

MINUTES BOARD MEETING

August 14th, 2023

REGULAR MEETING

At 6:01 p.m. Mr. Hartsfield convened the regular meeting of the district Board of Education. Board members present were, Mr. Moore, Ms. Whitaker, Ms. Compton, Mr. Frazier and Mr. Milner. Ms. White was absent until the first item under New Business. School administrative personnel present were Mr. Hayden, Ms. Anderson, and Ms. Davis. IC Murrell from the PB Commercial was in attendance. The Pledge of Allegiance was said and Mr. Milner said a prayer.

OLD BUSINESS

Minutes. The minutes of the last meeting were unanimously approved 6-0 on a motion by Mr. Moore and a second by Mr. Milner.

Financial Statement. The financial statement for the month of July was presented, reporting \$1,112,763.95 in revenue and expenditures of \$423,204.81 in the non-activity funds, leaving an ending balance of \$10,423,040.40. On a motion by Mr. Milner and a second by Ms. Whitaker the board voted 6-0 to approve the financial report for the month of July.

NEW BUSINESS

Timeline. Steve Elliot and Patrick Schroeder gave a brief update on the construction timeline. Mr. Wilson recommended the board to approve moving forward with the plans for the safe room size according to the law. Mr. Elliot wants to have the plans turned in in October and ready for review to get approval for DESE to build and they are allowed 6 weeks. November 14th they would get the approvals ready to advertise for 30 days for bids then they will be able to get started. The dirt work has already been advertised and demolition can be done. The amount it will take to build will be presented in the December board meeting. We are going with a larger safe room due to what the current fire marshal says. IBC code requires a larger safe room than DESE. Mr. Wilson asked if legislation changed to smaller would it be too late to change. Mr. Elliot said we would have 4-6 months before foundation is poured but after it is poured you cannot change the plans. Mr. Schroeder stated they were getting bids for demolition this week and they would wait on the district to finish up things with Entergy and other things. The plan is to tear building down and build up the dirt for the slab, so we will leave the slab until we are ready for the foundation. Demolition will start mid-September or early October. Bids may have to be presented in the January board meeting to start the construction in March and it will last until the end of 2025 to move into the new school December of 2025.

We are going to salvage if there is anything in the building the district can use later. The contractor may be able to salvage and may get a cheaper bid. Mr. Wilson asked if the demolition will include taking out the gym or can we use it for storage. Mr. Schroeder said they would look at the costs and give the district options on what to do. Mr. Wilson said we are having trouble with Windstream and we have to wait on asbestos which takes 30 days. Mr. Schroeder said they will have to reroute the sewer mains. Mr. Wilson asked if the board needs to approve the drawings for the bigger safe room to meet the law and Mr. Elliot said yes. On a motion by Mr. Milner and a second by Mr. Moore, the board voted 7-0 to approve the new drawings for a bigger safe room.

Bids. Mr. Hayden presented bids. Mr. Wilson recommended the approval of a bid for WCHS HVAC and WCJH Asbestos abatement. Mr. Hayden stated they needed to replace the HVAC at the HS with a 15 ton York unit because it cannot be repaired anymore. This will be purchased with ESSER funds. He received 3 bids and the lowest was Scott Systems at \$32,280.00. Mr. Wilson recommended the low bid. On a motion by Ms. Whitaker and a second by Mr. Milner, the board voted 7-0 to recommend the low bid for the HVAC at the High School. Mr. Hayden said they had an inspection of the Junior High for asbestos and there was none in the roof. He received the lowest bid from Gerken Environmental Enterprises. Mr. Wilson recommended the low bid. On a motion by Mr. Milner and a second by Mr. Moore, the board voted 7-0 on the low bid for the asbestos abatement at the Junior High.

Petition. Mr. Wilson attached a parent's request for petition to transfer 3 students. Mr. Wilson stated the district's current ADM was 1,703 and due to the enrollment decrease and not meeting the deadline, he recommended the board deny this request. Ms. White asked if they could table the issue until executive session to discuss why these students are wanting to leave. Mr. Wilson said that executive session is for personnel. On a motion by Ms. Whitaker and a second by Mr. Milner, the board voted 6-1 to deny the petition to transfer students. Ms. White voted nay.

Audit Report. A hard copy of the 2021-2022 audit report will be available at a later date. Ms. Walker has a pdf copy if the board would like to view the report before the hard copies are available. There were no problems found in any area. Ms. Walker explained the audit report.

Proposed Budget of Expenditures. This resolution is a yearly action by the board to verify our millage, which did not change. Norma explained the budget.

VForce. Mr. Wilson recommended the board to approve the attached VForce contract. Mr. Wilson explained that VForce will be here 8 hours a day at all schools for 178 days when students are present. He said the clear backpacks are helping. Mr. Moore asked if we are having any help from the Sheriff's department and Mr. Wilson said they come at ballgames for payment. Mr. Moore asked if Officer Arnold is employed by the Sheriff's Department or the district and Mr. Wilson said that receives his training from the department, but is employed by the district.

On a motion by Ms. Compton and a second by Mr. Frazier, the board voted 7-0 to approve the VForce contract for the 2023-2024 school year.

Report. Ms. Davis gave a brief report on the Student Achievement Data. Ms. Davis discussed why we were in level 4 and the only reason is 50% or more students are in need of support in Reading. Ms. Davis explained STAR testing, foundational reading, and the differences between what is taught in Kindergarten and 1st grade which is learning to read. Kindergarten in the spring showed that 47% haven't mastered what they should. 1st grade in the spring showed that 58% haven't mastered what they should because they are trying to catch up from Kindergarten. 2nd grade in the spring showed that 84% haven't mastered what they should which is reading to learn. 86% of 1st grade cannot get the words off of the paper. There has to be a huge focus on the foundation of reading with reports of periodical progress. Ms. Davis discussed the ACT Aspire scores and the district had some celebrations in writing. 7th grade had gains across the board and 10th grade had mostly gains.

Plan. Mr. Wilson recommended the board approve the attached 2023-2024 District Support Plan. Ms. Davis explained the support plan is for reading. The goals are improving reading achievement and the district must show progress. All of this will help increase ESSA scores. Mr. Frazier stated that PLC's and Solution Tree have helped the district and Covid has hurt the students, but seeing a little bit of improvement. He asked Ms. Davis what her thoughts are. Ms. Davis stated that we needed intense focus and can get things to help. Mr. Frazier said parental support would help. Ms. Davis stated she wants the board to see how we are progressing on the goals set. Mr. Wilson said that we stress to parents at open houses how important it is for kids to be at school. He said he has stressed to teachers the need for them to be at school. On a motion by Ms. White and a second by Ms. Whitaker, the board voted 7-0 to approve the 2023-2024 District Support Plan.

Virtual Arkansas. Mr. Wilson recommended the approval to utilize Virtual Arkansas for High School credit recovery and/or elective classes. On a motion by Mr. Milner and a second by Mr. Moore, the board voted 7-0 to approve the utilization of Virtual Arkansas for the High School.

PPC REPORT & CPPC

PPC. Frankie Hemphill stated there was no report due to school just starting. Ms. Hemphill stated they were in the process of reorganizing, but she was elected again.

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Frazier said that in late June the JROTC participated in a worship service and did a great job. He said on July 28th, Allen Wimberly passed away and he made a huge impact

on the students at WCSD. He said in today's paper at the PB Commercial they mentioned people coming out to pray for the schools and teachers. He thanked the PC Commercial for highlighting this event.

PERSONNEL

Mr. Wilson received a letter of resignation from LaResha Romes. On a motion by Mr. Milner and a second by Mr. Frazier, the board voted 7-0 to accept the resignation.

Mr. Wilson recommended the board hire Cassandra Briggs as a Secondary Teacher, Britney Johnson as a Secondary Teacher, Tiffany Manning as a Nurse, and Jarhea May as a Special Education Teacher. On a motion by Ms. Compton and a second by Ms. Whitaker, the board voted 7-0 on the employment recommendations.

SUPERINTDENT'S REPORT.

Mr. Wilson said we had a great start to school with the grade configurations and thanked Mr. Hayden and his staff for the hard work they did this summer to make this happen. He said the traffic flow will be worked out.

ADJOURNMENT.

Respectfully submitted by, Mr. Wilson and Ms. Walker.

Alan Frazier,
Board Secretary