



**BARKER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Board of Education Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, September 11, 2023, 7:00 PM - Board Room**

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- Present** R. Atwater, D. Carnes, C. Gancasz, E. Gow, J. Harris, J. Sweeney, Jr., V. Voss
- Excused** None
- Also Present** J. Reimer, M. Carter, C. Cornwell, M. Eadie, S. Kordish, M. Love, R. Mucha  
Public: 1
- Call to Order** Mr. Atwater called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The pledge of to the flag was given. He then asked for a moment of silence in observance in remembrance of 911 and all those affected by the events of that day.
- Approve Agenda** The agenda was reviewed. Motion by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., seconded by Mrs. Gow, to approve the agenda as presented.  
Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.
- Accept Minutes** The Board reviewed the minutes. Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, Jr., to accept the minutes as presented from the Regular Board Meeting dated August 14, 2023, as presented.  
Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.
- Public Forum** None.
- Presentations** Principal's Update - Mrs. Love  
Mrs. Love commented that the school year kicked off with a great start and she wanted to publicly recognize the staff and teachers, and everyone being teammates across the board. The Welcome Back evening was a success with several families in attendance. The evening also included a Grade 7 orientation, which she noted went as well as possible given technical and electrical issues during that event, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class held a



fundraiser, and the PTO provided popcorn to all. Mrs. Love then reviewed enrollment numbers, noting there were 82 new students, which were 37 in PreK, 10 in K, 17 Grades 1-6, and 18 in Grades 7-12. She also noted that there are 359 students in grades PreK-6, and 299 in Grades 7-12. BOCES has 33 students in grade 11, and there are 19 participating in Grade 12.

She then reviewed homecoming preparations and schedules which include four days from October 10-13, noting it is shortened one day due to the holiday. Over that time period, Grades 7-12 students will be decorating halls and making parade floats based on this year's theme of 1990s cartoons. The elementary students will also participate with their own events. Other activities include a pep rally for Grade 7-12 on Friday afternoon, a chicken BBQ, parade, and the field hockey game at 6:45 p.m. The dance is on Saturday. It will be a busy week.

#### Director of Instructional Services' Update - Ms. Kordish

Ms. Kordish also gave a shoutout to everyone coming together for a successful first day. She noted the enthusiasm of Mrs. Love and Mr. Cornwell. Ms. Kordish stated that with a new school year is new data collection which will commence September 12<sup>th</sup>, and BEDS day is October 4<sup>th</sup> which will have different components worked on throughout the year and is provided to NYSED for reporting and reimbursement. She noted that 12-15 students enrolled just before school opened and a number have disabilities which must be planned for. Over the summer, she prepared for the new school year and all IEPs are ready. There are 146 classified students this year which is 20% the school populations. She discussed the continued difficulties of placements for several students, and the significant expense if they need to attend farther away from the District. Ideally the District would like to keep students in District but it is unable to meet the specific needs of the child/ren, and therefore out of district placement is required.

A Special Education focus group has been created and the first meeting will be September 21<sup>st</sup> and will include herself, Mrs. Love, Mr. Cornwell and 23 faculty members with the focus being how to reinvent, reinvigorate what we do for the benefit of the students.

When asked, Ms. Kordish commented that 20% is a little higher number of classified students than the 12-15% typically reflected on the State Report Card.

Mr. Reimer noted, that as the District's number of classified students is higher than the state threshold for students with needs and number of students out of district, Barker is now required to provide a justification report for exceeding the 1.0 percent state level cap on New York State Alternative Assessments (NYSAA) participation and assurance of participation in Tier 1 Universal Technical Assistance and Supports for 2021-2022 data. The justification report is due to the state October 31<sup>st</sup> which is a typical report when a district's number is high.

#### Coor. of Curriculum & Prof. Learning/AP's Update - Mr. Cornwell

Mr. Cornwell reported on summer professional development opportunities that were available to the staff. Several teachers attended a literacy conference and a technology conference sponsored by O/N BOCES. Other teachers worked on coursework related to



certifications and other content related workshops. Also, several teachers engaged in writing curriculum, especially at the secondary level. A good amount was done with more curriculum work received today.

The District trained four additional teachers to be able to serve as mentors in the future. He commented that he is also planning to provide this training again during the school year to continue to increase the District's teacher mentor pool.

Mr. Cornwell provided an overview of the Opening Day for the 2023-2024 school year which was held September 5, 2023. During Opening Day, Mrs. Love, Ms. Kordish and Mr. Cornwell presented strategies for teachers to shift their mindset to help maintain their sustainability as teachers throughout the year. Also, the elementary staff had a presentation by the head of O/N BOCES media resources about all of the print and electronic resources for students and teachers that are available via our COSERs from O/NBOCES. Secondary teachers received a presentation regarding resources that the Teacher Center provides, as well as information about the online tutoring program available to Barker students (Paper). Teachers also had time to meet by department and/or grade level.

He commented that the first day and week have been going well.

#### Financial Update - Mr. Carter

Mr. Carter commented that the Board is being presented for approval a revised tax warrant this evening. The total tax levy is still the same at \$5,017,125 or 2%. When running the bills, the District received word from Niagara County that the taxes did not balance. After extensive investigation with the County, the issue was the information the District received regarding tax rolls was different from the final numbers the County was given by \$3,400 for Somerset. The District therefore made a small adjustments and everything is equal. The impact is a very small percentage for each town's share of the levy.

Mr. Carter noted that he and others spent some time during the external audit process on asset and inventory management. It has been quite a while since the District updated this process and made sure all of the District's assets/inventory is current, and following best practices. As a result, the District will be entering into an agreement with QUESTAR BOCES to begin a new assessment of all assets. At this time, the District does not have a current timeline or start date but it is anticipated that it will begin in the next few months. This will be a fairly in-depth process as the company is taking an accounting of all of the physical inventory the District owns and assesses their value and depreciation on items such as the buildings, vehicles, desks, cabinets, computers, etc. Mr. Carter noted that more information will be provided as it is received. Mr. Reimer noted that the asset control service through BOCES is approximately 78% aidable and the District's insurance company will pay the difference for the process. It is usually done every five years by districts, but it has not been done here for ten years. It is estimated to cost \$10,000 which is lower than most asset control inventory processes, but it is a badly needed service for the District. He also noted that the insurance company was here this past Friday and discussed this audit process and stated they would pay the difference between the cost and aid received. There will be approximately 4-6 individuals who will be on site and will



be on site approximately 2 weeks usually during a school break when students are not in District, and then it will take time to generate the fixed asset report.

Mr. Carter then discussed the budget transfers which are being presented this evening for approval. He noted it is a regular part of the closing of the budget for the previous year. He stated that going forward he will present to the Board budget transfers more frequently throughout the course of the year to prevent a build up of approvals at the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Carter noted that tax bills were mailed and payments continue to be received daily. The District's first deposit was \$97,730 at the end of the past week. A number of calls have been received from taxpayers and issues have been worked through and questions responded to.

### **Superintendent's Report &**

#### **Discussion**

Mr. Reimer provided an update on the Yorker House, commenting that no RFPs were received and as such, the District will move to the next phase, removal of the building from the property. He described the plans for a silent bid auction whereas people can bid on different components of the building with the responsibility of removal of the item(s) being with the bid winner. After the bid process and removal is completed, the building will be demolished by the person receiving the winning bid for that process. The property will then be backfilled. Mr. Reimer commented that he would have liked to backfill the site with dirt from the multipurpose field but the timing to utilize the soil may not work out to do so. He noted that the District is only able to use the amount approved by the voters to demolish the building so proceeds of the silent auction may be used to offset the expenses.

With regard to the Solar array, a meeting was held on Friday with Mr. Reimer, National Grid, and Solar Liberty. He explained that at the meeting he learned that the District was potentially part of a study by National Grid which he was unaware of, and the investigation into whether the District was part of the study was the reason for the delay. He was then subsequently told by National Grid the District does not need to be part of the study due to the size of its solar field. He noted his frustration as it is costing the District money by not producing electric. National Grid is now looking for a specific part that should have been ordered and in stock when the District completed the Interconnect Agreement. National Grid apparently purchased this part two years ago, but the part was subsequently reallocated. National Grid is now looking for the part and the District is to receive a date for receipt, anticipated for October at the latest. Mr. Reimer noted that he has also requested reimbursement for losses due to National Grid's delays.

The tower is close to completion and millings will be laid down on entry to the tower from Quaker Road entrance.

Five different capital outlays are ongoing with the goal to have them done the next four months to submit the Certificate of Substantial Completion certificates by December 30, 2023 in order to get full aid in 2024-2025. Otherwise, submission after that date will result in the District receiving only half the aid once completed and the other half would be



received six months later as aid is distributed bi-annually. He reviewed the projects which included the auditorium, the heat exchange/boiler project, the air conditioning for the data closet, security enhancement of cameras and fobs, and the solar project.

A meeting is scheduled for the \$25 million capital improvement project to review more components, including finer details on turf, lighting styles, etc. He reviewed submissions of Phase II, as well as the bid and construction process, and anticipated commencement of construction in February or March. He commented it will be hectic but explained how it would be worked through, and the goal to have most done before people come back to school by completing work during second shift to have as little disruption to the school's daily activities as possible. Mr. Reimer then reviewed potential bonding timelines and noted he would like to not have it bonded until after the turf is done if possible. If this can happen, it will reduce capitalized interest, which is not aidable. The goal is to have more aid come in than interest and payments. He also reiterated that the cost of the work to the press box is not aidable so the District is looking at various options for that space.

Mr. Reimer noted that the data is still not available to complete the analysis for goals yet. If it becomes available early enough he would like to consider having a meeting as soon as possible to prep for the October meeting with regard to goals. He noted that it will take approximately a week to process the data and he would like the data set as soon as possible.

The Corrective Action Plan with the NYS Comptroller is due October 1<sup>st</sup>. He commented that most challenging was the development a policy the Comptroller's office requested with regard to payroll and overtime. He worked with Lumsden and McCormick and the school attorney on the policy which is being put forward for the first review at this meeting. Although Lumsden and McCormick found no deficiencies during its audit, in order to comply with the Comptroller's recommendation, the District is completing this policy.

Mr. Reimer noted that his favorite part of opening day is riding the bus with the students. He commented that it was the first time there were no "tears". He said opening day went well and it was amazing how everyone comes together. He noted that some students had bussing issues which were resolved, but the students were helped by other students as well as staff, which was great to see. He thanked the students, staff, and parents for their efforts.

Mr. Reimer then discussed the Barker naming process which is continuing to move along. The staff received the information today so they would have time to review before being issued to the students with the teachers walking them through, especially in elementary so the students understand the process and what they are doing, as well as the meaning associated with Bulldog and Beacon. Voting will be open to students and staff until September 22. If everyone participates there would be about 650 responses. Participants are only able to vote one time. Mrs. Gancasz noted concern about the ability to coordinate this process with the Senior apparel sale. Mr. Reimer commented that if the information can be pulled together quickly and options for the selected name, it could be narrowed down in October/November for this and ideally also for the multipurpose field and capital project where applicable.



Mr. Reimer discussed the establishment of the tax certiorari reserve fund for the school years from 2022-2023 in the amount of \$370,321.87 and from 2023-2024 in the amount of \$217,293.31 which he suggested would be funded by contributions from the Retirement Contribution Reserve pending a public hearing scheduled for September 28<sup>th</sup> and Board approval of the resolutions. This type of action does not require the approval of the qualified voters of the District. He noted that this is being requested to be done due to the change in the plant value, and it takes a prospective vs. retrospective position by the District should the plant win the tax cert case. He noted there is not enough in the general fund to cover the potential judgements if they occur as it was not budgeted for and thus he did not recommend paying through this source as it would utilize 80% of the emergency funds. If the Board approves the resolutions, the reserve would be funded out of the Retirement Contribution Reserve which can be used to pay for ERS and TRS, not direct retiree costs. It is believed the District has adequately budgeted for ERS and TRS costs well into the future so using this money in this way won't have a negative impact at all. The total of the monies held in the reserve fund shall not exceed the amount that would be reasonably deemed necessary to meet the anticipated judgements and claims arising out of such tax cert proceedings. Monies not expended for that purpose shall be returned to the general fund. Depending on the outcome, judgements would be paid out of the new reserve. If this occurs the District will change its energy cessation fund application and submit an amended application. The District should then get 60-70% of the claim amount back to then put in the Employee Contribution Reserve, or put monies in another reserve fund. This transfer will allow the payment to be made and not have a negative impact in the spring and thus protecting the budget.

Mr. Reimer discussed the basic educational data in relation to BEDS codes. BEDS relates to all data reports for a district, and is important to the costs of items for services and systems associated with a district which is typically charged by its BEDS code. As the energy cessation mitigation program will be going away, the District will need to find a way to make up the monies no longer received and going to one BEDS code for the District is a way to save monies and increase efficiencies. He noted there currently is a lot of duplicative reporting and fees charged with more than one BEDS code which being the District is one building/one campus would be beneficial moving forward. He noted there are also some challenges to a move to one BEDS code. This change, if approved, would not change what the District does but rather decrease the reporting data and may also allow for free and reduced lunches which is good for the community, the school, and its students. If that were to occur, the cafeteria would be self-sufficient. Mr. Reimer stated he would plan to provide a timeline at an upcoming meeting with the pros/cons of the proposed change. He commented that if anyone has any questions to please let him know.

**Policies/Plans** Mr. Atwater presented for first review the following policies: 7142, 7243, 7250, 7311, 7313, 7314, 7315, 7316. There were no questions raised.

The first reading of policy 5574 – Payroll and Overtime, which was developed in response to the NYS Comptroller's Audit and pertains to payroll and overtime as recommended by them. He noted, as mentioned last month, it was created with assistance from the external



auditors and school attorneys. It was part of the corrective action plan which is also being presented this evening.

**Education** Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Voss, to approve the 2023-2024 Bus Routes.  
Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Voss, to approve the following items be declared excess property and that the Superintendent, or his designee, be authorized to dispose of said books as outlined in the attached.  
Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

**Personnel  
Items**

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Carnes, to approve Timothy Clay as a Full-time Cleaner effective September 5, 2023, at a rate of \$14.48/hour, with a probationary period from September 5, 2023 through September 4, 2024.  
Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Carnes, to approve the appointments of the mentors as outlined with a stipend of \$750.00 for the year, and Loriann Martell as the Teacher Mentor Coordinator with a \$350.00 stipend for the year, for the 2023-2024 school year.  
Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Carnes, to approve Shelly Kordish as APPR Teacher Evaluator.  
Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Carnes, to approve Laura Jordan as a community/parent volunteer.  
Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Carnes, to accept the resignation of Susan McGee as Substitute Clerical/Typist and Substitute Teacher Aide effective September 7, 2023.  
Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Carnes, to approve the appointment of Ryan Hynes as a Student Teacher for the 2023-2024 school session as part of his Physical Education Teaching program through SUNY Brockport from approximately Monday, September 11, 2023 – Friday, December 1, 2023 with Messrs. Carson and Bruning.



Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Harris, seconded by Mrs. Carnes, to approve the appointment of Molly Handrich as a Student Teaching Assistant for the 2023-2024 school session as part of her Chemistry Education Grades 5-12 Teaching program through Niagara University on Wednesdays and Fridays from approximately September through December 2023, her Fall Semester with Ms. McIntyre

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

### **Business & Financial**

#### **Items**

Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Harris to accept the Warrant Report dated September 11, 2023.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Harris to accept the Extraclassroom Report dated July 2023.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Harris to accept the Treasurer's Report dated July 31, 2023.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Harris to approve the electricity bid to purchase electricity to Energy Coop of America at the indexed adder rate of \$0.01847 per kwh used for the 2023 -2024 school year.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Harris to approve the 2023 NYS Comptroller Corrective Action Plan.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Harris to approve the budget transfers as outline for the 2022-2023 school year.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Harris to approve the resolution for the authorization to transfer funds from Unappropriated Fund Balance to Reserve Funds.



**Authorization to Transfer Funds from Unappropriated Fund Balance to Capital Reserve Fund**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education of the Barker Central School District hereby authorizes and directs the transfer of \$1,396,991 from the 2022-2023 unappropriated fund balance to the Capital Reserve Fund established by the voters pursuant to Education Law Section 3651 on May 16, 2023 (known as the "2023 Capital Reserve Fund"); and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Superintendent is authorized to take any and all action necessary to effectuate the transfer, as described herein.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Harris to approve the year-end 2022-2023 Financial Audit performed by the external auditors, Lumsden McCormick.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Harris to approve the agreement for contract services between Thomas Wenhold PT and Barker Central School District for the academic school year of 2023-2024 and the summer session of July-August 2024.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Harris to approve the amended tax warrant pursuant to the resolutions approved on August 14, 2023 for the collection of property taxes for 2023-2024.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Harris to approve the Resolution to Establish Tax Certiorari Reserve Fund for the 2022-2023 School Year.

**Resolution to Establish Tax Certiorari Reserve Fund for the 2022-2023 School Year**

**RESOLVED**, that in accordance with Education Law Section 3651(1-a), the Board of Education of the Barker Central School District hereby establishes a Tax Certiorari Reserve Fund in the amount of \$370,321.87 to pay judgments and claims for any tax certiorari proceeding commenced during the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Tax Certiorari Reserve Fund will be funded by contributions from the Retirement Contribution Reserve pending a public hearing and Board of Education approval.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.



Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Harris to approve the Resolution to Establish Tax Certiorari Reserve Fund for the 2023-2024 School Year.

**Resolution to Establish Tax Certiorari Reserve  
Fund for the 2023-2024 School Year**

**RESOLVED**, that in accordance with Education Law Section 3651(1-a), the Board of Education of the Barker Central School District hereby establishes a Tax Certiorari Reserve Fund in the amount of \$217,293.31 to pay judgments and claims for any tax certiorari proceeding commenced during the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Tax Certiorari Reserve Fund will be funded by contributions from the Retirement Contribution Reserve pending a public hearing and Board of Education approval.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Harris to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Royalton-Hartland Central School District and Barker Central School District effective September 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 for the education of students in grades K-12.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

**End of Public  
Session**

Motion by Mrs. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Carnes to approve the adjournment of public session with no need for an Executive Session at 7:57 p.m.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Prepared by,

Mary H. Eadie  
District Clerk