



The Newport Board of Education held a regular meeting on January 27, 2021 at 6:30 PM. The meeting was held at 30 W. 8th Street, Newport, KY.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Malone called the meeting to order and asked for a roll call. The following were present: Ramona Malone, Dr. Julie Smith-Morrow, Melissa Sheffel, Sylvia Covington, and Aaron Sutherland.

Also, in attendance: Tony Watts, Superintendent. Central office administrators and guests were attending virtually.

Ms. Malone asked those in attendance to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance and pause for a Moment of Reflection.

Mr. Watts introduced Dr. Fred Carter. Dr. Carter is Tony's coach as he goes thru his superintendent training over the course of this school year.

PRESENTATIONS

January is Board Appreciation Month. Each building principal took a minute to thank the board for their leadership and support. Each principal especially thanked the board for their forward thinking in purchasing all the technology equipment for students. This has been a lifesaver during these months of virtual instruction. Each board member was presented with a gift in appreciation of their service.

Daniel Demonte and Harold Kremer from Barnes Dennig were in attendance virtually to review the auditor's report for year ended 6/30/20.

Mr. Kramer reviewed the audit scope, required communications, and the executive summary. The summary is as follows:

- An unmodified (clean) opinion on the financial statements.
- An unmodified (clean) opinion on the major federal programs.
- Excellent cooperation from Mr. Turner and staff.
- No internal control matters are reportable.
- No matters related to fraud or illegal acts.
- No significant audit adjustments or uncorrected (due to materiality levels) adjustments.

Mr. Kramer introduced Daniel Damonte who reviewed trends of assets and liabilities, revenue over expenses district-wide, balance sheet trends for the general fund, revenues over expenses of the general fund, and revenues over expenses for food service.

There were no questions. The board thanked Mr. Damonte, and Mr. Kramer for their presentation.

The board took a 15-minute break.

MINUTES OF DECEMBER 9, 2020, JANUARY 6, 2021, AND JANUARY 13, 2021

On MOTION BY SHEFFEL AND SECONDED BY SMITH-MORROW the minutes were approved as presented.

1174 - MOTION CARRIED 5-0

TREASURER'S REPORT

On MOTION BY SHEFFEL AND SECONDED BY SMITH-MORROW the financial statement was accepted and will be filed for audit.

1175 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

Ms. Hoover answered questions prior to the meeting regarding bills and ask if there were further questions. Ms. Malone did ask about the Burlington Coat Factory expense. Ms. Hoover explained this is a grant to purchase coats for students in need.

On MOTION BY SHEFFEL AND SECONDED BY SMITH-MORROW the bills were approved for payment.

1176 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

The treasurer's report also included:

- Credit card bill and receipts
- Administrator expense report
- Monthly report period 6
- Tuition reimbursement update
- Chester Davis Scholarship Fund update
- Draft budget

After much discussion regarding “why” Merrill Lynch can no longer hold the Chester Davis Scholarship funds, the board has asked for a representative from Merrill Lynch to attend a meeting to explain why money must be moved to another investment firm. No one seems to know this answer and before vetting other investment firms, the board would like a better understanding of the issue. Merrill Lynch has agreed to only hold the funds until March 1, 2021.

STUDENT LEARNING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Mr. Watts updated the board on the following:

- Kick-off meeting with the Northern KY Chamber of Commerce. The meeting centered around diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Possible partnership with Thomas More College to create a “principal pipeline”. This would be a cohort with Boone County. District administrators would be asked to teach the classes. Ongoing discussions will be taking place.
- Consulting contracts with Linda Rains

The board had several questions regarding the systems work as well as the strategic plan work. Mr. Watts explained why the work was important to the success of each department and ultimately the district.

The contracts will be revised, and an hourly rate will be added.

Ms. Stewart presented her report. She gave an overview on the following:

- Participation numbers

- Information on employee COVID vaccines – over 200 employees have been vaccinated thru St. E, just under 20 employees have been vaccinated on their own, and approx. 15 are still waiting for St. E to set up another appointment time. The second round of shots for most employees will be February 13.

The board and Mr. Watts thanked Ms. Stewart for all the work she has done to set up the vaccines for employees.

Mr. Grayson presented his report. There were questions about the upcoming roof work and fire alarm system work. Mr. Grayson explained that the roof they are replacing is probably original to the building. The fire alarm system is the oldest one the fire department has seen in the entire city. The camera work is complete as well as the replacement work on the water heaters.

Ms. Swanson presented her report to the board. Ms. Malone asked how the special education population is coping with virtual learning. Ms. Swanson reported that the number of special population students have dropped. While all students need to come back to school this is especially true with the special education population. Many of their schedules require daily repetition. These services are missing during virtual instruction.

Our mental health counselors are at or near full caseloads. Many regular ed students are dealing with anxiety and frustration also.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

On MOTION BY SMITH-MORROW AND SECONDED BY SHEFFEL, items 5 and 6, consulting contracts with Linda Rains, will be tabled until corrections can be made to the contracts.

1177 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

1. Personnel report.
2. FY 2021 Draft Budget
3. Expenses to attend the KSBA annual conference in Louisville on April 23-25, 2021.
4. 19/20 Annual Financial Audit
5. ~~Consulting contract with Linda Rains for systems work with leadership teams.~~
6. ~~Consulting contract with Linda Rains for strategic planning process.~~
7. 2nd reading of KSBA policy 09.124 – Tuition.
8. 1st reading of KSBA policy 03.1321 and 03.2321– Use of School Property
9. BG-1 application for NIS re-roof project
10. Owner/Architect Agreement for NIS re-roof project
11. BG-1 application for fire alarm system at Newport Primary School
12. Owner/Architect Agreement for NPS fire alarm project
13. Capital funds request to cover cost of NIS re-roof and NPS fire alarm projects.
14. Final pay application for district-wide camera project in the amount of \$73, 068.
15. Final pay application for water heater replacements at NIS and NPS in the amount of \$70,200.
16. Surplus technology equipment/furniture

On MOTION BY SHEFFEL AND SECONDED BY SMITH-MORROW consent agenda items 1-14 were approved as presented.

1178 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

BOARD COMMENTS/CONCERNS/UPDATES

Mr. Sutherland expressed his concerns about the number of failing students. He requested a report on specific trends that might lend some answers to the failures especially in grades 7-12. Mr. Watts will request a detailed report for the board.

Dr. Carter addressed the board regarding his work with Mr. Watts. He complimented Tony on doing a great job in his training; his love for the district, and the concerns Tony has for moving the district forward. His heart is in the right place. It has been a difficult year for all superintendents; especially those in the position for the first time.

ADJOURNMENT

On MOTION BY SUTHERLAND AND SECONDED BY SMITH-MORROW the meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

1179 – MOTION CARRIED 5-0

Chairman

Secretary