



BARKER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Education Meeting Minutes
Auditorium
Monday, August 31, 2020

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. Heilighenthaler
Public: 1

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 and an addition under the Business & Financial items was added as Item C to address an electrical bid request recommendation for approval. With no further additions or changes, a motion was made 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. A motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, to accept the minutes from the Regular Board Meeting dated of August 3, 2020 as presented.
Yes: 7, No: 0
Motion carried.

PUBLIC FORUM

None.

PRESENTATIONS

Principal's Update – Mr. Carter

Mr. Carter provided an update on the hiring process for the substitute part-time music and substitute social studies teachers which are presented for approval this



evening. The District is still in the process of hiring a full-time science teacher as the newly appointed teacher subsequently resigned. As a result, in the interim, teaching of the science courses will be split amongst Messrs. Reimer and Mucha, and Mrs. McIntyre. He noted that an update will be provided to the community on this so they are aware for the opening of the school year.

With regard to the reopening plan, Mr. Carter acknowledged that there will need to be adjustments and changes once the District opens, as well as obstacles to overcome such as conflicts in schedules, but that hopefully everyone will have patience as the District works through the new way of teaching to all three cohorts. He noted that every Monday the students and their families will be provided the expectations for the week by their teachers, and Wednesdays will be used for group meetings, office times, and time for students to get help and follow-up on classes they were unable to sync up for.

Regarding school activities, Mr. Carter noted that Open House, scheduled for September 9th, has been postponed to give the District more time to adjust to the reopening. Mr. Carter is continuing his meetings with the Senior Class Officers to discuss many events such as Homecoming, dances, and the possibility of having them, postponing or changing how they have traditionally looked, all of which will need to be based on guidance due to the environment we are in. He stated that unfortunately given the restrictions currently in place and emphasis on safety, he does not see how the District could have Homecoming and many of the traditional aspects like the parade, dance or pep rally as in the past. With regard to athletics, the District is still waiting on an update from the State Task Force, who had another meeting today, on exact guidance. Once know, the District will have conversations both internally and externally with other schools in the league.

Mr. Carter noted the sincere thanks to retired employee, Joan Morgan, along with numerous members of the community, who volunteered time and materials to make over 1,200 masks for students and staff for the District's benefit

Mr. Carter mentioned that a number of families came and toured the building during the family visiting hours last week which enabled them to see where their students' classes will be and the work done to prepare for opening day. He also stated that as the end of year wave could not be done, it will be held on Wednesday from 2:30 – 3:00 p.m. in the elementary bus loop for students and their family.

Mr. Atwater thanked the staff and everyone for all they did in order to prepare for opening day of the school.

Financial Update – Ms. Heiligenthaler

Ms. Heiligenthaler noted that tax bills were sent out on Friday, August 28, 2020 and due to the current Covid-19 situation, a drop box has been established outside the District Office to allow people to pay in person but without having to come into the building. She noted that the District will not accept cash payments and if any



are received, they will be returned in order to protect the District from receipt of counterfeit bills and as there is no bank locally to deposit it with.

The year-end financial audit is being finalized and will be presented at the September meeting.

Ms. Heiligenthaler discussed a transparency report she is working on which analyzes student spending per building. It is the first year the District was required to do this State report.

The transfer of processes to Erie 1 and Erie 2 BOCES continues to move along and issues that have occurred are being worked through and there are no concerns to report.

Curriculum Update – Dr. Kramer

Mr. Reimer covered Dr. Kramer's report as she was at a meeting. He provided an update on the device distribution, noting that approximately 1/3 or 298 families still needing to pick devices up, with the last pickup scheduled for tomorrow, September 1 between 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. Families who have not responded will be reached out to. A larger number of families than anticipated have requested mifi based on the usage in Spring, and the District is working with BOCES to get more for the students.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Reimer provided an update on the status of student athletics and varying opinions on the proposed September 21, 2020 start date, as well as different aspects on perspectives from a statewide or regional decision perspective. He stated that September 21st would be a push for the District as it is just reopening. The District has to consider how it impacts students, especially fully remote students, transportation, etc. He did anticipate that that there most likely would be no state-level championships with Fall and the District might be able to play contiguous counties or regions such as Niagara, Orleans and/or the Finger Lakes but it will be pending guidance. He stated he wants to ensure the District plans thoroughly for it and considers the safety of all.

Mr. Reimer noted that the Banner is being printed in black and white vs. color for this edition as a cost savings and as it is a condensed version. He stated that the cancellation of Community Ed for the Fall would also be communicated in this issue. The decision was based on current guidance and after discussions with various people, including Mr. Cantella given the current Covid-19 situation, the need to get things done within the campus under the new teaching schedule, and for the safety of all. If Community Ed is able to be held in the Winter, the course offerings will be made available through the Winter edition of the Banner.

Mr. Reimer noted that the next two Superintendent Conference Days will be with all staff and center around getting them back into the building as it has been six



months for many since they have been in, required and new training, professional development, and preparing the classrooms. Mr. Reimer discussed anxiety levels being high and what had happened at other Districts since opening. During this time, the District will be promoting safety to move forward vs. backwards.

Mr. Reimer discussed how school will look moving forward and how should it if it needs to go remote. He commented that many schools administrators do anticipate needing to go remote at some point in time. What the triggers that would send Barker back into a fully remote learning environment were discussed by the Board as a result. Mr. Reimer noted that one trigger could be attendance trends, such as 5%, of students/staff being out compared to historical or trends occurring. Governor Cuomo's ratio is 9% to shut down. Mr. Reimer inquired into the Board's view if 5% is a good benchmark trigger, 9% or somewhere in between. The Board discussed the various scenarios, if the ratio includes a single cohort, both, historical trends, and if a cluster exists in reported absences. Mr. Reimer noted that Gov. Cuomo's ratio is based on a region, so if Buffalo spikes and Barker is fine, the school will close if the spike causes the region's numbers to be at 9%. Barker would be able to close if it deemed necessary even if the region was stable. A decision for the school to close would be a result of a full Board discussion. Criteria to reopen would be based on conversations with Mr. Stapleton and the Department of Health. After discussion with opinions of the members being heard and answers responded to, the Board concurred on the statement as follows:

“In the event of increased student absences, such as a 5% variance from regular attendance trends, the District shall strongly consider alternative instructional methodologies.”

The Board then discussed if illnesses of staff and students occurs, how it is handled and what reentry requirements would be. If a person tests positive for Covid, the Department of Health will contact the school and necessary tracing and steps would be followed. The Department of Health may not inform the school of who the individual is due to privacy requirements. At this point in time, an individual would not be allowed back into school until s/he tests negative and has quarantined for fourteen days.

Mr. Reimer noted that Ms. McKee, the Nurse, has been an integral part of the reopening plan, and will be providing training to all staff on all the protocols and safety measures that must be taken and have been implemented. She will also be training the students. He noted the critical role she will play going forward in assessing staff and students of health conditions.

Mr. Reimer also discussed the usage of masks and requirements for them and if not being worn or become soiled. Given the costs of some of the options to address when masks are not being used, that the District purchased lanyards for the students to use in conjunction with their masks for safety reasons and as a cost savings



compared to other options available. He noted that for safety purposes the lanyards do have a break-away clip and will not be shared.

Mr. Reimer then discussed the status of the power plant and payment of the \$1.9 million in back taxes owed and the good faith effort by the plant by providing to the District a payment of \$59,200 today. He explained the budget impact of the \$1.77 million not being received, as well as the reduction in State Aid, creates a nearly \$4 million fund balance impact. He reviewed an updated timeline of fund usage based on the non-payment of the plant. Because of the seriousness of the plant non-tax payment, Mr. Reimer discussed the need to look at the EPCs and how the Board would like to proceed given the financial deficit is not an expense issue. He noted that if nothing changes, spending will need to change which would be detrimental to the students in order to make the District solvent. Mr. Reimer discussed that the State did not give the District the aid as projected last year and the BOCES aid and excess cost payments were reduced by 20% resulting in a potential loss of last year's aid also resulting in a potential reduction of \$500,000 next year. As some of the original amount projected for building and transportation aid will most likely to be withheld next year it will have a negative impact on the projected budget. In relation to the EPCs analysis, if building aid is held back, the projected savings will be impacted as well as the long-term benefits. As a result of this updated information, Mr. Reimer noted that the District must proceed slowly and cautiously move forward with regard to the EPC decisions. He noted that generally the building aid provided to a district is not touched, however, this is a new environment that may not hold true. He noted that the District will need to continue to look at savings impact of the EPCs. He noted that of the EPC proposals, three companies were brought back. He stated that each proposal provided financial benefits in the short and long-term, but the results were accomplished in very different ways as a result of what was tied together in the proposals. The proposals took into account the input from the forums last Fall as well as the known infrastructure needs. Of the proposals, the largest return also would have the largest gross cost to the District of approximately \$2.1million. The other proposals did not do some of the things outlined in the larger one and Mr. Reimer detailed the differences between them relating to HVAC, control costs, lighting, fixtures, plumbing, boiler replacement, etc. The cost also did not reflect grants and other opportunities available to reduce the overall cost of the project. Mr. Reimer stated what is important is the return on the investment. Mrs. Clemens-Harris inquired about if the District would receive the building aid back and was informed it would but it may not get all of it as originally projected. Therefore the short-term savings may be a wash but in the long-term, it would save the District money. The savings projected in the EPCs are guaranteed or the company would pay the District back. The payback period with the State aid is eighteen years which is one of the barometers in reviewing projects by the NYSED. The most expensive project results in the largest savings to the District and more aid being received if given. The projects have maintenance schedules built into them which will free up time for the staff. The least expensive proposal does address different issues but does not refurbishing devices, would not replace the boilers, and does not address all the



issues and the savings to the District would be less. The Board discussed the different propositions and views on moving forward. They concurred it was a lot of money, but it makes sense to move forward with the larger project to save more money in the long run. They also acknowledged concerns pertaining to the long-term stability of the District and the concern of the understanding of the community given the current economic conditions and impact of Covid-19 currently. Mr. Reimer noted that this is a Board decision and it could be taken to the community for a vote. If a vote is done and approved, it would result in 10% more aid being received to cover the costs for the District. If the community turns the proposal down, the Board would still have the option to decide if it would want to move forward. Mr. Reimer commented that the project would get the District close to net zero with the solar project savings accounted for if the Board opts for the larger project. After further discussion, the Board agreed to move forward with the larger project proposal and take to the voters in May of 2021.

POLICIES Upon motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, the Board agreed to approve the following policies:

- 8280 - Instruction for English Language Learners;
- 8310 - Purposes of Instructional Materials;
- 8320 - Selection of Library and Multimedia Materials; and
- 8330 - Objection to Instructional Materials.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

EDUCATION Motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mrs. Gancasz, to approve the following book be declared excess property and that the Superintendent, or his designee, be authorized to dispose of said item as presented: New York Adventures in Time and Place, McGraw Hill School Division, ISBN 0-02-149194-1 / 4, Copyright 2001, approximately 100 copies.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

PERSONNEL

ITEMS A motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Voss, to accept the resignation of Cody Campbell, Science Teacher, effective August 5, 2020.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

A motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Voss, to approve the indefinite Leave of Absence for Part-time Music Position of Kim Wendling effective September 1, 2020.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

A motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Voss, to approve the appointment of Jennifer Goodwin as a Substitute Teacher effective September 1, 2020 at the per diem rate.



Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

A motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Voss, to approve the appointment of Maggie Kelsey and Donna Witkop as Part-time Food Service Helpers at a rate of \$11.80/hour effective September 1, 2020.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

A motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Voss, to approve the appointment of Antonio Ingenito as a Substitute Teacher effective September 1, 2020 at the per diem rate.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

A motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Voss, to approve the appointment of Kaitlyn Stachowiak as a Substitute Teacher effective September 1, 2020 at the per diem rate.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

A motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Voss, to approve the appointment of Alexander McCabe as a Substitute Cleaner at a rate of \$11.80/hour effective September 1, 2020.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

A motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Voss, to approve Kelsey Phillips as a Student Teacher for both Erin Goodlander and Jason LaRock from September - December, 2020 of the 2020-2021 school year.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

A motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Voss, to approve the following individual appointments for Nurse's Clinical Participation with School Nurse Sarah McKee during the 2020-2021 School Year.

- Alexandria Hurley: September 11, 14, 18, 21, 25, 2020;
- Tyler Dent: September 28, October 2, 5, 9, 2020;
- Amanda Equils: October 16, 19, 23, 26, 30, 2020;
- Emily Harrell: November 2, 6, 9, 13, 2020;
- Cassie Maynard: November 16, 20, 23, 2020; and
- Amanda Chase: November 30, December 4, 7, 11, 14, 2020.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

BUSINESS & FINANCIAL

ITEMS

A motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, to accept the Warrant Report dated August 31, 2020.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

A motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Royalton-Hartland Central School



District and Barker Central School District effective September 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021 for the education of students in grades K-12.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

A motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, to approve the awarding of the bid for purchase of electricity to New Wave Energy at the indexed adder rate of SC2 @ 0.0081 and SC3P @ 0.0072 per kwh used from November 1, 2020 to October 31, 2021.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

END OF PUBLIC

SESSION A motion by Mrs. Ecker, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to end the Public Session and enter into Executive Session at 8:08 p.m. for the purpose of discussing legal matters.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

EXECUTIVE

SESSION Motion by Mrs. Gancasz, seconded by Mrs. Ecker, to approve the adjournment of the Executive Session at 8:45 p.m. and return to Public Session.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

**PUBLIC SESSION/
ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Mrs. Gancasz, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, that the Board approve the end of the Public Session and adjournment of the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Prepared by,

Mary H. Eadie
District Clerk