

REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

November 25, 2020

8:30 A.M. Virtual Meeting

CALL REGULAR BOARD MEETING TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL at 8:31 am

Dr. Chris Dougherty called the regular board meeting to order and roll call was taken with three board members present. Board members present were Jason Bauer, Scott Doerr, and Chris Dougherty. Also present were NPT Director, Kelly Suey, NPT Program Coordinator/Transition Specialist, Sabrina Jones, and NPT Business Manager, Deanna Tarter.

Others in attendance include: Jessica Nguyen, Michelle Todd, Michael Edwards, Wendy Dulakis, Mara Atkins, Casey Matheson, Katie Hilgert, Kyle Anderson, and Doug Kirkbride.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS, PUBLIC COMMENT, AND CORRESPONDENCE

There was no public comment or correspondence.

MOVE TO APPROVE THE November 25, 2020 CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

Dr. Dougherty commented that the bills and treasurer report contains an item from a consulting bill that was received in her office that needs some review and scrutiny. She asked that it be removed from the consent agenda until that can be reviewed and clarified. Kelly asked if there were any other comments regarding the consent agenda.

Motion by Doerr to approve the November 25, 2020 consent agenda as presented and seconded by Bauer. Bauer- YEA, Doerr- YEA, Dougherty- NAY. Motion passed.

The consent agenda included Minutes from October 28, 2020 regular board meeting, Bills/Treasurer's Report from October, Board Policy Section 1 Cooperative Organization, Section 2 Board of Directors, Section 3 Cooperative Administration, Section 5 Personnel, & Section 8 Community Relations and move the December board meeting from December 23, 2020 to December 16, 2020.

NEW BUSINESS

First Reading of Board Policy 4, 6, & 7

Mrs. Kelly Suey presented the board policy Section 4:Operational Services, 6:Instruction, and 7: Students. The only change, pending approval, is the approved date will have to be changed to December 16th instead of December 23rd since the board meeting has changed.

Review and Take Action on NPT Tuition Reimbursement Program

Mrs. Suey discussed this at the last board meeting, but is now presenting the NPT Tuition Reimbursement Program paperwork. An employee can be eligible for \$150 per semester hour with a maximum of \$1,350 per year that will be allowed for NPT employees to take courses that are relevant to the employee's current instructional area, will go towards an endorsement/certification or towards a Master's degree to help the organization. They will go through an approval process first before enrolling in the course and then have to turn in their grade with an A or B before being reimbursed. For every year the Cooperative reimburses tuition, the employee agrees to stay on for another year of service. Failure to do so will require the employee to pay one-half the reimbursement back to the Cooperative.

Motion by Bauer, seconded by Doerr to approve the NPT Tuition Reimbursement Program as presented. Bauer- YEA, Doerr- YEA, Dougherty- YEA. Motion passed.

Approve Contract for Business Manager Consultation for January 1, 2021-June 30, 2021

Michelle Rexroad has been providing consultation and there has not been a contract in place. Due to some surprises that have happened, Mrs. Suey thought it would be best to come up with a contract for the second half of the year from January 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021. In #2, there is a typo, where it has 60 hours it should be 160. We have significantly lowered this to 160 when we originally anticipated approximately 450 hours, but due to some bills that were unexpected, we have drastically cut them. She'll be required to send in a timesheet and work log on the 5th of each month for us to include in our bills on a monthly basis. Dr. Dougherty inquired how many hours she already worked for FY21. Dee answered that according to her last timesheet she turned in dated November 13th, she has a total of 347 hours billed. Dr. Dougherty said the purpose of keeping her on was to help Dee get established in her role as bookkeeper for the office and asked Dee how much support she anticipated still needing. Dee responded there is still a lot to go over, for example Excess Cost, MOE, new budget, amended budget, etc. Dr. Dougherty asked who will be guiding the work and Dee responded that she will be.

Motion by Bauer, seconded by Doerr to approve the Contract for Business Manager Consultation for January 1, 2021 - June 30, 2021 as presented. Bauer- YEA, Doerr- YEA, Dougherty- YEA. Motion passed.

Open Discussion

There was not any open discussion.

OLD BUSINESS

Discuss the Transfer of location of the FACeS/CBI program from Taylorville CUSD #3 to a different location starting July 1, 2021

Dr. Dougherty asked Mrs. Suey to discuss this because she didn't realize it would be on the agenda. She stated that this has been discussed and Taylorville's stance has been not to transfer their teachers or students to another district. Mrs. Suey said that per Dr. Doerr and Mr. Bauer this needed to stay on the agenda because due to her understanding this had been tabled at the August board meeting. Dr. Doerr commented that this was brought up in August and he is not ready to move forward with more discussion on these two agenda items at this moment, but it will be a discussion for the future.

Discuss the Transfer of Employees employed in the FACeS/CBI program from Taylorville CUSD #3 to NPT Special Education Cooperative starting July 1, 2021

See notes in the previous agenda item.

REPORTS

Director's Report

Mrs. Kelly Suey has begun working on enrolling DLM students into the portal for the upcoming DLM assessment this spring. She is double checking records with IEP/SIS and istar to ensure we have all the students entered that need to be entered. She has been working hard on the December 1 childcount and making sure all records are error free in iStar and hoping to wrap that up today. Mrs. Suey proceeded by giving a TCT Update Per District.

Program Coordinator/Transition Report

Mrs. Sabrina Jones reported for DHS, we have 8 out of 10 outcomes. We currently have 16 students who have filled out their packets and are 'eligible'. 8 of those students are current outcomes and 3 of those students are working and will be additional outcomes. We currently have 35 students who have filled out their packets and are in the "Referral Process". 12 of those students are working and would be additional potential outcomes. Mrs. Jones has been sending emails to DHS monthly with a list of students stuck in referral status and a list of students who are working and could be potential outcomes, which would lead to additional money, but she wanted to report that she has not had any response to those yet. Suellen with DHS is working two positions right now and drowning from working from home and Sabrina is worried this will affect our grant money that is received. Currently our contract is written out for 10, but she doesn't see why we couldn't get 20 like we did last year and is worried that DHS will not be able to pull their weight. Mrs. Jones continued by giving an update on the STEP grant money received and DHS Covid-19 surveys that are being completed by students. We are in a battle with DHS on the surveys as well. In September we had 21 students complete the survey, but we

have only received payment for 11. DHS current response is again that due to COVID they are drowning in paperwork and are having trouble keeping up.

As the Program Coordinator, Mrs. Jones has reviewed 160 IEPs so far this school year. Special Education staff in all three Districts are working hard to continue to stay in compliance. There have been some minor issues, but we are fixing those and moving forward. Mrs. Jones has completed all 2020-21 NPT Evaluations. She wanted the Board to know that our staff has continued to go above and beyond amidst this pandemic. Mrs. Jones is happy that we still decided to complete evaluations because it is amazing to see all the things our staff has done to make sure that the students' needs are being met.

Business Manager Report

At the September board meeting Mrs. Tarter brought up the three different financial/payroll softwares that were researched for NPT Special Education Cooperative to purchase for budgeting and payroll. School Insight's quote is for \$4,000 on an annual basis and \$750 training fee for the first year. Specialized Data System's (SDS) quote is for \$12,000 for the first year, which includes licensing fees and free training. Then it will cost \$4,400 for the recurring year. The Board asked for her to look further into School Insight. She contacted 3 schools that currently use School Insight. She contacted Kathy Harris from South Fork, Karla Fuehne from Aviston, and Sara Hays from Woodlawn. Kathy thought it was very user friendly and stated that if she can figure it out, anyone can. South Fork's superintendent runs payroll and liabilities and she didn't think he has had too many issues. She said there were some reports that the superintendent needed and it didn't take them long to create them. Karla stated that they still have some kinks that need worked out and that has been frustrating. Sara stated that she doesn't know if she can recommend it or not. She doesn't like that in the Chart of Accounts you can only search by account number. Sara was having an issue with payroll, but they got it fixed. There have been issues and glitches, but she thought this was expected since they are new and thinks/hopes this will all get worked out this year. She also stated that I could reach out to her if needed. One thing they all commented on was how great their customer service is and how fast they get back on an issue. It sounds like they assign a contact person and if that person cannot help, they forward it on.

Dee has also discussed SDS with Pana and Nokomis district offices. They both like the software and would recommend it. They both commented on their customer service being slow, but both stated it is because they cover such a large number of schools, which is a good and bad thing. A lot of their communication is through email. One office stated that software is always changing and they believe whichever route we go there will be difficulty with either product. They both like that they are really on top of changes with TRS and other information. An added bonus is that they have Touch Base Tuesdays (every other Tuesday) and User Boot Camps (once a month) that are ongoing free trainings where you can ask questions and SDS touches base on certain subjects. One office stated that she thought the payroll is easy to run. They both have commented that they would be willing to assist me if help is needed.

Dee's recommendation would still be SDS because of the network of people she can contact if an issue arises and because two of our school districts use the software and she can contact Sherry McIlravy from Knox-Warren. But, if School Insight is the Board's choice to purchase, it does look user friendly in the demonstrations she has had and it sounds like they have good customer service. She asked the Board if we could have the new financial/budget software purchased in February to allow for training because they have stated that April and May are very busy months.

An update on where we are on becoming our own entity is that we cannot move forward with TRS, IMRF, or applying with the Secretary of State until the Joint Agreement is revised. We are working on this and once this is completed and approved, Dee will move forward with these. We have applied to be tax exempt with the state, but it can take up to 90 days for our application to be processed. She may have to apply again once our Joint Agreement is revised.

CLOSED SESSION

The meeting did not move into a closed session.

MOVE TO ADJOURN AT 8:57 am.

Motion by Doerr, and seconded by Bauer. Bauer- YEA, Doerr- YEA, Dougherty- YEA. Motion passed.

Dr. Chris Dougherty, President

Dr. Scott Doerr, Secretary