

## **Eau Claire School Board Minutes**

**Monday, October 7, 2019**

*Generated by Meta Miske*

### **Members present**

Lori Bica, Aaron Harder, Eric D Torres, Charles Vue, Tim Nordin

### **Members absent**

Lori Klinkhammer, Joe Luginbill

### **1. REGULAR MEETING - 7:00 p.m.**

Following the Pledge of Allegiance led by Locust Lane Elementary student Bryant M, President Eric Torres called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

Board Secretary Meta Miske confirmed that the meeting had been properly noticed and was in compliance with the Open Meeting Law.

### **2. PUBLIC FORUM**

Doug Carlson lives across from Little Red Elementary School. He said residents of the Town of Brunswick spoke a few weeks ago regarding their displeasure at the possible sale of the school. He shared a hypothetical story about what the outcome could have looked like had a different process been followed.

Sue Smith is a retired ECASD employee and citizen of the Town of Brunswick. She is concerned with the overcrowding at southside schools. She hopes the District has a long-term plan, and possibly selling Little Red factored into the plan. She asked the Board to release a study cost comparing expanding three schools versus expanding and reopening Little Red ideas to help quiet the feeling that selling Little Red was a bandage to fix financial problems. She said Town of Brunswick was second in growth around Eau Claire only behind Town of Union. She encouraged the Board to lobby their legislators to fix school funding problems.

Erica Christensen is a Sam Davey parent and said the lack of substitute teachers is concerning. In the past week, her first grader had three different teachers and one day his class was split into separate rooms because there was no teacher. She made efforts to contact staff regarding her concern but hasn't yet received any response. She would like to see the sub shortage addressed.

Karen Voss said she previously spoke to the Board about the Little Red Elementary sale. She expressed concern that her Open Records Requests to the District has not been successful and that the District's attorney will not

release the requested information until the sale is complete. She feels there is a lack of transparency.

### **3. BOARD/ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

#### **3.1 Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Hardebeck reviewed the Board's calendar of events.

Dr. Hardebeck congratulated three National Merit Scholarship Semi-Finalists: Memorial High School seniors Alexandra Beimborn and Ronin Cosiquien and North High School senior Lydia Monk. There are 1.6 million entrants for the Scholarship and only 16,000 semi-finalists.

The District recently received a notice from Focus on Energy indicating that the 113 energy-savings projects ECASD has completed since 2012 have saved approximately \$500,000 per year or \$4million in eight years.

Family Advisory Council (FAC) had its first meeting of the school year on October 1. They elected officers, received a presentation about Eau Claire Virtual School (ECVS), and received an update from Dr. Hardebeck. FAC would like to provide input to the Superintendent Search Committee in their November meeting.

It is School Board Appreciation Week. Dr. Hardebeck thanked the Board Members for their service to the students and community.

#### **3.2 Board President's Report**

Dr. Torres provided an update of the Superintendent Search. The committee, chaired by Commissioner Bica, has started to gather input from each school building. They will be scheduling three opportunities for the community to provide input which will be used to help create the job description and superintendent profile.

State Superintendent Carolyn Stanford Taylor has proclaimed October to be Gifted Education month. President Torres thanked Dr. Kaying Xiong, Director of Student Services and her team of coordinators and teachers who strive to support students in utilizing their gifts.

### **4 STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

#### **4.1 Student Representative Report**

Morgan Priem said Memorial's homecoming went very well last week and had a great turnout. She reviewed other events from the past week including field trips and a blood drive.

Johnny Xiong was absent, but President Torres read a report which included sports outcomes and an invitation to upcoming events.

## **5. OTHER REPORTS**

### **5.1 School Board Committee Reports**

Budget Development Committee met September 24 and discussed their work timeline for and created a list of working items including cost savings, revenue, and more. They have a meeting tomorrow.

Learning Environments and Partnerships meets tomorrow.

Policy & Governance Committee met this morning. They have approved a draft resolution on clean energy for Board approval which will be presented at the next Board meeting.

Demographic Trends and Facility Planning Committee hasn't met.

### **5.2 Legislative Update**

Commissioner Nordin said the Wisconsin Senate meets tomorrow with its only floor session of the month. Several bills are on the agenda regarding education including special meeting notices, teacher loans, pupil records, fire drills, and teacher license based on reciprocity. WASB is monitoring these bills.

## **6. CONSENT RESOLUTION AGENDA**

Motion by Charles Vue, second by Tim Nordin to approve the following consent resolution items:

- Minutes of September 23, 2019
- Minutes of Closed Session - September 23, 2019
- Minutes of Work Session September 25, 2019
- 2018-19 Budget Adjustments
- Human Resources - Employment Report
- Revisions to Policy 751.5 - Student Transportation in Private Vehicles
- Proposed Policy 675 - Construction Contracts

Motion carried

Yes: Lori Bica, Aaron Harder, Eric D Torres, Charles Vue, Tim Nordin

## **7. INDIVIDUALLY CONSIDERED RESOLUTION(S)**

### **7.1 Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention funding**

President Torres reminded the Board this item was presented and discussed at the last meeting. He invited conversation.

Commissioner Harder said the request went to Budget Development

Committee but they didn't have much time to discuss. He recalled the previous presentation shared the many benefits of the program and the cost sharing model. He thinks the question is if the Board wants to contribute and is it the right amount to contribute.

President Torres follow up on Commissioner Bica's comments from the last meeting about the model. The list of institutions invited to contribute is large, but there's not much contribution from private and corporate/business organizations in the community. He wondered if the Board can advise the Alliance to invite more contributions.

Budget Development Committee will review for a recommendation and the Board will discuss again on October 21.

## **8. ADJOURN TO COMMITTEE**

## **9. COMMITTEE REPORTS/ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

### **9.1 Eau Claire Public Schools Foundation Annual Report**

Sue Bornick, Interim Executive Director and Dustin Wiesner, Board of Trustees Treasurer were present. The Eau Claire Public Schools Foundation (ECPSF) is an arm of the Eau Claire Community Foundation and their vision is to ensure the future.

Mr. Wiesner gave Board members ECPSF's annual report which reports the outcomes informs the community. Ms. Bornick said there are 14 community members on the Board of Trustees. So far in 2019, 108 grants have been distributed which help fund supplies, field trips, immersive experiences, and more. Newly formed is the legacy society to ensure the future forever. There are eight individuals who've designated a portion of their estates to the ECPSF as a legacy to public education.

Ms. Bornick said a portion of ECPSF's revenue comes from the District which helps ECPSF grow so they can increase donations. Mr. Wiesner handed out an investment overview. Ms. Bornick said ECPSF has an investment committee to monitor all investments and promotes diverse investing.

President Torres thanked Ms. Bornick and Mr. Wiesner for the report. He expressed the Boards interest in continuing the relationship and said they will plan a work session to have a conversation with ECPSF in the coming weeks.

### **9.2 Referendum Update**

Ms. Kim Koller introduced Mr. Darryl Petersen, Interim Director of Buildings and Grounds, and Ms. Holly Kitchell, Facilities Planning Manager who would

provide a facility update from the 2016 referendum.

Ms. Koller said buildings and facilities are one of the largest assets the District has. The referendum projects were focused on deferred maintenance and security/safety improvements.

Ms. Kitchell said this year's projects were at Memorial, McKinley, Flynn, Locust Lane, Meadowview, Northwoods, Sam Davey, and Prairie Ridge for a total cost of \$5,066,882.70. She reviewed the upgrades that occurred at each building site.

Mr. Petersen said there were 76 projects completed over the last three years. There is one remaining referendum project that is yet to be completed because the contractor handling window replacement didn't have enough staff. That will be completed next summer which will finish all referendum projects.

### **9.3 OPEB Discussion**

Ms. Abby Johnson was present to give an update on OPEB. She reminded the Board about the OPEB conversation, where it began and why it continues.

OPEB has a significant budget impact, it has a lack of predictability and sustainability, and may impact the District's bond rating. Currently the cash liability of OPEB is expected to be over \$102M over the next 30 years.

At an August Board meeting, the Board approved a few changes including changes to the timing of the HRA contribution, having employees earn their HRA, eliminating the HRA contribution after retirement, locking insurance rates at the year of retirement instead of the year after, and the modification of the cap based on an individual's actual needs.

The Board voted to set aside four items for further discussion including locking the insurance rate increase at 3% or 5%, grandfathering any OPEB changes based on meeting eligibility instead of fixed dates, and grandfathering any OPEB changes based on years of service instead of age and years of service. Ms. Johnson reviewed each of the four tabled items more in depth.

Locking the insurance rate increase at 3% or 5% would provide some stability, predictability, and savings for the District. Budget Development Committee looked at this option early on when reviewing at OPEB but since it didn't meet the cost savings goals at the time, they chose not to bring it forward. They have since decided to bring the idea forward to the Board.

The option to grandfather based on meeting eligibility instead of a fixed retirement date was a recommendation from the OPEB Ad Hoc Committee so any changes the Board made to OPEB wouldn't force people to retire earlier than they wanted to.

The final item is to grandfather based on years of service instead of age and years of service. This idea was from the OPEB Ad Hoc Committee to honor those who have devoted their careers to the District; someone may be 49 years old and have met all the years of service but not be old enough to retain the benefits.

The next step is to review the data from the actuary which is expected in mid-November. Dates for future discussions are unknown and will need Board direction. Certified staff must notify ECASD by February 1, 2020 if they plan to retire at the end of the 2019-20 school year. Changes to OPEB need to be made in advance of that date so affected employees have time to make a decision.

Dr. Torres said the Board is scheduling a work session in late November and they may be able to work on the OPEB topic at the work session.

Commissioner Harder said OPEB is one item of consideration on Budget Development's worklist. He hopes to look at things holistically and communicate something definitive to staff in the coming year.

#### **90.4 Discussion and Possible First Reading of revisions to Policy 453.12 - Concussion and Brain Injury Management**

There was a very small modification. Commissioner Nordin volunteered to read the modified paragraph.

There were no questions from the Board. The policy changes will be on the October 21 agenda as a Consent Resolution Agenda item.

#### **10. REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

No agenda items were requested.

#### **11. ADJOURN**

Motion by Tim Nordin, second by Aaron Harder, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried

Yes: Lori Bica, Aaron Harder, Eric D Torres, Charles Vue, Tim Nordin

Meeting adjourned at 8:22pm.