

October 21, 2021

The Board of Education of the County of Kanawha met in Regular Session on Thursday, October 21, 2021 at the Board of Education Building, Charleston, West Virginia. The meeting was called to order by Board President Becky J. Jordon at 6:00 p.m.

**PRESENT**

Becky J. Jordon, President  
Tracy White, President Pro Tem  
Ric Cavender  
Jim J. Crawford, Sr.  
Ryan White  
Thomas E. Williams, Secretary

Debra J. Lewis, Recording Secretary

**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

Paula Potter, Deputy Superintendent  
George Aulenbacher, Assistant Superintendent, High Schools, Technical & Adult Education  
Melissa Ruddle, Asst. Superintendent, Curriculum & Instruction  
Melanie Meadows, Treasurer, Budget & Finance  
Ron Pauley, Executive Director, Human Resources  
Megan McCorkle, Assistant Superintendent, Special Education & Student Support Services  
Alicia Warden, Health Services  
Alan Cummings, Executive Director, Purchasing & Supply Management  
Briana Warner, Communications  
Keith Vititoe, Executive Director, Safety & Security  
Leah Sparks, Executive Director, Technology

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Board President Becky J. Jordon.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. September 7, 2021 - Special Session
- B. September 16, 2021 - Regular Session
- C. September 23, 2021 - Special Session
- D. September 28, 2021 - Special Session

## **REPORTS**

- A. Kanawha County Travel Reimbursement for September, 2021 (Enclosure 51)
- B. Monthly Financial Report (Enclosure 52)
- C. Legal Reports

Mrs. Tracy White moved: The Board adopt the findings and conclusions of the hearing examiner and approve the Superintendent's recommendation for dismissal of Johnny Williams, and Johnny Williams shall be, and he is hereby, terminated from his employment with the Kanawha County Board of Education, effective immediately. Motion was seconded by Mr. Jim J. Crawford and unanimously carried.

- D. Board Reports

Mrs. White-Yesterday was the first Trunk or Treat for the Virtual students. Valery and her team put that on. A lot of the times they miss out on the in-school stuff and they did a great job last night at Crede. There were tons of trunks and treaters, I won't say who the best one was. It was a great event and I want to thank them for putting it on for those students who aren't doing in-person learning.

Mr. Crawford-The only thing that I want to mention is at the next State Board Meeting Dr. O'Cull and the State Board are considering a new document to evaluate the Superintendent. That's in the works. It's been simplified somewhat.

Mrs. Jordon-Monday we had a tour of Clendenin Elementary at the new location and it is fabulous. It's going to be fantastic for that community. Mayor Summers joined us.

## **PERSONNEL**

A. Personnel Agenda for October, 2021 (Enclosure 53)

Mrs. Tracy White moved: The Board approve the Revised Personnel Agenda as included in Enclosure 53. Motion was seconded by Mr. Jim J. Crawford and unanimously carried.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **CONSENT**

Mrs. Tracy White moved: The Board approve the following CONSENT Items A-B. Motion was seconded by Mr. Jim J. Crawford and unanimously carried.

A. Approval of Bills for September, 2021 (Enclosure 54)

Approval of the payment of bills for the month of September, 2021 in the amounts of \$25,318,185.74 for the Current Expense, Special Revenue and Federal Stimulus Funds; \$6,387,314.34 for the Permanent Improvement Fund; and \$711,512.97 for the Public Library Fund as reflected in Enclosure 54.

B. Budget Supplements & Transfers (Enclosure 55)

Approval of budget supplements and transfers as reflected in Enclosure 55.

## **OTHER NEW BUSINESS**

A. AEP Easement (Enclosure 56)

Mrs. Tracy White moved: The Board approve the AEP Easement to allow utility installation on property located at Sissonville Middle School as shown in Enclosure 56. Motion was seconded by Mr. Jim J. Crawford.

Chuck Smith-There is an existing pole on our property but there is no easement. AEP will need to relocate the pole about 5 feet. They would have to have an easement to do that.

Mr. White-Will that benefit the school system? Chuck Smith-No, AEP has to do it to make modifications to the line that serve 3 or 4 houses in that area. It allows AEP to do the work without destroying the houses next door.

The above motion unanimously carried.

## **OTHER NEW BUSINESS (continued)**

### B. Substitutes in Areas of Critical Need and Shortage Policy (Enclosure 57)

Mrs. Tracy White moved: The Board approve the Substitutes in Areas of Critical Need and Shortage Policy as shown in Enclosure 57. Motion was seconded by Mr. Jim J. Crawford.

Dr. Williams-We have to do this on a yearly basis. If we have shortages of subs in specific areas we have to get approval from the State Department in order for retired people to sub in those positions for an extended period of time.

The above motion unanimously carried.

### C. Cargo Van Purchase (Enclosure 58)

Mrs. Tracy White moved: The Board approve the purchase of thirteen 2021 GMC Savanna Cargo Vans to Matheny Motor Truck Company in the amount of \$287,261.00 per State Contract #MVTRUCK21C as shown in Enclosure 58. Motion was seconded by Mr. Jim J. Crawford.

Dr. Williams-Mr. Gladwell literally is stuck in traffic, so I can speak to this. This is for 13 vans from Matheny Motors. The least amount of mileage on one of the vans that is being replaced is 190,000 and the most mileage is 261,000. We gave the money to go ahead and replace 13 of these vans plus 2 other vans that will be coming in December. We got them for roughly \$22,000 each which is a good deal, it came off of the State bid. I think it is what we need to do to replace our aging fleet. We haven't been putting money there for a while for whatever reason. Mr. Crawford-What is the average age of our fleet? Dr. Williams-The ones that we are replacing go from 2004-2008. Mr. Crawford-At this point we probably need to make a change. It will save us money in the long run.

Dr. Williams-Kudos to Jeremy, he went through all of the fleet and prioritized the worst ones so we would know which ones needed replaced. He has done a good job with this.

Mr. Crawford-The ones we have will be auctioned off right? Dr. Williams-That is correct.

The above motion unanimously carried.

## **OTHER NEW BUSINESS (continued)**

### D. Sissonville Bus Garage & Alban Elementary Roof Replacements (Enclosure 59)

Mrs. Tracy White moved: The Board approve contracts to the lowest responsible bidder, Tri-State Roofing & Sheet Metal Company, for the roof replacement of Sissonville Bus Garage in the amount of \$448,820.00 and Alban Elementary in the amount of \$188,435.00 as per bid 22-110 as shown in Enclosure 59. Motion was seconded by Mr. Jim J. Crawford.

Mr. Crawford-I would like to say that Tri-State Roofing is a reputable company and they have been around as long as I can remember. They do good work and they are local. That is a plus for us.

The above motion unanimously carried.

### E. Regular Session Start Time

Mrs. Tracy White moved: The Board approve the change of the start time of the Regular Sessions of the Kanawha County School Board Meetings to begin at 5:00 p.m. on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month beginning in November, 2021. Motion was seconded by Mr. Jim J. Crawford

Mr. Crawford-In order to do this we need to inform the public so they will know that we are changing the meeting time. I don't like the idea, but I know everybody wants to do that and I understand the reasons why. I just want to make sure that everybody has the opportunity to come to the Board Meetings even though we are streaming it live.

Mrs. White-When we go back to doing the LSIC Meetings at the schools, will those be at 5 or 6? Dr. Williams-That would be up to you all to decide.

Dr. Williams-Mr. Crawford, to address your issue we will work with Briana to get the word out. We will send notifications to all of the schools and put it on our social media sites. Mrs. Jordon-Why don't you ask your Principals what they think the best time would be for the LSIC Meetings. Dr. Williams-Okay.

The above motion unanimously carried.

Mr. Crawford-If there is a high probability that a lot of people don't want us to change the meeting, we can revisit this. Mrs. Jordon-We can revisit anything.

## DELEGATIONS

Mrs. Jordon-I don't always say this, and I want people to take note of this that the Board does not address the Delegations. You can discuss your topic and later we will discuss it with Dr. Williams. Mr. Cavender-To clarify, we don't address it because it's not on the agenda. Mrs. Jordon-Yes, that's right.

Betty Jarvis-I want to talk to you again about the masks. I was going to talk to you about the money coming into Kanawha County and ask questions about that, but I would just like to tell you about Chamberlain Elementary School. I was walking the other day and I looked over and there was a teacher on the lawn with the children. His voice carried very well even though he kept the mask on. As I watched them I wanted to see if they were intent on what he was saying. They were not doing well with the masks. There was one little boy that was heavy and he was having trouble. I felt sorry for him because he was a little heavier than the others. What I'm saying to you is that those masks are very unhealthy. I think all of you know that. I really do appreciate Mrs. White and Mr. Crawford for voting no and I don't hold it against the others for voting yes. People please consider the children. I'm asking you again to consider going back into session and taking the masks off of our children.

Donna Caruthers-At the last couple of meetings I had given you guys some handouts to read and I'm hoping that you actually took the time to read them. I wanted to highlight a few things here. There is a greater threat from flu every year and masks mandates have never been implemented during flu season. The survival rate right now is 98.4%. When we are looking at the infection rate compared to the population, we are looking at 13.5% and for the flu during 2017-18 it was 13.6%. This is just a 7 month period that we are looking at. I have a few questions that I realize that you guys can't answer tonight so I am preparing a FOIA to be sent in so I can get answers to these questions. Kanawha County Schools has received \$116.2 million from the Federal Government for Covid relief. Were there strings attached to this money? Was masking our children a condition in receiving this money? How was this money spent? What's the plan? How long will we continue to force them to wear masks for 7 hours a day? Out of 299 people that have died from ages 0-20 in West Virginia, only 8 died because of Covid. This needs to be reevaluated.

Dennis Westover-This is my 3<sup>rd</sup> time here. I am not for masks. They are utterly ineffective. Last time I was here you had people here talking about doing the PCR Tests and I think I mentioned to you that they were being taken out of service December 31<sup>st</sup>. The reason I mentioned that to you is that they can't tell the difference between Covid and the flu and also they are being used incorrectly. You are going to look back one day and see that you were on the right side or the wrong side of this thing. The truth is

## **DELEGATIONS (continued)**

starting to come out about Covid and lawsuits are starting to be brought against school boards for being irresponsible and not checking out the truth. West Virginia has received \$1.2 billion to deal with Covid. Kanawha County received \$117,000,000. That's up to you guys to decide what you are going to do with it. I am telling you that you have bigger problems than masks that are coming. I am currently working with a child that is in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade that couldn't count to 20 and couldn't add one plus one. The school has been unstable and they live in an unstable home. You guys had better take a look at what is going on with your kids and what they haven't learned instead of focusing on masks. There is an avalanche of mental health issues. You have bigger problems than masks.

Dinah Adkins-KCEA-I would like to thank Dr. Williams and the other administrators for working with KCEA to develop the Quarantine Academy which allowed teachers to be able to teach in-person while the county provided some lessons that they could access for students who were quarantined. That has made a huge difference. We can't tell you how much we appreciate that. I would like to give you some general information about the sub shortage. It's primarily due to Covid. People don't want to be in the classrooms and expose themselves even if they have been vaccinated. They are concerned that the variant will override the precautions. There is a lack of technology training for subs. They don't receive the training that other teachers in the county receive. If you are going in to teach, you are going in blindly. We know that you have been providing subs from Central Office and we appreciate that. Subs are not paid to complete the online staff development. It is a lengthy, difficult bit of information to go through, so you may want to pay your subs. It is critical information. They also do not have iPads available to them usually unless the teacher leaves their iPad. Sub salaries are not very attractive. We are all paid the same rate. We are not paid on our daily rate of pay based on our education. That's been a concern for many years. That's something you might want to look at in the future.

## **QUESTIONS/ANSWERS**

Mr. White-Dr. Williams provided us with some information regarding the request that was made to us a couple of meetings ago with regard to the compensation for the extra time for teachers. I'd like to see us put that on the agenda for the next meeting. Dr. Williams-We will put it under contracted service pay.

Mrs. White-Can you break down when we close a school versus closing some classrooms? How do we make a decision based on when we have too many out? We've had some issues with that this week.

## QUESTIONS/ANSWERS (continued)

Dr. Williams-I think one of the things that is so frustrating for folks is that no two schools are the same. For example, there were 102 out of 125 5<sup>th</sup> graders at Sissonville Middle that would have been out with Covid or quarantined. That was a huge number of 5<sup>th</sup> graders. Those numbers were huge for that school, so we thought it was better to close the school. We always speak to the Health Department and run our scenarios by them or they run the scenarios by us and they make a suggestion to us. We either go with it, modify it or we don't. That's our process. We look at each school individually. We look at the number of cases that we have and the number of kids that are quarantined. We consult with the Health Department, the school nurse and Alicia and that's how we make our decisions. It's different for every school. There's no set formula on how to do this. We just have to do the best we can with the information that we have.

Mrs. White-Regarding masks, our numbers are slowly trickling down as far as positive cases. Do we have a percentage that we are looking for or are we waiting for the under 12 to be vaccinated before we would discuss putting masks back on the agenda again?  
Dr. Williams-I think we need to look at the overall county in general and see how things are as well as the State and our schools and then make a decision from there. You all can make a decision or I can make a decision for you, whatever you would like to do. At this point I haven't been given any guidance along those lines.

Mrs. Jordon-We hired Robert Brown as a new investigator and I would like to know a little bit about his background. Ron Pauley-He is a retired Charleston Police Officer.

Mr. Crawford-Do you think it's necessary to make arrangements with the Health Department for our employees to get a booster shot? Dr. Williams-We can look at that, but to be honest but I think it would be easier for them to go to the Health Department and get it then for us to try and run a clinic. Mr. Crawford-I would like for our employees to have that opportunity to get that if we could arrange it for them to go to the Health Department to get it. Dr. Williams-Alicia, I know we give the flu vaccine but do they allow us to have the COVID vaccine where we could do that in the schools?  
Alicia Warden-I don't think so, the storage of it would be too difficult to do. Also, the employee vaccinations were Moderna and that was just approved for a booster. I would anticipate us hearing something from the State Department of Education or DHHR to coordinate that if that would be possible. Dr. Williams-We will look into that  
Mr. Crawford. Alicia Warden-Mr. White, in regard to the inquiry about students ages 5-11, I have been in contact with Dr. Young and Zach Hanshaw has provided me with preliminary enrolment numbers for that age group so we can start preparing vaccine clinics for them when it is approved. Dr. Williams-With parental permission, I always want to say that.



**MOMENT OF SILENCE**

Mrs. Jordon-I would like to end with a moment of silence. Kanawha County Schools lost a long-time employee this week, Jeane Ann Herscher. She was a great employee.

**ESTABLISHMENT OF MEETING DATES**

- A. Thursday, October 21, 2021, 6:00 p.m.-Regular Session
- B. Monday, November 1, 2021, 6:00 p.m.-Special Session at Mary C. Snow West Side Elementary
- C. Thursday, November 18, 2021, 6:00 p.m.-Regular Session
- D. Monday, December 6, 2021, 6:00 p.m.-Special Session at Riverside High School
- E. Thursday, December 16, 2021, 6:00 p.m.-Regular Session

NOTE: The above meetings of the Kanawha County Board of Education, unless otherwise indicated, will be held in the Board of Education Building, 200 Elizabeth Street, Charleston, WV.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mrs. Tracy White moved: That the Regular Session of the Board be adjourned. Motion was seconded by Mr. Jim J. Crawford and unanimously carried. The Regular Session was declared adjourned by Board President Becky J. Jordon at 6:42 p.m.

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President

djl

11/1/2021

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Secretary