SWALLOW SCHOOL DISTRICT
W299 N5614 County Road E
Hartland, Wisconsin 53029

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING January 16, 2020 6:00 p.m.

Present: John Stahl, Susie Polentini, Peggy Moede, Darin Clark, and Greg Zimmerman, Melissa Thompson, Adam Scanlan, Jeremy Struss, Andrew Joseph and Nancy Hazelberg.

Also in attendance:

Staff members Danielle Fischer, Kelly Cavaiani, Dianna Van Mullem, Jeanne Hanson, Cindy Felscher, Lisa Regan, Scott Morgan, Barb Ryczek, Ashley Wolf, Jenny Lindee and Melissa Losiniecki.

Community Members: David and Carmen Michaelis, Kirsten Neuman, Jennifer Ignatowski, Neely Basich, Lydia Vanderpoel, Tracy Egenhoefer, Julie & Kyle Wold, Amy Coraggio, Emily Stolzman, Mike Hoida, Stephanie & Kevin Christiano, and Annie Schleicher.

CALL TO ORDER

John Stahl called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., read the Notice of the Meeting, and led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Darin Clark moved to approve the agenda. Peggy Moede seconded and the motion carried 5-0 on a voice vote.

CITIZENS' FORUM

Julie Wold thanked the board and administration for holding *Community Conversations*. She then requested that the 6 FTE reduction be done over the next three years via attrition rather than layoffs or reductions all at once.

Kirsten Neumann thanked the board and administration for holding *Community Conversations* and acknowledged that most districts do not do something like this. She indicated that she has three kids who are/will be attending Swallow and chose to live here for the education. She wondered if there are other creative solutions or ways to assist the budget without ripping off the band aid, so to speak. She inquired as to the teacher to student ratio with reductions and if retirements over time could be used instead of layoff. She also suggested increasing Activities Fees could help offset the budgetary shortfall.

Nelly Fischer also thanked the board and stated that she noticed there were not any of her neighbors in attendance as their children had already attended Swallow and grew up. She also stated that the passion from the Swallow teachers has never changed, regardless of the number of students attending Swallow or in their classrooms.

Carmen Michaelis thanked the board for offering *Community Conversations*, and commented they feel there are other options that are not being considered and that she does not feel teachers want the board to 'rip the band aid off' and do all reductions at once. She feels there is a disconnect between what the teachers say to parents and what they say to board or administration and that the voices of teachers are not really being heard.

Peggy Moede reiterated first-hand contact with several teachers who have indicated that they appreciate the board doing all reductions at once so that the anxiety over looming reductions with enrollment changes does not continue and impact culture negatively. She also indicated that the board has been working on reductions and planning for this for years, and has looked at the suggested options from staff and parents.

Carmen Michaelis does not feel that the district's finances are at the cliff's edge and there are other solutions.

David Michaelis stated that they ask questions because they care, there is no feeling of us vs. them. He feels there are other options for the board to consider based on his calculations including *(full text provided to the board following the meeting based on what was stated during the Citizen's Forum as it could not be written down in real time to capture all of the details):*

- Option 1: 2020: No Changes. Do a deep dive on an operational referendum of $600k as a possibility instead of staff cuts. If it is determined that the board doesn't see the operational referendum as a viable option cuts could be made next year, which would also coincide with the end of administrative contracts. This would give the school the ability to make cuts or go to referendum before the deficit is larger. It would also be at the end of the administrative contracts, which would allow those positions to be looked at for savings as well.
- Option 2: 2020: Cut $150k from the budget via staff cuts. Ask the current administration to find $50k in savings from operational expenses (paper, lawn and pest contracts, cell phone bills, camps, etc.). 2021: Move the business manager position to .5 vs the current 1.0. This should be a savings of roughly $60k. Combine the superintendent role and principal role. This would save roughly $150k. This option would save roughly $410k with an additional savings from $110-440k possible from the 4 teachers eligible for retirement. Total savings would be between $520-850k.
- Option 3: 2020: Eliminate $150k in budget. 2021: Move 6th grade to middle school because the last 3 section grade will have graduated out of Swallow. This is a savings of roughly $330k. Cut business manager to .5 saving $60k. Combine superintendent and principal saving $150k. This plan would save approx. $690k with an additional staff savings of between $110-440k as the four teachers that are eligible for retirement indeed retire, and also if any of those 4 are part of the cut when 6th grade is moved to middle school.
- Option 4: 2020: Eliminate $150k from budget. 2021: Go for an operational referendum of $300k. As the four teachers retire allow administration to shift staff where possible to cover the openings created. This would be an additional savings of $220-440k depending on which positions could be covered vs. needing to hire. Completing these moves over a couple years allows administration to find additional efficiencies, and revenue generating ideas (food production, etc.) to offset the budget shortfall.

Annie Schleicher feels that the board starts at 'no' and is not listening to feedback. She would like to see an anonymous survey conducted.

Julie Wold wondered what the ideal organizational structure for a two section school looks like.

Amy Coraggio asked how the 6th grade absorption will affect students and staff, including teacher workload.

Stephanie Christiano asked if the cuts will effect class size to which Darin Clark stated the class size will stay the same.

Jennifer Ignatowski stated that the side effect of declining enrollment is less teachers. Teachers thrive regardless of how many sections, there is no less of a drive for excellence.

Julie Wold stated that this is "Not an ask, it is an Opportunity"!

Kirsten Neuman said that despite the deficit, the district should care more about kids than dollars and cents. Is the board looking at how do we best serve the student population?

Kevin Christiano asked why the board feels the sky is falling with the budget? Why not wait to make reductions?

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Thompson presented the following information:

Finance and Operations

Announcement of Candidate for School Board Election – There is one seat available in the upcoming School Board election, to be held on April 7, 2020 with voting happening at local municipalities. Incumbent Peggy Moede was thanked for her continued commitment to the district as she is the only person to declare candidacy.

Monthly Financial Overview – Jeremy Struss explained that Operating revenue in the month of December came in under the projection by $5,541 due to a slight change in how Equalization Aid was distributed. To date 4.31% of budgeted operating revenue for the fiscal year has been received. Changes were made to the Expenditure projections in an attempt to better represent what is expected for the remainder of the year. Currently the District has paid 35.25% of budgeted operating expenses for the fiscal year.

Teaching and Learning

Enrollment Update: 2nd Friday Pupil Count – Current enrollment is 437, which is an increase of 5 students since September. Some of the grades have a slightly different composition as there have been other enrollments and withdrawals.

Preparations for Open Enrollment Space Declaration for 2020-21 School Year – The grid delineating the current enrollment, projected enrollment and recommended number of seats for 2020-21 via open enrollment was discussed. Ultimately it was decided to keep the declaration of seats as recommended because the District reviews and opens additional seats if possible each July based on updated enrollment data.

Instructional Technology Selection Process Update and Recommendation – Jeremy Struss presented the recommendation to purchase Clevertouch Impact Series interactive digital displays for the instructional spaces in the building for next school year. He explained the process used whereby staff have been visiting other districts and piloting various solutions for the past year and based on features, this is the recommended product. The Technology Committee is recommending spending not more than $90,000 out of District funds ($30,000 is available in the Construction Guaranteed Maximum Price) to purchase these displays, mounts, and professional development to maximize their usage.

Principal's Report

Mr. Scanlan presented the following information:

Month in Review – Adam Scanlan presented updates on the new sound system installation in the Multipurpose Room and Gym, hosting a student auction winner for Principal for the Day, accomplishments in the building over Winter Break and highlights from the *Community Conversations* series.

Professional Development Update – Information was shared about ongoing areas of emphasis with professional development and specifically about staff attending the WSRA – Wisconsin State Reading Association conference in February.

Semi-Annual Report on Bullying Prevention and Response – Adam Scanlan presented the first semester report including that there were no Discrimination/Harassment/Bullying complaint forms submitted by Swallow students or families during this time; however, four parent requests were received by teachers or administration to investigate a potential student harassment/bullying situations, two requests were

received from staff members, and one request was received from a student. One of the requests required two instances of intervention and support. All other requests were resolved with a single intervention and/or investigation by staff or administration.

ACTION ITEMS

The Board reviewed and took action on the following items:

Approval of Minutes

Susie Polentini motioned to approve the following minutes: December 19, 2019 – School Board Meeting; January 9, 2020 – School Board Work Session (8:30am); January 9, 2020 – School Board Work Session (6:30pm); January 10, 2020 – School Board Work Session; January 14, 2020 – School Board Work Session (8:30am); January 14, 2020 – School Board Work Session (6:30am) –Greg Zimmerman seconded and the motion passed on a 5-0 vote.

Finance and Operations

Greg Zimmerman motioned to approve the expenditures as presented in the amount of **$491,567.06** during the month of December. In addition, the Board acknowledges the receipt of **$148,740.79** in revenue during the month of December. Darin Clark seconded and the motion passed on a 5-0 vote.

Teaching and Learning

Peggy Moede motioned to approve guarantee currently attending students open enrollment seats for the 2020-2021 school year, even if there are not seats available at their grade level. Susie Polentini seconded and the motion passed on a 5-0 vote.

Four-Year-Old Kindergarten - Darin Clark moved to approve two (2) spaces for 4-Year-Old Kindergarten for the 2020-2021 school year. Peggy Moede seconded and the motion carried 5-0 on a vote.

Kindergarten - Peggy Moede moved to approve fifteen (15) spaces for Kindergarten for the 2020-2021 school year. Greg Zimmerman seconded and the motion carried 5-0 on a voice vote.

First Grade - Darin Clark moved to approve twelve (12) spaces for 1st grade for the 2020-2021 school year. Greg Zimmerman seconded and the motion carried 5-0 on a voice vote.

Second Grade - Greg Zimmerman moved to approve zero (0) spaces for 2nd grade for the 2020-2021 school year. Peggy Moede seconded and the motion carried 5-0 on a voice vote.

Third Grade - Darin Clark moved to approve zero (0) spaces for 3rd grade for the 2020-2021 school year. Peggy Moede seconded and the motion carried 5-0 on a voice vote.

Fourth Grade - Susie Polentini moved to approve ten (10) spaces for 4th grade for the 2020-2021 school year. Greg Zimmerman seconded and the motion carried 5-0 on a voice vote.

Fifth Grade - Peggy Moede moved to approve four (4) spaces for 5th grade for the 2020-2021 school year. Darin Clark seconded and the motion carried 5-0 on a voice vote.

Sixth Grade - Darin Clark moved to approve five (5) spaces for 6th grade for the 2019-20 school year. Susie Polentini seconded and the motion carried 5-0 on a voice vote.

Seventh Grade - Peggy Moede moved to approve thirteen (0) spaces for 7th grade for the 2020-2021 school year. Greg Zimmerman seconded and the motion carried 5-0 on a voice vote.

Eighth Grade - Darin Clark moved to approve thirteen (13) spaces for 8th grade for the 2020-2021 school year. Susie Polentini seconded and the motion carried 5-0 on a voice vote.

Special Education, Speech and Language - Susie Polentini moved to approve zero (0) spaces for the speech and language program for the 2020-21 school year. Greg Zimmerman seconded and the motion carried 5-0 on voice vote.

Special Education, Non-Speech and Language - Darin Clark moved to approve zero (0) spaces for the special education non-speech and language program for the 2020-21 school year. Susie Polentini seconded and the motion carried 5-0 on a voice vote.

Darin Clark motioned to approve the instructional technology purchases in an amount not to exceed $90,000 as presented. Greg Zimmerman seconded and the motion passed on a 5-0 vote.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

School Board Self-Assessment – The board discussed the results of the self-assessment, with several members commented on the fact that the board and leadership team see things similarly.

Review of Intergovernmental Agreements Expiring June 30, 2020 – The listing of current intergovernmental agreements that Swallow participates in to provide services beyond what the school can do alone and would like to continue were discussed. These include: Arrowhead Area Schools Beginning Band Camp, Consortium Band, Jazz Band Consortium, CESA #1, and CESA #2. Peggy Moede asked if we can pursue shared staffing for teaching staff as well such as Art or Languages, which administration from all K-8s is working towards presently.

Strategic Planning Next Steps – There was discussion regarding the planned summer work to review and revise the District's Strategic Plan, which is in its third year. Feedback from the *Community Conversations* series and annual survey were discussed as sources of information to assist the board in this process. Greg Zimmerman asked if it was necessary to do this survey annually and Darin Clark stated that doing this annually provides longitudinal data. The option of doing a survey bi-annually will be looked into further. Discussion was also had about the fact that the survey is anonymous and confidential such that the company has all of the information and the board and administration only receive summaries; however, some feel that by asking which grade bands people work in it is too specific. It was agreed that more discussion needs to be had on how to break the survey down to accomplish this so that there is still meaningful data.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Board reviewed and discussed upcoming events.

1. January 21-24, 2020—WASB/WASDA/WASBO State Education Convention
2. February 6, 2020 – School Literacy Night 6pm
3. February 7, 2020 – School Board Work Session 7am
4. February 20, 2020 – School Board Meeting, 6pm
5. March 5, 2020 – Family Arts Night 6pm
6. March 6, 2020 School Board Work Session 7am
7. March 19, 2020 – School Board Meeting, 6pm
8. March 23-27, 2020 – Spring Break
9. April 3, 2020 – School Board Work Session 7am
10. April 16, 2020 – School Board Meeting, 6pm
11. April 22-24, 2020 – Spring Superintendent's Conference

CLOSED SESSION

The board moved to convene into closed session at 8:49 p.m. The closed session was pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes 19.85 (1)(c) for the purpose of: "considering employment, promotion, compensation

or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility." This closed session was held specifically to conduct the Superintendent's evaluation and discuss staff management planning. (Stahl – YES, Polentini – YES, Moede – YES, Clark – YES, – Zimmerman - YES)

RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION

At 10:42 p.m. Melissa Thompson, Jeremy Struss and Adam Scanlan left the closed session. At 10:50 p.m. the Board of Education reconvened into open session. (Stahl- YES; Polentini: YES; Moede- YES; Clark – YES; Zimmerman- YES)

ADJOURNMENT

At 10:51 p.m. Darin Clark made the motion to adjourn which was seconded by Susie Polentini and carried 5-0 on a voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Thompson

Superintendent

Approved: _____

_____, President

_____, Clerk