

MORTON UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709

October 3, 2023

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Morton Unit School District 709 held on October 3, 2023, at the Morton Education and Administration Center. **The meeting included the District Goals of Achievement, Communication, Climate, Facilities, and Finance.**

Call to Order and Roll Call –

President Tim Braker called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

Members present: Mr. Tim Braker, Dr. David Cross, Dr. Diane Krall, Mrs. Amanda Leman, Mr. Thomas Neeley, Mr. Andrew Roth, and Mr. Jerry Rudd.

REGULAR MEETING

Recognition of MJHS State Golfer: President Braker noted one presentation would take place before the public comment audience presentations. The Board of Education recognized MJHS Student, Lee Bolliger, who finished in 2nd Place at the IESA Golf Tournament. Dr. Smock called Mr. Scott Hammond, MJHS Athletic Director, to the podium to share a little about Lee and the season. Golf coach, Joshua Ames, spoke about the season and Lee's integrity and character as an athlete that shine beyond his success on the golf course.

Audience Presentations: President Braker opened the podium for audience presentations. Eight community members presented to the Board of Education. Mr. Scott Gilles, Ms. Heather McMeekan, Ms. Kathy McNeil, Dr. Ashley Fischer, Mr. Nathan Fay, Mr. Bryan Groth, Ms. Tamara Woodmancy, and Mr. Dan Countryman addressed the Board of Education. Each community member was given five minutes to share his/her thoughts.

Administrative Reports:

Superintendent's Report— Dr. Smock

- Dr. Smock called Ms. Lisa Kowalski, CFO to introduce Brian Mateas, Director, CLA to offer the Board a presentation and feedback on our annual audit. Mr. Mateas was very complimentary about the audit and once again, the district received an unmodified clean opinion from the Audited Financial Statement (AFR) with no findings noted. The Government Auditing Standards report was unmodified (clean) with no findings. The Single Audit Report was clean (unmodified) with no findings. It reflects excellence in the finance and accounting department.
- Ms. Deidre Ripka, MHS principal, spoke about the Future Fair to be held on October 4, 2023. Forty careers will be represented. It is a huge undertaking that includes colleges, trades/technical training, military opportunities, strength spotting, and college application workshops. There are 20 total breakout sessions. MHS Counselors, Administration, the Career Technology Education (CTE) department, and the Morton Economic Development Council worked together to offer this event to students. It is offered every two years because of the magnitude of the programming.
- Principal Kate Wyman shared about the upcoming 95th Anniversary of Jefferson School. She invited the Board and the community to come and see what is old and what is new. Students of all ages will take part in the celebration. Come and see on October 17, 2023, 3-4:30 p.m.
- We need a Superintendent's Finance Committee meeting soon to discuss the levy. The Superintendent's Facilities Committee will meet soon regarding summer projects. We have not received the next PRESS Plus Policy Issue #113. Dr. Sander reported from the Superintendent's Extra-Curricular Committee.
- The IASB regional meeting will be attended by Dr. Smock, Dr. Sander, Mr. Rudd, and Mr. Neeley in Pekin on October 4, 2023.

October 3, 2023

President's Report - Mr. Braker

- President Braker noted that the Board's need to designate an IASB Assembly Delegate. Mr. Jerry Rudd is not opposed to returning as the delegate. He reminded the Board to communicate their final plans for the School Board Conference with Mrs. Valerie Smith. She is preparing the itinerary.
- Mr. Braker spoke regarding Dr. Diane Krall. He stated that the Board supports her and finds her to be an effective and fair minded public servant who cares very deeply about all children that we serve. She is as kind and caring as she can be, and any notion to the contrary is false. She is a very valuable member of the Board of Education. She has the Board's complete support. The other Board members concurred.

Discussion Item(s) –

Board Policy Review ---

The Administration presented all Board of Education Policies that include: **Employee Personal Use of Email, Bullying and Harassment**, and **Non-School Use of Buildings and Dissemination of Materials** for their review. There was some preliminary discussion. Improving the communication regarding the reporting of bullying and harassment may be where the change is needed. Encouraging staff to be in the halls and in the places it might occur. The policy may be good.

The Board will spend time reviewing policies and Dr. Smock will ask for input from the Administrative Leadership Team. The use of email policy is one the Board may want to make some changes regarding employee use of District emails. There was much discussion.

President Braker gave his reflections with emphasis on remaining neutral regarding building use and material dissemination. The Board will look at the use of facilities policy, too. Dr. Smock noted one of the initiatives the Board has been supportive of is disagreeing and discussing respectfully when they agree to disagree.

Bullying is not new in schools, but is unacceptable. Education of staff, students, and parents may be a key component in improving our response to any bullying or harassment. Without communication, it cannot be addressed. We will continue to try improve identification and response. No one on the Board wants to see hatefulness or kids being hurt.

Project Financing Proposal ---

Ms. Lisa Kowalski, CFO, presented the Board of Education with a Project Financing Proposal that was first presented on September 19, 2023. The prepared proposal offers a number of options of financing for some needed facilities improvements. Ms. Kowalski answered questions from the Board about the options and for clarification. Administration asked for feedback from the Board. The Board discussed current properties that could be expanded to meet needs. Dr. Smock reiterated that all decisions about moving forward with projects and financing decisions are made by the Board by individual project.

IASB Resolutions ---

The Board of Education discussed the upcoming IASB Assembly and potential delegates to the assembly. The resolutions have been made available to the Board. The Board will review the Resolutions and discuss them at the November 14, 2023, Board of Education Meeting. Mr. Rudd was the delegate last year. Mr. Braker has been the alternate. The Board will decide as a whole how the delegate will cast each vote for Morton 709.

October 3, 2023

Action Item(s) –

Approve Resolution to Sell the 4th Street Property

The Board of Education believes it is in the best interest of the School District to sell the South Fourth Street Farmland. The School District publicized the land bid and had a public opening of the bids submitted on September 29, 2023, at 12:00 p.m.

The School District received one bid for the total acreage of 123.496 from David L. Anderson, Susan B. Anderson, Michael D. Unzicker, and Christy J. Unzicker, in the amount of \$23,100/acre for a total dollar amount of \$2,852,757.60.

A motion was made by Mr. Rudd to approve the resolution. The motion was supported by Dr. Cross.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

Consent Agenda –

A motion was made by Dr, Cross to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Mr. Rudd.

- Approved Personnel Report
- Approved SkillsUSA Overnight Trip to L.E.A.D. Convention - October
- Approved Minutes of the September 19, 2023, Regular Meeting; the September 19, 2023, Closed Session Meeting
- Approved Bills and Payroll

	Bills 9-22-23 9-25-23	Bills 9-28-23	Payroll 9-1-23	Payroll 9-15-23	Payroll 9-29-23
Ed. Fund (10)	\$568,805.48		\$964,295.39	\$962,064.59	\$1,008,316.68
Bldg. Fund (20)	\$278,335.03		50,677.70	48,668.02	50,780.62
Trans. Fund (40)	\$2,827.98	\$67,866.00	21,657.58	27,565.27	31,931.20
IMRF (50)			44,680.58	47,580.42	50,325.60
TORT (80)	\$3,821.60				

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

October 3, 2023

Closed Session –

A motion was made by Mr. Neeley, seconded by Dr. Cross that the Board of Education entered closed session for the discussion of **Negotiations. (5ILCS 120/2 115 ILCS 5/18)**

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried. The Board entered closed session at 7:19 p.m.

A motion was made by Dr. Krall to re-enter open session. Mr. Leman seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried. The Board re-entered open session at 7:53 p.m.

Adjournment –

A motion was made by Dr. Cross to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mrs. Leman

Voice Vote: Yea 7 Nay 0 Absent

Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m. with a voice vote.

Recorded by,

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Smith, Recording Secretary

Jerry Rudd, Secretary

Tim Braker, President