

**MINUTES OF MEETING
BOARD OF EDUCATION
SCOTTSBLUFF PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

A regular meeting of the Board of Education, in the School District of Scottsbluff, in the County of Scotts Bluff, in the State of Nebraska, was held at 7:00 p.m., on Monday, March 19, 2007, in the Board Room of the Administration Building, 2601 Broadway, Scottsbluff, with the following members present: Bob Kinsey, Mark Lang, Tim Lordino, Kim Magana, Megan Massey and Michael Shedd. Notice of meetings was given by publication of time and place thereof in the Star-Herald on March 16, 2007.

President Lordino called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Motion to adopt the agenda, as presented, passed with a motion by Michael Shedd and a second by Megan Massey. Yes: Shedd, Massey, Kinsey, Lang, Magana, Lordino; No: None; Motion carried.

Kayla Jacobsen, student representative, reported on following student activities: eight students attended state speech and brought home 3 medals; ProStart team competed in Lincoln with the "Best of Beef" team who took first place and another team that took second and a Scottsbluff student who received a \$2000 scholarship; and the DECA students qualified over 40 students and Scottsbluff received two out of ten Nebraska DECA scholarships. There was no SEA report.

Megan Massey reported she was online and reviewed the new Scottsbluff website as well as the "Neighbors for Better Education" website. She stated she was aware the Scottsbluff website was not completely up and running but was excited about what she saw and felt the District was making good progress.

President Lordino read a thank you note from the Scottsbluff Education Association (SEA) for meals the board provided during parent/teacher conferences.

Dr. Shedd reported the Curriculum/Technology Committee met on March 6th to discuss a couple of software programs: noting the current software that runs the student attendance, grading and scheduling is near end of life and will need to be replaced in the near future. The district is looking at Infinite Campus which can do all the same things the current software can do but a lot easier and accessible and noted this recommendation will be coming back to the Board for consideration at a later date. Mr. Knapper noted that because of the financial commitment the recommendation will be presented to the Finance Committee and then brought to the full board for consideration. Also, the Scranton software, which allows for assessments to be done on a continuous basis and will allow for more real time evaluations in terms of teachers knowing where their students are instead of finding out at the end of the year. The March 13th meeting included a presentation from Cheryl Svoboda on the Autism program and how to recognize autistic students and intervene as early as possible for better outcomes. There was also a School Improvement Report which was fairly extensive and they reviewed the commendations

and recommendations on how to make things better regarding assessments. They discussed advance placement programs and noted everyone is on the same page in terms of where the District needs to go and that the main issues was to make sure the students who want to take tests are adequately prepared for the test and to do what can be done to get as many students enrolled in AP as possible so the parents understand the advantages an AP program presents.

President Lordino reported the Community Relations/Finance Committee plans on meeting next week to discuss the website and outline media information leading up to the May 15th bond election.

Bill Knapper, Director of Business Service, reported the Finance Committee met a few weeks ago and discussed the advantages of the SOCS system. President Lordino had an excellent suggestion, due to Mindy's pending absence, to hire someone, Mike Welfl, who has worked on the website the past 2 weeks and noted as of Friday, March 16th the new website was converted and turned on for public access. Also, Mr. Knapper reported the District received ownership of the church located north of Roosevelt Elementary and provided members with the new Blue Cross/Blue Shield rates noting the increase was approximately 8%.

Sandy Porter, Director of Curriculum/Technology, provided an overview of the new assessment system. In the fall of 2006 teachers expressed their concerns with not being pleased with the way they were assessing. In Nebraska school districts are obligated to administer an NRT, CRT, and the state wide writing test. The NRT is the NWEA maps test and the CRT test was created by ESU and teachers from the Panhandle noting this has always been such an event, there was something wrong with it, or it was not available until late because they were making updates at the last minute so the District decided to create their own assessments. Mrs. Porter stated the District started the process in November by creating curriculum mapping, content and skills so they imbedded the assessments measuring what the skills and contents indicated should be measured at. The beauty of the system is that they can teach to the standard and then measure the student performance or proficiency level. If the students are not proficient they can re-teach and then reassess which can be done at the point of instruction. The committee has made a huge push to finish the assessments and they are still working on them. It has been a difficult and long process but the teachers will see the value. The state department will come out and review the assessments on April 25th to see if the District has met or not met them. Mrs. Porter noted the 4th grade teachers have challenged the Board to take the 4th grade language arts test.

Mrs. Massey questioned if these tests will be used for assessments this spring and if we are using the tool but when the state comes out they can say it's not an effective tool. Mrs. Porter stated they have been using the assessments currently and the state can say the assessment is not an effective however the push is for local control and the District has to be sure and are currently sending through the 6 quality criteria in the State of Nebraska and they are currently determining if there is efficiency, valid, and reliable. Dr. Shedd stated Senator Ron Raikes has been pushing legislation regarding and pointing

out you can't compare districts to districts or state to state and pushing for a more global applicable testing system and questioned if this was going anywhere and if it would have a big impact on what we are doing right now. Mrs. Porter stated it could and it seems everyone want standardized testing; however this is a huge issue in Wyoming and because of the flaws with their standardized tests several students missed the deadline for college and the assessment results were incorrect. She noted there could be some minor errors with Scottsbluff assessments but nothing to the extent of what Wyoming is experiencing. Vice President Kinsey stated his main concern is with regard to the criticism we received on assessments that we are not comparing apples to apples and everyone wants to compare school districts and some districts have been able to manipulate the way its done to make it appear that their student's are doing good and he feels the most important thing we want to accomplish is to be able to evaluate Scottsbluff students and the improvement of these students. Mrs. Porter stated the District will always have a norms reference test and one thing she is noticing is that the teachers are creating rigorous tests.

Dr. Reynolds reported the last time the SEA negotiations group met with board representative's one thing that was left unsettled was how the District deals with leave issues and noted Mr. Largo indicated the SEA group is interested in setting up a meeting to discuss these issue in the near future.

President Lordino noted the School Site Council Report from Roosevelt Elementary was presented and is on file for review.

Motion to accept the certified staff retirement resignation from Bryan Osborn. BMS Art Instructor, effective at the end of the 2006-2007 school year, passed with a motion by Kim Magana and a second by Megan Massey. Yes: Magana, Massey, Kinsey, Lang, Shedd, Lordino; No: None; Motion carried.

President Lordino, on behalf of the Board, thanked Mr. Osborn for his 19 years of service to the District.

Motion to accept the certified staff resignation from Shawn Huelle, SHS German Instructor, effective at the end of the 2006-2007 school year, passed with a motion by Megan Massey and a second by Kim Magana. Yes: Massey, Magana, Shedd, Kinsey, Lang, Lordino; No: None; Motion carried.

Mrs. Magana questioned how the resignation of Mr. Huelle would affect the German course offerings. Dr. Reynolds stated the District will advertise for a full time German teacher and the District shared this position with Gering this year knowing Mr. Huelle was only going to be with both districts for one year.

Motion to accept the certified staff resignation from Pedro Sulu, SHS Spanish Instructor, effective at the end of the 2006-2007 school year, passed with a motion by Kim Magana and a second by Megan Massey. Yes: Magana, Massey, Shedd, Kinsey, Lang, Lordino; No: None; Motion carried.

Motion to accept the certified staff resignation from Taren Lockwood, Lincoln Heights Elementary Kindergarten Instructor, effective at the end of the 2006-2007 school year, passed with a motion by Kim Magana and a second by Megan Massey. Yes: Magana, Massey, Shedd, Kinsey, Lang, Lordino; No: None; Motion carried.

Mr. Knapper reported bid documents were advertised and provided to contractors interested in constructing an automated irrigation system for the field area north of the Splash Arena (softball fields). Two firms responded to the solicitation. Mr. Knapper noted the low bid from Roanco Sprinklers was not responsive to the bid requirements as it did not include a bid bond and the bid from Scottsbluff Landscaping is considered a reasonable bid amount according to the engineer; therefore the bid from Scottsbluff Landscaping, in the amount of \$62,582.00, was recommended for approval.

Dick Meyer, owner of Scottsbluff Landscaping, stated he has worked for Scottsbluff Public Schools on a number of occasions over the past 15 years doing primarily irrigation and some landscaping work and knows there has been some concerns expressed on the part of the Board over the project they did associated with the installation of the well field and band practice field. He noted there were some very unusual circumstances with this project that were not really apparent at the time the work was done and he didn't feel it was anyone's fault but does think the irrigation and seeding work that Scottsbluff Landscaping did at the time was of high quality but as everyone recalls they ended up with a lake. He noted time has shown that what's happen is the well field created a sealed layer of pond approximately one foot below the surface and because the area was so flat the surface water doesn't drain off but when this became apparent shortly after the irrigation system was installed and it was seeded they consulted with the engineers and suggested someone come in and grade, although the grading was not a part of the contract, and they reseeded and they continued to have areas where water will not drain away to this day and it is wasn't because the grading wasn't done right, not because the irrigation wasn't installed right or because the seeding wasn't done right but it's because you have a layer of bentonite which creates a lake/water feature. Mr. Meyer stated no one could have foreseen this as a problem and the district has dealt with this as best it could but at the time there was some thought by the school board, understandably, that the problem was a result of the workmanship on the part of Scottsbluff Landscaping and that he stands by the workmanship and appreciate the opportunity to lay this to rest.

Vice President Kinsey stated Mr. Knapper mentioned when Mr. Meyer reviewed the plans there was a possibility that Scottsbluff Landscape might be able to reduce the cost of the bid by using PVC piping. Mr. Meyer stated he mentioned a couple of things to Mr. Swanson, engineer, when the specification came out all of the other systems has gasket pipe on 4" and 3 pipe which requires thrust blocks, additional care and installation and if this were changed to a poly pipe specification which would not in any way decrease the quality of the system could reduce the cost and noted the specifications kind of allowed it but it wasn't clear so he wasn't sure if he could bid it this way but if 4,000 feet were installed as poly pipe would make it a lot easier for the staff to maintain and there could be a significant savings of approximately \$4-5,000 from the base bid and in addition the actual base bid of the project is not the \$62,000 but probably \$57,000-58,000 because the

last three items A4-A6 would not be necessary. Mr. Lang stated he would rather see the black poly pipe installed versus the PVC piping and questioned Mr. Knapper on how to make this change order. Mr. Knapper suggested awarding to Scottsbluff Landscaping and using Baker & Associates as an independent third party to cost out what the appropriate change order saving would be and proceed with project which would be an approximate \$10,000 reduction from the total bid. President Lordino questioned if the cost was way over what Baker & Associates projected for this bid. Mr. Knapper stated Baker & Associates did not project a cost but noted this was an acceptable and reasonable cost and Mr. Swanson, engineer, would accept poly over PVC piping as suggested by Mr. Meyer.

President Lordino question what the budgeted amount and how much money has been spent on this project to date. Mr. Knapper reported the District has spent just under \$106,000 excluding the irrigation system project and noted the Facilities Committee requested \$150,000. Mr. Knapper stated he would suggest the irrigation system should not be counted against the \$150,000 softball field budget amount because when the District accepted this field area we knew the irrigation system was in poor shape and what ever is done with this space the irrigation system would need to be replaced because it has inadequate coverage that we actually have to run the existing sprinkler system longer than necessary so that the water will run out to other areas that aren't hit by the sprinkler system and run during the daytime when there is labor available to manually set sprinkler heads and is an inefficient and inadequate way to water this space and has been a practice over the years to automate irrigations fields where we can so we don't have to utilize labor to set sprinkler heads. Mr. Knapper noted there was another field, Jaycee Park at Westmoor, which also needs to be considered and converted to an automated system.

Vice President Kinsey noted the whole field area was a trade/exchange with the City of Scottsbluff who installed the original irrigation system and all the lines are charged with water so that when they go to irrigate an individual has to go out and find the port and set the sprinkler. One of the first things Rick Deed with the City of Scottsbluff stated was the District would need to do something about the irrigation system because there was a terrible waste of water. Dr. Shedd questioned if this would be an automated system. Mr. Knapper indicated it would be automated and would come off existing well. Vice President Kinsey stated he was concern with the discrepancy in the two bids prices that were received and noted he did some research and found the problem that they are running into is the number of sprinkler contractors, locally, who are actually capable of bonding a project is limited for qualified bids. Also, Baker & Associates felt the bid was an appropriate amount. Mr. Lang stated with regard to quality work he felt Scottsbluff Landscaping would do a better job.

Motion to accept the Irrigation System bid, in the amount of \$62,582.00, from Scottsbluff Landscaping and to make the appropriate adjustments as discussed for the change order to reflect material substitution and deletion of Items A-4, A-5, and A-6, passed with a motion by Mark Lang and a second by Michael Shedd. Yes: Lang, Shedd, Kinsey, Magana, Massey, Lordino; No: None; Motion carried.

Mrs. Porter reported that early in the year the administrators recognized the need to create a cohesive, focus plan for professional staff development and that this was a NCA external team recommendation. The curriculum cabinet met and aligned the mission to the Scottsbluff Vision and developed eleven standards of philosophy or beliefs. They then developed procedures to ensure all teachers receive the proper and appropriate training so they are prepared to address the district initiatives, then prioritized and identified the initiatives and training will typically begin in August for Guided Reading, Quantum Learning, etc. A district plan was created for district, building, and individuals priorities. Mrs. Porter reviewed the Professional Development Initiatives and Priorities as follows: professional development, assessment, instruction, curriculum, and student achievement. Mrs. Porter noted that the district has been offering providing on-going training from 4:00-6:00 p.m. for mini-sessions twice a week in the BMS Curriculum Room for topics such as beginning Excel and Sitton Spelling. President Lordino questioned the budget for the staff development program and noted since the district was facing issues with the budget questioned what type of expenditures were expected. Mrs. Porter reported the budget is built into the curriculum and business budgets and noted they are looking at the most practical/logical ways of providing opportunities and if the teachers are expected to teach then district needs to provide the training using the most cost effective ways to train. Dr. Reynolds noted he felt the cost for training should go down since there is a specific staff development plan and before this plan there were several initiatives that were being followed.

Motion to approve the Staff Development Plan, as presented, passed with a motion by Michael Shedd and a second by Kim Magana. Yes: Shedd, Magana, Kinsey, Lang, Massey, Lordino; No: None; Motion carried.

President Lordino read future meetings and dates. It was the consensus of the Board to meet at the Administration Building at 6:30 p.m. to ride out to Lake Minatare School for the April 10th board meeting.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m. passed with a motion by Michael Shedd and a second by Kim Magana. Yes: Shedd, Magana, Kinsey, Lang, Massey, Lordino; No: None; Motion carried.

Katherine A. Reyes, Secretary
Board of Education