

Cassopolis Public Schools
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Board of Education
Minutes
Regular Meeting
November 24, 2014

Welcome: This regular meeting of the Cassopolis Board of Education was held on Monday, November 24, 2014 in the Board meeting room at Squires Educational Center and called to order at 7:00 p.m., as Vice President Pompey welcomed those attending.

Roll Call: Members Present: Lisa Cutting, George Calvert, Sue Horstmann, Jeremy Carlisle, John Bright, Jason Pompey
Members Absent: Scott Ward
Also present: Tracy Hertsel, Becky Smith, Dee Voss, Dave VanLue, Robyn Bright, Cindy Martynowicz, staff member and community member.

Jeremy Carlisle led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda - **Moved by** George Calvert, **supported by** John Bright to amend the agenda by adding an action item X, Proposed Scope and Cost of Facility Study.

Moved by Sue Horstmann, **supported by** Jeremy Carlisle to further amend the agenda by renumbering Superintendent Report to XI and Adjournment to XII.

Motion carried 6-0, as follows: Horstmann, yes; Cutting, yes; Bright, yes; Calvert, yes; Carlisle, yes; Pompey, yes to amend the agenda as proposed.

Moved by Jeremy Carlisle, **supported by** John Bright to approve the amended agenda. **Motion carried** 6-0, as follows: Horstmann, yes; Cutting, yes; Bright, yes; Calvert, yes; Carlisle, yes; Pompey, yes.

Approval of Minutes: **Moved by** Jeremy Carlisle, **supported by** John Bright to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of November 10, 2014, as written. **Motion carried** 6-0, as follows: Carlisle, yes; Horstmann, yes; Calvert, yes; Cutting, yes; Bright, yes; Pompey, yes.

Communications or correspondence – None.

Reports, Information Items from School Staff –

Ross Beatty Jr./Sr. High School / VanLue: Mr. VanLue said that they had an overall good turnout for parent/teacher conferences. Thursday's numbers were higher than Friday's which is typical but Mr. VanLue said that their average attendance was over 20%. He attended Friday night's play at Ross Beatty and said that the students did great, even though they lost several practices. He was impressed with the students that participated and also commended Jean Porath, Lois Barrett-Bush, Teresa Wellman, Carolyn Kelly and others that helped with the production. Mr. VanLue said that tomorrow evening Dr. Vickie Markavitch is presenting on public education at SMC and said that Board members, administrators and community members are invited to attend.

Sam Adams Elementary School / Voss: Mrs. Voss showed the shirts her staff wears for their positive and good behavior assemblies at Sam Adams Elementary. These assemblies are held monthly. The staff put a video together highlighting kids doing the right things when at school. Also, Golden Ticket winners are announced at these monthly assemblies. She invited Board members to attend any upcoming assemblies. Also they have had a pantry drive competition between grade levels. These items were

donated to local churches. Grandparents' Day, which is sponsored by the PTO, is this Wednesday and will be an open house format from 8:30-10:30. They are also working on being well represented in the newspaper about events at Sam Adams Elementary.

Mrs. Voss said that SMC students are doing observations in the building. Also some community members as well as churches have sponsored children/families in our district. She thanked her staff, as over the last few weeks they have worked closely with students who have recently lost a parent and the difficult emotions that go along with those situations. Also, her staff will be adopting some families in need over the holidays, providing them with gifts and food.

Mrs. Voss said that a data team was selected by WMU to partake in writing a chapter documenting the data. Sam Adams Elementary had made the most progress in closing achievement gaps and were asked to participate. The team working on this are Mrs. Voss, Mrs. Stermer, Mrs. Carlisle and Ms. Gorham. Also she talked to Mrs. Shelli Burks about STAR testing. She is working with Mr. VanLue and Mrs. Doll about the NWEA as they want to make sure all students are ready to take the test by the first week of December. She wished all a safe holiday and Happy Thanksgiving.

Finance / Smith: Mrs. Smith said that the audit is finished and the purchase order system is now again active. She is educating staff on procedures of the system. Mrs. Smith said that this process will help alleviate overspending and will help with checks and balances. Mrs. Smith said she is also working on budget revisions and has been meeting with administrators to get their input on line items. She will revise the revenue portion at a later time after the student count is verified by the ISD, which should be within the next month. Mrs. Smith said she hopes to have a revised budget to the Board by December or January at the latest.

Mr. Bright asked how the approval process is going with the ISD on our student count. Mrs. Smith said that the Superintendent is in the process of verifying some information for the count so it has not been turned over to the ISD yet. As soon as the information is sent to the ISD we will be first priority to get certified and hope to have the audited numbers in the next couple of weeks.

Public Comment – None.

Financials – **Moved by** Jeremy Carlisle, **supported by** John Bright that it is hereby resolved the Board of Education approve bills for the month of October, as follows: General Fund \$346,079.43; Food Service Fund \$49,347.90; Debt Service Fund, \$91,169.70, and, Sinking Fund \$68,541.08. **Motion carried** 6-0, as follows: Cutting, yes; Calvert, yes; Horstmann, yes; Carlisle, yes; Bright, yes, Pompey, yes.

New Business – Discussion Item

Proposal for Scope and Cost of Facility Study – Mr. Hertsel said that the Building & Grounds Committee met earlier tonight. Carmi Design Group put together a proposal for a facility study. We set aside \$10,000 to perform a study but at the last committee meeting a larger scope was developed and this added to the cost of the study. One thing that was added after the last committee meeting were the high school gym basketball rims and backboards which are a safety concern. They are currently out of compliance with MHSAA and need to be addressed.

Mr. Hertsel said that in committee there was discussion about buses but it was determined not to add these to the bond due to their depreciation value. Numbers were put to each item. Mr. Leininger with Carmi Design Group was in attendance to address any questions. Mr. Hertsel said the line item for additional services does not assume there will be additional services but would be pertinent if the district were to add something during the process.

Mr. Hertsel said that Secant Technologies would conduct the technology piece of the study and has offered to complete this project for the district free of cost. He said that Secant wants to make good on some problems from the past bond project that fell short of our expectations.

Mr. Bright said if we are looking at demolishing Red Brick he suggested a pole barn be put up on the high school property so the Ag Science program could use that for projects.

Mrs. Horstmann asked for information about the issues or points of consideration at Sam Adams Elementary. She asked why we are already looking at issues in our new building. Mr. Hertsel said it is on the old structure itself and things not addressed in the bond. Many roofs at Sam Adams Elementary were not touched during renovation or replacement, the gym and cafeteria as an example of problem areas, as well as several small roofs.

Mr. Hertsel said there are February deadlines to be on the May ballot so time is of the essence.

Mr. Pompey said that by passing this item we also would get a “look back window” of 18 months, so as long as we have not cut a check for any of the items on here that could be taken out of this bond.

Old Business – Action item

Act on Proposed for Scope and Cost of Facility Study – **Moved by** George Calvert, **supported by** Lisa Cutting to approve the proposal from Carmi Design Group for an amount not to exceed \$22,750 to perform a feasibility study on repairs of our school buildings. **Motion carried** 6-0, as follows: Horstmann, yes; Calvert, yes; Cutting, yes; Carlisle, yes; Bright, yes; Pompey, yes.

Superintendent’s Report – Mr. Hertsel reported as follows:

- As mentioned in last Friday’s update he has been looking at the possibility of moving from two regular Board meetings a month to one. He has heard back from one Board member whose concern was if we went to one it might be a lengthy agenda and a lot of information to cover. Mr. Hertsel said his point is that we could always schedule a special meeting at any time and have committee meetings whenever necessary. If we keep two meetings a month he would like to have administrators report to only one meeting a month.
- Mr. Bright said he has no problem going to one meeting a month with the exception of June when we have budget discussions. He preferred keeping two meetings a month during that time. Mr. Hertsel said that special meetings could always be scheduled.
- Ms. Cutting said with everything coming up over the next few months she prefers to keep two regular meetings a month but had no problem with administrators attending only one each month.
- Mr. Carlisle said that some other districts hold one regular meeting a month and one work session. They would have discussion at one meeting and action at the other meeting.
- Mr. Bright said if we keep this schedule of two meetings a month up to July, we could revisit this option again at that time.
- Board members were in agreement for administrators to attend one meeting per month.
- Mr. Hertsel said he would get more information out to Board members before the next Board meeting so that a decision can be made.
- Reminded Board members and administrators about Dr. Markavitch’s presentation tomorrow night at SMC.
- He also attended Friday’s play presentation and was impressed with the students.
- Thanked Tony Leininger for his efforts and said we are glad to be working with him on the facility study.
- Met today with the count auditors and Mrs. Tanya Leach regarding our new home school partnership program. The auditor from Van Buren County has resources that will help us get the program running.
- Spoke with Mrs. Cooper from the ISD today and she thought we would be able to have the

unofficial audited numbers in the next two weeks.

- As far as Michigan testing, the state has put emails out about changes in standardized tests. This is a test year but the Federal government is going to look at the data.
- Lastly, wished everyone a safe and Happy Thanksgiving.

Mr. Bright asked about the student count. He knows the numbers were being tweaked and then were going to the ISD for validation. His question is once the numbers are submitted to the ISD, how soon will they be considered final? Mr. Bright said he is asking because in August when the teachers started we took money out of their wages and if the numbers change it could be maybe 2 or 3 percent rather than 5. With Christmas coming he would like to get money back to the teachers, and said that this money needs to go back to employees and is not sure of the process.

Mr. Hertsel said that last year the district adjusted wages based on unaudited numbers, as the true audited numbers won't come until March. The ISD numbers should be available within the next two weeks, however the actual certifying isn't done until March.

Mrs. Smith said the district plans to use the ISD's report and any adjustments would be made after we get those final numbers which should be within the next two weeks, hopefully sooner, but they have to wait for verifications. They originally thought employees could be reimbursed by next Friday the 5th but now are hoping for the 19th.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Education it was **moved by** George Calvert, **supported by** Jeremy Carlisle, to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 p.m. All in favor.

Susan Horstmann, Secretary