

**Minutes of the Site and Facilities Committee Meeting of
Hawthorn Community Consolidated District #73, Lake County, Illinois
841 West End Ct, Vernon Hills, IL 60061
4:00 pm on the 8th day of December 2025**

Board Members Present: Jennifer Akin Asst. Supt. of Finance and Business Operations, Stephanie Peters and George Fievet, Board Members

Absent: None

Others Present: Mike Labbe, Director of Facilities, Bill Guenther, Safety and Security Liaison, and Cindy Hooten, Business Coordinator.

1.1 Meeting called to order at 4:01 pm

1.2 Roll Call: Stephanie Peters and George Fievet present

1.3 Public Comment: None

Discussion Items

2.1 Energy Discussion

Mrs. Akin explained that Hawthorn 73 belongs to the Illinois Utilities Purchasing Cooperative (IUPC), a regional energy consortium and Entel is our contact. The current agreement is for the timeframe July 2024 through June 2027. The District is exploring options such as solar which can be used to supplement the prebought electric credits. The district always uses more energy credits than the pre-allocated credits. As part of the IUPC, there is a demand response option which would require us to change our building temperatures based upon the IUPC temperature recommendations. Due to the extreme shifts in temperatures from unoccupied to occupied levels, the district does not follow the IUPC's demand response because student and staff safety and comfort are the most important elements for temperature setting.

ComEd offers an energy evaluation, free service. Mr. Labbe has met with ComEd for Middle North and Elementary North. The ComEd recommendations show that fine tuning could be useful. A determination of cost savings for the recommendations will help decide which recommendations should be done. Mr. Labbe will show ComEd the other buildings to get those recommendations as well. The student and staff safety and comfort are the most important elements of the energy discussion.

2.2 Summer Project Timeline Discussion

Mrs. Akin provided the timeline below for the 2026 summer work:

December 17, 2025 - 100 % Bidding Documents sent to LAMP

December 22, 2025 - LAMP to Issue Documents for Bid to Contractors

January 5, 2026 - Non-Mandatory Pre-Bid Meeting at 3:30 pm

January 14, 2026 - Bids Due at 11:00 am

January 15, 2026 - Board Meeting - Preliminary Bid Update
January 19-23, 2026 - Scope review with bidders
January 29, 2026 - Letter of Recommendation
February 5, 2026 - Board Meeting - Board Approval

For the 2025 summer work, it was noted that the re-epoxy at Middle North was not aesthetically pleasing. The company who performed the work would like to fix it at an extremely reduced cost over winter break. Mr. Fievet and Ms. Peters supported the efforts because it was under the required bid amount.

2.3 Copier Bid RFP Discussion

A copier Request For Proposal (RFP) was done due to vendor interest. Mrs. Akin noted that a Site Visit was held and we had thorough questions from interested vendors. Copier proposals were due December 5. We received 7 and evaluated the proposals on December 5. Three vendors were competitive and considered for the contract. The recommendation is that we go with Impact. The benefits of Impact include continuity of service and the weekly on-site staff member could help with some of the initial setup. Hawthorn 73 will be reducing devices from 43 units to 30 units.

2.4 Transportation Update

Partnership & Route Planning

Road closures have subsided now that winter has arrived. Weather conditions are definitely a challenge and extra steps have been put in place to ensure that routes are as close to on-time as possible.

Parent Tools & Technology

Lakeside continues to struggle with iPad deployment when there is a sub driver. Jen Ezop has been in contact with Leslie and we are told it will improve. iPads being used each day by both Sub drivers and regular drivers is key to success.

Service Levels

- The average number of sub drivers has risen from 4 to 8 per day. While sub drivers do their best, there is often a slight delay because the driver is not familiar with the route.
- Blown routes, which means none of the students are picked up, are averaging one a week which leads to parent frustration. Lakeside is always apologetic and we hope that this trend will cease in the future.

Safety Commitment

Student behavior continues to be a challenge. While we have added several aides to ride the bus in order to support the driver while the bus is in motion, the behavior reports keep coming. Megan Goldman has been helping the building staff to reinforce our bus protocols to keep students safe while traveling. Ms. Peters stated that bus behavior does impact learning so it is important.

2.5 Food Service Update

Ongoing Partnership & Menu Planning

Chef Anita Zgjani started on December 2, 2025. On her first day, she noted that the chicken was not appealing so Quest added sauces and the students found this a favorable improvement. Middle North experienced an issue with the last meal session not having enough of the daily entree, so Quest will now be sure to have enough of the daily entree.

Parent Engagement

A Parent Advisory Committee is in the works for February 2026 for the north side

Student Engagement

The middle north student council created a petition because the last lunch of the day was not getting the entree of the day due to low production. Quest has redirected their staff to make more of the entree every day even if that means that there will be waste. The goal is that the students in the last lunch period have the same choices as the kids in the first lunch period. Additionally, a Student council advisory committee is being planned for Middle North in March 2026

2.6 Grant Funding Update

Mrs. Akin presented the following information regarding grants:

- Title III Immigrant Student Education Program has not opened and status remains unclear. It may open in the Spring of 2026 similar to last year.
- The School Maintenance Project Grant (SMPG) grant has been approved by ROE and we are waiting on ISBE approval.
- Title I, II and IV final allotment has been awarded, amendments were submitted.
- DCEO grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity that we applied for in spring 2024 was finally paid! \$399k, funds were used at Middle North for floor replacement.

2.7 Operational Technology Update

Leadership & Department Restructuring:

Dr. Jean Sophie will continue to serve in the Director of Technology role until January 16, 2026. For the permanent Director of Technology, the first round of interviews went well and the next round of interviews will happen soon. As soon as feasible, a candidate will be brought to the BOE. We expect to hire a temporary technology technician to fill an opening with the idea that the new Director of Technology can hire the technician.

Network Infrastructure:

Battery backup devices have been installed with replacement anticipated in 2029. Cisco switches have been mapped and named. Scheduled patching has gone well and will continue on a monthly basis. The umbrella filter test is scheduled for December 22, 2025.

Security & Compliance:

Cyber Maturity work continues and Dr. Sophie is working on SOPPA, COPPA and FERPA compliance documentation.

Learning Systems & Applications:

Staff continue with Jamf and Google training. Learning apps continue to be a challenge with Liz, Dr. Sophie, and Impact working to find resolutions.

Communication:

The Technology Department is continuing to rebuild while serving students and staff. Communication is continuing to develop especially for Incident IQ tech tickets that require multiple layers of assistance.

Action Items

No action items on the agenda for this meeting.

4.1 Future Meeting Topics

Mr. Fievet asked about McKinsey. Mrs. Akin identified that would be a future item. In addition, three additional companies are being evaluated with lower pricing.

A transportation follow up question will determine if Hawthorn 73 shares buses with the High School routes.

Mrs. Akin will meet with Quest to determine if Quest can box up remaining meals at the end of the day and give to the food pantry or building families with need instead of throwing out meals at the end of day.

With no further items to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 5:10 pm. Motion by George Fievet and seconded by Stephanie Peters.

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Hooten

Jennifer Akin, Asst Superintendent
of Finance and Business Operations

George Fievet, Board Member

Date Minutes Approved:_____