

Cassopolis Public Schools  
725 Center Street  
Cassopolis, MI 49031  
(269) 445-0503

Board of Education  
Minutes  
Regular Meeting  
October 26, 2015

Welcome: This regular meeting of the Cassopolis Board of Education was held on Monday, October 26, 2015 in the Board meeting room at Squires Educational Center and called to order at 7:00 p.m., as President Ward welcomed those attending.

Roll Call:

Members Present: Deb Deubner, Amanda Smego, Jesse Binns, George Calvert, Sue Horstmann, Scott Ward

Members Absent: Lisa Cutting

Also present: Tracy Hertsel, Becky Smith, Dee Voss, Dave VanLue, Jeremy Carlisle, Cindy Martynowicz, members of the community and public

Sue Horstmann led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda - **Moved by** George Calvert, **supported by** Jesse Binns to approve the agenda, as presented. **Motion carried** 6-0, as follows: Calvert, yes; Smego, yes; Horstmann, yes; Binns, yes; Deubner, yes; Ward, yes.

Approval of Minutes – **Moved by** Deb Deubner, **supported by** George Calvert to amend the minutes of the October 12, 2015 meeting to reflect that the meeting was held at Squires Education Center. **Motion carried** 6-0, as follows: Binns, yes; Smego, yes; Horstmann, yes; Calvert, yes; Deubner, yes; Ward, yes.

**Moved by** Deb Deubner, **supported by** George Calvert to approve the minutes, as amended. **Motion carried** 6-0, as follows: Deubner, yes; Calvert, yes; Horstmann, yes; Smego, yes; Binns, yes; Ward, yes.

Communications or correspondence – None.

Reports, Information Items from School Staff –

**SAM ADAMS ELEMENTARY / Voss:** Mrs. Voss said that she and three other staff members handed out candy at the Trunk or Treat held at the fairgrounds. The kids enjoyed seeing them in costumes. Mrs. Voss handed out a report of STAR testing data, this testing is done three times a year. She said as the year progresses you will be able to see the results improve. They will also have data from NWEA testing when it becomes available. They are having a Halloween dance on Thursday. Also, the students and teachers have over 200 Christmas cards boxed and ready to mail to the soldiers overseas. Mrs. Voss said that she has been working on positive promotions with the press and believes Sam Adams Elementary will be featured in upcoming newspapers.

**Ross Beatty Jr./Sr. High School / VanLue:** Mr. VanLue said that the home football playoff game is this Saturday at 1 p.m. We have some football players who are also on the FFA's parliamentary procedures team and will be at nationals through early Saturday, but they will be back to play in the game. Mr. VanLue said that our football team has made the playoffs 9 of the last 10 years. He thanked the athletic boosters for buying dinner during playoff selection. Our soccer team lost 3-1 in overtime but it was a great effort by the students and coach. The team progressively got better as the season went along. Volleyball districts will be next Monday versus Watervliet in EauClaire. Mr. VanLue said that we won the sportsmanship award for the 2015 boys' basketball team. Middle School basketball begins next week. Winter sports begins mid-November. He said that Mr. Brawley puts in endless hours and attends all of the events. Mr. VanLue said that NWEA testing began last week and will continue through

this week. He thanked Mrs. Doll for coordinating the testing. Also Mr. VanLue thanked Lesley Steensma, the new Yearbook Advisor who will be meeting with students regularly two days a week. Mr. VanLue thanked parents that attended conferences last week, they had a very good turnout. The teen jury has been moved to November 20<sup>th</sup> at 9 am and he is working on a list of 20 students that he will reduce to 12. Mr. VanLue said that tardies and behavior have greatly improved with the implementation of the positive school culture. Lisa Thomas has retired, her last day was Friday October 23<sup>rd</sup>. He thanked Mr. Hertsel and Mrs. Bright for the luncheon and attending it last Thursday. Mr. VanLue thanked Mr. Bright for getting to building repair issues. He also welcomed Mr. Carlisle to the team. FFA will attend national convention later this week. He and Mr. Hertsel will be present in Louisville on Thursday. Mr. VanLue said that the Wellness Center hired a social worker who met with the staff last Friday and he also has met with Mrs. Doll. The social worker will initially work Monday through Wednesday from 8-Noon until they are fully staffed.

**CENTRAL OFFICE / Carlisle:** Mr. Carlisle said that he appreciates everyone's help during the first three days in his new position. Web updates are being worked on and we will continue to revamp the new site. He will be compiling pictures to update our photos on Facebook and Twitter. Information from staff will run through administrators who will then forward information to him for publication. Mr. Carlisle said that he appreciates the opportunity and looks forward to working with everyone.

Public Comment – Michele Outlaw, 61331 Mary Lou Lane said she has two daughters at the high school. There has been negativity about the high school sports programs. Mrs. Outlaw said that some kids have been brought in for certain sports and we have lost other students for certain sports. We had negative press about losing these students and she thinks this should be looked into and she wanted the Board to be aware. She suggested speaking to parents coming into the district to see what attracted them here.

Financials – September, 2015 - Moved by Deb Deubner, **supported by** George Calvert to approve the payment of bills for the month of September, 2015, as follows: General Fund \$198,453.55 and Food Service Fund \$9,080.47. **Motion carried** 6-0, as follows: Calvert, yes; Horstmann, yes; Smego, yes; Binns, yes; Deubner, yes; Ward, yes.

#### New Business – Discussion Items

Request for overnight trip for National FFA Convention – Mr. Hertsel said that Mrs. George submitted the paperwork for this week's national FFA convention. Our parliamentary procedures team is heading to Louisville Tuesday night and will return on Saturday.

2014-15 Audit Presentation – Mrs. Smith said that the Board members received items prepared by Abraham & Gaffney. She introduced Alan Panter from the firm.

Mr. Panter distributed audit documents to Board members and presented to the Board and public. He said that the audit went very well, the office staff was well prepared. Being a first year audit with his firm there was extra reporting required. Also there was a huge change in governmental accounting. He thanked Mrs. Smith and the business office for all of their help. Mr. Panter then reviewed highlights of the financial statements, the independent audit report, opinion on the financial statements and statement of the district's net position. He said that the district finished the prior year at 9.3% fund equity and at the end of 2014-15 the fund equity was 15.6%.

Mr. Ward asked where other districts are with fund equity. Mr. Panter said that he represents very few local districts that have 15% fund equity. The state recommends 12-15% as a minimum but it is not common. Cassopolis is at 45 days of operating expenses. Mr. Panter continued his presentation again focusing on the General Fund, reviewing graphs showing the 5 year history and the positive trend of the fund balance increase in 2015.

Mr. Panter reviewed the schedule of findings and questioned costs from the single audit. They checked Title I and the nutritional cluster. He reviewed the findings and said that the administration's responses to these findings are included. The findings stated that there is too much money in the district's Food Service Fund. The Michigan Department of Education limits the amount available in the Food Service Fund, as it is to be non-profit. Mrs. Smith said that most of that was due to the catering and food service to the ISD that wasn't billed until the end of the year, this year billing is quarterly so we will not have that issue again.

Mr. Ward said that Food Service is having issues with negative balances and asked if it would be to our advantage to have that paid from the extra in the food services budget? Mrs. Smith said that we are not allowed to use food services money to cover negative balances, it would have to come out of our General Fund.

Awarding of the bonds - Mr. Hertsel said that Mrs. Smith, Mr. Carlisle and he sat in on the awarding of the bonds today. The district was very fortunate as the timing was perfect and we got a great rate. We had eight bidders and bidding was very competitive.

Mrs. Smith said that the rate we received was better than the 10 year rate. They had a rating call last week and that went very well. Adding enrollment and adding to our fund balance helped. The funds should be distributed on November 12<sup>th</sup>.

Review Superintendent Contract – Mr. Ward asked that this be put on the agenda. It is the Board's responsibility to enact the Superintendent's contract. Mr. Hertsel is currently in the last year of his contract, which his set to expire on June 30<sup>th</sup>. He would like this addressed. There were no questions from Board members.

#### Old Business – Action Items

Act on request for 5<sup>th</sup> grade to attend overnight trip at Camp Friedenswald – **Moved by** Jesse Binns, **supported by** Deb Deubner that it is hereby resolved the request for 5<sup>th</sup> grade students to attend an overnight trip to Camp Friedenswald from May 18-20, 2016, is approved as requested. **Motion carried** 6-0, as follows: Horstmann, yes; Smego, yes; Calvert, yes; Deubner, yes; Binns, yes; Ward, yes.

Act on request for overnight trip for National FFA Convention – **Moved by** Deb Deubner, **supported by** George Calvert that it is hereby resolved that the request from FFA to attend national convention in Louisville, Kentucky from October 27-31, 2015, is approved. **Motion carried** 6-0, as follows: Deubner, yes; Binns, yes; Horstmann, yes; Calvert, yes; Smego, yes; Ward, yes.

Act on 2014-15 Audit Presentation – **Moved by** Amanda Smego, **supported by** Jesse Binns that the 2014-15 audit is approved, as presented. **Motion carried** 6-0, as follows: Smego, yes; Deubner, yes; Calvert, yes; Horstmann, yes; Binns, yes; Ward, yes.

Awarding of the bonds – **Moved by** Deb Deubner, **supported by** George Calvert that it is hereby resolved the bid of J.J.B. Hilliard, W.L. Lyons, Inc. for the 2015 bonds at the rate of 1.943757% is accepted. **Motion carried** 6-0, as follows: Binns, yes; Horstmann, yes; Calvert, yes; Deubner, yes; Smego, yes; Ward, yes.

#### New Business – Action Item

Hiring – **Moved by** Amanda Smego, **supported by** Deb Deubner that the following positions are awarded: Varsity Wrestling Coach – Kenyon Ellison; Varsity Softball Coach – Demi Schrader; and, Drama/Play Director, Tammy Stierle. **Motion carried** 6-0, as follows: Binns, yes; Deubner, yes; Horstmann, yes; Smego, yes; Calvert, yes; Ward, yes.

Kenyon Ellison was present and introduced himself, stating that he was originally from Niles High School, won state his senior year, and is also a Central Michigan University graduate. After college he coached under his former Niles wrestling coach. Mr. Ellison said he expects to build the program up over time.

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

- Graduation date for 2016 will stay on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, as the Board already approved that date. He will meet in the near future with parents to discuss graduation dates for future years.
- Thanked “Feed the Children” for their latest donations.
- The district received a favorable interest rate today for the bonds that will benefit the community, allow the bonds to pay off quicker, and save taxpayers money.
- Wednesday evening Dowagiac and Edwardsburg will host an internet safety meeting open to parents. On Thursday they will present to the students at each county middle school and high school.
- Said that he submitted an agreement with Stevenson Land Surveying on Red Brick, and will move forward with that project.
- Thanked Mrs. Smith who has put in a lot of time lately but even more time when auditors were in district.
- Wished the FFA parliamentary procedures team and the varsity football team good luck at upcoming competitions.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Education it was **moved by** George Calvert, **supported by** Jesse Binns to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m. All in favor.

---

Susan Horstmann, Secretary