

**Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting of
Hawthorn Community Consolidated District #73, Lake County, Illinois
810 N. Aspen Drive, Vernon Hills, IL 60061
7:00 p.m. on the 9th day of November 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, Wes Polen, and Robin Cleek. Also in attendance were Asst. Supt. of Finance & Business Operations Ms. LeeAnn Taylor; Asst. Supt. of Innovative Learning Dr. Karen Maturo; Asst. Supt. for Human Resources Mr. Adam Palmer; and Superintendent Dr. Pete Hannigan.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Community member, Mr. John Hetzel made a public comment regarding the tax levy, stating opposition to a tax hike and urging for improved communication between the district and the community.

RECOGNITION

Board Member Karl Borchers spoke on behalf of the Recognition Committee to recognize some outstanding Hawthorn students. Hawthorn Middle School North Cross Country athletes excelled at the recent IESA State meet. Among them, Ella Nowacki secured an impressive 24th place out of 199 female runners, clocking in at 12 minutes and 45 seconds. Hannah Greenfield finished proudly in 106th place with a time of 13 minutes and 45 seconds. Among 199 male participants, Jonas Jocson showcased remarkable dedication, earning the 104th spot in just 12 minutes and 17 seconds. Special thanks were given to Coach Cantagallo, Coach Matuch, and Coach Sobotka for their crucial role in our students' success. The students were awarded with a medal of excellence and certificates.

Vice President Wes Polen also spoke on behalf of the Recognition Committee to recognize the Hawthorn Middle South's boys soccer team. The team demonstrated an exceptional performance at the SMSC Conference Tournament. Despite their initial 5th ranking, their determination led to a hard-fought 2-1 victory in the championship game against Barrington Station. This win showcased their teamwork and unwavering spirit, reflecting their dedication. A special acknowledgement was given to Coach Quiles and Coach Pacillas for their invaluable dedication throughout the fall 2023 season. The students were awarded with a medal of excellence and certificates.

President Cleek called for a five minute recess. The meeting resumed at 7:20 pm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements at this time.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Robin Cleek reminded board members to RSVP for the upcoming IASB Legislative Breakfast at Vernon Hills High School on December 2, 2023, and the Veterans Day Breakfast at Hawthorn Middle School South on November 10, 2023. Additionally, President Cleek extended warm Thanksgiving wishes to the community. She concluded her report by speaking on behalf of the entire Board to extend their sincere condolences to the Lis Family. Hawthorn mourns for the loss of 6th grade student Collin Lis from Middle School North, emphasizing the profound impact he had on everyone and how greatly he will be missed.

ED-RED REPORT

Mr. Joel Finfer reported that at the last ED-RED meeting, there was a discussion about property tax and TIF districts, mainly focusing on Cook County. Despite the limited scope, valuable information was shared, including details about payment in lieu of taxes for developers. The meeting also shared ED-RED's annual initiatives including school security for polling places, ongoing challenges with special education funding due to a growing population, and efforts to secure additional funding for students in ED-RED districts.

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 November 9, 2023. In response to the SEDOL program review that is being conducted by Standards for Exceptional Services (SES), a dashboard has been created to track progress and provide more transparency to the SEDOL community. For each of the seven SES teams created, there are now updates in regards to goals, progress, and projected completion dates. The next governing board meeting will include an update from SEDOL administration on strategic planning,

further SES team updates, and SEDOL financial planning. The next executive board meeting is scheduled for December 14, 2023 and the next governing board meeting is scheduled for December 6, 2023.

SITE & FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. George Fievet reported that the Site & Facilities meeting convened on October 25, 2023, covering a range of topics. The committee was delighted to welcome Ms. Stephanie Peters, a community member with extensive experience, who will be participating in the Site & Facilities meeting moving forward. Ms. Peters, a parent in the Hawthorn community, brings valuable perspective to the team. During the meeting, the committee focused on reviewing the district's safety protocols and unanimously agreed to initiate a safety audit. This audit aims to assess the current safety status and identify areas for improvement within the district. Additionally, discussions were held regarding the food service, considering that the Quest contract is expiring after one year. While there has been positive feedback on Quest's service, the committee is evaluating criteria that will be used in the RFP process that is required by the state to select a long-term partner. An update on Elementary North highlighted the completion of the library and a new pod, with the demolition of the second pod underway. Lastly, concerns were raised about an old and overused maintenance truck crucial for transporting food and supplies between buildings. The committee is actively seeking a solution to replace the truck. The next Site & Facilities meeting is scheduled after the Holidays.

WELLNESS COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Julie Clifford reported that the Wellness Committee meeting was held on October 17, 2023 and it was extremely well attended by staff, parents, students, and the community with a high level of engagement. The purpose of this committee is to discuss the district's strategies revolving around the district's fourth goal "The Success of the Whole Child." Some of the things the committee has put in place since last year are the harvest table in the cafeteria, increasing social media and digital citizenship education, increasing recess supervision, and many other things. Notably, between August 2022 to October 2022 and August 2023 to October 2023, there has been a decrease in incidents like bullying, disorderly conduct, and physical altercations. A presentation from EAB, a data-driven education-focused company, highlighted some challenges children face today. It led the committee to ask: "What does it mean to feel safe, healthy, engaged, supported and how does the school provide resources to contribute towards these elements?" Looking ahead, the committee plans to reconvene in January to delve deeper into data measurement and identify areas needing further attention and support.

PRESENTATIONS

Superintendent Dr. Hannigan presented the 2023 State and District Assessment Update. He reviewed the district's mission, motto, vision, collective commitments, and goals associated with the District 73 Strategic Plan. Hawthorn School District 73 utilizes a combination of national, state, and local assessments to track student achievement and growth relative to the Board of Education's goals. The presentation contained a comprehensive review, including the student demographic report and the District's longitudinal student achievement results. Additionally, insights from the district's climate and culture survey conducted by Humanex Ventures were shared. Notably, District 73's unwavering dedication to the four Board Goals set in 2020 has laid the foundation for ensuring high levels of student achievement in the future. Multiple questions were asked by board members to gain insight on the data that was presented.

The Hawthorn School of Dual Language team presented their School Improvement Plan. The team included Principal Nikki Rodrigo, Building Assistant Supervisor Meghan Caby, and the following staff members; Laura Gitzinger, Katie O'Donnell, Cristina Pike, Maggie Kirst, and Kim Smith. The team reviewed the Dual Language student demographic data, assessment data, and action plans for the 2023-2024 school year. The Dual Language team will reconvene at a Winter and Spring board meeting to share an update on the school's progress. Board members asked relevant questions in regard to the Dual Language presentation.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Business Operations Ms. LeeAnn Taylor reviewed the 2023 Tax Levy. Ms. Taylor was joined by Ms. Jennifer Akin, the HR and Business Office Systems Administrator, to review the 2023 tax levy. 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. Ms. Taylor and Ms. Akin presented the rationale behind proposing a 6.94% levy increase, along with an overview of the district's bond levy history and showcased cost-saving measures, such as bulk purchases and supply reductions. A public hearing took place during the meeting, and a formal approval request for the levy increase will be made at the board meeting scheduled for December 14, 2023.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Hannigan introduced the second episode of 'Hawthorn's Superpowers.' The series aims to highlight each school building's distinctive strengths, emphasizing their unwavering commitment and collective efforts. Aspen Elementary School showcased their unique superpowers.

Dr. Hannigan concluded his report by expressing gratitude to the board members for their unwavering support and dedication to the Hawthorn community in light of Board Member Appreciation Day on November 16, 2023. As a token of appreciation, he shared a heartfelt video created by students and staff members from across the district.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 7.1 Board Meeting Minutes from October 18, 2023
- 7.2 Closed Meeting Minutes from October 18, 2023
- 7.3 Expenditure Report from November 9, 2023
- 7.4 Mastercard Report from September 21, 2023
- 7.5 Amazon Expense Report from November 9, 2023
- 7.6 Treasurer's Report from August 2023
- 7.7 Personnel Report

8 New Hires:

2 Leaves of Absence:

2 Resignations:

2 Change of Status:

8 New Hires: Milton Arrieta-Lopez, Teacher, MN; Hailee Milewski, 0.2 Teacher, DL; Soma Maity, Lunch/Recess Supervisor, TL; Akila Prakash, Lunch/Recess Supervisor, ES; Sreedevi Rajanala, Lunch/Recess Supervisor, ES; Tricia Sample, Student Secretary, TL; FNU Shalini Shruti, Lunch/Recess Supervisor; Marlene Sotelo, Administrative Assistant for the Dept of Teaching & Learning and Innovation.

2 Leaves of Absence: Deepika Bhardwaj, ELL Assistant, TL, 11/27/2023; Sarah Trees, Instructional Assistant, Aspen, 10/23/2023.

2 Resignations: Daisy Morales, Lunch/Recess Supervisor, 10/25/2023; Rachel D'Acquisto, Teacher, EN, 10/27/2023.

2 Change of Status: Ashley Cass, Principal Secretary, MS, 11/13/2023; Jennifer Sotirovic, Lunch/Recess Supervisor, Aspen, 10/30/2023.

Vice President Wes Polen requested to remove section 7.1 **Board Meeting Minutes from October 18, 2023** and 7.2 **Closed Session Minutes from October 18, 2023** from the consent agenda.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: George Fievet moved that the Board of Education approve 7.1 Board Meeting Minutes from October 18, 2023 and 7.2 Closed Session Minutes from October 18, 2023 as presented; seconded by Julie Clifford.

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

Motion carried: 6 ayes; 1 abstain

RECOMMENDED MOTION: Michael Engle moved that the Board of Education approve the remaining **Consent Agenda** items as presented; seconded by Karl Borchers.

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

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Business Operations, Ms. LeeAnn Taylor, reviewed the Design and Development Summer Projects for Summer of 2024 and 2025. Last month, VP Trinh from Arcon and Associates attended the board meeting to explain the proposed summer mechanical projects for 2024 and 2025. Tonight, the business department is seeking approval to plan and go out to bid for the proposed projects. The approval is not a consent to spend the funds on the project at this time.

Ms. Taylor also reviewed the Disposal of Technology Surplus. Given the outdated nature of the identified equipment, the Business Office and IT Department request the Board of Education's approval to declare the items identified as surplus property and authorize their sale or disposal.

ACTION ITEMS

Design and Development Summer Projects for Summer of 2024 and 2025

MOTION: George Fievet moved that the Board of Education approve the Design and Development Summer Projects for Summer of 2024 and 2025; Julie Clifford seconded the motion.

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

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

Disposal of Technology Surplus

MOTION: Michael Engle moved that the Board of Education approve the Disposal of Technology Surplus; George Fievet seconded the motion.

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

Motion carried: 7 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 9.2 of the Board agenda.
 3. Media Clips
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TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

Mr. Karl Borchers has asked for an update on Lakeside transportation during the upcoming board meetings. The business department has a scheduled update for the Site & Facilities committee within the next few weeks. An update regarding Lakeside transportation is set to be delivered as part of the Site & Facilities board report, either in January or February.

ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION

Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) President Cleek read the motion(s) to adjourn to CLOSED SESSION for the purposes of:

Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the public body finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the minutes of the closed meeting. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1)

and;

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, Wes Polen made a motion to adjourn to Closed Session, seconded by George Fievet. The meeting adjourned at 9:23p.m. **All in favor? Yes.**

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Flores

Robin Cleek, President

George Fievet, Secretary

Date Minutes Approved: _____