

Okemos Board of Education
Okemos, Michigan 48864
REGULAR MEETING DECEMBER 11, 2023

The regular meeting of the Okemos Board of Education was called to order by President Gebara at 7:00 p.m. Call To Order

Members Present: Tom Buffett, Katie Cavanaugh, Shulawn Doxie, Mary Gebara, Melanie Lynn and Andrew Phelps

Members Absent: Jayme Taylor

Administrators: Assistant Superintendent Stacy Bailey; Finance Director Elizabeth Lentz; HR Director Mario Martinez; DEI Director Lara Slee

Member Shulawn Doxie will serve as temporary secretary. Temp Secretary

Representatives from Christman Company, TowerPinkster, and Veridus Group will present a 2022 Bond update including Hiawatha car line redesign, and updates pertaining to bid packages 1, 2, 3 and 4. Current projects and expected completion timeframes were discussed including secure vestibules and offices. Middle school bathroom redesign and options were reviewed. Bond Update

Bid package #4 which includes Hiawatha projects; High School office improvements; minor athletic updates; and OPM draining and infrastructure improvements. The proposed Hiawatha carline and bus loop redesign was discussed at length, as well as secure vestibule and office renovations. The High School will receive office renovations, and secure vestibule upgrades. The bid process is underway with expected action in March.

Communication plans including an additional listening session regarding the Hiawatha car line, website and newsletters were described.

Members inquired about the following: how were decisions made and who was included; what requirements were used to vet options; what other options were evaluated; what happens to the berm and trees currently there; banner poles; communication channels; and community engagement.

The following individuals addressed the board concerning the proposed Hiawatha carline design: Susan Metcalf, Susan Leahy, Mohammad Yusaf, Suhela Yusaf, Lauren Swanson-Aprill, Rick Metcalf, Janet Tamborini, Ron Tamborini, Theresa May- Hartle, Marlene Stover, Tom Lee, Shelby Miller, Barbara Forney, UshaSree Chamarchy, Sima Kumar, and Charlie Ashley. Citizens Address
Agenda & Non-
Agenda Items

The following individuals addressed the board concerning OPM building and water challenges: Sue Hallman, Aster Soria, Kelly McCarty, and Stephanie Winslow.

High School Student Representatives reported on the following: recent Toddler Day, upcoming Wilson Talent Center Open House, coat drive through December 22nd, car line procedures, closed campus policy, counseling activities, military visits, athletic update, and upcoming fine arts performances. High School
Student
Report

Superintendent Hood reported on the following: Operations hiring update; introduction of Communication Specialists Shannon Beczkiewicz and Mikayla Temple; upcoming OPM Water FAQ and listening session on Thursday, December 14th; upcoming Hiawatha informational meeting; and Bennett Woods was selected to host a state-wide instructional coaching training. Superintendent's
Report

Members inquired about the following: communication and engagement.

President Gebara acknowledged correspondence from the following: Yingxin Zhou concerning community pool use; Rick Metcalf, Tri Huynh, Judy Leibinger, Zhichao Cao, Andrea Swartzle, Pam Sawatzki regarding the Hiawatha car line redesign; Ibrahim Mohmand regarding boxing as a high school sport; Gabriela Pawlak regarding weighted GPAs; Andrew Jubeck regarding prerequisites for some high school classes; and Eli Magnuson regarding music program funding.

Board Reports &
Request

Members reported on the following: upcoming fine arts performance; work session regarding board, superintendent and budget alignment; start times committee and recent presentation; and recent ISOA meeting.

MOVED by Andy Phelps SUPPORTED by Shulawn Doxie that the board approve items 1 through 3 for immediate implementation and appropriate action. Item 1: Approval of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 13, 2023; Item 2: Approval of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 27, 2023; Item 3: Acknowledge receipt of the November financial statement and approve payment of bills for November.

Consent Agenda

AYE: 6 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 1 **MOTION CARRIED**

MOVED by Tom Buffett, SUPPORTED by Andy Phelps that the board waive the reading and adopt the resolution for collection of summer property tax as appropriate from Alaiedon Township, Meridian Township, and the City of Lansing and to negotiate a reasonable expense for such collection of the district's tax levy.

Certify Summer
Taxes

Roll Call Vote

Tom Buffett	Yes	Melanie Lynn	Yes
Katie Cavanaugh	Yes	Andrew Phelps	Yes
Mary Gebara	Yes	Jayne Taylor	---
Shulawn Doxie	Yes		

AYE: 6 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 1 **MOTION CARRIED**

MOVED by Katie Cavanaugh SUPPORTED by Shulawn Doxie that the board waive the reading and adopt first reading of board policies 3106 Booster Clubs, PTOs, and Other Support Groups; 3113 Social Security Numbers; 3114 Litigation; 3115 Nondiscrimination and Retaliation; 3201 Accounting; 3203 Deposits; 3204 Investment of Funds; 3206 Property Tax Levies; 3210 Borrowing; 3211 Post-Issuance Tax Compliance; 3212 Post-Issuance Disclosure Compliance; and 3213 Electronic Transactions of Funds and Automated Clearing House Arrangements.

Board Policy –
First Reading

AYE: 6 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 1 **MOTION CARRIED**

The policy committee sought feedback from the board to help inform their work; specifically, should the board have a goal for the fund balance percentage it would like to meet and should that goal be memorialized in board policy. The board discussed how often the policy should be reviewed, what happens if the district doesn't meet the goal, and the appropriateness of a goal inside a board policy before agreeing that while a goal would be helpful, they were not necessarily comfortable putting it into policy. The proposed policy will return to the policy committee for further work.

Policy Feedback

Finance Director Elizabeth Lentz provided information regarding 2023-2024 budget revisions. Proposed revisions included the following: adjustments due to staffing, operational expenditures, workers compensation increases, wage analysis and adjustments, enrollment, special education reimbursements, cost offset by grants, as well as interest and investment income. The revisions result in a positive \$943000 to be returned to the fund balance. As a reminder, the districted initially adopted a 23-24 budget using general funds.

The board discussed the process as it pertains to the recent superintendent contract negotiations. The board and superintendent contracted with a 3rd party to negotiate the superintendent's contract, which involved several board meetings, market analysis and comparison with like districts. How comparable districts were defined was explained, and it was noted that in the future the superintendent's salary will be a part of the district's budgetary process and timelines. They also discussed how to ensure the process is institutionalized.

Superintendent
Contract
Negotiations

Dana Bennett and Susan Metcalf addressed the Board concerning the proposed Hiawatha car line design.

Public Comment

Member Cavanaugh suggested follow up with Ingham County Road commission regarding the move from four lanes down to three on Jolly Road.

Other Matters

President Gebara adjourned the regular meeting at 10:17 p.m.

Adjourn

Jayne Taylor, Secretary