

## 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, March 29, 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., Alan Hemphill, Mike Davis, Jr., Grant Gutierrez, Chris Hinnant, Candice Parsons, Nancy Towry

**Others present:** Patsy Holmes, Dennis Bender, Kurt Hammons, Jim Rose, Stephanie Foster, Jack McIe, Erik McCowan, Rebecca Hinnant, Dwight Stockton, Amanda Gommert, Michele Rutherford, Molly Cox, Zack Harris, Tessa Otten, Lisa Gonzales, Lacey Schwanke, Cameron Drummond, Jennifer Bezner, Candy Biehle, Dusti Goertz, Donna Bartsch, A.J. McIe, Trenton Helmcamp, Jean Ann McCarthy, Tucker Copeland, Chris Kelly, Oscar Trevino, Kathy Mathias, Blair Williamson, Michael Caudill, Ana Murray, Cheryl Burns, Denise Behrens

**Call to Order** – The Board President called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

**Roll Call** – Mr. Hemphill called the roll. All members were present except for Nancy Towry, who arrived at 6:15 p.m.

**Student Led Pledge of Allegiance** – Brown Primary students led the group virtually in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Communications** – The Board heard from Patsy Holmes, Kurt Hammons and James Rose in opposition to the Big Star Solar, LLC project.

**Closed Session** – Consultation with Legal Counsel Regarding Appraised Value Limitation Application by Big Star Solar, LLC. (No. 1531). *Tex. Gov't Code Section 551.071 and 551.087* – The Board adjourned to closed session at 6:15 p.m. and returned at 7:42 p.m. with no official action taken.

**Possible Action as Discussed in Closed Session** – Candice Parsons moved to allow the school district's legal counsel to negotiate a contract with Big Star Solar, LLC. Mike Davis Jr. seconded and the motion passed 6-1 with Howard Burns, Jr. opposing.

**Consent Agenda** – Grant Gutierrez moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Howard Burns, Jr. seconded and the motion passed 7-0. 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.

**Financial Report** – The Chief Financial Officer, Jean Ann McCarthy, shared the financial disbursements for the previous month with the Board of Trustees. No action was required.

**Superintendent's Report** – The Superintendent shared the following information with the Board:

- UIL Academic District Competition was held last weekend. SISD students did well. We have several students who will advance to Regional Competition at Stephen F. Austin University on April 17th.
- We are pleased to announce that, as a result of Moody's credit report review, Smithville ISD has improved from an A-1 to an AA-2 rating due to a strong financial outlook.
- This coming Friday, Good Friday, is a school holiday.
- STAAR testing will begin on April 6th.
- The Chamber of Commerce will host a virtual Smithville ISD School Board Candidate Forum on April 12th
- We have been informed the Board of the Chamber 2020 Organization of the Year Award is going to the SISD Child Nutrition Department.
- The SISD Communications Department received 4 Star Awards at the 2021 TSPRA Conference. Gold for both the Tiger Insider Newsletter and New Student Registration poster, silver for the SISD Academic Calendar, and a bronze for the District's Brief Facts flyer. These awards bring the total number to 14 since 2016.
- We also have TIGER Award Recipients from the 2nd 9 Weeks:
  - BP Ashley Ladewig
  - ES Susan Schobel
  - JH Ronnie McKeown
  - HS Anne Seidel
  - ISD Nichole Garner
- Our FFA students had a good showing at the Houston Livestock Show.
- The junior high is hosting and participating in a meet at Tiger Stadium today.
- The high school will host and participate in a meet at Tiger Stadium on Wednesday and Thursday.

**COVID-19 Update** – Mrs. Burns presented an update on COVID-19 including current numbers and how it pertains to instruction and mitigation plans for the district.

**Review of District and Campus Improvement Plans Status Reports** – A format has been designed for an end of the year status report, which allows the Board to monitor the implementation of the District and Campus Improvement Plan. District and Campus site base committees have reviewed the progress of the implementation of each plan and staff members have prepared the status reports for the respective improvement plan. The principal, staff, and site base committee are responsible for evaluating each improvement plan. Dr. Michael Caudill

reviewed the status of the District Improvement Plan and each campus principal reviewed the Campus Improvement Plan status.

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

- a. Financial Report
- b. Superintendent’s Report
- c. COVID-19 Update
- d. Review 2021-2022 High School Course Catalog
- e. Call for Special Meeting to Canvass School Board Election
- f. Resignations and Employment of Certified Personnel

**Review and Award Bids for Audit Services** – The district is required to hire an independent audit firm to conduct the annual financial audit for the fiscal year 2020-2021 for annual mandatory state reporting on school district budgeting and compliance. Bid proposals were mailed out to fourteen firms and we received six responses from the following audit firms: Armstrong, Vaughn & Assoc., PC; Beasley, Mitchell & Co.; EideBailly, LLP; Neffendorf & Blocker, PC; Pattillo, Brown & Hill, LLP; and Singleton, Clark & Co., PC. After careful review of the bids and references, the CFO and Superintendent recommended engagement of Armstrong, Vaughan & Associates, PC . Grant Gutierrez moved to approve the engagement of Armstrong, Vaughan & Associates, PC as district auditor for the fiscal year 2020-2021. Candice Parsons seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

**Consider Approval of Instructional Materials Allotment and Textbook Adoption** – Board policies EFAA (legal) and EFAA (local) address the selection and adoption of instructional materials for the district. In order to remain in compliance with board policy and state guidelines to enable the district to obtain state funded instructional materials for the school district, the Board of Trustees must certify the use of Instructional Material Allotment Funds for instructional resources within the school district. Candice Parsons moved to approve the Instructional Materials Allotment and Textbook Adoption as presented. Chris Hinnant seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

**Resignations of Certified Personnel** – The Superintendent informed the Board of the resignations of Erich Schatte and Barbara Benson, teachers at Smithville High School, Samuel Burnside a teacher/coach at Smithville High School, Gary Anthony, teacher/coach at Smithville Junior High, Deselle Marshall-Hill Jones, teacher at Smithville Junior High, Esmeralda Rodriguez, teacher at Smithville Elementary and Nicole Cromey, teacher at Brown Primary. No action was required.

**Employment of Certified Personnel** – No employment was recommended at this time.

**Closed Session** – The Board adjourned to closed session at 8:38 p.m. and returned at 9:34 p.m. with no official action taken.

**Consider and Take Action Regarding Certified Staff Contract Renewals** – Grant Gutierrez moved to approve certified contract renewals, with minor edits, as presented. Candice Parsons

seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

Adjournment – The Board ended its meeting at 9:35 p.m.