

## MINUTES OF SCHOOL DISTRICT REGULAR MEETING

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

#### SMITHVILLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Notice is hereby given that a Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Smithville Independent School District was held on Monday, August 28, 2023 beginning at 6:00 PM at the Smithville ISD Administrative Building, PO Box 479, 901 N.E. 6th Street, Smithville, Texas 78957.

**Members present:** Grant Gutierrez, Michael Hancock, Alan Hemphill, Chris Hinnant, Josh Magden, Candice Parsons

**Members absent:** Nancy Towry

**Others present:** Sarah Vinklerek, Stephanie Foster, Tracy Johnson, Tucker Copeland, Whitney Brown, Bethany Logan, Lindsey Sauders, Margarita Igoe, Erin Seale, Jack Page, Robert Tamble, Tim Sanders, Zack Harris, Michael Caudill, Candy Biehle, Rebecca Hamilton, Justin Bezner, Judy Bezner, Cheryl Burns, Denise Behrens

**Call to Order** – The Board President called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

**Roll Call** – The Board President called the roll of members. All members were present.

**Pledge of Allegiance** – The group recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Hearing** – The school is required by state laws and board policies CCG [Legal] and CE[Legal] to conduct a public hearing on the proposed budget. Any taxpayer of the District may be present and participate in the meeting. Mrs. McCarthy, Chief Financial Officer, made a short presentation of the 2023-2024 proposed budget.

**Public Communications** – There were no citizens signed up to communicate with the Board.

**Consent Agenda** – Grant Gutierrez moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Alan Hemphill seconded and the motion passed 6-0. The Consent Agenda included:

1. Minutes
2. Financial Statements
3. Investment Report
4. State Aid Comparison - Budgeted vs. Earned
5. Earned vs. TEA Payments
6. Tax Collection Report
7. Budget Amendments
8. Approve a Resolution regarding Extra-Curricular Status of the 4-H Organization and County Extension Agents

**Financial Report** – The Chief Financial Officer, Jean Ann McCarthy, reviewed the financial report with the Board of Trustees. No action was required.

**Superintendent's Report** – The Superintendent updated the Board on important issues pertaining to the District, including:

- Enrollment numbers as of August 25, 2023: Total enrollment 1828, with an attendance rate of 94.69%.
- Reminder of the special strategic planning board workshop scheduled for September 11, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.
- The Lady Tigers volleyball team will play Lehman at Lehman on Tuesday and will participate in a tournament in Flatonia on Thursday and Saturday.
- The Tigers JV/Freshmen football team will play Sealy at home on Thursday and the varsity will play Sealy in Sealy on Friday.
- Please refer to the new Smithville ISD website for the latest news and resources.

**SISD Curriculum Corner – Accountability** – Dr. Bethany Logan, Director of Curriculum, presented the 2023 Academic Accountability Overview.

**Discussion With City Of Smithville And Bastrop County Regarding A Grant That Would Provide Additional Improved Drainage on Secondary Campuses** – Tim Sanders with BEFCO Engineering presented information about a grant received and the potential partnership with Smithville ISD to utilize the funds available. The grant would pay for upgrades and an additional retention pond for possible future growth. The detention pond will help with the continued need for drainage around the City of Smithville and Smithville ISD campuses.

**COVID-19 Update** – School nurse Erin Seale presented a health update for the district.

**Senate Bill 1267** – Dr. Logan reported a schedule of required trainings for school district staff in accordance with Senate Bill 1267

**Tentative September Agenda Items** – Tentative items for the September agenda include:

- a. FIRST Ratings Public Hearing
- b. Financial Report
- c. Superintendent's Report
- d. Review and Approve District and Campus Improvement Plans and Performance Objectives
- e. Personnel

**Consider Adoption of the 2023-2024 District Budget** – The Board is required to adopt an operational budget before the beginning of the fiscal year, which begins September 1<sup>st</sup>. Grant Gutierrez moved to adopt the 2023-2024 district budget as presented. Josh Magden seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

**Consider Adoption of the 2023-2024 District Tax Rate** – The Board is required to set a tax rate within 60 days of receiving the certified tax roll but no later than September 30<sup>th</sup>. The Board is also required to conduct a public hearing on the budget and tax rate before setting the tax rate. The tax

rate necessary to fund the proposed 2023-2024 budget is \$0.9676 per hundred. That includes an M&O rate of \$0.7876 and an I&S rate of \$0.18 representing a combined decreased rate of \$0.1353 for M&O and I&S from the 2023-2024 budget year. The M&O rate is the maximum rate approved by voters in the tax ratification election held May 14, 2011. The I&S rate is the necessary rate to pay for bonded indebtedness. Josh Magden moved to approve the 2023-2024 tax rate as proposed. Michael Hancock seconded and the motion carried 6-0.

**Approval of Expenditure in Excess of \$50,000** – The purpose of this agenda item is to authorize the purchase of 2 school buses after September 1, 2023. The 2023-2024 budget currently has \$238,000 budgeted for the purchase of two new school buses. Grant Gutierrez moved to approve the purchase of 2 school buses as requested. Candice Parsons seconded and the motion carried 6-0.

**Consider Approval of Regulation Approving Self-Certification of Increased Micro-Purchase Threshold for FY 2023-2024** – The Federal Office of Management and Budget issued revised Uniform Grant Guidance updates that allow school districts to increase their micro-purchase threshold, for federal expenditures, from \$10,000 to \$49,999 if the LEA is a low-risk auditee for its most recent federal audit. This item must be reviewed and approved on an annual basis. This increase will allow Smithville ISD to make annual purchases up to \$49,999 without soliciting competitive price or rate quotations if the District considers the price to be reasonably based. By increasing the micro-purchase threshold, Smithville ISD will be able to continue to work in a more efficient environment when reasonably priced items are obtained. Alan Hemphill made a motion to approve the Regulation Approving Self-Certification of Increased Micro-Purchase Threshold for FY 2023-2024 as presented. With a second from Grant Gutierrez, the motion carried 6-0.

**TGC §551.071 Consider Support of Potential Litigation Regarding TEA Accountability Rating System, in Conjunction with Other Area Texas Districts** – A Texas Public School District coalition to freeze A-F (Refresh) Accountability Rating system and assignment of ratings has been formed and is suing TEA to freeze the release of all District accountability ratings in Texas. Founded by Kingsville ISD, the Coalition's legal counsel (Nick Maddox of O'Hanlon Law Firm) is filing suit based on a Texas law that requires TEA to provide the accountability rating system and grading rubric to Texas school districts BEFORE the start of the year of which they are to be graded. The coalition is asking the court to freeze the new system for a minimum until next year, and to maintain district's current rating this year. All school districts and any that have experienced a drop in their preliminary accountability scores are strongly encouraged to join. Josh Magden moved to authorize the superintendent to express the Smithville ISD's support of potential litigation regarding TEA Accountability Rating System, in conjunction with other area Texas districts. Candice Parsons seconded and the motion carried 6-0.

**Consider Approval of Required Trainings for School District Staff in Accordance with Senate Bill 1267** – In accordance with the requirements of Senate Bill 1267, the Superintendent shall recommend the District's professional development plan for all District employees. The Board shall annually review the professional development clearinghouse published by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and annually approve the District's professional development plan. The District's professional development plan must be guided by the SBEC clearinghouse training recommendations, note any differences in the District's plan from the

clearinghouse recommendations, and include a schedule of the required professional development for all district employees. Dr. Logan presented the plan to the Board of Trustees. Candice Parsons moved to approve the required trainings for school district staff in accordance with Senate Bill 1267. Michael Hancock seconded the motion and it carried 6-0.

**Resignations of Certified Personnel** – The Superintendent informed the Board of the resignation of Ashley Gartman, the ACE coordinator for the district. No action was required.

**Employment of Certified Personnel** – According to Board Policy DC [Local], the Superintendent has the authority to make recommendations to the Board regarding the selection of all personnel. The following professional staff have signed contracts with SISD in the past month: Desiree Sorber, Jennifer Holmes at Smithville Elementary, Willie Henderson and Brenda Hughes as teachers at Smithville Junior High, Scott Stephens as a teacher/coach at Smithville High School, Bethany Collins and Amanda Tyler as teachers at Smithville High School, and Michael Trost as an instructional coach at Smithville High School. This was an information item only.

Adjournment – Grant Gutierrez moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 p.m. With a second from Josh Magden, the vote passed 6-0.