

OFFICIAL MINUTES FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING OF THE
ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

The Board of Trustees for the Arkansas School for the Deaf met for their monthly meeting on February 21, 2017.

Present: Dr. Doug Watson, Chairperson; Faith McLaughlin, Vice Chairperson; Susan Pack, Secretary; Everett Elam, Board Member; Dr. John McAllister, Board Member; Jeanne Tribett, ASB Parent Representative; Harry Pompeo, ASD Parent Representative; James Caton, ASBVI Superintendent; Dr. Janet Dickinson, ASD Superintendent; Beth Smith and Will Gorum, Interpreters; Members of the Deaf Community; Members of the o

17-D-002 Motion to Approve Consent Items

Dr. Watson asked for a motion to approve the consent items to include the minutes, financial statement and personnel items. Ms. Pack made a motion to approve the consent items and Ms. McLaughlin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Items

Approval to Sell Riverfront Property

Dr. Dickinson asked Mr. Krenn if he wanted to say something about the Riverfront property. Mr. Krenn said they wanted to know if the Board had had time to look at the appraisal and if the Board would approve ASD to go forward with the sale of the property starting with state agencies. If no state agency is interested it would go out to the bid process. If there is not a good offer the property does not have to be sold. The appraisal came in at around \$60,000. Dr. Watson asked why ASD wants to sell the land and for what purpose. Ms. Pack said that it was discussed at the last meeting. Dr. Watson asked what the pressing need for \$60,000 was. Mr. Krenn said with the potential sale of the land they had done a study of the repairs that are needed for every building on campus and it is around \$20 million dollars so any dime that can be raised looks good on them from the Governor's standpoint. The Governor and Legislators are trying to find a route where they may be able to build a school later on to replace some of the buildings that are deteriorating. He said now they are in discussion with an architect firm to get a master plan done on the campus – where a building would be able sit on this campus. They are waiting to hear back from the firm on how much it would cost to do the plan. If it is over \$50,000 they have to go back to ABA and let them bid out everything again. A master plan can go anywhere up to \$250,000 or less. They are trying to get one done for less than \$50,000. Technically cannot use any of the \$1.5 million that the Governor gave the school to do that master plan.

Mr. Krenn said ASD has been encouraged by ABA and the governor's office to do the master plan because they have gone to them and said there is an issue on the campus and the issue is that the buildings are old and not in ADA compliance. Mr. Krenn said they had to have a decision soon because they need to determine if they are going to extend the lease on the property. If the board approves today they would discuss with ABA to get it to the governor's office. He understands that the governor has already given them the initial approval to go ahead with the sell process once the board approves. Mr. Elam said that property is currently yielding about \$420 a month. Mr. Krenn said it brings in about \$325 a month. Ms. Pack said this had been discussed at the last meeting and the land is of no use to ASD whatsoever because there is nothing you can do with it except watch it erode. Dr. Dickinson said they have spent a lot of time trying to figure out what to do. Dr. Watson asked if the state would be interested in brokering a deal with the Game & Fish. Mr. Krenn said they would not know until they start the process. ABA will go out to multiple agencies and ask if anyone is interested in purchasing this property but they cannot do that process until the board approves to sell.

17-D-003 Motion to Approve the Sale of the Riverfront Property

Ms. Pack stated they should forward with that part because what Mr. Krenn is saying is all the board needs to do tonight is to move to have ABA look at it and then they discuss with the state and there is no obligation to sell. Ms. Pack made a motion that the board decide tonight to let them make the first step. Ms. McLaughlin seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Dr. Dickinson said there were a lot of good things happening at ASD. She said a big thank you goes to Harry. He was a huge help throughout GPSD. Ms. Pack told everyone to stop in and look at the gym – it is beautiful. Dr. Dickinson said they had many people in the stands and it was a huge success.

Dr. Dickinson introduced their new HR Manager, Kristi Clark.

She said they had one student who met the governor. The student wanted to meet the governor so she worked hard to make it happen. It was a very nice opportunity.

Dr. Dickinson recently went to UALR and met with Dr. Kuykendall and Dr. Holtz to discuss the possibility of establishing a master's degree program in Deaf Education.

ASD has several new grants. The new grant writer has been working very hard to set the foundation to get that going. Last month ASD received a grant for a greenhouse. This month ASD received a grant from Game & Fish Commission for archery/equipment. ASD also received \$46,000 for a new culinary arts program.

Dr. Dickinson said their enrollment had started to decline but now is in an upswing and thanked the staff for helping to retain the students they have and recruiting new students. She said the trend is not like what they are seeing at other schools for the deaf. Most other schools have an increase in students that are deaf plus. ASD has had a significant increase in students that are on grade level, smart and many of them have the ability to use spoken English so they are bilingual. She said ASD is making some big changes in how they educate the kids to make sure that they are equivalent to the public schools. She is sending their teachers out with mentors in the public schools with teachers in their same field.

Ms. McLaughlin said she wanted to add that when she visited the school she saw the early childhood program. She said the program is dynamite and going to fly. She said there were very few enrollees now but they are doing wonders with the children. She said there was a beautiful new early childhood parent center where the parents can come in and work with the teachers along with their children.

Dr. McAllister asked why they were losing so many coaches. Dr. Dickinson said the teacher who coached decided to move to north Arkansas. She is not sure what happened prior to that coach. Mr. Northrup said the last four have moved for other job reasons. Dr. McAllister said he noticed ASB has had a lot of turnover and asked if they could speak to that effect. Mr. Caton said for ASB it has been a matter that the coaches can make more money in the public school sector. He said the school is very restricted on how they can give coaches stipends whereas in public school they can get a stipend for every sport they do. In a state agency they are limited to \$3500 and it doesn't matter how many sports they teach. Dr. McAllister said that was not fair to coach different sports and only get one stipend as there is a lot of time spent with training/teaching. Mr. Caton said it was not fair at all but that was the reality of being a school and being a state agency. Ms. Bonifas said they had tried to modify the language to add a Parent Facilitator and both the governor's office and the legislature would not allow it. She said she did not know how receptive they would be to someone receiving more than \$3500. She said they would keep trying. Dr. McAllister said he thought it would behoove the government if our schools are kept up with public schools. He said that both schools have good coaches that put extra time in and need to try to keep them. Mr. Elam said the energy the coach puts forth for the blind (if done correctly) is insane.

Dr. Watson said the board would now go into Executive Session (5:15-5:36).

Dr. Watson said the board recommended no action be taken on a personnel issue, no vote was taken. They discussed it and the board supports going ahead with the process.

Dr. Dickinson invited everyone to a reception for Mary Weeks, former Chair of the Board.

17-D-004 Motion to Adjourn

Ms. McLaughlin made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Elam seconded the motion. Dr. Watson adjourned the meeting at 5:40.

Dr. Doug Watson, Chair

Susan Pack, Secretary

OFFICIAL MINUTES FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING OF THE
ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF
ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

The Board of Trustees for the Arkansas School for the Deaf and the Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired met for their monthly meeting on February 21, 2017.

Present: Dr. Doug Watson, Chairperson; Faith McLaughlin, Vice Chairperson; Susan Pack, Secretary; Everett Elam, Board Member; Dr. John McAllister, Board Member; James Caton, ASBVI Superintendent; Dr. Janet Dickinson, ASD Superintendent; Jeanne Tribett, ASB Parent Representative; Harry Pompeo, ASD Parent Representative; Beth Smith and Will Gorum, Interpreters; Members of the Deaf Community; Members of the Blind Community, Hillcrest residents

Dr. Watson called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm. The next meeting was scheduled for March 21st. There was discussion regarding that date being during Spring Break so it was decided to change the meeting to March 14, 2017.

17-J-002 Motion to Approve Minutes

Dr. Watson asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the January meeting. Ms. McLaughlin made a motion to approve the January minutes and Ms. Pack seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Items

None

Discussion Items

Dr. Watson said he wanted to recognize the ASD girls' basketball team. He said for those that didn't know the girls just won a regional deaf school basketball tournament (7 schools). A short clip from the winning game was shown. Dr. Dickinson stated the video was taken from the live streaming that ASD did so anyone that wanted could watch the tournament being played at ASD. The trophy was displayed for everyone to see. The team was recognized for their victory of the first championship won by ASD girls. Dr. Watson told them how proud they were of this team. Ms. Pack said they won in '94 but it was not as big a tournament at that time. Dr. Dickinson recognized the coach (Tommy). The team was asked to stand and tell their name, grade and where they were from. Dr. Watson congratulated the team.

Coach Varner stated the girls had been through a lot with rotation of coaches over the last four years. They had new coaches coming in and program changes every year and it wasn't fair to the team. Coach Varner said he told the girls he was going to continue coaching the girls program for the next several years.

Easter Seal Update

Ms. Bonifas stated they had submitted to DBA and are waiting on their comments. Once they get through reviewing everything and give back comments on any additional information or changes they want made then that will be responded to but for now waiting on DBA's response to the submission.

ASB Parent Representative – Jeanne Tribett

Ms. Tribett reported that Inauguration Day was observed in the cafeteria during lunch periods. Students were able to watch and listen to the event on one of the Smartboards. The wrestling team traveled to Arkadelphia for a wrestling match February 24th and represented our school well. The wrestling and cheer teams traveled to the Kentucky School for the Blind to participate in Conference. ASB cheerleaders won first place and the wrestlers took 2nd place. The Pee-Wee wrestlers also participated in the annual Candy Bar meet during the pep rally.

ASB Wellness Committee continues to meet and revise the Wellness Policy and are planning a spring wellness event. It will most likely be a walk in addition to a staff health improvement competition. The Little Rockers Marathon is quickly approaching – March 4th. ASB will have 17 participants.

FBLA took a group of students to Conway for District competition. The students performed well and represented the program well.

The Braille Challenge was held February 2nd. The entire school participated in the celebration of literacy. Students from all over the state joined in the competition component event. Parent/teacher training activities were also available. Winner of the event has the chance to compete in the National Braille Challenge in California this summer.

The elementary and middle school students celebrated Valentine's Day with a "popcorn and bingo" party. The game was fully accessible and the kids had a super time. Additionally, the Valentine's Day Dance was a huge success. Dr. Watson asked if any wrestlers participated in the State competition. Ms. Doan said 3 wrestlers attended.

ASD Parent Representative – Harry Pompeo

Mr. Pompeo reported ASD hosted the GPSD Basketball Tournament for the first time since becoming a member in 2008. The boys won 5th place. The girls faced three different schools to win the championship. There were approximately 215 athletes and coaches that came here. In addition there were over 500 people watching the tournament. There were 10,000 views in the live stream from all over the United States. There were 10 players selected to the All-Tournament Players. ASD had two boys and two girls selected. ASD is sending two girls to the USA Deaf Basketball event in Washington, DC.

Four students and staff will attend the Midwest Regional Academic Bowl Competition in Indianapolis, Indiana February 23rd – 25th. If they win they will go to the National Bowl at Gallaudet University in Washington, DC.

Track and field athletes are training to get ready for the upcoming season. ASD has 58 athletes participating from elementary to high school. Meets will be every Saturday beginning March 4th – April 29th.

Special Olympic athletes and coaches have been busy with different sports. They will have a State Basketball Tournament March 10-11th in Russellville. The State Individual Skills Competition will be March 16th at ASD.

There being no further business of Joint nature, the meeting moved to the agenda for the Arkansas School for the Blind.

Dr. Doug Watson, Chair

Susan Pack, Secretary