

**REGIONAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION**

116 N. CHICAGO ST., SUITE 400

JOLIET IL. 60432

APRIL 7, 2025

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**Board Meeting Minutes 6:00pm**

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**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: All right, Rich, would you like to call the meeting to order?

Rich: I would like to call this meeting to order. Want to call the roll call?

Dr. Sparlin: Dr. Caparelli has it

**II. ROLL CALL**

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Nancy Bartels? (absent) Rich Davis?

Rich: Present

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Eric Bernacki?

Eric: Here

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Tony Drabik?

Tony: Here

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Kate Heisner?

Kate: Here

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Dr. Mimi Johnson? (absent)

**III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Can we please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance?

Everyone in Attendance: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all.

#### IV. PUBLIC

Rich: Any public comments in this seating? No public here. I guess we'll continue on.

#### V. PREVIOUS OPEN MEETING MINUTES

Rich: I'd like to have you review the September 10<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes, which is in your binder that's behind the red. And we will take a few minutes and go through that.

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: And all, I believe Jhasidy sent the minutes out to everyone to review before here, but if you guys need a few minutes? Okay. Thank you Jhasidy.

Rich: Is there any comments on the open meeting minutes? Hearing none. Let's vote to approve. I'll make the motion.

Eric: Motion

Rich: I have a second?

Second.

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Rich Davis?

Rich: yes

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Eric Bernacki?

Eric: yes

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Tony?

Tony: yes

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Kate Heisner?

Kate: yes

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Dr. Mimi Johnson? Not here. Dave Medema?

Dave: yes

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Okay, Great

## **VI. PREVIOUS CLOSED MEETING MINUTES**

Rich: And now we have the closed session minutes from September 10<sup>th</sup>

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Jhasidy, were the closed session minutes sent as well?

Jhasidy: Yes

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Okay

Rich: Any comments on the closed session minutes? Hearing none. Motion to approve the closed session minutes?

So moved

Rich: do I have a second?

It's been motioned and second.

Rich: Please call the roll.

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Sure, Eric Bernacki?

Eric: yes

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Tony Drabik?

Tony: Yes

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Kate Heisner?

Kate: Obtained

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: David?

David: Yes

## **VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Very good. So, now my turn for announcements? We have a few tonight. First and foremost, our next meeting will be on May 19. At this meeting, we will swear in our new members from the April 1 election. Congratulations to you guys. We

will go through the reorganization process. We will have new business from May 19, as we have received a detachment annexation request from a single-family household. The family currently has two children, ages four and two. They have filed a petition to detach from Petone School District, 207 U and to be annexed into Manhattan Elementary School District 114 and the Lincoln Way Community School District 210 we are working on all of the documents, postings and data collection for that hearing. We will provide more information as we get closer to that meeting date. Congratulations to Nancy, Kate, Dave and Tony on being elected to serve on the board, and Eric moving forward, there are many announcements for tonight, Richard, if there is nothing else, can we have a motion to adjourn?

Question? Sorry, On the petition, are they refiling like their signatures and all the petitions. So just like Kurt?

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: So, we have gotten documentation on petitions. Wait a minute for the annexation detachment, yeah. So, an attorney has reached out to us, a local Joliet attorney who has filed on the behalf of these two children, and have started the paperwork. Dr. Sparlin can you?

Dr. Sparlin: I was just going to say, I think Toni probably could elaborate better than I could.

Toni Renken: So, I conferred with the Illinois State Board of Education, I'm sorry, the Illinois School Board, and talk with their attorney about the detachment process, because this is actually my first that that I am doing. So, I they have a representative who specializes in detachments and annexations. I sent them the petition. They reviewed it. We spoke about it, because we are dealing with just one parcel, one home, not like an entire community or an entire subdivision. They need to have the signatures of two thirds of the amount of people that are registered voters for that home. Since there are two registered voters in that home, both of them sign the petition was adequate for them to be able to move forward. So that was reviewed by espy, and they agree with that position. So, since they have the necessary signatures to move forward, we're working on the process of having it run through the newspaper, because you have to do the publications, and then, you know, moving forward with the actual hearings.

But did they start this recently? Or is this from back in June?

Toni Renken: They did the petition was originally received. I don't have a copy of it. It was a while back. We did take some time to review the petition to make sure that both of the individuals that are within the household were, in fact, registered. They provided their voter registration card. They also provided their voter history showing that they have actually participated in elections and that they were eligible to do this, we also reviewed the boundary lines to make sure, because they do have to be contiguous, so as we, you

know, touching the next boundary, we ran their parcel. So, there was a lot of research that was kind of done before making sure that this petition was valid before we brought it to the board, because if there were some other problems that they were going to have that was going to cause issues at the hearing we wanted to, take care of those in advance.

Yes, I know signatures are only valid for six months

Toni Renken: I mean

For the administrative sure, someone wanted to fight it, they'd be like, Oh it's not valid anymore

Toni Renken: because of the timing in which when we received it, and the signatures being valid at the time that they were received and given that it's the two red one household Exactly. It shouldn't really be an issue, because they could always resign the petition. Both of them are planning on coming to the hearing and participating, along with their attorney, who I spoke with just this morning.

Tony Drabik: I mean, for us to be getting this all at one time, we have to make a ruling in one night. We can't.

Toni Renken: No, it doesn't have to be done in one night. So, there will be a formal hearing where they will come and present any evidence that they'd like you to take into consideration. The school districts also receive a copy of the petition, and they have an opportunity to come and present any evidence that they would like to have heard as to why it may impact their school district, why it may impact their schools, if they're in favor of it, if they're opposed, and they can provide that information, they'll take all of them into consideration. You know, in making more determination, determination doesn't have to be made that night, but it's all going to be presented in one evening.

Is our vote on that binding? Or is it just a recommendation?

Toni Renken: So, when you make your determination, your determination is binding in that it is enforceable unless one of the parties take that determination to a circuit court judge for an administrative review. The circuit court judge can then make a determination that they're either going to uphold your recommendation or they're going to overturn your recommendation. Any circuit court judge is then subjected to the possibility of an appeal to either. The third district appellate court, and then from there, you can, if that is not, you know, in their liking, appeal further to the Illinois Supreme Court. I know the previous one that you guys did a few years ago did get overturned by the appellate court. So it's something that, because of that. We wanted to make sure that everything was kind of dot I's dotted and T's crossed before the petition moved forward.

Yeah, and why was it overturned?

Toni Renken: I would have to look back, but I do know that I did send the rulings over. I can't say that I've read it recently, but I can resend that if you'd like. As to why the appellate court made that decision.

It might be helpful for us to have that information.

Toni Renken: Sure, I can resend it out to everyone. Because of the Open Meetings Act, it will be one email from me to each of you individually. You will not all be listed on much. I apologize I haven't read it recently.

I'm like Judges. I don't want to be overturned.

Toni Renken: In fairness, the state court judge was overturned by the appellate court. So, it was everybody had their opinion on that one.

Interesting before. When we're done with this subject, I have no question too. Then if anyone else has any other questions about this, anyone want to ask?

Tony Drabik: On our board meeting agenda, here is there ever like comes like, I see I'm on other boards, you get, like, you know, open or new business stuff like that, where we get a chance to or if we have any other business, or something like that. I don't see that on here. Is there? Do we normally do that? Or if we have something that we like to ask with everyone here present on the record, how do we go? How do we move forward?

Toni Renken: For the purpose of this agenda, there wasn't any new business that needed to be addressed, just because the board is pretty new and everybody's you know, coming on, you do receive the agenda packet a bit in advance. If there's something that you'd like to have added to the just ask for it to be added, and then they can add it on for the purpose of Open Meetings, it's always helpful to make sure that we have all of the items that we plan to discuss on the agenda, so that the public has an opportunity to know what's going to be talked about if they want to comment, you know, have their opinions voiced on that. We try to stick to only talking about what is on the agenda, so that everyone knows that's what the meeting is going to be conducting.

Tony Drabik: What I My question is, wouldn't really be pertaining much to the public, so it would be kind of question to you or and the board, basically. So that's, you know, that's what I would like to ask. I've asked it before. I really never got a clear answer sure which that would be, you know, like when I, when I was appointed about a year ago, you know, I was told I didn't have to run until 2029 or 2030 and then we got all this stuff because we had a new clerk, and she had to run the remainder of the seat. Now I had to run blah, blah, blah. So where was the information? Where did the information like? I'm curious.

I'd like to see the information that was passed along that I was told 2029 or 2030 and now I had to run for a remainder of seat. I get it, no problem. And I got to run again in two years. So where is that information at? I think maybe we should all have that so we so we're we know that.....

Toni Renken: Sure, as far as like when the next elections is?

Yeah. I mean, because I was originally told 2030 2029 now, I had to run now. And, you know, I mean, just definitely doesn't seem right?

Toni Renken: Following the conclusion of this election, the trust, the clerk, is going to come out with the consolidated election results, and they are actually like in a book, and they're bound, and it goes through every single elected office who was elected, how long their term is, and what is the requirements that they're going to have in order to move forward. So those are going to be bound that are come out by the by the clerk. I can get a copy of that for everyone to have, and then you'll have that information. They'll have your name, and then they'll have the clerk's information, who you call to get your petitions and everything that you need moving forward.

Tony Drabik: So, it sounds like maybe, with between the previous clerk, so the clerks stepping in must have had some must have passed along wrong information when we were appointed or something. And what I'm getting at possibly is that, what I'm getting at?

Toni Renken: Sure, possible that there was some, some issues transition. It was also pretty unprecedented to have so many open vacancies. Most people fill out their term. So it was kind of filling in those vacancies and knowing, you know what the election process was and how long each term was, but we should, I'm hoping that everyone's going to run out their terms. We won't have those issues moving forward.

Tony Drabik: Yeah, so, yeah, if we could have that information, you know....

Toni Renken: Sure, I'll get the election books for everyone for the next meeting, assuming that they're printed by then, but as soon as I have them.

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: And I just wanted to add for the new board members, we will be sending out a training, probably by Thursday or Friday. It'll come via email. It's just something you go through by yourself.

Everyone: Okay

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: . I don't know the exact verbiage. It was open meeting act so OMA, but there were some other parts to it.

Toni Renken: There's usually a sexual harassment training that's required by the state, and then one other like an ethics finance one as well.

Between my job and then I'm on the fire board, fire Commission Board, so I might maybe....

Toni Renken: There might be a financial report so... right the statement of economic interest, they should email separate the statement of economic interest will come directly from the state. To you, I do think I just did mine. So, it'll be coming right around, right around tax time is usually comes out.

Rich: Any other comments? All right, it looks as though our next scheduled meeting is Monday, May 19, at it in this room at six o'clock.

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Can we all be dressed up so that we can do a group photo for our website, dressed however you like to be seen in a picture across all of Will County?

Toni Renken: Yes, it will also be a longer meeting, because there will be the hearing on that petition. So just so everyone's prepared...

Rich: And the swearing in of new people

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Yes

Rich: Everything else we should probably do that, swearing in before the meeting day.

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Yes

Rich: No other comments? May I have a motion to adjourn?

Tony Drabik: Motion

Rich: Second?

Second

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Okay, Tony Drabik?

Tony: Yes

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Kate Heisner?

Kate: Yes

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Rich Davis?

Rich: Yes

Dr. Caparelli-Ruff: Eric Bernacki?

Eric: Yes

Rich: Adjourned!