

TO: BENTON COMMUNITY BOARD OF EDUCATION
FROM: DR. JAMES BIESCHKE, SUPERINTENDENT
RE: REGULAR BOARD MEETING
TIME: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2024
6:00 p.m. - Regular Meeting
PLACE: Central Office - Board room
304 1st Street
Van Horne, Iowa 52346



Regular Meeting

1) Call to Order – 6:00 p.m.

Directors Present: Director Kaiser, Director Schanbacher, Director Shaw, Director Thompson, and Director Werning. Absent: Matt Nolte.

A quorum was declared present.

Also Present: Dr. Bieschke, Anna Selk, Aric Becker, Katie Bauder, Phil Eastman, Jason West, Melisa Venneman, Rob Arnold and Melody Spence

2) Delegations, Communications, Considerations of Additional Items for the Agenda

None

3) Action Item #75 – Approval of the Agenda

Motion by Kaiser, second by Werning to approve the agenda as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

4) Open Forum

None

5) Action Item #76 - Appointment of Board Member – District 5

Publication
Proof of Publication

Roll call vote: Directors: KAISER Yes, SCHANBACHER Yes, SHAW Yes, THOMPSON Yes, and WERNING Yes.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

The Board secretary swore in Aric Becker as Director, District 5.

6) School Improvement

a) New Teacher Support

Anna Selk reviewed the support given by Grant Wood in the Mentoring and Induction Program.

7) **Action Item #77 – Review/Acceptance of FY’23 District Audit**

[FY23 Final Audit](#)
[News Release](#)

Fiscal 2023 Financial Highlights

- General Fund revenue and other financing sources decreased from \$19,846,286 in fiscal 2022 to \$18,881,061 in fiscal 2023 while General Fund expenditures and other financing uses increased from \$18,782,632 in fiscal 2022 to \$18,910,480 in fiscal 2023. This resulted in an overall change in the District's General Fund balance from \$6,303,651 in fiscal 2022, to \$6,274,232 in fiscal 2023, a decrease from the prior fiscal year.
- Benton Community’s Instructional Support Levy is supported through fiscal 2030, it is funded by a mixture of Income-surtax and local property tax. The levy is scheduled to provide approximately \$892,575 for District identified purchases and supported by board resolution.
- The District continues to collect one-cent sales tax revenue from Benton, Iowa and Tama Counties during the 2023 fiscal year. The revenue, approximately 2.2 million annually has been used to reduce District long-term debt. This funding stream will also continue to fund annual district infrastructure and technology needs as annually identified.
- The District continues to support the .33 cent portion of Physical Plant and Equipment Levy. This levy annually generates approximately \$254,971 of revenue through the annual budgeting process and currently the district does not have a voted PPEL in the fiscal budget.

- A. [FY23 Final Audit](#)
- B. [FY23 Audit Comments](#)

Motion by Kaiser, second by Shaw to approve the FY23 Audit as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

8) **Action Item #78 – Budget Guarantee**

The budget guarantee is a funding mechanism that uses property taxes to aid schools when supplemental state aid (SSA) doesn’t keep up with decreased enrollment. If a district’s enrollment goes down and it loses more percentage than they gain in state cost per-pupil, the budget guarantee kicks in and lets districts use the previous year’s enrollment plus 1%. The Budget Guarantee is allowed by the state and is a sound financial decision so districts can go beyond 100% of their previous year’s regular program costs in the event of declining enrollment. Approving it now ensures the district is able to spend 101% if needed for next year’s enrollment which today is unknown.

MOTION RECOMMENDATION: RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Benton Community School District, will levy property tax for fiscal year 2024-2025 for the regular program budget adjustment as allowed under section 257.14, Code of Iowa. **Approve the Budget Guarantee for fiscal year 2025.**

Motion by Shaw, second by Kaiser to approve the Budget Guarantee.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

9) ADMINISTRATION REPORT
No action taken.

10) Action Item #79 - CALENDAR CHANGE
Due to weather related cancellations the FY’23-24 calendar has been adjusted for student hours and teacher contract days.

Motion by Kaiser, second by Schanbacher to approve the adjusted 23-24 school calendar as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

11) Action Item #80 - Certified Budget Information with No Adoption or Decision
General overview of new changes to the timelines and hearings needed for the certified budget completion. We will need to set the hearing dates for the Proposed Budget and Budget Adoption for the FY25 Certified Budget as well.

Select Hearing Date for Proposed Budget Hearing		First Hearing on the Proposed Budget Cannot be held Prior to March 25, 2024		
Select Hearing Date	Wednesday, March 27, 2024	<-----Double Click to the left to pick a hearing date		
Earliest Publication Date	Thursday, March 7, 2024			
Last Publication Date	Sunday, March 17, 2024			
Select Hearing Date for Budget Adoption				
Select Hearing Date	Wednesday, April 17, 2024	<-----Double Click to the left to pick a hearing date		
Earliest Publication Date	Thursday, March 28, 2024			
Last Publication Date	Sunday, April 7, 2024			

- a) **Certified Budget File information - Dr. Bieschke**
FY25 Certified Budget information: Benton CSD FY’25 Budget presented at a property tax rate of **\$10.24** currently, comprised of Local Additional Tax to include General Fund Levy (Property Tax 7.93), Instructional Support Levy w/ 4% Income Surtax (Property Tax .52) subtotal \$8.45, Management Levy \$.76, and PPEL .33 for a total Tax of \$10.24 for FY 25 Budget Publication.
- b) FY 25 Tax Certification Page
- c) FY 25 Proposed Tax Hearing Notice Mailed to the Community
Set hearing date for proposed budget hearing and budget adoption for FY’25 Certified Budget
March 27, 2024 - Proposed Budget Hearing
March 7-17, 2024 - Publication Date Window

April 17, 2024 - Hearing Date for Budget Adoption
March 28- April 7, 2024 - Publication Date Window

DUE TO THE STATE - April 30, 2024

Motion by Kaiser, second by Werning to move to set the hearing dates for proposed budget as March 27, 2024 and budget adoption as April 17, 2024 for the FY'25 Certified Budget.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

12) Action Item #81 – March Board Meeting Date Change (Move to March 27 due to certified budget requirements)

Due to the required 1st hearing on or after March 25, 2024, it would make sense to move our March board meeting to the 27th.

Motion by Kaiser, second by Shaw to change the date of the March board meeting to March 27, 2024 in order to follow certified budget guidelines.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

13) Action Item #82 – Business Services:

Motion by Becker, second by Kaiser to approve the warrants and financial reports as presented.

1. [WARRANTS](#)
2. [ADDITIONAL WARRANTS](#)
3. [SUMMARY OF WARRANTS](#)
4. FINANCIAL REPORTS
 - (1) [GENERAL FUND](#)
 - (2) [ALL FUNDS REPORT](#)

MOTION CARRIED
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14) Action Item #83 – Policy Review

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: The following policies have been reviewed and are ready for Board consideration.

- [303.6](#) **Administrator - Evaluation**
- [411.4](#) Evaluation of Support (Classified) Personnel (No change from IASB policy)
- [303.9](#) Administrative Consulting/ Outside Employment (No change from IASB policy)
- [303.10](#) Reduction in Administrative Personnel (Benton created policy)
- [304.1](#) Administration and Board of Directors (Benton created policy)
- [304.2](#) Administration and District Personnel (Benton created policy)
- [306](#) Administrative Code of Ethics (No change from IASB policy)

Motion by Werning, second by Shaw to approve the updated and revised policies as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

15) Action Item #84 – Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda includes common topics.

***ALL HIRES ARE CONTINGENT ON BACKGROUND CHECK, PROPER LICENSING, AND RELEASE FROM CURRENT CONTRACT IF APPLICABLE**

Motion by Shaw, second by Kaiser to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

- i) HIRES
 - (1) Dawn Wauters, Atkins, Food Service - [Recommendation](#)
 - (2) Kennedy Donald, Substitute Associate
 - (3) Raegan Junge, Substitute Associate
- ii) Resignations
 - (1) Ashley Wahe - Preschool Transportation Associate
 - (2) [Claire White](#) - Norway 5th Grade Teacher
 - (3) Melissa Sherbon - Special Education Associate and Bus Stop Supervisor
- iii) VOLUNTEERS
 - (1) Stephen Krug - Show Choir Volunteer
 - (2) Tracy Urell - Show Choir Volunteer
 - (3) Richard Fisher - Volunteer Football Coach - FY25
 - (4) Aaron Gale - Show Choir Volunteer
 - (5) Amanda Hutton - Show Choir Volunteer
 - (6) John Carley - Show Choir Volunteer
- iv) MEETING MINUTES -
 - (1) [January 17, 2024](#)
 - (2) [January 31, 2024 Work Session](#)
- v) CONTRACTS
 - (1) [Coe College](#)
 - (2) [Kroll, LLC Fixed Asset Contract](#)
 - (3) [Morningside Contract](#)
 - (4) [UNI Contract](#)

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

16) Superintendent Report

- VPPEL Updates
- Governor Reynolds Meeting
- Legislation
- Negotiations Timeline
- [Board Member Code of Ethics](#)

17) Action Item #85 – Closed Session/Consent Agreements

As per Iowa Code 21.5(e) To discuss whether to conduct a hearing or to conduct hearings to suspend or expel a student(s), unless an open session is requested by the student or a parent or guardian of the student if the student is a minor.

We had 2 student closed sessions.

Student #1

Motion by Werning, second by Schanbacher to go into closed session.

Roll call vote to go into closed session: DIRECTORS: KAISER Yes, SCHANBACHER Yes, SHAW Yes, THOMPSON Yes, WERNING Yes and BECKER Yes.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

Motion by Kaiser, second by Werning to come out of closed session.

Roll call vote to come out of closed session: DIRECTORS: KAISER Yes, SCHANBACHER Yes, SHAW Yes, THOMPSON Yes, WERNING Yes and BECKER Yes.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

Motion by Werning, second by Shaw to approve the consent agreement for Student 1 who is subject to the suspension.

Roll call vote: DIRECTORS: KAISER Yes, SCHANBACHER Yes, SHAW Yes, THOMPSON Yes, WERNING Yes and BECKER Yes.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

Student #2

Motion by Shaw, second by Kaiser to go into closed session.

Roll call vote to go into closed session: DIRECTORS: KAISER Yes, SCHANBACHER Yes, SHAW Yes, THOMPSON Yes, WERNING Yes and BECKER Yes.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

Motion by Kaiser, second by Werning to come out of closed session.

Roll call vote to come out of closed session: DIRECTORS: KAISER Yes, SCHANBACHER Yes, SHAW Yes, THOMPSON Yes, WERNING Yes and BECKER Yes.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

Motion by Schanbacher, second by Shaw to approve the consent agreement for Student 2 who is subject to the suspension.

Roll call vote: DIRECTORS: KAISER Yes, SCHANBACHER Yes, SHAW Yes, THOMPSON Yes, WERNING Yes and BECKER Yes.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

18) Action Item #86 – Exempt Meeting

Exempt Session: IOWA CODE 21.9

- a. A meeting of a Board to discuss strategy in matters relating to employment conditions of employees who are not covered by a collective bargaining agreement. I.C. 21.9 (no action with exempt sessions. As we have done in years past, the Board typically provides a range for collective bargaining).

b. Dr. Bieschke held a strategy session with the board for non-union employees.

Motion by Kaiser, second by Werning to go into exempt session.

Roll call vote to go into Exempt Session: DIRECTORS: KAISER Yes, SCHANBACHER Yes, SHAW Yes, THOMPSON Yes, WERNING Yes and BECKER Yes.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

Motion by Kaiser, second by Werning to come out of exempt session.

Roll call vote to come out of Exempt Session: DIRECTORS: KAISER Yes, SCHANBACHER Yes, SHAW Yes, THOMPSON Yes, WERNING Yes and BECKER Yes.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

20) Action Item #87 - Adjournment

Motion by Schanbacher, second by Kaiser to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING AYE

Meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.