhoun has a full time director and an assistant. After looking at Fort Calhoun, we have good people who have worked hard for our kids. We would need to look for other members in addition to those from the organizations and those already on it. It was recommended to Dr. Johnson to have a paid person who can “focus on the goal”. Meetings should be at least quarterly, plus a retreat with the scope to focus on “additional programming”.

A timeline of 3 years was suggested to fully set up the new foundation. Year 1 includes hiring a director, legally establish the new foundation and rebrand it; create a new foundation board, assume operations of school-related organizations, transition the Before & After care and hire a director for it to the foundation; and initiate an alumni database to make and keep connections for fundraising purposes now and in the future to grow and cultivate donors. Year two entails building participation in the Before and After program on the way to self sufficiency, identify major fund-raising events and activities, evaluate and revise the scholarship program, create and fund a classroom grant program, and add additional staffing. Year 3 is to ensure the foundation is self sufficient, initiate a major project fund, achieve a profit in the Before and After program, and establish an active alumni association. Another area of fundraising would be to contact all the people/companies who we have been using for big building/renovations/projects to have them help support.

A grant was written for funds from the Scott Foundation through Amy Scott and they awarded \$110,000 over 3 years. She loves our district and what we have done for her family, and she can help us get up and running. The first year would pay part of the director salary with the board needing to pay part of this salary. The salaries for Before and After care personnel would be a district expense also, however with the district having to take it over anyway, this expense would happen one way or the other. When asked if other schools hire students, some do but instead of paying it goes toward a scholarship as they go. In conclusion Dr. Johnson said all goes back to bringing everything under one umbrella and by putting the board and administration in the process it guarantees it is really needed for the district.

REGULAR AGENDA

-Public Participation: Larry Kusek spoke for the American Legion regarding their gun show asking why they may no longer hold it at the Community Building as he noticed its not on the calendar. He explained it's their biggest fundraiser of the year. It is usually held the second week in January. The Legion gets special insurance, hires deputies and are prepared for DHM's if necessary. President Genoways explained that the school district has just recently found out the we now own the building, not the city and our attorneys said “Absolutely not” about firearms on school property. There are no exceptions in state statutes and this would put the District in violation of state statutes. Mr. Green said that we have supported a lot of things in the past that we can no longer have. Finding out we own the building changes “how things are done”. It was discussed that alcohol could no longer be served/consumed in the building either. Mike Conrad said it is unfortunate for our community but we “have to enforce” it. President Genoways concluded by saying the board definitely tried to find a way to continue the show and that they appreciated him coming.

-Approval of Claims: Moved that the claims for November be approved in the amount of \$78,680.54 from the General Fund, and \$572,949.86 from Savings and Depreciation passed with a motion by Kelli Shaner and a second by Kim Lukasiewicz. Mike Bonacci: Yea, Mike Conrad: Yea, Jon Genoways: Yea, Kim Lukasiewicz: Yea, Amanda Schrum: Yea, Kelli Shaner: Yea.

Mr. Green made note of the ESU #3 expenses.

-Consent Agenda: Motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented passed with a motion by Kim Lukasiewicz and a second by Kelli Shaner. Mike Bonacci: Yea, Mike Conrad: Yea, Jon Genoways: Yea, Kim Lukasiewicz: Yea, Amanda Schrum: Yea, Kelli Shaner: Yea. There was discussion about increases in breakfast participation at the elementary but no major movement at the high school.

-Standing Committee Reports: The American Education & Civics Committee met and discussed policies that are being recommended. The committee went over them and most are required by law. Policy 4043 requires all staff to acknowledge receipt, understand and sign off on it. The committee supports the calendar change and supports ending remote learning. They also discussed the elementary parking lot acknowledging the city's financial help.

-Amend the 2020-21 Calendar to Include Instructional Time Flexibilities: Moved that the board of education amend the 2020-21 calendar to include instructional time flexibilities as approved by NDE for additional professional learning, teacher and/or staff work time, and time for teachers to consult parents/caregivers regarding their students passed with a motion by Amanda Schrum and a second by Mike Bonacci.

Mike Bonacci: Yea, Mike Conrad: Yea, Jon Genoways: Yea, Kim Lukasiewicz: Yea, Amanda Schrum: Yea, Kelli Shaner: Yea. Mr. Green said NDE is giving schools 6 extra days for staff to work to help students during the COVID and can still count the days as instructional time.

Families will be e-mailed followed by a letter.

-Policies: 2008 - Meetings; 3001 - Budget; 3004.1 - Fiscal Management for Purchasing and Procurement Using Federal Funds; 4043 - Professional Boundaries and Appropriate Relationships Between Employees and Students; 5006 - Foreign Exchange Students; 5018 - Parent and Guardian Involvement in Education Process; 5067 - Student Assistance Team or Comparable Problem Solving Team: Moved that the Board of Education waive first reading and pass on second reading and approval Policies: 2008 - Meetings; 3001 - Budget; 3004.1 - Fiscal Management for Purchasing and Procurement Using Federal Funds; 4043 - Professional Boundaries and Appropriate Relationships Between Employees and Students; 5006 - Foreign Exchange Students; 5018 - Parent and Guardian Involvement in Education Process; 5067 - Student Assistance Team or Comparable Problem Solving Team passed with a motion by Mike Conrad and a second by Kim Lukasiewicz. Mike Bonacci: Yea, Mike Conrad: Yea, Jon Genoways: Yea, Kim Lukasiewicz: Yea, Amanda Schrum: Yea, Kelli Shaner: Yea

-Establishing a Foundation: Moved that the board of education move forward with the recommendations presented and establish a foundation based on those parameters passed with a motion by Amanda Schrum and a second by Kelli Shaner. Mike Bonacci: Yea, Mike Conrad: Yea, Jon Genoways: Yea, Kim Lukasiewicz: Yea, Amanda Schrum: Yea, Kelli Shaner: Yea: President Genoways said updating the alumni and using them makes him excited. Amanda Schrum asked if the board needs to sit down and decide how to move forward. Mike Conrad said to work with the present foundation board to get it going as it sponsors scholarships and administers the others and we need to make sure all those still "out there" are continued as presented and grandfathered in, otherwise he would not be in favor. President Genoways said yes, they want to do this and also take care of the next steps which will start with the Finance

Committee in the next month. Once a director is hired this can all be discussed between them and the other organizations. The Finance Committee needs to look at how much it will cost and how much the district will/can contribute. Conrad said the Pioneer Foundation is already registered as a 501 3C and all that needs to be done is a name change and keep the same number etc. It is a small process after the rebranding is done. All organizations have been using the number so are already under the “umbrella” but have been separate entities under it running their own operations. The new foundation might see higher contributions if under one name and after finding the right director, it can be made into a viable, profitable, and meaningful foundation. It puts some structure under the 501 3C that it hasn’t had in the past. Mike Bonacci said he likes the 3 year time frame. The board commended Dr. Johnson for doing a fantastic job.

-2019-20 Audit: Moved that the 2019-20 audit of all funds of the Fort Calhoun Community Schools be approved as presented passed with a motion by Kim Lukasiewicz and a second by Kelli Shaner. Mike Bonacci: Yea, Mike Conrad: Yea, Jon Genoways: Yea, Kim Lukasiewicz: Yea, Amanda Schrum: Yea, Kelli Shaner: Yea. President Genoways said the audit was pretty standard with no red flags. It has just been completed and will be sent to the state. The auditors will send their management letter spelling out any areas of improvement, but have indicated it was fine.

-Board Member Reports: Amanda Schrum thanked the administration for everything they are doing during these “unprecedented” times; Kim Lukasiewicz concurred and welcomed Josh Christensen as a member elect; Mike Bonacci said the administration is doing a great job and he enjoys the activities we have been able to have; Mike Conrad was reelected and is looking forward to working with everyone again; Jon Genoways told members that the NASB State Convention has now gone virtual with the governor’s new DHM’s.

-Administrator Reports: Mr. Wagner reported on Parent/Teacher conferences through Zoom, e-mail or phone with 95% of his parents; thanked Chris Roberts for spearheading the PFE Walk-a-Thon; construction ongoing albeit inside so you can’t see the progress; Thanksgiving lunch will be for students and staff only this year and there will be no Elementary Christmas Program; there may be music skills demonstrations on line with the kids as they are unable to do much singing; a big shout out to our nurses for all they have done and are doing for the schools and kids; the accreditation external visit will be remote because of the pandemic and the team has chosen the lead for the team; he concluded with staff information, professional development and upcoming events. The School Improvement committee met again to perform self-assessments and review building academic goals. The improvement tab is being updated on the website.

Mr. Wemhoff: Skills USA is planning the Veterans Program for students and staff only and will be streamed free on the website through NFHS; student testing taking place; Parent/Teacher conferences reaching 42% of the students and that with Powerschool, any parent contact can be initiated at any time; there has been a small increase in breakfasts since they are now free with the PLC’s number increased; the mural south of town the Art students made is “phenominal” and they and Mr. High Horse did great work.

Mr. Christensen: Reported on the accomplishments for the season for the Fall sport athletes in Cross Country, Volleyball and Football; explained plans and schedules for Winter activities and gym time; with COVID guidelines changing just today, there will be new directives for our spectators and families at contests; and Jen Gepson is doing a great job keeping the high school marquee updated.

-Superintendent Report: Mr. Green offered congratulations to Josh and thanks to Kim for her service. Goals: The 5 year tech plan will start with a purpose statement; the elementary parking

lot is moving forward with the city being fully on board with helping with the curb & gutter; the foundation presentation has been accepted; and the new superintendent evaluation will be discussed in December.

After feeling that remote learning was important, developing plans and having families take advantage and use it, we have done an extensive evaluation and have concluded the program itself struggles and the schools are not getting great returns. Grades have suffered and we are “creating gaps” in these kids’ education. Teachers have struggled with getting students to engage and the majority has really suffered by not doing the work or engaging and failing classes necessary for graduation. 1. We are safe and believe the school is safe. 2. Expressed educational concerns and what kids are missing by not being here. 3. Work loads are not sustainable for our staff to try to keep all areas and our kids up to date. 4. We understand medical scenarios where dangers will be taken into consideration such as a medical situation with a doctor note and will have a plan for that. We need to move forward and “get our kids back in school” so will not offer remote learning starting 2nd semester. This decision was not made lightly but feel it is the best decision. President Genoways asked that we are prepared to go all remote if we need to, and yes we are. Mr. Green said he and other superintendents have had virtual meetings with several health departments and they are “screaming” at us to keep the kids in school as “what is happening in school is working”. If the schools do close, it will be health departments that dictate when and why we would close, not the schools. The external visitation will take place virtually on December 2nd; the Building & Grounds Committee will discuss our next steps for the Community Building; a spike in positive COVID cases and quarantines, but still having 93% in the building; being ahead of schedule with the new gym with installation of heat in the building and able to work inside; and a change in the state conference to virtual because of the new DHM’s put in place by the governor.

There was discussion about what would happen if we had to go full remote, how the teachers would teach, using Canvas which is already in place, and changing some students to Edgenuity to get them caught up. Classes with teachers would run the same time every day as they do now and students would have to join the class to participate. Hopefully there would not be the lack of engagement as in the past and this format will engage more, boost the interaction and help with grades. Using Canvas was designed to have all students both remote and in person doing the same work at the same time and pace to have everyone on the same page but this wasn’t what happened.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the president declared the meeting adjourned at 8:35.