

Polo Community Unit School District #222
Board of Education Minutes

December 18th, 2023

The Board of Education of Polo Community Unit School District No. 222 met in regular session in the Centennial Elementary Library on Monday December 18th, 2023 at 6:00 pm.

Members Answering Present:

Dee Mumford, Jen Grobe, Kellie Call, Rick Knutson, Suzanne Stout, Michael Collins and Matt Mekeel.

Also present at the meeting was Superintendent Dr. Kelly Mandrell, Principal Andy Faivre, Principal Dr. Melydi Huyett, Melanie Near, Ed Stouffer, Bob Carson, Trish Bolen, Sarah Rowland, Justin Grobe.

The meeting was opened for public comment.

Ed Stouffer discussed the proposed Tax Levy that was posted with Ogle County Life about two weeks prior to the meeting. During Ed's time Michael Collins dispersed copies of the Ogle County Life publication in question. It was stated that the numbers reflect a 6.1% increase which does not match what was published and that the limit per the taxation meeting is at 5%. Ed also expressed that there is better use of tax payer's money than what was proposed. In response Dr. Mandrell explained that the publication reflected inaccurate numbers but that percentages were accurate. This was an error that was overlooked prior to submitting to be published.

Bob Carson stated that he was unclear on the Debt Services and Leases and the payment of the bond portion of the proposed Tax Levy that was published. Dr. Mandrell expressed that the county had increased the property taxes and the funds that are received by the district are in turn used to make the bond payment.

Trish Bolen stated the Tax Levy that was published numbers were not adding up and that it was the duty of the Board to correct the inaccurate numbers in print. Dr. Mandrell explained that our legal obligation was met by publishing the correct numbers on the Districts website, however, she was in agreement to correct this in print.

Justin ? expressed the desire to understand the goal for the increased funds that were being proposed in the levy. Dr. Mandrell expressed that compared to neighboring districts the amount being levied for is a lower percentage; as well in the upcoming year the district is facing retirements and contracts being due so it is important to levy

for these funds to remain competitive.

It was moved by Jen Grobe and seconded by Dee Mumford to close public comment.

Vote: Aye 7 Nay 0

Roll Call for those present in Open Session: Jen Grobe, Kellie Call, Rick Knutson, Suzanne Stout, Michael Collins, Matt Mekeel, Dee Mumford.

It was moved by Rick Knutson and seconded by Jen Grobe to approve the consent agenda including the November 15th Board meeting minutes, November bills, and the Treasurer's report with the correction of Michael Collin's response to the Risk Management Report being Abstained.

Roll Call: Kellie Call, aye; Rick Knutson, aye; Suzanne Stout, aye; Michael Collins, abstain; Matt Mekeel, aye; Dee Mumford, aye; Jen Grobe, aye.

Aye 6 Nay 0 Abstain 1

Motion carried.

Information and Proposals: Dr. Kelly Mandrell highlighted that the Polo School District was commended in the AASA. Jen Grobe concurred the feature on Centennial Elementary School was very well deserved. Dr. Mandrell also mentioned a story that was run in the Dixon Telegraph that highlighted the efforts of one of our drivers, Mark Maginnis.

Old Business Action Items:

There were no Old Business Action Items at this meeting.

New Business Action Items:

It was moved by Dee Mumford and seconded by Suzanne Stout to approve the 2023 Final Tax Levy with the amended numbers, the levy would be in the amount of \$4,585,114. In discussion Michael Collins noted that the levy must be made available to all local residents as stated in the Truth in Taxation Act and felt the district did not satisfy this requirement for Lee County residents. Dr. Mandrell advised that the levy was not shared via the Dixon Telegraph but was made available with the Tri-County Life publication to satisfy notification to residents of Lee County.

Roll Call: Rick Knutson, aye; Suzanne Stout, aye; Michael Collins, nay; Matt Mekeel, aye; Dee Mumford, aye; Jen Grobe, aye; Kellie Call, aye.

Aye 6 Nay 1

Motion carried.

It was moved by Jen Grobe and seconded by Dee Mumford to approve the Bond Payment. In discussion it was clarified that the payment amount is \$898,315.

Roll Call: Suzanne Stout, aye; Michael Collins, aye; Matt Mekeel, aye; Dee Mumford, aye; Jen Grobe, aye; Kellie Call, aye; Rick Knutson, aye.

Aye 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

It was moved by Rick Knutson and seconded by Jen Grobe for the approval and adoption of resolution to add question on County School Facility Sales Tax to the March 2024 Ballot. In discussion it was clarified this is a vote to add the 1% tax to the ballot for voters and that the rate to pass is 51% in favor. Jen Grobe brought up the question of whom is responsible for informing and educating the public on the details of the additional tax. Dr. Mandrell explained this is typically discussed during Town Hall meetings and the duty would fall on the Superintendents to inform the public.

Roll Call: Michael Collins, aye; Matt Mekeel, aye; Dee Mumford, aye; Jen Grobe, aye; Kellie Call, aye; Rick Knutson, aye; Suzanne Stout, aye.

Aye 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

It was moved by Jen Grobe and seconded by Rick Knutson to approve the facilities request for 7th and 8th grade basketball league. In discussion it was detailed that this league is led by Tyler Merdian and there is a fee charged per child that enrolls. The location at this time cannot be listed, Tyler Merdian coordinates with Ted Alston to finalize a schedule and gym locations.

Vote: Aye 7 Nay 0

It was moved by Dee Mumford and seconded by Suzanne Stout to approve the destruction of Closed Session Meeting recordings through June 2022. In discussion it was clarified that the retention requirement for Closed Session recordings is 18 months.

Vote: Aye 7 Nay 0

It was moved by Jen Grobe and seconded by Dee Mumford to approve to keep Closed Session

Meeting Minutes closed through November 2023. In discussion Michael Collins questioned what the purpose of needing to keep the minutes closed is. Dr. Mandrell explained this was advised per our District Attorney due to names being listed within closed session minutes.

Vote: Aye 7 Nay 0

It was moved by Rick Knutson and seconded by Jen Grobe to approve using funds from the sale of the van to create a District scholarship in Harry Allen's name. In discussion it was clarified that this would be a new scholarship not an addition to an existing scholarship. Andy Faivre explained that the family has the option to select the recipients of the scholarship and what qualifications are. Mr. Faivre stated the family has close ties to the University of Illinois and would like to provide assistance to a student that plans to attend the university.

Roll Call: Matt Mekeel, aye; Dee Mumford, aye; Jen Grobe, aye; Kellie Call, aye; Rick Knutson, aye; Suzanne Stout, aye; Michael Collins, aye.

Aye 7 Nay 0

Motion carried

It was moved by Jen Grobe and seconded by Suzanne Stout to approve the second reading of Board Policies.

Vote: Aye 7 Nay 0

It was moved by Dee Mumford and seconded by Rick Knutson to enter Executive Session.

Vote: Aye 7 Nay 0

Time entered executive session 6:46 pm.

Time exited executive session 6:55 pm.

Action Items:

It was moved by Jen Grobe and seconded by Dee Mumford to approve Student A to graduate based upon the State of Illinois Graduation Requirements, attend high school part-time, and a homebound tutor for 12 weeks starting in January.

Roll Call: Dee Mumford, aye; Jen Grobe, aye; Kellie Call, aye; Rick Knutson, aye; Suzanne Stout, aye; Michael Collins, aye; Matt Mekeel, aye.

Aye 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

It was moved by Rick Knutson and seconded by Michael Collins to approve Rob Mathis to be part-time Bus Mechanic for \$24.50 an hour for 25 hours per week.

Roll Call: Jen Grobe, aye; Kellie Call, aye; Rick Knutson, aye; Suzanne Stout, aye; Michael Collins, aye; Matt Mekeel, aye; Dee Mumford, aye.

Aye 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

It was moved by Dee Mumford and seconded by Jen Grobe to approve Jean Morse as a paraprofessional at Centennial Elementary School for \$15.00 an hour and 6.75 hours per day.

Roll Call: Kellie Call, aye; Rick Knutson, aye; Suzanne Stout, aye; Michael Collins, aye; Matt Mekeel, aye; Dee Mumford, aye; Jen Grobe, aye.

Aye 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

It was moved by Rick Knutson and seconded by Jen Grobe to approve Ed Elms as District Maintenance for \$25.50 an hour.

Roll Call: Rick Knutson, aye; Suzanne Stout, aye; Michael Collins, aye; Matt Mekeel, aye; Dee Mumford, aye; Jen Grobe, aye; Kellie Call, aye.

Aye 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

It was moved by Dee Mumford and seconded by Jen Grobe to approve Jeff Sands as a regular Bus Route Driver.

Roll Call: Suzanne Stout, aye; Michael Collins, aye; Matt Mekeel, aye; Dee Mumford, aye; Jen Grobe, aye; Kellie Call, aye; Rick Knutson, aye.

Aye 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

Discussion from the Board:

Matt Mekeel discussed an email that was sent to the Board of Education members from Tim Vock that expressed his grievances with not receiving any response when a communication was sent to the board previously. Jen Grobe stated she spoke with Tim on the phone and they discussed points he was displeased with. Dee Mumford stated she had sent an email response to Tim Vock. Kellie Call questioned if anyone was made aware that Dee Mumford would be responding to the email correspondence; Dee verified that Matt Mekeel was aware prior to sending her response, Dr. Mandrell was not notified as she was accused of intercepting notices within the email from Tim Vock.

The next Board meeting will be held on January 17th, 2024 at 6 pm at the High School Library.

It was moved by Rick Knutson and seconded by Michael Collins to adjourn the meeting.

Vote: Aye 7 Nay 0

Meeting was adjourned at 7:20 pm.



President of the School Board



Secretary of the Meeting