

**ADIRONDACK CENTRAL SCHOOL
WEST LEYDEN ELEMENTARY
WEST LEYDEN, NY 13489**

DRAFT

PUBLIC HEARING/REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES – October 11, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT	OTHERS PRESENT
Michael Kramer – President Almanda Sturtevant – Vice-President Bruce Brach Maureen Healt Robert Healt Keith Redhead	Kristy McGrath, Superintendent, Sharon Cihocki, Business Administrator, Michelle Freeman, District Clerk, Heidi Smith, HS Principal; Dan Roberts, Asst. Secondary Principal; Brandie Collins, MS Principal; Linda Weber, WL Principal; Michael Faustino, Director of Technology, Instr. & Curriculum; Wendy Foye, CSE Director; Jennifer Badaracco, Transportation Supervisor; Cameron Teachout, Director of Facilities; Ivan Pritchard, Christine Goossens, Darlene DeFazio, Marion Gray, Paul Repak, Kendra Hopsicker-ATA, Jennifer Gallo-ATA, Rob Hinsdill
<u>MEMBERS EXCUSED:</u> Abby Podkowka	

At 6:59 p.m. Mr. Kramer, Board President called the Public Hearing/Regular meeting to order.

PRESIDENT’S MOMENT:

Mr. Kramer stated due to the many items on the Agenda he would spare the President’s Moment.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Superintendent McGrath gave a slide presentation to the Board and attendees on electric school buses. She explained the timeline in New York State. Starting in July 2027 the district will no longer be able to purchase gas/diesel buses. By July 1, 2035 all NY school buses are to be zero-emission.

Adirondack typically rotates out 3 buses every year usually 8-9 years old, average of 135,000 miles. Adirondack currently has 30 buses, 25 full size, 4 small buses and 1 suburban. Superintendent McGrath’s presentation included what an electric bus looks like, high voltage components, maintenance, bus warranty and training which will be partnered with Leonard Bus Sales.

Christine Goossens from Leonard Bus Sales went over the EPA Clean School Bus Program. It is anticipated there will be 5 rounds of EPA grant funding. Adirondack was chosen in Round 1 to receive funds – Bus Purchase Award of \$1,125,000 (\$375,000 per bus) and Infrastructure Award of \$60,000 (\$20,000 per bus).

Why is Adirondack looking to buy 3 electric buses now?

1 – Electric buses are expensive and we have a grant:

> We will want to take advantage of grant money. We currently pay approximately \$165,000 for a gas/diesel bus, and electric buses cost well over \$400,000 plus electrical/charging/construction costs.

> We have the EPA grant, with transportation aid applied we will be paying approximately \$30,000 locally for a project/purchases that total \$1,329,738.

2 – Knowledge is power:

> Starting with 3 buses will allow us to better prepare.

Next Steps:

Special Vote – Tuesday, October 24, 2023 in the multipurpose room at the MS/HS from 12 noon – 8 p.m.

If the vote passes, we anticipate the 3 electric buses to be operational in spring/summer 2024 (may be 2024-25).

If the vote doesn't pass, the district will continue to map out a plan for funding and infrastructure, to be prepared for the requirements in future years (July 2027). Beginning in August 2024, each District must present to State Ed. a progress report on our status and plan for electric bus implementation.

Superintendent McGrath and Ms. Goossens answered many questions from those in attendance.

PRESENTATIONS:

3-8 Data:

Ms. Weber, WL Principal/District Data Coordinator – Presented to the Board a Data Overview of 3-8 NYS ELA, Math & Science. She went over the 2021-22 & 2022-23 proficiency % and score levels broken down by district wide and of each building Boonville Elementary, West Leyden Elementary & Middle School.

Professional Development at Adirondack (Summer & Fall) – Mr. Faustino:

Will be presented at the November meeting due to time.

SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION:

Mrs. McGrath thanked Board members for their time and efforts they put in serving as Board members. It is not just about attending monthly meetings; there are training sessions, workshops and committee meetings in addition. A lot of work goes into being a member of the Board. A certificate and personalized tumblers recognizing each member for Board Recognition Week were handed out. Elementary students from West Leyden and Boonville Elementary made posters and cards for the Board members to take home.

PUBLIC FORUM:

No one came forward for public forum.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Mr. Redhead moved and Ms. Healt seconded, carried 6-0; the Board of Education approved the following Consent Agenda:

Minutes:

>> September 12, 2023 – Regular Meeting

>> September 28, 2023 – Special Meeting

Field Trips:

REQUESTOR:	DESTINATION:	DATE:
HS Guidance 9-12	Fort Drum for Career Day	10/12/23
Boonville Elem Kindergarten	Teel Farms in Barneveld to learn about plants, animals, agriculture	10/17/23
Technology students	AMF & Kraft in Lowville, Owl Wire & Lodging Kit Co. in Boonville	10/19/23
Class of 2024	Watertown airport for Annual Workforce Connections	11/15/23
FFA students	Oswegatchie Educational Center	11/17 – 11/18/23
12:1:3:1 Class	Tops in Boonville	11/17, 2/12, 4/12, 6/7

REGULAR AGENDA:

Audit 2022-2023:

Resolved that, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Brach moved and Mr. Kramer seconded, carried 6-0; the Board of Education adopted the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the School District external audits for 2022-2023 including general purpose financial statements, Report on Federal Financial Awards, Extra-Curricular Activity funds, and Management Letter as presented by Accounting Firm D’Arcangelo & Co., LLP, of Utica, New York, be accepted.

Mr. Brach, Mr. Redhead, Ms. Healt, Mr. Kramer, Mrs. Sturtevant, Mr. Healt **6** – Yes, **0** – No, **1**-Absent (Ms. Podkowka)

Effective Date Amendment:

Resolved that, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Brach moved and Mr. Redhead seconded, carried 6-0; the Board of Education approved to amend the effective date of Teacher Aide, Tiffany Quinn from 9/18/23 to 9/14/23.

Non-instructional Employee Resignation:

Resolved that, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Brach moved and Mr. Redhead seconded, carried 6-0 the Board of Education approved to rescind the termination of a non-instructional employee and accepted their resignation effective September 13, 2023.

Substitute Resignation:

Resolved that, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Brach moved and Mr. Redhead the Board of Education accepted the resignation of Patrick Henry as a substitute Groundsworker/Cleaner effective 9/18/2023.

Support Staff:

Resolved that, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Brach moved and Mr. Redhead seconded, carried 6-0; the Board of Education appointed the following support staff with the exception of Mrs. Sokoloff as you cannot be placed in two different Civil Service positions:

Name	Position	Civil Service Classification	Type/Duration of Appointment	Effective Date	Rate of Pay
Jennifer Dickinson	2.5 hour Food Service Helper	Non-Competitive	26- week probationary	10/16/2023	Grade 7, Step 1
Joan Zimmer	5.5 hour Food Service Helper	Non-Competitive	26-week probationary	10/16/2023	Grade 7, Step 1
Cassandra Sokoloff	School Bus Attendant (withdrawn)	Non-Competitive	26-week probationary	10/16/2023	Grade 6, Step 1

Winter Coaches for the 2023-24 Season:

Resolved that, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Brach moved and Mr. Redhead seconded, carried 6-0; the Board of Education approved the following winter coaches:

WINTER SPORT:	NAME:	WINTER SPORT:	NAME:
Boys V Basketball	Trinity Swancott	Varsity Wrestling	Joe Galligan
Boys JV Basketball	Nick Hople	JV Wrestling	Rob Hennessey
Boys MOD A Basketball	Nick Palczak	MOD Wrestling	Steve Bala
Boys MOD B Basketball	Justin Wiedrick		
Girls V Basketball	Mickey Fauvelle	Girls V Volleyball	Blanche Coscomb
Girls JV Basketball	Erika Ventura	Girls JV Volleyball	Patricia Croneiser
Girls MOD A Basketball	Jeremy Youngs	Girls MOD A Volleyball	Phil Puleo
Girls MOD B Basketball	depends on #s	Girls MOD B Volleyball	Courtney Foll
		Vol. Asst. for MOD B	Elizabeth Horan
Boys & Girls Nordic Ski	Rob Hinsdill		
		Boys & Girls Bowling	Kyle Wilcox
Indoor Track	Glen Roberts		
		Ski Club Advisor	Bill Engelbrecht

Extra-Classroom Positions:

Resolved that, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Healt moved and Ms. Healt seconded, carried 6-0; the Board of Education approved the following Extra-Classroom positions:

- >> Heather Nunneker – Musical Director
- >> Ryan O’Neil – Pit Orchestra Director
- >> Isabella Abelbeck – Volunteer Skills USA

Surplus Equipment/Books:

Resolved that, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Healt moved and Ms. Healt seconded, carried 6-0; the Board of Education declared equipment and/or textbooks from the District as surplus and be disposed of in the most expedient manner as per the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools.

Committee on Special Education:

Resolved that, upon the recommendation of the Committee on Special Education, Mr. Healt moved and Ms. Healt seconded, carried 6-0; the Board of Education granted approval be granted for placement of students.

Special Vote Permanent Chairperson:

Resolved that, the Board of Education designate District Clerk, Michelle Freeman as Permanent Chairperson of the October 24, 2023 Special Vote and designate Superintendent Kristy McGrath as acting Clerk/Permanent Chairperson in the event the District Clerk is absent or unable to act in this capacity. Ms. Healt moved and Mrs. Sturtevant seconded, carried 6-0.

Inspectors of Special Vote:

Resolved that, the Board of Education designate the following as Inspectors for the Special Vote to be held on October 24, 2023, Ms. Healt moved and Mrs. Sturtevant seconded, carried 6-0:

>> Colleen Dorrity >> Harold & Mary Williams >> Denise Kramer
>> Beth Fox >> Tonya Kazek

Juul Lab Resolution:

Resolved that, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Redhead moved and Mr. Brach seconded, carried 6-0; the Board of Education adopted the following resolution regarding vaping litigation:

WHEREAS, in recent years the use and abuse of e-cigarettes and vaping devices increased dramatically among high school and middle school students, leading to significant risks of addiction and potentially life- threatening respiratory ailments; and

WHEREAS, students attending the Adirondack Central School District (the "School District") have not been immune to this phenomenon with the School District observing students using e-cigarettes and vaping devices in school and on school grounds; and

WHEREAS, the use of e-cigarettes and vaping devices by students has caused the School District to incur costs in the form of staff time, disciplinary proceedings, and other costs, with the expectation that these costs will only increase unless and until student use of these devices decreases and stops; and

WHEREAS, the School District authorized the law firms of Ferrara Fiorenza PC, and the Frantz Law Group, APLC, to initiate litigation against Altria Group, Inc. and Philip Morris USA, Inc., Altria Client Services LLC, Altria Enterprises LLC, and Altria Group Distribution Company (collectively "Altria") by board resolution relating to the production, marketing, sale, and distribution of e-cigarettes and vaping devices; and

WHEREAS, a tentative settlement has been reached with Defendant Altria whereby in return for discontinuing the litigation, the School District would receive certain cash payment; and

WHEREAS, the amount that the School District receives will be no less than \$6,991

; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education (the "Board") has determined it is necessary, advantageous, desirable, and in the public interest and the best interests of the School District that it settle this litigation against Altria.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Education of the School District, as follows:

1. The Board authorizes the partial settlement of the vaping lawsuit against defendant Altria.
2. A Settlement with the substantive terms contained herein is hereby approved in substantially the form reviewed by the Board and together with such minor modifications as are deemed necessary by the School District's attorneys and administrators to protect the best interests of the School District.
3. The Board President, Superintendent and their designee(s) are hereby authorized to finalize, sign and enter into the Settlement Agreement on behalf of the School District and take all actions and execute all documents necessary or appropriate to carry out the intent of this Resolution.
4. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Teacher Separation Agreement:

Resolved that, upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Brach moved and Ms. Healt seconded, carried 6-0; the Board approved the Separation Agreement and General Release between the District and a tenured teacher, contingent upon the tenured teacher's execution of the Agreement and final legal review of the Agreement.

INFORMATION & DISCUSSION:

➤ **Warrants:**

Warrants:
Cafeteria Fund Warrant
Capital Fund Warrant
Federal Fund Warrant
General Fund Warrant

- Jeff-Lewis School Boards Association Meeting – Building Projects – Mr. Brach submitted a write up of information from the meeting he and Mr. Kramer attended in Watertown on Sept. 20, 2023. Each Board member was given a copy which is attached to these minutes.

HANDOUTS:

- ACS Enrollment as of October 1, 2023
- District Calendar – October 2023
- Claims Auditor Report for September 2023
- Conferences Approved by the Superintendent
- Conference Report – *Engage in Change* – K. Corrigan

At 8:56 p.m. Ms. Healt moved and Mr. Redhead seconded, carried 6-0; to adjourn to the Special Vote to be held on Tuesday, October 24, 2023 at the high school from 12 noon – 8 p.m.

MEMO

Date: 10/11/2023

To: Mike Kramer
Maureen Healt
Abby Podkowka
Kristy McGrath

Almanda Sturtevant
Bob Healt
Keith Redhead

From: Bruce Brach

Re: Jeff – Lewis School Boards Association Meeting – Building Projects

Mike Kramer and I attended a Jeff-Lewis School Board Association Meeting in Watertown on Wednesday, September 20th. The topic presented was Capital Projects and the presenters were as follows:

- Ben Maslona Fiscal Advisors
- Audrey Stevenson Indian River CSD Business Official
- Patrick Hanss Indian River CSD Director of Facilities

The presenters did an excellent job laying out the steps and considerations of a building project. Some of the higher level take aways from the meeting for me are as follows:

- Select Partners that you can trust and have had good experience(s) with these include Architects, Engineers, Financial Advisors and Construction Managers. Doing our diligence during construction is how we maintain credibility with the tax papers and school district employees once the project is completed.
- Make an objective assessment if a Capital Project is truly needed. Understanding needs from Building Condition Survey(s), regulatory requirements as well as other wants from Administration, Staff and Community will need to be weighed in our determinations.
- We should look at our Dept Service Projections and understand where our drops are occurring and what our strategy is for them. A drop is generally when a bond payment ends and, as a result, the local share to debt service is reduced. While we generally look at this with the Auditors, we don't generally don't discuss strategies associated with them.
- When looking at a building project the Maximum Cost Allowance must be considered. This is based on what it would cost to replace a building with new construction and SED will not allow a district to exceed 100% of this value over a period of time. (30 years for new buildings, 20 years for additions, 15 years for reconstruction)
- Capital Projects can impact Tax Cap. The local share of capital projects is excluded from the tax cap; however, a drop in the local share of debt service will lower the tax cap. Again, the lady Audrey from Indian River suggested that we should be making projections on our tax cap, similar to how it is done with debt service. The presenter from Fiscal Advisors made the statement that we should never tell tax

payers that we are doing a capital project with no **impact** on taxes. There is an impact if a project is not done and that will be a decrease in their taxes. If we properly plan around a "drop" along with maximizing aid ratios and use of reserves, we may be able to do a project without a tax **increase**.

- Building Aid is not tied to debt service. If we decide to use some of our reserves or fund balance, to pay down debt service, we will still get the aid on the building and lower our debt service (and potentially taxes). I think this is a worthwhile discussion in a time when we are potentially over 4% with fund balance and concerned about a spending / funding cliff approaching when Covid money goes away.
- Some of the questions that I left with for our district include:
 - Do we have an AHERA document that identifies where asbestos is located and a management plan on how we will prevent hazards associated with asbestos?
 - Can we look at our debt service schedules more often and have discussions about how we want to manage their changes.
 - Can we do some projections on tax cap like is done with debt service. I have heard a few presentations now in which that has been suggested but balked at.

I appreciate the opportunity you gave me to attend this event. I always feel like I leave these meetings with a little more knowledge and thoughts on how I can become a better Board member and steward of our district.