

MINUTES
Regular Board Meeting
Almont Community Schools Board of Education
November 23, 2015

CALL TO ORDER

President Hoffa called the Regular Board Meeting of the Almont Community Schools Board of Education to order at 7:00 p.m. in Media Center at Almont Middle School, 4624 Kidder, Almont, MI 48003

Present

Steve Hoffa, Jill O'Neil, John Miles, Scott Kmetz, John Brzozowski, Stephan Manko and Superintendent Joseph Candela.

Visitors: 5

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL: Jonathon Owens was absent

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Approved as presented

COMMUNICATIONS

Student Council

None

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS: AUDIENCE

None

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS: BOARD

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Miles, supported by Manko, the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval of the Minutes Regular Meeting October 26, 2015
- B. Approval of the Minutes from the Closed Session on October 26, 2015
- C. Approval of the Minutes Special Meeting Work Session November 16, 2015

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BILLS PAYABLE AND FINANCIAL REPORTS

Motion by Brzozowski, supported by Kmetz, the Board of Education approve the bills payable and the financial reports as proposed by the administration and reviewed by the Finance Committee.

November

General Fund Total	\$ 803,802.77
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School Lunch Fund	\$ 42,685.42
2006 Refunding Bonds	\$ -
2012 Refunding Bonds	\$ -
2013 SBL Refinance	\$ -
2013 Refunding Bonds	\$ 90.55
Sinking Funds	\$ 18,280.33
QZAB Bond	\$ -
Subtotal	\$ 864,859.07
General Fund (transfer in for Payroll)	\$ 110,000.00
PESG	\$ 13,891.27
Coach EZ	\$ -
Participant Benefit Claims	\$ -
TOTAL FUNDS SPENT	\$ 988,750.34
Check Numbers: 33811-33954	
Void Checks: 33688 and 33788	

Approval of check numbers covering these invoices range from check number 33811 to 33954 and voided checks as presented: Voided check(s): 33688 & 33788
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Mr. Hoffa abstained because there is a check in the run to his son.

ORCHARD PRIMARY, ALMONT MIDDLE SCHOOL, AND ALMONT HIGH SCHOOL TRUST AND AGENCY ACCOUNT REPORTS

The Trust and Agency Accounts were approved as presented.

Board of Education: Questions

Mr. Miles asked why the general fund was so much for the Middle School.

Mr. Candela said it was from the Fun Run.

NEW BUSINESS

Superintendents Report

Orchard Primary

Parent-teacher conferences were well attended. 95% of our parents discussed student achievement. Several classrooms had student-led conferences, allowing children to describe their own work to their families. This increases ownership and responsibility in our young people.

Our PTA sponsored a movie night on Friday the 13th. Inside-Out was on the big screen in the cafeteria. Families cuddled up on the floor to enjoy pizza and popcorn with the movie.

The Orchard Primary Raider Reps have sponsored a very successful food drive for the less fortunate members of our community. The entire hallway is lined with donations. The generosity of the students and families is truly inspirational.

On Friday, November 20, we celebrated the Fourth Graders who earned honor roll status. Fifty–nine of our students made the honor roll, including eight that received all A’s.

The first “Tea with Tamie” was held on Wednesday, November 18th. Parents discussed pick-up procedures after school, lunch room rules, and new laws coming from Lansing that affects our school. On our professional development learning community day, our staff discussed school improvement goals for 16-17 and refined some best practices to achieve this year’s goals. Grade level committees are meeting regularly to collaborate and to insure continuity.

Activities commemorating Thanksgiving are underway. The first graders are designing a “Mayflower” that must float and carry a load. The students in Mrs. Macciomei’s class are planning a feast to learn about the holiday. On November 25th, the entire Kindergarten comes together in the cafeteria for a banquet to learn about Thanksgiving.

Cross-age collaboration is happening in Mrs. Weigand’s room. Mrs. Mueller’s sixth graders will be visiting OP every other week to help their kindergarten buddies with various learning projects.

Finally, the staff celebrated the success shown on the M-Step results

Middle School

DISTRICT CURRICULUM COUNCIL

The DCC Team met on 11-18-15. Topics of discussion included: STEM/PLTW overview and updates, Protocol for following a process to introduce new curriculum and/or programming, Technology Director (J. Bostian) on DCC to fulfill state reporting, Needs’ Assessment for Reading Series, PD Day on Jan. 18th, and PLC open discussion. Next meeting will be held on January 13, 2016.

ACHIEVEMENT SERIES

AMS continues to participate with the Achievement Series. The AMS Staff is discussing the possibility of a “Success Period” (to be implemented by second semester). This period would provide our struggling Math and ELA students the opportunity for remediation. Depending on the structure of this period, the “Success Period” could also serve to enrich our Tier 1 students. More details will be forthcoming.

READ NATURALLY UPDATE

K. VonHiltmayer and the Para Eds received training on the new version of *Read Naturally* (iPad App). A BIG thank you to Mr. Michael Hinkley (with Literacy & Beyond) and the PTSA for helping to purchase the upgrade. This intervention is designed to target Tier 2 and 3 students in reading fluency and comprehension.

Also, thank you to Teresa Deneweth for her hard work and efforts to help with the organization and details for Read Naturally!

AMS PARENT SURVEYS

AMS Parents had the opportunity to take an online survey during Parent/Teacher Conferences. Results will be displayed and shared at the December Work Session. Thank you to all parents for their participation. Very positive results to be shared!

NEW CHESS CLUB

Mr. Kline has **VOLUNTEERED** to run an AMS Chess Club after school twice per month. There are approximately 15 students interested in the club at this time. Students have already attended one meeting- they had a blast strategizing and beating one another in this tedious game!

QUIZ BOWL CONTINUES AT AMS!

A big thank you to Mrs. Sandra Crittenden for **VOLUNTEERING** to continue Quiz Bowl this school year. The parents and students are so appreciative of this opportunity once again. Mrs. Crittenden is seeking grants to help pay for any related expenses.

See announcement below from 1st Tournament:

The Quiz Bowl Team had their first tournament at Carsonville Port-Sanilac.

7/8 grade Team A came in 2nd place

7/8 grade Team B came in 3rd place

5/6 grade Team A came in 2nd place

5/6 grade Team B came in 3rd place

We are so proud of our AMS Quiz Bowl Team! Go Raiders!

SPECIAL RECOGNITION/THANK YOU

A big thank you to Mr. John Miles for **VOLUNTEERING** his time and efforts to organize and supervise an AMS Play/Skit for our students this school year. We look forward to Dec. 11th and 12th!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Nov. 25th.....Half Day

Nov. 26th - Nov. 29th.....Thanksgiving Break

Dec. 5th.....MS Solo Ensemble (7th & 8th Grades)

Dec. 7th.....Chess Club

Dec. 11th.....*Elfacular* (Elf Movie & Treats) after school

Dec. 11th & 12.....AMS Skit/Play 5:00-9:00 PM

Dec. 14th.....Holiday Choir Concert (Grades 5-8) 6:30 PM @ AHS

Dec. 15th.....Holiday Band Concert (Grades 6-8) 7:00 PM @ AMS in Gymnasium

High School

The 2015 National FFA Convention Results had students from Almont High School placed 16th in Floriculture. Haley Westover from Almont High School received the National Chapter Star 3 award for being the Chapter Reporter.

Almont students in the Health Science Professions received certificates for Mental Health 1st Aid.

All teacher s first observations will be concluded by the end of this month.

The high school had over 57% of the parents attend this year's parent –teacher conferences held November 4th & 5th. Marking Period 1 report cards were distributed at conferences and then e-mailed to parents and students on Nov. 9.

Nov. 18 Ms. Frederiksen had representatives from Lapeer Ed Tech make a presentation to 10th graders about the programs available at the Lapeer Ed Tech Center. Students from the various programs made presentations in the cafeteria.

Evening of Nov. 18 - Ms. Frederiksen had a "Get Set for College Night" meeting for 9th - 11th grade parents & students. About 66 parents and 58 students attended. Topics discussed: Career Exploration, College Admission changes for Class 2017 & beyond, Scholarships, Financial Aid, & College Visits. Saginaw Valley State Univ. helped with presentations.

The High School received a \$4990 grant from L & L Products for our STEM program. A BIG Thank You to Kris Rohrbeck for all her work on writing the grant.

Thank you to Axium, our custodial company, for the \$1500 donation for the High School Cyber Café.

- **Athletics**
- The Boys Cross Country Team on the regionals and finished 25th in the state.
- The Girls Cross Country had two that qualified for states.
- Varsity Football concluded its season with loss in the district final. Boys ended their season 8-3 overall.
- Olivia Dean signed her national letter of intent to become part of the Saginaw Valley State University volleyball program last week.
- Kaleigh Creech signed her national letter of intent to become part of the Lawrence Technology University softball program last week.

Upcoming Events:

Nov. 19 - Fall Sports Awards

Nov. 23: 9th grade vision screening

Nov. 28: NHS Blood Drive at HS

Dec. 2: Financial Aid Meeting (Sue Frederiksen with U of M Flint)

Dec 5: Holly Day Parade (Band and Choir participate)

Dec 10: HS Band Concert

Dec 14: HS/MS Christmas Choir Concert

Other

Bids for the OP roof are due tomorrow. Mr. Candela will put them in dropbox after 3 pm.

Board of Education: Questions

None

NEW BUSINESS

Personnel

Approval of Drama Director

Moved by O'Neil, supported by Manko, the Board of Education accept John Miles as Almont Community Schools volunteer Drama Director.

Discussion:

Mr. Manko feels Mr. Miles will do a great job

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Mr. Candela explained that we had advertised for a Drama Director and at this time we have not had any interest externally or internally. Mr. Miles, rather than see the program fall by the wayside, had stepped up to put something together for the MS while we continue looking for someone to take over for the HS.

Mr. Miles stated he will be abstaining from the vote since it has to do with him

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Abstained: John Miles

Finance

Informational Only

Results of Audit

Discussion:

Mr. Kmetz stated that he thought what the chart should regarding actual use of reserves was interesting.

Mr. Brzozowski said that they had ever intended to add to reserves and the chart might be misleading. Either way we did end up spending the reserves just not in the years that we thought we might.

Disposition of Property

Discussion:

Mr. Candela stated that on Friday we had two bids/offers on the building, one for \$200,600.00 and one for \$55,600.00, since then the first one had rescinded his offer (letter attached).

He also pointed out the following:

The lawyer said it can be empty for up to 3 years before having to bring everything up to code.

Keeping the building empty will cost 60 – 70 thousand a year.

We will continue to have break-ins and vandalism.

It will need a new roof.

We need to decide if we will grow enough in the next 3 years to warrant keeping it.

The Central Office move is most likely at least a 5 year move.

Mr. Kmetz – did we talk to Mr. Spears about his letter to rescind his offer?

Mr. Candela- No.

Mr. Kmetz suggested we talk to both interested parties

Mr. Manko agreed that we could keep the bidding open for a month or so and/or negotiate with the currently interested parties.

Mr. Candela – we need to decide tonight what the next course of action is. Reject current offer of \$55,600, negotiate (with who), or talk to real estate agent.

Mr. Brzozowski – lets reject current offer and list with commercial real estate and if selling the building is unsuccessful then re-try the bid process.

Ms. O'Neil – asked Mr. Candela where the money for the building would go.

Mr. Candela stated that the money has to go to paying down the bond debt or into the MS or OP.

Ms. O'Neil feels there is no need to negotiate with the first bidder. His letter made it clear why he rescinded his bid. She agrees with Mr. Brzozowski that we should put it up for sale or may want to negotiate with second bidder.

Mr. Hoffa stated that he thinks Mr. Candela may want to try to negotiate with the first bidder because although he thinks his first bid is too high maybe he would be willing to pay less but more than the current bid.

Mr. Miles asked how many acres we were talking about

Mr. Candela around 19 or so.

Mr. Miles – is \$4000.00 an acre the going price

Mr. Candela stated that is what we sold the ball fields for so yes.

Mr. Miles – we did sell it for that to the township but that was a goodwill gesture. Would it be worth it to try and sell the land separate?

Mr. Candela – No we are not in that business.

Mr. Miles – then negotiate with first bidder then if necessary contact the commercial real estate agent.

Mr. Hoffa – negotiate with both bidders to see if we can get a better offer, then commercial real estate agent, not a local real estate.

Mr. Candela – read #5 of the bid process stating that the Board had the right to negotiate the price.

Mr. Hoffa polled the Board members and all agreed to negotiate with the two bidders then go with a commercial real estate if they did not get a reasonable offer.

Moved by Brzozowski, supported by Kmetz, the Board of Education reject the bids that were received on November 20th for the AE building and begin the negotiation process with both bidders.

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Policy

Approval of Neola Updates

Moved by Manko, supported by Miles, the Board of Education approve revisions and new policies/bylaws as follows:

0144.3 Conflict of Interest (Revised)

Policy 1130/3110/4110 Conflict of Interest (Revised)

Policy 6110 Grant Funds (Revised)

Policy 6111 Internal Controls (Revised)

Policy 6320 Purchasing (Revised)

Policy 6550 Travel Payment and Reimbursement (Revised)

Policy 8500 Food Service (Revised)

Bylaw 0175.1 School Board Conferences, Conventions and Workshops (Revised)

Policy 1420 School Administrator Evaluation (Revised)

Policy 1630.01/3430.014/4430.01-Family and Medical Leaves of Absence (Revised)

Policy 5517.02 Sexual Violence (New)

Policy 5830 Student Fund-Raising (Revised)

Policy 6146 Post Issuance Compliance for Tax-Exempt and Tax advantages Obligations (Revised)

Policy 6850 Public Disclosure and Reporting (Revised)

Policy 8321 Criminal Justice Information Security (Revised)

Policy 9211 District Support Organizations (Revised)

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COMMENTS: AUDIENCE

Mr. Tencza asked how many acres were with the building? He thought it was 14.85

Mr. Candela - 19-20 or so.

Mr. Tencza stated that he has looked at about 6 buildings in the last year and they are all still sitting. He had talked to Mr. Spears and Mr. Spears thought he could just move in and was surprised about the need for sprinklers. He said that demoing the building would be expensive as well.

Pam Ferzacca inquired about the reading series they were looking for at the OP. She stated that there has never been consistency with the reading series at OP and she wanted to know if the Board would mandate that the teachers had to use the series that they select. In the past one teacher used a really old series from 1998 and others would use whatever the latest thing was they learned at a conference.

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Mr. Candela stated that yes they have discussed out inconsistent and old the reading series is at OP. This had come up at the DCC meetings. If/when they find a reading series all teachers will use it. This will be up to the administrator to monitor. He realizes that some of the teachers are frustrated with the series or lack of that they currently have.

Mrs. Ferzacca – the interim Principal is a proponent of a method that many of the teachers don't care for.

Mr. Candela – there are really only a few series out there to look at. They decided at the DCC meeting to look at the research, contact other districts of the same demographics as Almont and see what they are using and what kind of results they are getting and with this information contact the vendors. They will most definitely look at these factors first before making a decision.

Pam Ferzacca – is it a Board goal that all the teachers use the series that is picked.

Mr. Candela – yes he would hope so. The administrator would be responsible for this as well as the peers in the district.

Pam Ferzacca – Will the M-Step individual teacher's results be public?

Mr. Candela – we do not have these yet. It may not be until December.

Pam Ferzacca – when you do get the scores will they be public?

Mr. Candela – He probably would not have a problem with this.

Pam Ferzacca – she would like to see her kid's scores

Mr. Candela – he will look into this.

Mrs. Barton – Is Mr. Miles going to take on the HS play as well

Mr. Miles – the MS play is definitely being downsized from previous years. He is currently in charge of everything since much of the help from previous years has moved and since he is not in the buildings like Mrs. Pinsoneault was it is more challenging to get the help he needs. It is his goal to get someone else for the HS play and he has had contact with a couple people. He wants to make sure there is a HS play.

Mr. Candela – there will be a HS play.

Mr. Miles – be careful about the release of M-Step data results teacher by teacher. It's not apples to apples. It's not a reflection of a teacher's ability.

Comments BOE

None

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Miles, supported by Manko, the Board of Education adjourn our monthly board meeting at 8:25 p.m. on this day November 23, 2015.

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Approved _____
Date

Signed: _____
John Miles, Secretary

Signed: _____
Steve Hoffa, President