

**Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting of
Hawthorn Community Consolidated District #73, Lake County, Illinois
600 N. Aspen Drive, Vernon Hills, IL 60061
7:00 p.m. on the 18th day of October 2023**

CALL TO ORDER

President Robin Cleek called the Board of Education meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

The Board Secretary called attendance and the following members attended: Joel Finfer, Michael Engle, Julie Clifford, Karl Borchers, George Fievet, and Robin Cleek. Also in attendance were Asst. Supt. of Finance & Business Operations Ms. LeeAnn Taylor; Asst. Supt. of Teaching, Learning & Innovation Dr. Allison Stein; Asst. Supt. of Student Services Ms. Alicia Corrigan; Asst. Supt. of Innovative Learning Dr. Karen Maturo; Asst. Supt. for Human Resources Mr. Adam Palmer; and Superintendent Dr. Pete Hannigan. Vice-President Wes Polen was not in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Community Member John Hetzel made a public comment in regards to the tax levy. He commented that he is not in favor of a tax increase and requested increased communication with the community. Any public comment received via email has been attached to this meeting's minutes.

RECOGNITION

Board Member Karl Borchers spoke on behalf of the Recognition Committee to recognize some outstanding Hawthorn students and staff. Middle School North 7th grader Ethan Chang was recognized for his outstanding performance in the IESA boys golf tournament in Peoria, Illinois. Ethan scored an impressive 10th place finish out of 79 golfers with a score of 75. Middle School North 8th grader Kenzie Christie was recognized for her exceptional performance at the IESA girls golf tournament. Kenzie scored an incredible 74, tying for second place out of 76 golfers. Both students were awarded with a medal of excellence and certificates.

Meghan Caby, who serves as the Building Assistant Supervisor at the Hawthorn School of Dual Language, received well-deserved recognition for her exceptional dedication, outstanding work ethic, and the profoundly positive impact she has consistently made on the school's staff, students, and overall educational environment.

Assistant Superintendent of Innovative Learning Dr. Karen Maturo was recognized for her unparalleled dedication, innovation, and enthusiasm for Hawthorn's new teachers. Her exceptional commitment to foster a culture of continuous improvement and innovation within the educational community does not go unnoticed. Both staff members were awarded with a Certificate of Appreciation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements at this time.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Robin Cleek spoke on behalf of the entire Board of Education to extend their condolences to the Collins family, as well as friends, administration, staff, teachers, students, parents and community members who knew and loved Mr. Collins. The Hawthorn Board of Education also expressed sympathy to the Wauconda Board of Education, recognizing Mr. Collins' contributions to Education and the community. President Cleek commented on his spirit, voice, and legacy he leaves at Hawthorn. May his memory be a blessing to all who knew him.

ED-RED REPORT

No report at this time.

SEDOL REPORT

Mr. Michael Engle reported that SEDOL's last governing board meeting was on August 23, 2023 and the last executive board meeting was on September 21, 2023. In regards to the SEDOL review, Dr. Donnan, SEDOL Superintendent, presented the proposed goals that align with the SEDOL Strategic Improvement Plan that is being developed. Mr. Engle reviewed the action step categories and the timeline on receiving updates. The next scheduled governing meeting is on December 6, 2023 and the next scheduled executive meeting is on October 26, 2023.

SITE & FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

No report at this time.

PRESENTATIONS

Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Business Operations presented the FY23 Audit, accompanied by Kevin Smith from Eccezion audit group. The presentation gave an overview of the district's recent audit results. According to the Eccezion report, Hawthorn's financial statements were found to be fairly presented. These statements encompass the cash basis financial position of the district's governmental activities and each major fund as of June 30, 2023, along with the corresponding changes in financial position.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Business Operations Ms. LeeAnn Taylor reviewed the 2023 Tax Levy and the Design and Development Summer Projects for Summer 2024-2025. Ms. Taylor was joined by Ms. Jennifer Akin, the HR and Business Office Systems Administrator, to present an overview of the proposed tax levy through a set of informative slides. The annual levy serves the vital purpose of soliciting local revenue, enabling the provision of high-quality education, the upkeep of school facilities, the support of educators, and the fulfillment of the diverse needs of our students and community. During the presentation, key topics covered included the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL), CPI trends, and the Equalized Assessed Value (EAV) in relation to property taxes. A public hearing is scheduled for the next board meeting on November 9, 2023, followed by the approval request at the board meeting on December 14, 2023.

Ms. Taylor, along with VP Trinh from Arcon, provided an overview of the summer projects. With the 2018 referendum funding set to be fully utilized by spring 2024, the Site and Facilities committee has discussed the ongoing need for a five-year facilities plan. This plan will be revisited annually to prioritize essential site improvements for the school community. In the fall of 2021, the business office proposed an annual commitment of \$1.5 to \$2 million to fund future summer projects. Currently, the budget and fund balance can support this commitment for the next two summers. Hawthorn will conduct annual financial discussions and analysis each fall after the financial audit to ensure continued project planning support. The summer projects will be presented as an action item for board approval at the upcoming board meeting on November 9, 2023.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Hannigan and Dr. Maturo presented the new series of 'Hawthorn's Superpowers.' The series aims to highlight each school building's distinctive strengths, emphasizing their unwavering commitment and collective efforts. The Hawthorn School for Young Learners was the first to showcase their unique superpowers.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 7.1 Board Meeting Minutes from September 21, 2023
- 7.2 Closed Meeting Minutes from September 21, 2023
- 7.2 Expenditure Report from September 21, 2023
- 7.3 Amazon Expense Report from September 21, 2023
- 7.4 Mastercard Report from July 21, 2023
- 7.5 Treasurer's Report from July 2023
- 7.6 Personnel Report

5 New Hires:

9 Leaves of Absence:

5 Resignations:

5 New Hires: Amy Bennett, Teacher, TL; Diane Dimov, Instructional Assistant, EN; Ummal Habiba, Lunch/Recess Supervisor, TL; Padmaja Jollu, Instructional Assistant, EN; Deborah Ziemke, Student Secretary, ES.

9 Leaves of Absence: Cinthia Blair, Art Teacher, EN, 10/31/2023; Hillary Boruta, Health Teacher, Middle North, 3/13/2023; Kelli Cordes, Social Worker, MN, 1/19/2024; Rachel D'Aquisto, Teacher, EN, 9/18/2023; Anne-Marie Julius, Occupational Therapist, Middle South/District, 1/8/2024; Lauren Sachs, Building Assistant Supervisor, Townline, 3/24/2024; Alma Hawkins, Registrar, District, 10/2/2023; Sangita Parande, Library/Media Facilitator, MS, 12/4/2023; Constantina Wroblewski, Principal Secretary, 10/2/2023.

5 Resignations: Dawn Drury, Art Teacher, DL, 9/26/2023; Laura Casey, Lunch/Recess Supervisor, DL, 10/6/2023; Kristen Giebler, Student Secretary, TL, 10/11/2023; Babita Kashyap, Lunch/Recess Supervisor, TL, 8/29/2023; Barbara Melcer, Instructional Assistant, EN, 11/10/2023.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: George Fievet moved that the Board of Education approve the remaining Consent Agenda items as presented; seconded by Julie Clifford.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Joel Finfer, Julie Clifford, Michael Engle, George Fievet, and Karl Borchers.

Motion carried: 6 ayes; 0 nays

Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Business Operations, Ms. LeeAnn Taylor, reviewed the Resolution Abating the District's Working Cash Fund and the School Maintenance Project Grant for FY24. In the previous month, Ms. Taylor proposed transferring \$2 million from the working cash funds to support annual summer projects. This transfer would maintain the projected year-end fund balance above 62%, aligning with the recommended 50% fund balance threshold.

The School Maintenance Project Grant (SMPG) is a dollar for dollar state matching grant program providing awards to grantees exclusively for the maintenance or upkeep of buildings or structures for educational purposes. The district has identified work at Townline/Dual Language for the replacement of original fire panel and original intercom and clocks. At this time the project is estimated to cost \$250,000 and the district would seek the maximum award of \$50,000.

ACTION ITEMS

Resolution Abating the Working Cash Fund of the District

MOTION: Karl Borchers moved that the Board of Education approve the Resolution Abating the Working Cash Fund of the District; George Fievet seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Joel Finfer, Julie Clifford, Michael Engle, George Fievet, and Karl Borchers

Motion carried: 6 ayes; 0 nays

Approval to Apply for the School Maintenance Project Grant FY24

MOTION: Michael Engle moved that the Board of Education approve to apply for the School Maintenance Project Grant FY24; Julie Clifford seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Joel Finfer, Julie Clifford, Michael Engle, George Fievet, and Karl Borchers

Motion carried: 6 ayes; 0 nays

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Enrollment - Uploaded
2. FOIA Log, Dr. Hannigan reported that the District has received four FOIA requests since the last board meeting and has been responded to as identified in Section 8.2 of the Board agenda.
3. Media Clips

TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

No topics for future discussion at this time.

ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION

Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) President Cleek ~~NA=@PDAI KFEKJ Q FK=@KQNJ FK~~

~~BNFDALQNLKOCKE%~~

The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or specific volunteers of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee, a specific individual who serves as an independent contractor in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or a volunteer of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity. However, a meeting to consider an increase in compensation to a specific employee of a public body that is subject to the Local Government Wage Increase Transparency Act may not be closed and shall be open to the public and posted and held in accordance with this Act. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1).

With no further business to discuss, Karl Borchers made a motion to adjourn ~~FK HKCA@ AOCKJ~~ seconded by George Fievet. The meeting adjourned at 7:59p.m. **All in favor? Yes.**

Motion carried: 6 ayes; 0 nays

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Flores

Robin Cleek, President

George Fievet, Secretary

Date Minutes Approved: _____

From: John Hetzel <jhetzel37@att.net>
Date: October 21, 2023 at 6:51:29 AM CDT
To: Robin Cleek <cleekr@hawthorn73.org>
Cc: Peter Hannigan <hanniganp@hawthorn73.org>, schoolboard Board <schoolboard@hawthorn73.org>
Subject: Re: Tax Levy - Tax Increase

Please attach this email to the Board Mtg. Docx from mtg. on Wed., as a matter of public record to compliment my public comment. Thank you.

JHetzel
M: 812.431.6511

On Oct 18, 2023, at 2:21 PM, John Hetzel <jhetzel37@att.net> wrote:

Hi – The reference to Bidenomics had nothing to do with the Board other than point out the possible root cause of why we are getting another Tax Levy proposal, and the fact it affects those groups I noted below moreso, than say people living in \$1M homes with obviously much greater disposable income or trust funds as example, it affects a huge percentage of the families that simply can't afford another property tax hike.

I plan to make public comment when appropriate, but sometimes a restrictive 3 minutes can't cover the topic completely, especially when only a handful of parents seem to have knowledge of what is now being proposed bc the district does not seem to effectively communicate this info except at board mtg., knowing only a "handful" of parents are paying attention to what's going on. Whereas some of the presentations in the meeting that drroll on aways get extended time, maybe consider a 3 minute limit on some of those presentations that are redundant with same info regularly?

Enjoy the weather this afternoon, bc it seems to be changing around the time the BOE mtg. starts tonite.

John Hetzel
www.rykrrroll.com
M: 812.431.6511

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On Wed, Oct 18, 2023 at 9:55 AM John Hetzel <jhetzel37@att.net> wrote:

Dr. Pete and D73 Schoolboard Members –

My family and many, many other families in the community are very, very concerned D73 is proposing another Tax Levy at tonites BOE Mtg., especially after doing same this past year that effectively raised our property taxes 5% this year, now there is a another property tax increase proposal?

Enough is enough, cut costs in the district. The district received covid \$ and state \$ the last few years yet D73 seemingly thinks the families in the community have endless money supply open for the district to tap? When the community knows, there are increased costs and expenses with repaving all the school parking lots during covid which wasn't really needed, new playgrounds replacing perfectly good playgrounds, district offices makeover and many other expenses like donuts/breakfast for teachers on Amex regularly, monthly, its time the district tightens its spending habits. Its seems D73 burns money like leaves in the Fall.

Realizing the Tax Levy difference is significant there must be a way to stop the

Realizing the Tax Levy difference is significant, there must be a way to stop the constant tax increases the district is proposing again. And, I'm sure LeAnn will provide the nice proposal and justification tonite. But be careful, the families in the community once they find out thru social media and other means, will not be happy they will be stuck with another significant tax increase. Cut spending, as example the district administrative staff is top heavy with some whopping salaries.

Furthermore...President Joe Biden last week proudly stated that Americans know they are more financially secure than they were prior to his time in the White House. "I think they know they're better off financially than they were before. It's a fact," Biden claimed.

However, numerous fact-checks prove Biden is lying.

- Gas prices are up 63%.
- Real wages have gone down for Americans.
- Prices and inflation are skyrocketing under Biden.
- Mortgage rates are at highest levels in decades under Biden.
- Saving rates of Americans have collapsed under Biden.
- Credit card debt for consumers at highest levels in decades under Biden.

So, is this Tax Levy proposal a result of Bidenomics? What will the low-income families, the multi-family households, minorities and middle class families in D73 struggling to make ends meet right now, think about ANOTHER new tax levy if they knew what is going on tonite with the proposal? Not everyone lives in Greggs Landing.

This Tax Levy situation will face resistance from the community families.

John Hetzel
M: 812.431.6511

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