

# 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, July 19, 2021 beginning at 6:00 PM at the Smithville ISD Administrative Building, PO Box 479, 901 N.E. 6th Street, Smithville, Texas 78957.

**Members present:** Howard Burns, Jr., Mike Davis, Jr., Grant Gutierrez, Chris Hinnant, Candice Parsons, Nancy Towry, Alan Hemphill.

**Others present:** Margarita Igoe, Jennifer Bezner, Justin Bezner, Amanda Gommert, Tucker Copeland, Michael Caudill, Whitney Brown, David Edwards, Cheryl Burns, Jean Ann McCarthy, Denise Behrens

**Call to Order** – The Board President called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

**Roll Call** – Mr. Gutierrez called the roll of members. Mr. Alan Hemphill was absent but arrived at 6:15 p.m.

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

**Public Hearing - ESSER III** – Mr. David Edwards, Director of Federal Programs, conducted a public hearing on the ESSER III grant.

**Public Communications** – The Board heard from Jennifer Bezner and Justin Bezner regarding the ESSER III grant and their ideas for possible allotment of funds.

**Consent Agenda** – Candice Parsons moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Nancy Towry seconded and the motion passed 7-0. The Consent Agenda included:

1. Minutes
2. Financial Statements
3. State Aid Comparison - Budgeted vs. Earned
4. Investment Report
5. Earned vs. TEA Payments
6. Tax Collection Report
7. Bond Resolution

#### **Information Items**

**Financial Report** – The Chief Financial Officer, Jean Ann McCarthy, reviewed the financial disbursements for the previous month with the Board of Trustees.

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

- Upcoming Board training: Legislative Update - Symposium in Georgetown, SafeSchools (cybersecurity), Team of Eight
- Genesis Drum and Bugle Corps is a non-profit performing group that is part of Drum Corps International (DCI) who will be using our high school facilities July 18-24. These groups are composed of students from across the country that audition to become a part, tour and perform. Genesis is based out of Austin, TX and is currently stationed at Lake Travis HS. They have also offered to have their drum majors and leadership team do a presentation for our leadership camp that will start that week. In addition, we will be able to have our students observe how a drum corps rehearses. This is a unique opportunity for our kids to be able to witness.
- Summer Feeding is currently serving at 6 sites: Elementary School - Congregate feeding. Box meals @ Brown Primary, Rosanky, Lake Thunderbird, BBC and Home Deliveries. Six student workers are assisting five child nutrition staff. In the month of June, we served 5660 breakfasts and 6,220 lunches for a total of 11,880 meals served.
- Administrators will be back on duty beginning Monday, July 26th.
- New student enrollment is August 2nd.
- New teachers will be on campuses for orientation on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, and all staff will report back on August 9<sup>th</sup>.
- 6 professional staff openings remain at this time.

**Second Draft of the 2021-2022 District Budget** – Jean Ann McCarthy, CFO, presented the second draft of the 2021-2022 district budget.

**Preliminary STAAR Test Results 2021** – Whitney Brown, Special Programs Coordinator, presented the preliminary STAAR test results for 2021.

**Review of Board Policy EIC (Local)** – The Superintendent and Mr. Copeland, high school principal, recommended no changes to Board Policy EIC (Local). However, after discussion, the Board would like to see a review of the current high school course catalog. Specifically, how it addresses pass/fail electives.

**Clarification of Public Use of District Facilities** – The Superintendent has received requests by community groups to use district facilities, including Tiger Stadium. To this point, the Superintendent has not allowed outside for-profit organizations to use Tiger Stadium. This discussion was for clarification of current policy and possible future implications.

**Tentative August Agenda Items** – Tentative items to be included on the August agenda are:

- a. Public Hearing on Proposed Budget
- b. Financial Report
- c. Superintendent's Report
- d. Annual SHAC Report
- e. Annual Technology Report

- f. Adoption of 2021-2022 District Budget and Tax Rate
- g. Approval of District and Campus Improvement Plans
- h. Personnel

### **Action Items**

**Call for Public Hearing on Proposed Budget and Tax Rate** – The goal of the District is to adopt a budget and set the tax rate for the 2021-2022 school year. State Truth in Taxation laws require the school district to publish a public notice of public hearing to discuss the proposed budget and proposed tax rate for the new fiscal year. Legally the budget must be developed on or before August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and adopted by August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021. The school district will publish the notice of the public hearing in the local newspapers to comply with state laws and timelines for budget adoption and setting of the tax rate. Alan Hemphill moved to call the public hearing for Monday, August 23, 2021. Candice Parsons seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

**Consider Approval of 2021-2022 Salary Schedules** – District administrators have been working on an updated salary schedule for teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, and trades for the upcoming school year 2021-2022. Salary schedules are necessary to calculate the 2021-2022 budget, and it has been Smithville I.S.D.'s practice to inform staff as early as possible of any changes to the salary schedules. Nancy Towry moved to approve the 2021-2022 salary schedules as presented. Chris Hinnant seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

**Consider Approval of RFP for Security Fencing at Brown Primary** – This Request for Proposals (RFP) will be used by the District as a tool in the decision making process in the best interest of the District. This RFP is issued for the purpose of negotiating a contract for Security Fence Installation at the Brown Primary campus to improve the safety for our students and staff. The expenditure will be purchased through General Operating funds, not Bond funds, to save the district costs. Howard Burns, Jr. moved to approve the bid for security fencing submitted by Swift Corporation. Candice Parsons seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

**Approval of Expenditures in Excess of \$50,000 for the Smithville ISD Playground Project** – The purpose of this agenda item was to authorize the purchase of two playgrounds, as well as upgrades to the current 3rd grade playground and Brown Primary playground to meet ADA requirements. Two bids were obtained from companies that were recommended for these types of projects. Alan Hemphill moved to approve an expenditure in excess of \$50,000 for the Smithville ISD playground project based on the proposal from Game Time, for a total cost of \$596,771.53. Mike Davis, Jr. seconded and the vote passed 7-0.

**Consider Approval of 2021-2022 Student Code of Conduct** – As a practice, the Student Code of Conduct for the upcoming school year is reviewed, revised and ultimately approved by the Board prior to the commencement of the new school year. Administrators have reviewed the current Code of Conduct and have made necessary revisions. Alan Hemphill moved to approve the 2021-2022 Student Code of Conduct as presented. Howard Burns, Jr. seconded and the vote passed 7-0.

**Review and Approve 2021-2022 Student Dress Code** – The student dress code is annually reviewed by the administration, campus site-base committees, and the district site-base committee. There are no changes to the primary/elementary/secondary dress code this

year. Alan Hemphill moved to approve the 2021-2022 Student Dress Code as presented. Howard Burns, Jr. seconded the motion and it passed 7-0.

**Consider Possible Revision of Board Policy DC (Local) as it Pertains to the Board of Trustees as the Final Hiring Authority**

– At this time, Board Policy DC (Local) states that the Board of Trustees maintain all authority to hire contracted staff year round. We have found that this can cause a bit of conflict when trying to fill positions between board meetings in the summer months of June, July and August. Districts in Texas are not required to release an employee from contract later than 45 days before the first day of instruction. For this reason, at times it is imperative that we have the flexibility to hire staff prior to that deadline. Many times this is not conveniently near a regularly scheduled board meeting, and it may not be feasible to call a special meeting each time this situation comes up. We have consulted with the Texas Association of School Boards and have been advised that many school districts in Texas amend their policy to allow the Superintendent to be the final hiring authority, provided that the Board of Trustees is kept informed at all times, of staff being hired under contract during the months of June, July and August when it is not practical to wait for a regularly scheduled meeting. Mrs. Burns requested that the Board amend policy DC (Local) to include a provision to allow the Superintendent to hire contracted staff during the months of June, July and August without action by the Board of Trustees, and to keep the Board informed of each occurrence. Alan Hemphill moved approval of the request. With a second from Candice Parsons, the motion passed 7-0.

**Review and Approve Local Board Policy Update 117 and Affected Policies** – The District must update and maintain its local policies with the most recent legislation and educational regulation changes. Alan Hemphill moved to approve Board Policy Update 117 and affected policies including CH (Local), CV (Local), and DEC (Local) as recommended by the Texas Association of School Boards. Mike Davis, Jr. seconded, and the vote carried 7-0.

**Consider Approval of 2021-2022 TTESS Appraisers and Appraisal Calendar** – The Board must approve the district appraisal calendar and the list of administrators trained to evaluate teachers. Teachers must be evaluated annually by trained and board approved appraisers. For the 2021-2022 school year, the District plans to continue to use the state-adopted appraisal system, Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS). All appraisers will be trained before they conduct classroom observations. Teachers are evaluated on performance in the classroom, staff development activities, and performance of students on the campus. A list of appraisers and the appraisal calendar was included in the board packet. Candice Parsons moved to approve the TTESS Appraisers and Appraisal Calendar for 2021-2022 as presented. Nancy Towry seconded and the motion carried 7-0.

**Schedule a Date for Board Team of Eight Training** – The Board, along with the Superintendent, is required to participate in at least three hours of team building conducted by the Texas Association of School Boards, or another registered provider, on an annual basis. Alan Hemphill moved to schedule a Team of Eight workshop for Monday, August 16, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. Howard Burns, Jr seconded and the vote passed 7-0.

Personnel

**Resignations of Certified Personnel** – The Superintendent informed the Board of the resignations of Echoe Burkhart, Paulette Bonorden, Brenda Garbe, Ashley Ramirez, Shelly Huerta-Johnson, Patricia Rivers-Taylor, Jacob Rigby and Dena Beattie. No action was required.

**Employment of Certified Personnel** – The Superintendent recommended employment of the following individuals for the 2021-2022 school year: Veronica Donahue, Hanna McDorman, Haley Nunn, Oscar Nunez, Joe (Brad) Bass, Linda Neville, Shawna Randall and Jaqueline Alvey. Nancy Towry moved to approve the employment as presented. With a second from Chris Hinnant, the motion passed 7-0.

Closed Session – The Board entered closed session at 9:26 p.m. and returned at 9:55 p.m. with no official action taken.

**Superintendent's Mid-Point Review** – This was conducted in closed session and did not require Board action.

Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.