MINUTES

Wednesday, July 19, 2023

Work Session – 5:00 p.m.
Regular Board Meeting – 5:30 p.m.

WORK SESSION

Superintendent Ben Ferney shared his goals for the 2023-2024 school year.

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

The regular board meeting was held at Cheney High School and was called to order at 5:31 p.m. by President Swenson.

ROLL CALL AND WELCOMING OF GUESTS

In attendance: Directors, Nicol, Scott, and Swenson

Also present: Superintendent Ben Ferney,
Assistant Superintendent Tom Arlt, and
Finance Director Jamie Reed

Director Nicol made a motion to excuse Director Browne and Director Winer from the meeting. Director Scott seconded the motion and they were excused.

The pledge of allegiance was led by Director Nicol.

President Swenson expressed the Board's appreciation to those in attendance.

CORRESPONDENCE AND ADDITIONAL ITEMS

There were no correspondence and additional items.

Director Nicol shared the PACE Character Trait of the Month – Generosity: unselfish giving and sharing of resources, time and talents with others.
REPORTS

Student Advisor Zachary Cox was present and shared the student names and places earned while at FBLA Nationals. Next, he shared that Mrs. Soulek will be holding trainings for Link Crew. Lastly, he attended WSLA Camp and it was fun.

A. Financial Report

Finance Director Jamie Reed shared the fund balance and the top paid vendors list. She mentioned that USIP Insurance will be increasing by 32% for next year. USIP covers the district for everything including vehicles and buildings. The other large increase has been in attorney’s fees for public records requests, grievances and litigation. The increase is not directly tied to services for students.

Mrs. Reed then shared that there was an audit exit meeting earlier that day with one audit finding. The finding is in regards to the emergency connectivity fund that was rolled out through the eRate program at the start of Covid. State funding has very specific uses and paths for usage. The funds were originally presented as “enhanced eRate dollars” and later, federal compliance was added. When providing Chromebooks to students during Covid, the district took the word of the families that there was a need rather than identify a true unmet need. The sum of $881,000 is being questioned. Mrs. Reed will work with SAO to review these costs over the course of the next year.

Mrs. Reed shared a bargaining update with PSEC stating they have met eleven times since April 18, 2023 with additional meetings scheduled.

Mrs. Reed then shared the 2023 tax rates in Spokane County broken down by school district. Then broke it down further to show the enrollment of the districts and their specific EP&O Levy Rates. Due to the size of Cheney Public Schools now, we no longer qualify for impact aid. It is important to review these rates as the district moves into a levy cycle.

Lastly, Mrs. Reed shared the big picture timeline for a levy and bond. With a February 13, 2024 election date, she worked backwards to plan the following schedule with intention. Cory Plager with D. A. Davidson will attend the board work session on September 13, 2023 to help facilitate conversations around bond and levy work. In October, the appointment of For and Against committees needs to be identified. In November, the Board will have an opportunity to consider the first and second read of resolutions. December 15 is the deadline to file resolutions with the County. January 26, 2024 ballots are mailed to residents.

President Swenson requested more information on the For and Against committees. Mrs. Reed explained the requirement to appoint a person to write a “for” statement and another person to write the “against” statement for the voter pamphlets.
Director Scott asked to revisit the audit report and asked if the district will need to repay money to the federal government if they cannot prove the needs of the students; and, will it negatively impact families? Mrs. Reed responded that it likely will not impact families and this is not just a Cheney Public Schools issue. This will most likely result in more conversational and documentation-type processes.

B. CTF Program Report

CTE Director Adam Smith shared the CTE model diagram for career and college readiness. The number of CTE certified teachers is increasing and the conditionally certified teachers is decreasing. In 2022-2023, there was a CTE FTE of 435 combined for both middle school and high school. Mr. Smith shared the career preparation path for students. He shared the Carl Perkins grant indicators which are to have CTE Dual Credit; Industry Recognized Certification; and Work-Based Learning. He explained the difference between work-based learning and worksite learning. He explained there are 114 CTE Dual Credits available to students. He shared the Industry Certifications that are available as well as the Programs of Study. Mr. Smith shared data on how many students have completed two years of study inside Program of Study. The state has a goal of 50% completion and Cheney Public Schools experienced a 95.3% of students in the program graduating with college credit.

There are seven student-based enterprises in the district that created $168,500 in total in sales. Blackhawk Design Studio had $75,000 in sales; the Hawk Shop had $50,000 in sales; and, the FFA Plant and Pie Sales had $23,000. Other enterprises included Pro Start Catering; Blackhawk Printing; PE Uniforms; and, the Manufacturing Shop.

Mr. Smith shared the successes of the FCCLA, FFA, DECA, HOSA, and FBLA students. He then shared additional information on other events that had taken place such as STEM Night for 2nd through 8th grade, FFA Feed Cheney and FBLA Santa's Sleigh, the Boeing hiring fair, plus more. He also shared information on the summer camps.

Director Nicol said she was amazed at what Mr. Smith is able to do and accomplish with the students and thanked him for his efforts. She inquired how students learn about the CTE options. Mr. Smith replied that they are working on a better marketing plan to get the information out to more students.

President Swenson asked if the wood shop is being used. Mr. Smith replied that it is being used and there has been additional equipment added to the shop.

Director Scott asked about the programs of study being high need areas that do not have enough people working in those fields. Mr. Smith confirmed sharing that he does not see much on the trades. He will reach out to some Cheney graduates that are working in the trades to share their experiences.
C. Superintendent Report

Superintendent Ben Ferney shared that he would like to give thanks after being in Cheney Public Schools for one full year and said it has been a wonderful year. He thanked Mrs. Reed for her financial report and work around levies and bonds. He also thanked Adam Smith for his great work with CTE.

Dr. Ferney shared that he completed the end of the year goals and evaluations with his administrative staff as part of his instructional leadership goal and work.

In the Effective Management goal, he has started bond and levy planning for the February 2024 ballot. He and Jamie Reed met with Cory Plager from D.A. Davidson and Mr. Plager will be coming to a future work session to share more information.

Dr. Ferney shared some of the meetings he has been in during the last couple of weeks as his Inclusive Practice goal update. He also shared that in the NEWESD Superintendent Check-in Meeting there was discussion around the updated Air Quality Index (AQI) that will change when students can be outside and participating in athletics and/or recess. It changes when events will need to be canceled or modified. He shared that the best approach is a framework for a decision-making process from WIAA. He has asked Principal Brett Hale and Athletic Director Ken Ryan to come up with a plan on what the Districts' decision-making process will look like if air quality levels get too high.

Director Scott asked what the previous AQI threshold was. Dr. Ferney replied that at 151 outdoor activities were canceled. He then shared that each district in the GSL needs to be using the same plan. This is why he asked WIAA to get involved. A representative from WIAA will attend the August 8th Regional Superintendent meeting.

Dr. Ferney continued to share updates such as: he is the president for NEWASA for the 2023-2024 school year; he recently met with the new editor at the Cheney Free Press to talk about much of the summer work that is being done; he attended an open house at the Airway Heights Parks and Rec center in regards to some major road upgrades that will take place in Airway Heights that will benefit our student walkers; the West Plains Chamber of Commerce will partner with the District on the levy/bond; lastly, Cheney Public Schools was not selected for the LaunchNW pilot program for next year.

PARTICIPATION BY PUBLIC

Mr. Zachary Zorroza shared on the need for schools to serve the City of Airway Heights by saying I am going to give a really quick crash course in psychology. The cognitive triad. Thoughts lead to emotions, then emotions lead to behavior. The long-range facility planning committee along with Teater Crocker did the study on what the districts' facilities needs are. The question is - how do we get the voters to show up? We, as a district, will need to tap into their emotions. How do we talk to their emotions?
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SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES APPROVAL

Director Nicol made a motion to approve the minutes from the regular board meeting of June 28, 2023. Director Scott seconded the motion and it was approved.

GENERAL CONSENT

Under the general consent agenda, the following items were approved on a motion by Director Scott, seconded by Director Nicol, and passed unanimously.

A. Personnel - Resolution No. 26-22-23, covering the Personnel Status Report for the month of July 2023, including Leaves and Resignations, and Out-of-Endorsements

B. Auditing of Bills and Signing of Vouchers

Payroll Direct Deposit Warrants No. 242440 through No. 242441 .................. $2,808.19
General Fund Payroll Warrants No. 242442 through No. 242456 ............ $1,000,845.12
General Fund Payroll Warrants No. 242457 through No. 242458 ............. $93.09
General Fund Warrants No. 242459 through No. 242508 ....................... $277,665.27
General Fund Warrants No. 242509 through No. 242512 ....................... $14,767.86
ASB Fund Warrants No. 242513 through No. 242522 ......................... $24,193.95
Accounts Payable ACH .................................................................................. $240,716.29
Accounts Payable ACH .................................................................................. $54,426.72
Accounts Payable ACH .................................................................................. $3,525.65
Electronic Direct Deposit ................................................................................. $4,905,470.79
Electronic Direct Deposit ................................................................................. $10,592.91

NEW BUSINESS

A. Consideration of Dairy Bid Renewal

Finance Director Jamie Reed shared that historically the district has used Terry’s Dairy through an interlocal agreement with Central Valley School District. This last year Terry’s Dairy has been unable to provide needed product on multiple occasions and the district was unsatisfied with their customer service. The District went to bid and received one bid from Charlie’s Produce. The district has been very satisfied with Charlie’s Produce for the produce products and recommends we use them for dairy products as well.

Director Scott wanted to know if they provide chocolate milk. Mrs. Reed responded that they do yet there are some caveats. There are new federal guidelines that allow the district to offer chocolate milk at the high school yet not to the lower grade levels.

Director Nicol made a motion to approve the Dairy Bid renewal as presented. Director Scott seconded the motion and it was approved.

B. Consideration of Paper and Disposable Vendor
Finance Director Jamie Reed shared that in 2022 the district accepted a new prime vendor with Gold Star Foods. Gold Star did not bid on the paper and disposable portion of the ESD 101 RFP. After reviewing expenses during the 2022-2023 school year, the district advertised for bids for paper and disposable products. Only one response was received and it was from Insight Distributing. The district has worked with Insight and is pleased with their customer service and products. Mrs. Reed recommended the district use Insight Distributing for the 2023-2024 school year.

Director Scott made a motion to approve Insight Distributing as the Paper and Disposable Vendor as presented. Director Nicol seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

C. Consideration of Prime Vendor and Produce Vendor Renewal

Finance Director Jamie Reed shared that the District would like to renew the cooperative bids that were used in 2022-2023.

Director Nicol made a motion to approve the Prime Vendor and Produce Vendor renewal as presented. Director Scott seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

D. First Reading on Revisions to District Policy No. 6700, Nutrition, Health, and Physical Fitness

Assistant Superintendent Tom Arlt shared that there are no revisions to the existing policy language yet there is some added language. The item added under what the superintendent/designee is responsible for is “Sourcing local, minimally processed and sustainable products to provide whole food inspired meals to all students.” The other item is in regards to the District ensuring that “Any student who is excused from participation on account of physical disability, employment, religious belief, participation in directed athletics or military science and tactics, or for other good cause will be required to demonstrate proficiency/competency in the knowledge portion of the fitness requirement in accordance with District policy.”

Director Scott asked how that would work and Mr. Arlt responded that the building principal could provide a waiver for PE credit in lieu of other items.

No action was taken on the first reading.

ITEMS FROM THE BOARD

President Swenson thanked Adam Smith for his CTE presentation and thanked Angela Moses for being there.
ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Director Nicol and seconded by Director Scott to adjourn the school board meeting at 6:46 p.m. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.

Mitch Swenson, Board President

Ben Ferney, Board Secretary/Supt.