

School Board Meeting – October 17, 2023 Regular & Executive Session

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL – 7:00 P.M.

ESTABLISH A QUORUM AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Board of School Trustees of the John Glenn School Corporation met in regular session at 7:00 p.m. on October 17, 2023, at the John Glenn Administration Building. Board members present were Bob Borlik, Christine Carson, Jared Egger, Ryan Knowlton, Todd McGaughey and Carissa Smith. Christian Mattix was absent. Superintendent Christopher Winchell and seven observers were present throughout the meeting. Mr. Jared Egger led the meeting in the absence of Mr. Christian Mattix.

DONATIONS & FUNDRAISERS (WES, NLES, UMS, JGHS)

Walkerton Elementary School

➤ Donations

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • Dale Christopher | Miscellaneous Winter Hats and Gloves |
| • Pam McMahan | Miscellaneous Winter Coats |

Urey Middle School

➤ Fundraiser

- | | |
|------------|----------------|
| • Football | Donation Drive |
|------------|----------------|

Mr. Todd McGaughey made a motion to approve Donations and Fundraisers and Mr. Bob Borlik seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of six to zero.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public made comment at this time.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS #1 – 6

1. Approve Minutes – October 3, 2023 – Regular Session
2. Approve Vouchers 9/27 through 10/10/23 for \$757,488.62
3. Approve Employee Recommendations

Retirements/Resignations

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| a. Bobbie Milliken | Girls Soccer Head Coach, John Glenn High School |
| b. Joe Stanley | Assistant Football Coach, Urey Middle School |
| | Boys Track Assistant Coach, John Glenn High School |
| c. Laura Wertz | Robotics Coach, Urey Middle School |
| d. Sunu Thomas | Girls Soccer Assistant Coach, John Glenn High School |

Appointments

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| a. Jennifer Stout | Instructional Aide, Urey Middle School |
| b. David Lichtenbarger | Boys Track Head Coach, John Glenn High School |
| c. Anthony Borrelli | Instructional Aide, John Glenn High School |

Transfers

- a. Roger Dittmar Transfer from 8th Grade Boys B-team Basketball Coach to 7th Grade Boys A-team Basketball Coach, Urey Middle School

4. Approve Transfer Student Requests

There were no new transfer student requests at this meeting.

5. Approve FMLA Request for Employee #3115

6. Approve Administrative Leave for Employee #2142

Mr. Ryan Knowlton made a motion to approve Consent Agenda Items 1 – 6 and Mrs. Christine Carson seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of six to zero.

Mr. Davis took the opportunity to introduce Jennifer Stout, the new instructional aide at Urey Middle School, to the Board.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Adopt Resolution to Approve 2024 Budget as Advertised

Mr. Jared Egger noted that this action item is to approve the 2024 Education Fund, Debt Service Fund, Operations Fund, and Rainy Day Fund Budgets. Mr. Winchell reminded the board that we started the budget process back in July. There are two portions of the budget process, establishing how much cash we have, how much revenue we are anticipating, how much in expenses we have and how many we are anticipating for the next calendar year. We also complete a lot of very important reports that get posted on Gateway and eventually come before the Board as the Budget Packet that you have in your board packet for your review tonight. The Budget has been advertised, we held a public hearing/comment period and now it is before you for your anticipated approval. You are approving the financial numbers and projections and also approving us to send this to the DLGF (Department of Local Government Finance) where they will do part two of the budget process. Their official action gives us permission to collect taxes and spend the revenue that we receive. Mr. Bendy added the DLGF assigns what the final budget numbers are. We have a representative within that department that takes our numbers and compares them to what they projected the revenue and expenses to be. When preparing our budget, we take special care to often use their projected numbers to make this process less complicated. They will approve the tax rate and give us our 1782 Notice in December. Mr. Winchell also noted that we have been very careful to bond when we need to, we don't bond when we don't need to. We want to provide the best possible facilities for our students and community but we also need to remain fiscally responsible due to the fluctuating tax rates we often see in St. Joseph County. We do anticipate a higher rate this year, but we will not know for sure until the DLGF sends the 1782 notice. We also anticipate a decrease in tax rate when Greene Township is officially part of our school district in the 2025 budget. Mrs. Christine Carson made a motion to approve 2024 Budget as Advertised and Mr. Ryan Knowlton seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of six to zero.

2. Adopt Resolution to Approve 2024 Capital Projects Plan

Mr. Winchell explained that this is part of the budget process and part of state statute. The Capital Projects Plan is required to be updated every three years, but it is our practice to update it annually, or when we have major projects completed. As we have completed projects, we have updated our short-term, mid-term and long-term project plans. As the board is well aware, we have been working hard on a

lot of projects, corporation wide. Mr. Todd McGaughey made a motion to approve 2024 Capital Projects Plan and Ms. Carissa Smith seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of six to zero.

3. Adopt Resolution to Approve 2024 Bus Replacement Plan

Mr. Winchell noted that similarly, the Bus Replacement Plan must be updated every three years per state statutes, but we update them annually. We try to project buses out twelve years. We are currently waiting on three buses that were purchased well over a year ago and have a second set of buses that will hopefully be arriving soon after. The four used buses that we recently purchased from Michigan City have not been added to the bus replacement plan yet as we received them after the plan was updated. As we have mentioned before, we plan to file for a Max Levy Appeal as we take on Greene Township which will help offset the costs of providing increased transportation to our students in that area. We know we will need more buses, this will help offset those costs. Mrs. Christine Carson made a motion to approve 2024 Bus Replacement Plan and Mr. Todd McGaughey seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of six to zero.

4. Public Discussion of Tentative Agreement on Master Contract 2023-2024

Mr. Winchell reminded the Board that state statute requires that we hold a public hearing prior to holding official bargaining meetings. We held this meeting in September. Then when the Board and Teacher's Union reach an agreement on the contract, the teachers union must hold a ratification meeting, which they did on Friday, October 13th. Now the Board must hold another public meeting/public discussion regarding the tentative teacher's contract prior to approving the contract at a future date. Today is our public hearing for our tentative agreement that has been reached with the teachers association. You were provided with a thorough document in your board packet that references what contract language changes we propose to have updated. As a team, we were able to do some substantial updates that we have been discussing for several years. This reflects the substantial update, particularly in the extracurricular area, to reflect what our contract language reads, as well as a more simple operational language. We also have recommended moving all ECA's to one pay value per position and all employee pays will move to the highest rate in the current contract. Additionally, all ECA stipends will have a five percent increase. We want to reward our coaches and club sponsors as we recognize that those are very important for kids to develop relationships and feel connected to their school. We have also gone through the document to make sure that all sports are accurately represented. For example, at the middle school, golf was listed as one sport when it really should be listed as Boys Golf and Girls Golf. Similarly, we had some summer baseball clinic opportunities recognized and we felt we needed to also recognize summer softball clinic opportunities. Specifically for teacher compensation, we want to continue to reward our loyal teammates while remaining competitive in salary with local districts and also want to consider inflation and still be able to attract new talent. We have agreed to a \$4900 raise for all returning teachers who hold a bachelor's degree, and a \$5425 raise for all returning teachers who hold a master's degree or higher. That represents 7 rows/pay slots in what we have established as our "new hire teacher scale". We also have agreed for teachers new to the team this year to receive \$4300 if they have a bachelor's degree, or a \$4750 raise if they have a master's degree or higher which reflects 6 slots on the "new hire pay scale" plus \$100. One goal was to bring our starting teacher salary up to \$46,000 which will make us very competitive among neighboring districts. We always have a very detailed compensation package for our teachers. This contract reflects a very detailed compensation package increase and a very robust contract language update. This is a joint recommendation from not only the administration, but the union team as well. Amanda Smith and Jeremy Merrill, Co-Presidents of the John Glenn Education Association noted that they appreciate how well the bargaining process went this year and confirmed that the tentative agreement was ratified by the teachers last Friday evening. Mr. Jared Egger added that he and the board appreciate the work that has been put in and the smoothness of the process. Mr. Winchell went on that for a long time we have bargained collaboratively with our union. We agreed years ago to bargain with 60% of new monies. In 2021, there was a change in the law where the general assembly gave some directions about how much of the Education Fund revenue would go to teacher compensation. It used to be known as the

45% rule that 45% of Education Fund revenue went to the teacher salaries. It is now known as the 62% rule with 62% of Education Fund revenue going to total teacher compensation. When those rules came out, we weren't too far off because we have been collaboratively bargaining together, but we did have some thin years where we were thin on funding due to no fault of either side. So in 2021, the general assembly strongly funded schools to go along with their new 45% rule and we gave 100% of the new funds to the teachers which resulted in \$2,000-8,000 raises depending where they fell in the compressed comparison model. The following year, the teachers only received \$700 or \$775 raises. This year, we have again been funded better by the general assembly and the teachers are receiving approximately 84% of the new funds available. Due to the new stipulations, we thought we were better off doing a one year contract and coming back next year to look closely at our funding and expenses with the intention of providing another raise dependent on those finances but we are prepared to bargain with whatever funding will allow, large or small. There is no action to take tonight but we will bring the contract for formal approval on November 7th. Some of our past practice is to also bring a recommendation before the board for updated certified staff compensation and also administrative staff.

5. Approve Resolution to Declare Items Surplus

Mr. Groves noted that in our continued effort to update our student equipment, we have found more out dated and unused equipment that is no longer deemed safe for students to use. As in the past, these items will be sold through an online auction through our partners at Kaser Auction. This online auction will begin as soon as this week. The funds from the auction will be placed back into the Operations Fund. Mr. Ryan Knowlton made a motion to approve Resolution to Declare Items Surplus and Mrs. Christine Carson seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of six to zero.

REPORTS

1. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Winchell reported the following:

- When we updated the spending threshold, we agreed that I would include items over \$25,000 but under \$75,000 in my superintendent's report each week. We are currently working through some asbestos abatement over at Walkerton Elementary in relation to our project. When bidding our project, we specifically noted that if any abatement was necessary, we would contract our own company to do the work but the contractor had to assist with scheduling the work. It is likely that this will cost approximately \$40,000 from what we have uncovered so far.
- Greene Township- One of the things that was still pending in relation to complete annexation of Greene Township was the desegregation order through the federal courts. We have recently received a copy of the paperwork that this process has begun and at this time it does not appear the federal courts will veto our annexation
- We are doing a lot of work behind the scenes to update our school board plan documents to reflect the new boundaries of the district. Mr. Kaminski and I will be meeting with the DOE attorney this week. There is no reason that the Greene Township annexation will not be accomplished, but I will say it is officially done when we get the 1782 notice in 2024 for the 2025 budget that includes Greene Township as part of the John Glenn budget order.
- We met with Representative Jake Teshka this morning. He is working along with Senator Rodgers to continue to remove mandates placed on school corporations. They are trying to deregulate a lot of requirements that are currently on schools. Recently they were able to get rid of a financial report that was repetitive. He will continue his efforts in reducing redundant work.
- The Michigan City buses are on routes. On this heels of the conversation of buses and surplus items, I wanted to share that the buses that we traded in last time were only worth \$1300. There is some common sense to pull the buses we planned to trade in when our newest set of three buses arrive in November, have a new contract presented for approval and then sell the buses ourselves to hopefully get a little more money for them. We have also been in communication with the Tyner IOOF who are really in need of a new fish fry bus. I have been researching school board

policy and noted there is specific language in there for selling items, donating them to a not for profit group and throwing items away. I wanted to propose the idea that we pull those three buses from Midwest Transit, sell two of them for likely more than the \$3900 than we would receive in trade in value and then donate the third bus to the IOOF. Hopefully we will earn enough through auction to cover the cost of the donation. The Board agreed that we could list these two buses with the other items to be auctioned off and agreed that it is great community relations to donate the third bus to the Tyner Odd Fellows (Tyner IOOF). Mr. Winchell said it was important to note that he serves at the board's behest and we are all stewards of tax payer money. The school does not willy nilly donate the things that were purchased with tax payer money, but this request has come from a highly regarded philanthropic community group so that is why I want to bring this request to the board. It is a minimal financial investment and is an easy way to pay the IOOF back for all the help they have provided the community and the schools over the years. We will bring an official request to the next meeting. The Board agreed that we should proceed with getting these buses listed on the online auction with the promise to bring formal approval back at the next meeting.

3. Conference Requests

BOARD COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

Mr. Egger requested an update to the solar projections at the next meeting. We will share that along with potential projections for an additional project in Walkerton.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Parent Teacher Conferences – October 17 & 18
Fall Break – NO SCHOOL – October 20 & 23
JGHS Spell Bowl Competition – October 30

NEXT MEETING DATE: November 7, 2023 7:00 P.M. Admin Building Regular Session

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Jared Egger called the meeting adjourned at 7:58 PM.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board met in Executive Session to discuss collective bargaining and to conduct school board member training. No additional topics were discussed. The Executive Session was adjourned at 8:48 PM

PRES. _____

SEC'Y. _____
