

SPRING LAKE BOARD OF EDUCATION TRUTH-IN TAXATION HEARING, NOVEMBER 15, 2021

The Spring Lake Board of Education held a Truth-in-Taxation Hearing on Monday, November 15, 2021 in person at the SL IS/MS Media Center. Jennifer Nicles called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m. Board members present: Jennifer Nicles, Curt Theune, Katie Pigott, Kathy Breen, Bruce Callen, Paul Aldridge and Christopher (Chris) Beck. Absent: None

NON-HOMESTEAD OPERATING MILLAGE TAX LEVY

Brad VanDeVusse, Controller, provided that on November 2, voters passed the millage proposal to allow the district to levy the maximum of 18 mills allowed by law. Based on the millage passing, the district is requesting an operating levy of 0.2416 mills against non-homestead properties on the 2021 winter tax bills. It is estimated that this levy will restore approximately \$45,000 for General Fund operating purposes. This winter tax levy is an action item at the regular Board meeting to follow.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Curt Theune moved, supported by Chris Beck, to adjourn the hearing.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

Jennifer Nicles adjourned the hearing at 6:51 p.m.

SPRING LAKE BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING, NOVEMBER 15, 2021

The Spring Lake Board of Education held a Regular Meeting on Monday, November 15, 2021 in person at the Spring Lake IS/MS Media Center. Jennifer Nicles called the meeting to order at 6:59 p.m. Board members present: Jennifer Nicles, Curt Theune, Katie Pigott, Kathy Breen, Bruce Callen, Paul Aldridge and Christopher (Chris) Beck. Absent: None

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Paul Aldridge moved, supported by Katie Pigott, to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 18, 2021, as presented.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

ITEMS RECEIVED TOO LATE FOR PRINTED AGENDA

None

SPRING LAKE BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING, NOVEMBER 15, 2021 (cont.)

PUBLIC COMMENTS

SL Student – provided her views on the effects of COVID-19 and mask wearing for students, stated that students have had a difficult time adjusting with the masks and hearing each other, and expressed her belief that students with positive cases are not having long-term effects and no deaths. She believes that less and less people are supporting mask wearing, everyone is getting worn out and is losing hope of going to school without masks. She asked for the freedom to choose and to “free our smiles”.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

CONSENT AGENDA

Curt Theune moved, supported by Bruce Callen, to approve the consent agenda as presented:

- Accounts Payable – Food Service, SLCFAC, General Fund, Student Activity, etc. – totaling \$664,294.
- Payroll – totaling \$3,101,896.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

ACTION ITEMS

CONSENT AGENDA

Curt Theune moved, supported by Paul Aldridge, to approve the consent agenda as presented:

- New Hires –
 - Mallory VanRegenmorterOccupational Therapist Jeffers Elementary
 - Kate BeyerSpeech Pathologist..... Jeffers Elementary
 - Robert PruittBus Driver Transportation
- Winter Coaching Assignments

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

2021 WINTER TAX LEVY

Curt Theune moved, supported by Bruce Callen, to approve the 2021 Winter Tax Levy of 0.2416 mills on non-homestead properties as presented.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

DISCUSSION/INFORMATION ITEMS

POLICY READINGS

This was the first reading for policy numbers 0100, 3120, 6114, 6152, 7450, 8310, 8320, and 8330. Mr. Furton explained that policy updates are taken to the policy committee for careful reading and discussion, then they come to the Board for the first reading as an overview and an opportunity to research as needed. These policies will be brought back at the December meeting in final format for approval.

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SCHOOL SAFETY ZONE

Mr. Furton presented a visual of Leonard Rd and 148th Ave., where SL High School and Jeffers Elementary are located, and indicated that currently there isn't a school safety zone around SLHS. As Superintendent, he can make a request to the Ottawa County Road Commission for a change. Mr. Furton proposes that the school safety zone on Leonard Road be extended to begin just west of 148th Ave. and extend just east of 144th Ave. and only be in effect when the flashers on the sign are active. The application comes with a cost of \$15,000 to \$30,000. The County will pay for the sign but not for any extra wording or flashing lights. The District would be responsible for purchasing and installing lights on the sign. It was noted that the road commission does not consider this area to be unsafe as there have been just two traffic accidents in the last three years. There is zero chance of a traffic light at the intersection and the road commission will not provide any additional engineering for this intersection to make it safer.

Board members concurred that this is an investment that makes sense and having the flashers would be key. An inquiry about changing the sign on 148th Ave. to a flashing sign was made, and Mr. Furton indicated that he will look into that as well as he proceeds with submitting the application to the road commission.

OSHA – ETS

Mr. Furton presented the draft policy relating to the Emergency Temporary Standard from OSHA, which follows what OSHA put forward as a proposed format for an employer policy that needs to be adopted for employers of 100 or more. This will be finalized and sent to employees Tuesday. Mr. Furton noted the ongoing litigation regarding this OSHA standard, but indicated the district needs to proceed due to timeline constraints. Mr. Furton noted that the district is required to have a policy in place and have the vaccination information collected by December 6. This ETS is set to expire six months from the date issued, unless OSHA makes it a permanent rule. If at any point this ruling is overturned, the district would drop it. If this rule remains in place, beginning January 4, all unvaccinated employees would be required to be tested once every 7 days and wear a face covering. Testing will be at no cost to the employee. Further, paid time off would be provided to employees for vaccination and recovery. The policy pertains to all employees paid by the district.

SUPERINTENDENT'S EVALUATION

The annual superintendent's evaluation rubric was provided to the Board. This evaluation will be held in closed session at the December meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Heidi Heinz, 16120 152nd St., SL – stated she agrees with the school safety zone discussion and was surprised there were only two accidents in three years. She further commented that she totally disagrees with the vaccine and testing policy and believes the district will lose good teachers. She stated the district should be progressive and fight back. She questioned what fully vaccinated means as there is now a booster vaccine. She believes masks should be a choice for the kids too and stated she is impressed when kids speak up on how they feel. She cited a bullying incident and the district letting the

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parents of the kids involved decide their punishment but yet the district won't let parents decide about masks. She implored the Board to let the parents have the responsibility for the health of the children.

Shelly Slater, 15815 144th Ave., SL – commented she agrees with school safety speed zone. She further commented on the hiring of another speech therapist and provided her belief that students are needing more speech therapy because masks have robbed them of two years of learning how to properly speak.

Ross Ziegenthaler, 15620 Willows Dr., SL – commented that he is still waiting and looking for the random control trial study or peer review study that masking doesn't harm the children from the district and stated the burden of proof lies with those mandating. He further stated that by the district proceeding with the OSHA mandate while a federal appeals court has put a hold on it that it is being made political and the district should abide by the 10th amendment. He related a Dr. Seuss story about the star-bellied sneetches and indicated that masks will be like that for the unvaccinated teachers. He believes the mask policy should have been voted on by the Board and a poll should have been sent out to parents. He asked that the choice be brought back to the parents.

Carla Segaar 18690 North Shore Dr., SL – provided that she is a critical thinker and that it doesn't make sense to her that she can go into grocery stores, gas stations, churches, and this meeting and masks are not required but the kids have to wear masks at school. She stated that Greenville Public Schools have lifted the mask mandate on buses because of the danger of students getting sick and choking while wearing a mask. She believes that kids are struggling, breathing in bacteria, getting less oxygen and can't fight infections due to mask wearing.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Furton reported on the following:

- Legislative update – none
- COVID – Case information was shared with the Board, and it was noted cases continue to be monitored within the district and on a regional basis. The target is getting to the low end of the CDC's "substantial" level or below in order to adjust current guidelines. The target must be hit and data sustained at that level for one week. The current positivity rate is 22.7% and the target is below 9%. New cases per 100,000 is 380 with the target below 75. There have been 29 cases in the district within the last 7 days and there are currently 54 students and staff in quarantine. There are more cases within the school system this year than last year, and earlier. Part of mask wearing is the measuring distance for contacting tracing lowered to 3 feet which has led to quarantine numbers being significantly down from last year.
- Vaccine Clinic – The November 11 clinic was well attended. Initially there were 180 slots but the OCDPH expanded that to 220 due to interest amongst parents. All slots were filled. There is discussion about SLPS hosting a second clinic next week but no firm commitment has been made yet.
- Dan Start Resignation – After six years as the leader of Laker football, Dan Start announced his resignation. Dan led our Lakers to 4 straight playoff appearances. The vacancy will be posted after the MHSAA football playoffs have concluded with a targeted hiring date of February 1. Coach Start will be missed!

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- Transportation – SLPS will not be able to resume the recently suspended bus route on December 1 due to the continued struggles with staffing. This is the fifth route in the last two years that has been impacted by staffing shortages. It was noted that staffing shortage is a factor in every sector of employment. Of the five routes impacted, three were merged which means more kids on busses, and longer bus rides, but allows for staffing. The district currently has 12 full-time bus drivers but needs 17. There is one driver in training, and another driver waiting for information to be approved, which may not happen. The Transportation Director, mechanic, and part-time administrative assistants drive almost daily. Mr. Furton noted that the district significantly increased earnings for drivers recently but the challenge to recruit and train remains. To address that, the district is holding a “test drive a bus” this Saturday and Saturday, December 11, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Those interested can get behind the wheel, take the bus for a short spin and get more information about the process to get CDL.

UPCOMING MEETING

- Regular Board Meeting – December 13, 2021, 7:00 p.m., IS/MS Media Center
Note: this is the 2nd Monday in December

ADJOURNMENT

Curt Theune moved, supported by Bruce Callen, to adjourn the meeting.

Vote: Yes – Unanimous

Jennifer Nicles adjourned the meeting at 8:02 pm.

APPROVED: _____
Date Board Secretary