

Board of Education Meeting
Southwest Public Schools
District 179
March 11, 2024

President Jason Neseth called the regular meeting of the Southwest Public Schools Board of Education to order at 7:31 p.m. on March 11, 2024 at the Southwest Junior-Senior High School in Bartley.

Present: Jason Neseth, Duane Teter, John O'Dea, Brooke Brooks, Jason Kloeping, Jennifer McConville, Superintendent Drew Billeter, Principal Tara Fries, Principal Matt Springer, Sydney Mousel, and Patricia Smith.

Absent: None.

Visitors: Derek and Natalie Meyers, Jacey Kent, Tracy Zink, Arlyn Minary, Buck Haag, Whitney Billeter, Lynn Harris, Christian Arterburn, Chase Dickson, Les Roggenkamp, Doug Stewart, Dave McConville, Scott Moore, Alex Haag, Renae Weaver, Tony & Jill Truksa, Larry Durner, Rob and Becky Lampe, Jim Tiller, and Don Tiller.

President Neseth observed Open Meeting Law requirements.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by Kloeping, to approve the board meeting agenda as presented. Ayes: Teter, O'Dea, Kloeping, Neseth, Brooks, and McConville. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Notices of the meeting were posted at the Adams Bank and Trust in Indianola, the Stockmens Bank Bartley Branch, Post Offices in Bartley and Indianola, Southwest Elementary School in Indianola, Southwest Junior-Senior High School in Bartley, and published in the Valley Voice newspaper and on the school website. Notice of the meeting was given in advance to all members prior to the meeting date.

Moved by McConville, seconded by Kloeping, to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2024 board meeting. Ayes: Kloeping, Neseth, McConville, and Brooks. Nays: None. Abstained: O'Dea and Teter. Motion carried.

Moved by Teter, seconded by McConville, to approve the claims as presented. Ayes: Kloeping, McConville, Brooks, Teter, O'Dea, and Neseth. Nays: None. Absent: None. Motion carried.

The treasurer's report was presented to the Board.

Derek Meyers questioned the Board regarding the dollar amount of cash reserves and proposed fiscal year beginning and actual ending fund cash balances over the past ten years, the status of district investments, the process of transferring monies between funds, and the plan for taxes and cash reserves for the 2024-2025 budget year and beyond.

Moved by Teter, seconded by O'Dea, to approve offering all returning teachers a contract for the 2024-2025 school year as recommended by the Administration. Ayes: Teter, Kloeping, McConville, Neseth, O'Dea, and Brooks. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by Kloeping, to approve a teacher contract for Shannon Lovin as an elementary instructor for the 2024-2025 school year. Ayes: Kloeping, Neseth, McConville, Teter, O'Dea, and Brooks. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Kloeping, seconded by O'Dea, to approve a teacher contract for Connie Lovin as a math instructor at the junior-senior high school for the 2024-2025 school year. Ayes: Kloeping, Neseth, McConville, Teter, O'Dea, and Brooks. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by McConville, to accept Steven Salas, Sam Holloran, and Amber Daffer as new Southwest Foundation members. Ayes: Kloepping, O'Dea, Teter, McConville, Brooks, and Neseth. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Teter, seconded by Kloepping, to approve the resignation of Jordan Lewis at the end of the 2023-2024 school year with thanks for her service to the district. Ayes: Kloepping, Teter, O'Dea, Neseth, McConville, and Brooks. Nays: None. Motion carried.

President Neseth asked that the agenda be reorganized to allow agenda Item #10 and the administrators' reports to be addressed prior to the original list of agenda items so the Board could go into executive session to discuss possible pay raises for Items 7-9.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by Teter, to approve the list of surplus items for sale at the Holbrook Auction on April 6, 2024, as presented. Ayes: Neseth, Brooks, Teter, McConville, O'Dea, and Kloepping. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Superintendent Billeter informed the Board of a letter from Jarod Albers, Cambridge Public Schools Superintendent, asking the Board to discuss the possibility of a girls' wrestling coop to allow an interested student to participate with the Southwest Public Schools girls' wrestling team for school years 2024-2025 and 2025-2026. The item will be added to the April agenda. Drew Billeter discussed the replacement of a junior-senior high school gym door, electrical projects being completed by Holdrege Electric, possession of the new bus and its use on a route, and the attendance of administrators at the Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association Spring Conference on March 14 and 15. Mr. Billeter will attend an upcoming budget workshop in North Platte. Sydney Mousel has been hired as Natalie Meyers' replacement in the junior-senior high school office. He also thanked Natalie for her work training Sydney during the past week.

Principal Tara Fries informed the Board of the status of Kindergarten Orientation and the split classes for Grades Kindergarten, First and Second Grades for next school year due to increased student numbers, and Literacy Night planned for Thursday evening, March 21.

Principal Matt Springer discussed possession of the new bus, status of the installation of the basketball shock clocks for the 2024-2025 season, and student sign-up for next year's schedules. He informed the Board of several students' request for an automotive class and the planned Dessert Theatre on Tuesday, March 12.

Moved by Teter, seconded by O'Dea, to go into closed session at 9:05 p.m. for agenda Items #7, 8, and 9 to discuss pay increases for classified staff for the 2024-2025 school year for the protection of the public interest and personnel issues for the needless injury to the reputation of an individual. President Neseth repeated the motion, and the board voted as follows: Ayes: Teter, O'Dea, Neseth, McConville, Brooks, and Kloepping. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Teter, seconded by O'Dea, to end closed session at 9:40 p.m. Ayes: Neseth, Brooks, Teter, McConville, O'Dea, and Kloepping. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Teter, seconded by McConville, to approve a 3% pay increase for non-certified staff for the 2024-2025 school year. Ayes: Neseth, McConville, Kloepping, Teter, and Brooks. Nays: None. Abstained: O'Dea. Motion carried.

Moved by McConville, seconded by Teter, to approve an increase of bus route rates to \$62.50/trip and activities driving to \$18.00/hour beginning in the 2024-2025 school year. Ayes: O'Dea, Teter, Neseth, Brooks, McConville, and Kloepping. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Kloepping, seconded by O'Dea, to approve a 3% increase to the school nurses' hourly rate for the term of the 2024-2025 school year. Ayes: Neseth, Brooks, Teter, O'Dea, McConville, and Kloepping. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Agenda for meetings will be kept continually current and available for public inspection in the office of the Superintendent.

The next regular board meeting will be held on Monday, April 8, 2024 at 7:30 p.m. at the Southwest Junior-Senior High School Library in Bartley.

Moved by O'Dea, seconded by Kloepping, to adjourn the meeting at 9:47 p.m. Ayes: Kloepping, O'Dea, Teter, Neseth, McConville, and Brooks. Nays: None. Motion carried.