

Cassopolis Public Schools  
725 Center Street  
Cassopolis, MI 49031  
(269) 445-0500

Board of Education  
Minutes  
Regular Meeting  
February 23, 2015

Welcome: This regular meeting of the Cassopolis Board of Education was held on Monday, February 23, 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: John Bright, Jesse Binns, Lisa Cutting, George Calvert, Sue Horstmann, Scott Ward

Members Absent: Deb Deubner

Also present: Tracy Hertsel, Becky Smith, Dee Voss, Dave VanLue, Robyn Bright and Cindy Martynowicz

Jesse Binns led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Approval of Minutes: **Moved by** George Calvert, **supported by** Lisa Cutting to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2015 special meeting, as written. **Motion carried** 6-0, as follows: Binns, yes; Cutting, yes; Bright, yes; Horstmann, yes; Calvert, yes; Ward, yes.

Communications or correspondence – None.

Reports, Information Items from School Staff –

**Sam Adams Elementary / Voss:** Mrs. Voss said that she was a score keeper at the Cass County Spelling Bee at Southwestern Michigan College earlier today. Mrs. Voss said that 4<sup>th</sup> grade received 2<sup>nd</sup> place; 5<sup>th</sup> grade received 3<sup>rd</sup> place; and 6<sup>th</sup> grade received 2<sup>nd</sup> place. We had seven students advance to the individual round. Mrs. Voss said that she was very proud of our students.

Mrs. Voss said that next week the elementary will participate in the Science Olympiad on Tuesday and in the Math-a-Rama on Thursday, both at SMC. Her reading teachers are participating with Title I teachers on a special series at LCISD. On Friday, she will travel with Mr. VanLue to Holland for a meeting on how to implement Delta Math. Mrs. Voss said that she attended a Title I informational meeting last week and also said that David Gray will review our improvement plans, DIPs and grants.

**Food Service / Bright:** Mrs. Bright said that her department catered the Spelling Bee today, serving 141 students. They also will cater at next week's Science Olympiads on Monday and Tuesday and at Thursday's Math-a-Rama. Mrs. Bright said that Thursday is the Deonna Montei inservice and her department will cater that event as well. She continues to work with Mrs. Ash and Mrs. Stuby at the ISD on the Great School Readiness Program snack reimbursement application.

**Ross Beatty JS High / VanLue:** Mr. VanLue said that the deadline to order materials for the M-STEP was last Wednesday when the bad weather started. He thanked Brooke Brawley and Alisa Doll for

staying to make sure that was completed on time. Also Mrs. Brawley and Mrs. Doll completed the 31-a worksheets for this marking period. Mr. VanLue said that Brooke Brawley and Carey May were testing the technology pieces. Mr. VanLue had a huge “call out” to Matt Brawley as we hosted the MHSAA wrestling regional last Saturday. Over 1,000 people attended, with over 30 schools across the state being represented. Mr. VanLue said that the event ran very smooth. We had one student, Tamari Brown, qualify for state which will be March 5-7. Erica Williams has been asked to sing the National Anthem during the tournament. Mr. VanLue said we also will host district varsity boys’ basketball on March 9, 11 and 13. FFA regionals are being held tonight. Cambridge pre-test materials arrived. Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held this Thursday. He is heading to Howell, MI after Friday’s training in Holland, and will stay with the Robotics team overnight. Trivia night will be this Saturday at the VFW. The ACT at the high school will be March 3-4. WNDU will be at the school on Friday, April 17<sup>th</sup> for their “school rules” segment, staff and students are planning a big event for early that morning. The Junior High dance will be on Friday, March 6 from 5-6 in the cafeteria.

Public Comment – None.

#### Financials – January, 2015

**Moved by** Lisa Cutting, **supported by** John Bright that it is resolved that the Board of Education approves the payment of bills for the month of January as follows: General Fund \$311,614.40; Food Service Fund \$6,624.78; and, Sinking Fund, \$59,990.00, as presented. **Motion carried** 6-0, as follows: Cutting, yes; Calvert, yes; Horstmann, yes; Bright, yes; Binns, yes; Ward, yes.

#### New Business – Discussion Item

Activities Audit Report – Mr. Hertsel thanked Mrs. Smith for looking into these accounts and researching the past several years’ records.

Mrs. Smith said that she has been working on this report for a month. She completed a 4-year analysis of the activity accounts. She located funds and moved money within those accounts so that they are all in good standing. She made notes of how long balances had been in the accounts and is investigating some funds that may have been donations, to make sure the money in those accounts are spent in the fashion intended.

Mrs. Smith said she reviewed the activity accounts by school. Ross Beatty had several activity accounts with negative balances for last school year. She was able to utilize money from the Save the Sports account, make adjustments and still have a balance of \$1,000 in the Save the Sports account, so that can be used for athletic purchases when needed. Mrs. Smith said that Ross Beatty had five activity accounts in a deficit: Student Senate - they made a deposit recently so will no longer be in the negative; Yearbook accounts – the sponsor is looking into Jostens who has agreed to take \$1,000 off of the current bill. The General Fund cannot support activity funds so she is working with the rep from Jostens on this; 7-8<sup>th</sup> grade yearbook – hasn’t been used in the last few years but the last time used it was in the negative and she needs to determine what needs to be done to even that out; Class of 2015 – made a deposit last week that was not yet posted so they will now be in the positive; and Class of 2017 – at a negative \$55. She is working with sponsors from these accounts.

Mrs. Smith said through an audit and talking to sponsors she found that they were almost pre-spending the money. The habit had been to pre-spend the money. She will educate account advisors on the correct way to handle the activity accounts. Activity funds are also known as agency funds, where it is more custodial in nature to report revenues and disbursements. Generally PTO’s and Boosters are excluded from these groups. She will look more into this because our Boosters currently go through these accounts. She has researched and will check with MSBO and legal counsel to get an opinion on this matter. Mrs. Smith said we need to change spending habits and not pre-spend from activity accounts. Nothing fraudulent was seen but the school is legally liable for that money and yet the money belongs to the activity account. Mrs. Smith said that she will report to the Board quarterly regarding

activity accounts from this point.

Mr. Bright asked if the accounts that haven't been used can be closed out. Also he said that negative spending is a concern. If one of these accounts has a problem, the perception is that it is the district. Mrs. Smith said she is looking into this and into the history to make sure the funds are being spent correctly; as well as about the statute of limitations, after accounts are dormant for many years, if those funds can go back to the school.

Mr. Bright asked where the Pay for Play money was sitting if it didn't go into the Athletic Fund. Mrs. Smith said it was sitting in the activity account but did not get interjected into the budget this year. It stayed within the Athletic Department. She met with Mr. Brawley last week and he assigned the money to various athletic accounts.

Mrs. Smith said that she will meet with the Superintendent about the activity interest and unclaimed interest accounts to see about shoring up those from negative activity accounts. Once she receives information from MSBO and legal counsel she will develop guidelines for the district. Mr. Ward and Mr. Bright requested that this information be brought to the Finance Committee for further discussion.

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

- Will have another batch of NEOLA policies for first reading in the near future.
- Thanked Matt Brawley as Saturday's wrestling tournament ran very smoothly.
- Last Friday Cassopolis, Dowagiac and Marcellus Superintendents and Technology Directors met with Berrien RESA.
- This Wednesday at 8:30 he will meet with several Cass County government heads, and other county Superintendents, as well as other stakeholders. They will discuss possibilities of areas to build government consortium type settings and will look into possible cost savings without compromising services.
- Thursday afternoon he will leave with the Robo Rangers and spend the night with the drive team in Howell, MI. Mr. VanLue will arrive on Friday and stay with the team that night.
- Congratulated all Spelling Bee participants and said the food provided was great.
- FFA is competing at regionals tonight.
- Due to Act of God (snow) days, we are now at having to make up three school days.

Comments from Board members:

Dr. Calvert said that the Building & Grounds Committee met this evening on several issues, regarding repairs that need to be done in each of the three buildings. The estimated cost is less than \$4 million and we are looking at ways to finance and get that done. Carmi Design Group prepared a cost analysis of the proposed project.

Mr. Hertsel said one thing the committee is striving for is to keep the cost under 1 mill.

Mr. Ward said that Mr. Hertsel and Mr. Leininger have done a tremendous amount of leg work, going through the schools room by room to see what needs to be done now and also in the future. If we are moving forward we want to do it in such a way that it will give major longevity to the buildings. He said that looking at the technology options, scope and amount of work, this is a very large and detailed project.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Education it was **moved by** George Calvert, **supported by** Lisa Cutting to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m. All in favor.

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Susan Horstmann, Secretary