



**BARKER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Board of Education Meeting Minutes**  
**Auditorium**  
**Monday, April 11, 2022**

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**Present** R. Atwater, M. Clemens-Harris, H. Ecker, C. Gancasz, E. Gow, J. Sweeney, V. Voss

**Excused** None

**Also Present** J. Reimer, M. Carter, M. Eadie, C. Heiligenthaler, M. Kramer  
Public: 7

**Call to Order** President Atwater welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge to the Flag was given.

**Approve Agenda** The agenda was reviewed. A change was made to Section 10 – Business & Financial Items, Letter E to add the addition of the date, April 18, 2022, after the 5:00 p.m. referenced time in the resolution. Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to approve the agenda as amended.  
Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

**Accept Minutes** The Board reviewed the minutes. Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to accept the minutes as presented from the Regular Board Meeting dated of March 7, 2022.  
Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

**Public Forum** None.

**Presentations** COVID - Year End Sports Summary - R. Carberry  
Mr. Carberry distributed summary information and spoke about the participation in sports for the 2021-2022 sports seasons in comparison to the previous year, noting that all three seasons saw increased participation. Spring has experienced the highest level yet. He commented on the importance of sports after coming off of COVID as the students needed to have sports available to give them time, be together, and invest in themselves. He reviewed the personal accomplishments of particular students, team accomplishments, as well as scholar and sportsmanship



team awards. He stated that the success of the teams and individuals speaks highly of the opportunities the District is providing to them, and the caliber of students in a small district. He noted that the District continues to look at possibilities to work with other districts to expand opportunities to the students. He thanked the Board, staff, students, and community of their support of athletics which he said is important to the students' overall wellbeing, and it has intrinsic value, as well as ties to the Board's goals.

#### Curriculum Update - M. Kramer

Dr. Kramer reviewed the Federal government offering of Emergency Connectivity Funds. She stated the District has received two fundings to date and a third is being applied for. The first offering received was for \$70,000 and reimbursed the District for Chromebooks purchased to support students during COVID. The second funding of \$14,000 reimbursed the District for the purchase of iPads. We are still waiting to hear about mifis needed for connectivity. The third funding being applied for will be utilized for the purchase of additional iPads which are needed for special education testing and also for the students who will be in a self-contained classroom next year, and for Chromebooks.

With regard to the self-contained classroom, Dr. Kramer noted that as placement of students continues to be an issue and not available, the District has decided to have a 6-1-1 classroom in-house. This will save the District approximately \$20,000 per student.

Dr. Kramer noted that the District is halfway done with Annual Reviews. Meetings will continue in May and June.

On March 31, 2022, the Resource Review Committee met again to discuss the math series for the upcoming school year. After much discussion and concern over adding additional changes to the math program with the additional programming changes for Literacy, the Committee decided to keep MyMath and GlencoeMath for one more year. The new program from the publisher is not the same, seems to lack rigor for the upper grades and is not kid friendly for the younger grades. The Committee felt that of all the programs reviewed, EnVision Math, was a good option and is looking to potentially move to EnVision Math for the 2023-2024 school year. Before doing so, the Committee has requested teachers to review it and provide feedback from each grade level by May 6, 2022.

#### Principal's Update - M. Carter

Mr. Carter updated the Board of the student activities within the school. The Elementary School production of *Annie* took place this weekend and was very successful. He thanked Mmes. Gilbert and Nobles, as well as the staff, parents, students, and community who worked so hard for it to happen.

The Safety Committee met again last week regarding the evacuation drill. He provided details of the locations for evacuation and the work with the individuals in charge of the locations, the fire company, the police, and other community



members to ensure a successful drill. A letter will be sent home soon to the parents/guardians providing details. The drill is scheduled for May 13, 2022, with a rain date of May 20, 2022. Mr. Carter commented that if the two dates do not work out, it will be postponed until next year given all the year-end activities that need to take place.

Mr. Carter met with the Gay/Straight Alliance and discussed name and gender change processes and support available for the student, other students, staff, and families. He noted that there are a few students that are considering this and each situation is different.

State ELA assessments for grades 3-8 were performed last week and were computer-based. It was a learning curve for all involved but overall, there were very few issues and it went very well. The math state assessments will be offered after break and will also be computer-based. Mr. Carter commented that based on statements from years past that he has received/heard from the State Education Department, there is a high likelihood that these future assessments will be completely digital with no paper-based option.

Mr. Carter discussed that there will be some changes in the grades the Elementary teachers are teaching next year due to the fluctuation in numbers. He also discussed one way in which the High School addresses class size fluctuations through only offering some courses every other year to be able to ensure higher numbers and to be able continue to offer to students.

Graduation plans continue. It is scheduled for Saturday, June 25, 2022, at 9:30 a.m. in the auditorium. The Alumni Committee provided a list of potential alumni speakers. He noted they were in no specific order so he reached out by who was geographically the closest and worked from there. Mr. Trey Crosby accepted the offer to speak. He is a 1965 alumni, who is a retired high school principal, and a very good three-sport athlete.

Summer school planning continues. Grades 7-12 in need of remediation or credit recovery will be sent to the regional BOCES Center in Medina. High School students can receive up to three credits of recovery via this program. Transportation will be provided. Elementary summer school will be offered to as many as possible but it will be depending on the numbers and staffing. The District is looking to offer the program five days a week vs. four, and run from July 5 - July 29, 2022, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The hours and days per week are more but the number of weeks it is being offered is less than last year. The main focus will be on remediating/strengthening ELA and math skills.

Mr. Atwater noted he enjoyed the musical and everyone did an awesome job. Mrs. Ecker inquired about the hiring for summer school and if there would be an interview process. Mr. Carter stated that there will be no need for an interview unless there is a circumstance that too many individuals have applied for the positions. Based on a question from Mrs. Voss, Mr. Carter noted that the Seniors



selected a graduation speaker for their class but he would not divulge the name or the individual they dedicated the yearbook too.

#### Financial Update – C. Heiligenthaler

Ms. Heiligenthaler reviewed the budget transfers presented in the Board package for review and approval which were for special education tuitions that were more than what was budget for, as well as to transfer from the general fund to special education for two aides that are 1:1 for students with IEPs.

The Brockport Migrant Program will be utilizing the school for their summer program for grades kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade for four weeks, July 5 – 29, 2022 which will be a full day for approximately 70 students. Cafeteria services and technology services will be done by the District.

The District has been utilizing an arts in education program through BOCES this year which pays for some of the District's field trips, specifically to the Challenger Center and Strong Museum of Play. The teachers fill out an application and submit it to BOCES. If the program meets the required criteria and is approved, the District receives aid the next year on the admission cost of the field trip which results in a significant savings for the District.

Ms. Heiligenthaler reviewed the draft Budget Statement also known as the Tri-component Budget, and the required documentation. The document will be available on the school website, the library, and each office the week of April 25, 2022. Some of the required components included the three-part budget breakout for the District, the line by line details of the budget, the summary pages as to what the District reviewed in depth which resulted in the 3.26% increase; the property tax report card, budget notice, required disclosures, as well as exemption impact report for Niagara and Orleans Counties.

#### 2022-2023 Budget Discussion including presentation of the final 2022-2023 budget and property tax report card for adoption, review budget statement and budget notice - C. Heiligenthaler, J. Reimer

Mr. Reimer discussed the Budget Advisory Committee, its makeup, the process the Committee followed, and how they reviewed and provided input on the 2022-2023 proposed budget. The Committee met five times since it was created. He commented that the Committee felt the budget being presented is extremely appropriate and represented well for what the District has. The Committee also looked at the tax rate and levy. Mr. Reimer noted there are still some unknowns but did not feel the plant value would change, although values of the town may result in a small increase in the tax rate, but will most likely be less than the 2020-2021 rate. He noted that a 3.9% levy increase could aid in setting the District up for a more sustainable budget down the road. This levy change does not get where the District needs to be completely, but helps substantially for the future. He stated that the Committee felt the levy increase was an acceptable change which would result in a steadier rate in future years. Mr. Reimer discussed the budget flyer being prepared for distribution next week in advance of *The Banner* to try to provide as



much information as possible about the budget through a few different means for the community. He commented and concurred with the Committee that the 2022-2023 proposed budget supports what the District wants to do for its students and community. Mr. Atwater thanked the Budget Advisory Committee, Administration, and Board members for the work they did to provide and bring forth a budget they support. He felt the proposed budget is a responsible compromise given the rising costs everyone is experiencing and that hopefully the community will support it.

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

Mr. Reimer provided an update on the solar project, noting all the panels are up and the District is now dependent on National Grid to connect the power so it can commence producing energy. He is hoping this might occur in May or mid-June but was unable to say for certain. The vegetation around the project should be in before Memorial Day so it can be established.

With regard to projects, the HVAC project has been completed; lighting is complete except for the auditorium which will be done over break; and the final pieces of the weight room capital outlay project will also be completed over break.

Mr. Reimer provided an update on the Sheriff's tower, noting he received communication last week after seven months of working with the NYS Education Department (SED) for approvals, that the SED approval is now not needed. He contacted the Sheriff's Office with the new Chief Deputy who replaced Deputy Weidel, who retired, to let them know but is unsure at this point if it will speed up the project or cause a delay.

Mr. Reimer discussed the current COVID status and guidance. He commented that the District is operating much like pre-pandemic with what it is able to do for the students and does not anticipate it going backwards, but said one does not know for certain. Regardless, the District will continue to monitor the situation. He would like to see next year be business as usual for all. Regarding COVID guidance, given the current situation, Mr. Reimer asked if the Board would like to move its meetings back to the Board Room. They all agreed to move back and utilize the auditorium only if the situation dictates the need.

Mr. Reimer reviewed accountability of State testing. The District will be administering tests but there is some news that schools are now hearing that there most likely will not be a direct or overt level of accountability. The school will be offering tests and students will be required to take tests but the results may be just used as a baseline for the students as some district have students who are not fully back still, some being fully remote, and/or partially remote at the start of the year. He commented on the recent use of computer-based testing for ELA testing and that it is his belief that this form of testing may be more the norm going forward. Mr. Reimer commented that his is hopeful to have more information for the May meeting.



Mr. Reimer discussed the use of COVID stimulus spending and the difficulty to utilize the monies directed in some area such as summer school and after school as required, noting however the District will continue to look at what the needs of the District and students are in order to most effectively utilize the funding over the three-year time period allocated.

Mr. Reimer provided a few highlights from the last few weeks that he saw with staff and students including Mr. Strong’s forensics class where the class was made to look like a crime scene and the students had to do fingerprinting, develop a data base, and collaborate and work together. He stated that it was great to see what was happening with that lesson. The First Grade Team was doing mystery readers and Ms. Martel from the High School helped and participated as Madame Thor. He commented that the students were enthralled by Ms. Martel’s participation as well as the program in general and interactions with the readers. He noted that Mr. Mallon’s class that designed and built a rowing machine out of recycled materials. He stated that what he saw just this week reinforced the great things and benefits of a smaller district, what it is able to do, and the ingenuity of the teachers.

**Policies/  
Plans**

The second reading of the policies listed below was completed.

<b>Policy #</b>	<b>Policy Name</b>
4310	Superintendent of Schools
4320	Superintendent - Board of Education Relations
4410	Professional Development Opportunities
4420	Compensation and Related Benefits
5110	Budget Planning and Development
5120	School District Budget Hearing
5130	Budget Adoption
5140	Administration of the Budget

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to approve policies 4310, 4320, 4410, 4420, 5110, 5120, 5130, 5140 as recommended.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

First Reading of Policies: 5150, 5210, 5220, 5230, 5240, 5241, 5250, 5310

<b>Policy #</b>	<b>Policy Name</b>
5150	Contingency Budget
5210	Revenues
5220	District Investments
5230	Acceptance of Gifts, Grants and Bequests to the School District
5240	School Tax Assessment and Collection



5241	Property Tax Exemption
5250	Sale and disposal of School District Property
5310	Bonding of Employees and School Board Members

Mr. Atwater discussed Policy 5241/Property Tax Exemption with regard to the Senior Citizens and its alignment with the resolution the Board approved in 1997 for which the exemption was limited to \$18,500 per year. He inquired if the Board would want to leave it or change the level. The Board questioned what other districts' policy limits were, what comprised the \$18,500, and discussed how this exemption diverts the tax burden from senior citizens to others to provide. They agreed that the threshold, legal limits, laws pertaining to it, numbers of participants would have to be estimated, and what is included in the threshold with regard to the limit needs to be reviewed. They discussed the poverty level for people at \$17,667 for one elderly and questioned what that included. After discussion, the Board agreed for Mr. Reimer to research and bring back additional information for consideration. As a change would be too late for this year, any change potential would take effect by next March.

There were no additional comments or questions regarding the policies presented for review.

**Education**

Mr. Reimer discussed the Board's Goal #2 - Improve/Increase the well-being of the school community, and highlighted the two action steps included within the goal. He noted that some of the progress made to date also coordinates to the goal which will be discussed next month regarding increasing student engagement and investment in the community. Mr. Reimer noted that the goals were developed in 2018-2019 and implemented starting 2019-2020. The action steps for Goal #2 include: (1.) Provide on-site assistance in conjunction with local service providers to navigate various student, staff and community needs including but not limited to the delivery of mental health and overall wellness services. (2.) Provide students with social and emotional growth opportunities within the classroom setting and through extracurricular activities. Mr. Reimer reviewed the in-house support which was maintained and the added support in places to supplement services for students to meet the needs as much as possible. He reviewed the current staffing related to this social/emotional learning services including the principal, two Instructional Support Specialists (ISS), three guidance counselors, a full-time psychologist, and three BOCES 0.6 FTE positions which include a social worker, a behavior specialist, and a mental health specialist. This equates to 5.8 FTE positions solely dedicated to social/emotional learning for grades PreK-12. Both New Directions and Northpointe were also brought in for more support. Mr. Reimer commented that he did not think there is anything as too much mental health support, with the addition of the ISS position the ratio of support to students is the highest ever. BOCES Support, although not here every day, helps. Mr. Reimer discussed the improved RTi process for which 35 Elementary and 11 Jr./Sr. High students were referred through the process. Additional support includes, but is not limited to, the Mental Health Advisory Board, and M&M Peer Group that were added for students, assessment of SEL had 32 students go through the process. The District



added full class support for training on skills and managing social/emotional struggles. Mr. Reimer noted that the District continues to layer in as much as possible for the students, and there is a need to keep adding based on fit and what we can do based on time, resources, and dollars. Good strides continue to be made the past few years. The District needs to also look at mental health of staff and manage it as some staff members are burnt-out or near that point. As such, the District is looking into an EAP program similar to what is available at other workplaces as part of the staff's health consortium. He and Ms. Heiligenthaler are reviewing options but to date have not found one that can give a lot of support to staff at a reasonable cost.

Mr. Reimer reviewed next steps in connection to the goal which included the need for another measurement and diagnostic tools available to look at where the District is and how to move down the road.

**Personnel  
Items**

Motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gancasz, to approve the resolution conferring tenure of Bethany Tabone in the area of Elementary Education effective September 4, 2022, subject to that the employee must meet all requirements of the educational law and corresponding regulations.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gancasz, to approve the appointment of Erin Goodlander as CSE/CPSE Chairperson Alternate effective April 11, 2022. Mr. Sweeney inquired about the process for selection. Dr. Kramer discussed the rationale for the alternative appointment based on need as sometimes meetings run long and/or there are scheduling conflicts. She noted that Mrs. Goodlander has the administrative degree and is qualified to cover on an emergency basis if she and Ms. Breier were unavailable.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gancasz, to approve the appointment of Karen DeMorest as Election Chairman/Chief Inspector for the Annual Meeting on May 17, 2022, and designate the District Clerk to name another Election Inspector in her absence should the need arise

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gancasz, to approve the appointment of Joelle Andrews as a parent/community volunteer.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Mr. Reimer noted that Ms. Tabone was one of his first hire and that she has set high standards and done a fantastic job with the students. She continues to build upon



and develop her teaching techniques, and is a positive and valuable addition to the staff. Administration and the Board congratulated Ms. Tabone.

### **Business & Financial**

#### **Items**

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to accept the Warrant Report for April 11, 2022.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to accept the Extraclassroom Report dated March 2022.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to accept the Treasurer's Report dated March 31, 2022.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to approve the proposed budget of expenditures of the Barker Central School District for the 2022-2023 school year in the amount of \$17,817,534 and direct that such proposed budget of expenditures be submitted at the annual meeting of the qualified voters of the Barker Central School District, Niagara and Orleans Counties, State of New York, as Proposition #1 scheduled on May 17, 2022, subject to further federal or state directives.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to approve that the proposed language for the election of Board of Education members with names and order to be determined after 5:00 p.m., April 18, 2022, to be submitted at the annual meeting of the qualified voters of the Barker Central School District, Niagara and Orleans Counties, State of New York, as Proposition #2 scheduled on May 17, 2022 subject to further federal or state directives: "To elect two (2) members of the Board for a 3-year term commencing July 1, 2022 and expiring on June 30, 2025, to succeed Mary Jo Clemens-Harris and Heather Ecker whose terms expire on June 30, 2022."

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to approve the proposed funding for the funding for the Barker Public Library, which is raised by annual levy of a tax upon the taxable real property within the Barker Central School District be increased from \$79,590.00 to \$81,182.00, an increase of \$1,592.00 and direct that such proposed funding be submitted at the annual meeting of the qualified voters of the Barker Central School District, Niagara and Orleans



Counties, State of New York as Proposition #3 scheduled on May 17, 2022, subject to further federal or state directives.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to approve the 2022-2023 Tri-Component Budget Statement and Budget Notice.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to approve the Property Tax Report Card upon approval of the 2022-2023 Barker Central School Budget.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to approve the following 2021-2022 budget transfers as outlined:

From Budget Code	Amount	To Budget Code
A2250.400-07-2000	\$42,000	A2250.471-07-2000
A9060.800-00-0000	\$80,000	A2250.472-07-2000
A2110160-00-2502	\$38,000	A2250.160-07-2510

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Mr. Reimer noted that he was asked to look into the state of the Yorker House and determine what options are available to the District in its regard as it has been vacant for a number of years and is deteriorating. After speaking with attorneys, the current options would include to sell it as is, give to another municipality such as the town but this option includes caveats, and do whatever the District wants to. To rehab the building to usable space would require a lot of money. It was noted that Dr. Klatt looked into that a number of years ago. Previously it was used as a museum but the historical society has since moved to the Babcock House. It is unknown if that would be an interest to the society but Mr. Reimer could reach out. The Board further discussed and Mr. Atwater noted that the community should be asked for input, commenting it would take a lot of money to bring up to code and currently, is a liability for the District, but agreed there was a need to come up with a solution in his opinion. Mrs. Clemens-Harris thought it should be disposed of and did not see the village having an interest in it either as it is already dealing with a number of abandoned buildings. Mr. Sweeney suggested Mr. Reimer contact Dick Ray who was an advisor years ago but might be able to provide some historical information on the building that may be of value in determining a solution. Mr. Atwater asked for information about costs relative to the various options, such as fixing, demolish, disposing of. Mrs. Ecker suggested contacting the town also to cover all basis. Mr. Sweeney asked about any designation which Mr. Reimer will research further. Mr. Atwater noted that the District needs to reach out to the



community and come up with a permanent solution. Mr. Sweeney asked to try to see if it would be possible to pull more information together to potentially make a decision at the next meeting. The Board concurred with Messrs. Atwater and Sweeney.

Mr. Atwater stated that the Board, the Committee, and Administration did a good job on the budget this year.

**End of Public**

**Session** Motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, to end the Public Session and enter into Executive Session at 8:12 p.m., for the purpose of discussing negotiations and matters of a particular personnel.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

**Executive**

**Session** Motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, to approve the adjournment of the Executive Session at 9:20 p.m., and return to Public Session.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

**Public Session/**

**Adjournment** Motion by Mrs. Ecker, seconded by Mrs. Gancasz, that the Board approve the end of the Public Session and adjournment of the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

Prepared by,

Mary H. Eadie  
District Clerk