**LIBERAL R-II SCHOOL BOARD MINTUES**

**November 18, 2020**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of the Liberal R-II School District was held on Wednesday, November 18, 2020 in the Board of Education Office. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Board President Brian King.

**Members Present:** Brian King (2021), President

Christie Ulrich (2023), Vice-President

Bryce Barton (2022)

Chris Morrow (2023)

John Simpson (2021)

Tonya Suschnick (2022)

Brian Williams (2023)

**Others Present:** William Harvey, Superintendent

Nicole Ruddick, HS / MS Principal

Rachel Miller, HS / MS Assistant Principal

Leticia Fry, Elementary Principal *arrived 7:50 p.m.*

Travis Walton, Athletic Director

Wendy Rose, Board Secretary

**See Guest List Below**

**PRELIMINARY MATTERS**

**Motion** by Simpson, seconded by Morrow to approve the presented agenda for the regular November 18, 2020 meeting. Motion carried 7-0.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**A. Motion** by Simpson, seconded by Barton to approve the open session minutes from the regular meeting held on October 14, 2020. Motion carried 7-0.

**B. Motion** by Ulrich, seconded by Suschnick to pay November 2020 bills as presented. Motion carried 6-0-1; Williams abstained from direct deposit check #411.

**C. Motion** by Suschnick, seconded by Morrow to approve the monthly bank statement from October 2020. Motion carried 7-0.

**D. Motion** by Barton, seconded by Williams to transfer $305,000 from MoSIP General Fund Account to the NOW account. Motion carried 7-0.

**Motion** by Williams, seconded by Suschnick to transfer $105,000 from MoSIP Bond Account to the NOW account. Motion carried 7-0.

**E.** No MOHEFA transfer needed this month.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**B.**  Adam Wolf addressed the board concerning the new Covid Mask Guidelines released by the Governor. The guests who were present wanted to stress to the board that they were opposed

November 18, 2020

Open Session

Page 2 of 4

to children of any age being required to wear a mask while at school. He had been in contact with the local health department director while gathering his information and he stressed that the board and administration had been doing a great job of keeping kids in school and the doors open in spite of Covid. He would like to see the school’s policy on mask wearing continue with no mandatory changes. He listed many reasons why masks were unbeneficial in students especially in the elementary school; speech and hearing are more difficult; they are a distraction from learning and they create unsanitary conditions for young children were a few of the reasons he cited.

The guests asked questions about how the quarantine process worked. Mr. Harvey explained the seating charts and the system of working with the health department to keep as many kids in school as possible. He explained there were other districts that would quarantine entire classrooms, bus lists and ball teams when there had been exposure. The health department has tried to limit quarantine to only those closest contacts.

In discussing quarantine, there were some concerns that were brought up such as students seem to learn better in the classroom and the extra responsibility of having to take care of their district provided electronic device such as a tablet or laptop for some. Several of the parents felt like social distancing should be enough to protect most students and quarantines shouldn’t have to happen if parents just kept their children home when they don’t feel well. Wolf also questioned the board on the liability of sending students’ home for quarantine where there wasn’t as much parent support as there are in other homes and how that could be damaging to the students.

The parent guests also asked about how other counties in the area were handling the

mask / quarantine requirements and if our school district could follow those guidelines. Newton county has less severe rules allowing students not to have to quarantine due to exposure if they would wear a mask for a certain number of days. Harvey stated the district would be going out on a limb if they go away from what the local health department was requiring. Legally we need to follow the guidelines set by our county.

*All parents on the guest list left the meeting at 7:33 p.m.*

The board continued their conversation on the possible mask mandate. Harvey stated the health department has stated that the lunch table is the greatest source of exposure within the district. Mrs. Ruddick shared that the middle and high school are taking more precautions by spreading students out farther during the lunch periods allowing only three to sit at a table together. Ruddick also stated that she felt like she would a couple staff members who would not follow a mandatory mask mandate if issued. Mr. Harvey and the health department both have stated that most of the cases within the school aren’t from school spread, they have come from outside school. Harvey also told the board if they wanted to consider changing the district plan the could but the health department would look closely at those modifications. The Board is in agreement to continue with the original reentry plans at this time and with the current health department guidelines until the district is told changes must be made.

November 18, 2020

Open Session

Page 3 of 4

**BUILDING PRINCIPAL REPORTS**

**Middle School / High School**

Mrs. Ruddick reported enrollment for the middle school at 87 for in class students and 5 distant learners. The high school has an enrollment of 110 in class students and 11 distant learners. Current activities included the art classes making Halloween costumes for babies in the NICU at Children’s Mercy last month. They are currently making Christmas cards for nursing home residents. Drama will put on their fall production this coming Friday evening. Barnwarming will be held on November 21st and the Snowball dance will be held on December 5th. All district Christmas concerts will be recorded and posted on the website.

**Athletic Director**

Mr. Walton reported that high school football ended with a 7-3 record. There were multiple players who were given All-Conference honors. Gunner Miller was name defensive player of the year for the second straight year in the Conference.

High School volleyball ended with a 9-15-2 record. There were three players who were named to the All-District team and Gracie Bott was the sole player to be name to the All-Conference team.

Cross Country boys won their district and finished 8th at the state competition. Abby Barton was the only member of the girls’ team to qualify for the state meet this year.

High School basketball teams are practicing; there are 16 boys and 10 girls out. The middle school boys’ basketball team currently has a 1-3 record and the girls team has a 3-1 record.

**Elementary**

Mrs. Fry reported enrollment for the elementary at 111 for in class students and 11 for distant learners. The first virtual parent-teacher conferences went as well as can be expected. Some parents were disappointed not to meet face to face but most parents participated. Teachers are working on their AMI (weather) days. Every teacher is asked to prepare five days’ worth of teaching material and assignments to have in case of inclement weather. This years Christmas program will be recorded during the school day and posted to the website on December 10th.

**SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**

Mr. Harvey reported that district revenues and expenditures are up approximately $44,000 when compared to this time last year. The district has been awarded the following CARES money; federal $83,223 which will cover two teachers and one bus drivers salary this year, $24.832 state funds which will cover the salary of an additional custodian to help with the elementary school and $67,525 county funds which helped by cleaning and sanitizing supplies and will be used to help replace our internet servers.

The high school FEMA project is almost complete. There are just a couple issues that need to be fixed or finished; the doors weren’t closing completely and the heat pump on the furnaces needed the gas to be reconnected. A couple of changes that may need to be made include a small canopy over the south gym door to help protect that area from sun and rain.

November 18, 2020

Open Session

Page 4 of 4

Also, carpet tiles may need to be laid in front of the restrooms in the lobby to keep the floor from being slick.

The elementary project is coming along. Footings are being poured and the concrete slab for the office and lobby will be poured next week. CDL and Norbury are working out the electrical connections for the new buildings. The project is still on schedule.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**A.** **Motion** by Morrow, seconded by Suschnick to enter into a Football Cooperative agreement with Bronaugh School district for the 2021-2022 season. Motion carried 7-0.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Motion** by Williams, seconded by Barton to set the filing dates for the April 6, 2021 Board of Education election as follows: Filing will begin at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, December 15, 2020 and will continue through Tuesday, January 19, 2021 during the district hours of 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on days school is in session. Filing will not be possible during Christmas recess, which will begin at 3:30 p.m. on Friday, December 18, 2020. Filing will resume at 7:30 a.m. on Monday, January 4, 2021 and will end at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 19, 2021. Motion carried 7-0.

**B. Motion** by Simpson, seconded by Williams to allow Mr. Harvey to solicit bids for a Food Service Management Company. Motion carried 7-0.

**C**. **Motion** by Williams, seconded by Simpson to hold the next regular board meeting on Tuesday, December 22, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. Motion carried 7-0.

**Motion** by Barton, seconded by Williams to go into closed session for the purpose of exception #3 (hiring, firing, disciplining and promotion of personnel). Roll Call Vote: Barton-yes, King-yes, Morrow-yes, Simpson-yes, Suschnick-yes, Ulrich–yes and Williams-yes. Motion carried 7-0. **(9:10 p.m.)**

**Motion** by Simpson, seconded by Morrow to adjourn. Motion carried 7-0.

**CLOSING TIME: 9:30 p.m.**

**GUEST LIST**

Joe Meadows

Kari Meadows

Brock Frieden

Elizabeth Frieden

Josh Workman

Haley Workman

Tabitha Beaman

Adam Wolf