

Geneva Area City Board of Education  
Organizational Meeting  
January 8, 2020

The Board of Education of the Geneva Area City School District met for the Organizational Meeting at 5:30 p.m., January 8, 2020, at the Board of Education office. The meeting was called to order by President Pro-Tempore Ortiz.

Oath of Office

The Oath of Office was administered by Judge Marianne Sezon to Sarah L. Fisher and Amber L. Metzler.

Roll Call: Present: Mr. Arndt, Mr. Dana, Ms. Fisher, Mrs. Metzler, Mrs. Ortiz, Superintendent Kujala, and Treasurer Lillie

Visitors  
& Guests: Newspaper reporter; and other citizens

Certification by Treasurer of Compliance with Meeting Requirements Rules

The Treasurer reported that we were in compliance with the meeting notification rules.

Election of Officers

01-20

Mr. Dana moved, seconded by Mr. Arndt, to nominate Mrs. Ortiz for President and Ms. Fisher for Vice President for 2020 and to close the nominations. Roll Call: YES: Arndt, Dana, Fisher, Metzler and Ortiz. Motion carried.

Budget Hearing

A public hearing was held on the proposed budget for the Geneva Area City School District. Mr. Lillie explained that two copies of the budget have been on file and available for public inspection in the Board office for ten days prior to this budget hearing, as required by law. He also shared that the purpose of the tax budget is to provide information that enables the county budget commission to issue the first certificate of estimated resources for the next fiscal year. There were no questions from the public regarding the proposed budget.

2020-2021 Budget

02-20

Upon Mr. Kujala's recommendation, Ms. Fisher moved, seconded by Mr. Arndt, approval of the budget, as presented, for fiscal year 2020-2021. Roll Call: YES: Dana, Fisher, Metzler, Ortiz, and Arndt. Motion carried.

A-Tech Resolution

Upon Mr. Kujala's recommendation, Mr. Arndt moved approval of the following resolution appointing Jamie Ortiz to the A-Tech Board, but there was no second.

Mr. Kujala pointed out the qualifications of the position and the reason Mr. Brashear had recommended Mrs. Ortiz. Ms. Fisher stated her desire for the position and the reasons why she felt qualified. Mr. Arndt stated that he felt Mr. Brashear's recommendation should be followed and that Mrs. Ortiz was most qualified in her role as a CFO for American Electric along with the many business relationships they had. Mrs. Ortiz offered that she was going to have her hands full as Board President, and she was fine with Ms. Fisher filling the role. Mr. Dana shared that Ms. Fisher could fill this one-year term, and the Board could possibly consider Mrs. Ortiz for a three-year term in 2021, after she finishes her year as Board President.

Mr. Dana moved, seconded by Mrs. Metzler approval of the following resolution:

1. **WHEREAS the Ashtabula County Technical & Career Center (A-Tech) has a vacancy on its board;**
2. **WHEREAS Geneva Area City School District is a member of the Ashtabula County Technical & Career Center and is authorized by the A-Tech "plan" on file with the State Board of Education to appoint an individual ("Appointee") to fill the vacancy;**
3. **WHEREAS the Geneva Area City School District has reviewed the statutory requirements for making the appointment, including those in Ohio Revised Code 3311.19 (as amended ) and its requirements that JVSD Board members have experience as chief executive officers, chief financial officers, human resources managers, or other business, industry, or career counseling professionals who are qualified to discuss the labor needs of the region with respect to the regional economy; and the requirement that JVSD board members represent employers in the region served by A-Tech and be qualified to consider the state's workforce needs with an understanding of the skills, training, and education needed for current and future employment opportunities in the state; and the requirement that JVSD Board members be selected based on the diversity of the employers in the territory served by A-Tech.**
4. **WHEREAS Geneva Area City School District has performed and documented its due diligence in considering the Appointee's qualifications; including the Appointee's qualifications to meet the legal requirements to serve;**
5. **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Geneva Area City School District appoints Sarah L. Fisher to the Ashtabula County Technical & Career Center Board for a one-year term of office to commence on January 9, 2020 and expires December 31, 2020.**

Roll Call: YES: Metzler, Ortiz, and Dana. NO: Arndt ABSTAIN: Fisher Motion carried.

Insurance Renewal

04-20

An insurance renewal proposal was received from the Ohio School Plan on December 16, 2019 for coverage for the District's buildings and contents, fleet, and general liability. Upon Mr. Kujala's recommendation, Mr. Dana moved, seconded by Mr. Arndt, approval of the insurance renewal proposal from the Ohio School Plan at a package premium of 79,941. Last year's premium was \$77,879. Mr. Lillie explained that the small premium increase was due to exposure increases and rate increases. He also shared that the District received a \$5,045 premium dividend check from the Ohio School Plan on 9/12/19. This represents the second premium dividend from the OSP, and no other insurance company had ever returned premium before. Roll Call: YES: Metzler, Ortiz, Arndt, Dana and Fisher. Motion carried.

2020 Membership OSBA

05-20

Upon Mr. Kujala's recommendation, Mr. Dana moved, seconded by Ms. Fisher, that the Geneva Area City Schools Board of Education continue its membership in the Ohio School Boards Association for 2020 at a cost of \$5,978 including electronic copies of the Briefcase and School Management News subscriptions and to continue the annual Virtual Transportation Supervisor subscription at a cost of \$250/year. Mr. Arndt asked if we get our money's worth from this membership. Mr. Lillie responded that information included with the membership renewal in the Board packets outlined the many benefits of membership. It also noted that our participation in the Power4Schools electric purchasing program saved the District \$18,300, and a telephone call to OSBA's attorneys made this year saved the District \$350. Mr. Kujala added that they provide many valuable professional development opportunities including the Capital Conference and New Board Member Workshops. He believed we received more than our money's worth. Roll Call: YES: Ortiz, Arndt, Dana, Fisher and Metzler. Motion carried.

2020 OSBA Legislative Liaison

06-20

Upon Mr. Kujala's recommendation, Mr. Dana moved, seconded by Mr. Arndt, that Mrs. Metzler be appointed as Legislative Liaison to the Ohio School Boards Association for 2020. Roll Call: YES: Arndt, Dana, Fisher, and Ortiz. ABSTAIN: Metzler Motion carried.

OSBA Legal Assistance

07-20

Upon Mr. Kujala's recommendation, Mr. Dana moved, seconded by Mr. Arndt, approval to join the OSBA Legal Assistance Fund at a cost of \$250. Roll Call: YES: Dana, Fisher, Metzler, Ortiz, and Arndt. Motion carried.

OEPI

08-20

Upon Mr. Kujala's recommendation, Mr. Arndt moved, seconded by Mr. Dana, that the Geneva Area City School District renew its membership with the Ohio Education Policy Institute (OEPI) for 2020 at a cost of \$1,000. Roll Call: YES: Fisher, Metzler, Ortiz, Arndt and Dana. Motion carried.

Signature Authorization

Upon Mr. Kujala's recommendation, Mr. Arndt moved, seconded by Mr. Dana, approval of legal and facsimile signature

09-20

authorizations for 2020 checks and warrants by the Treasurer, or the Treasurer and Board President as provided by law. Signature on employee contracts may include any member of the Board of Education and the Treasurer. Roll Call: YES: Metzler, Ortiz, Arndt, Dana and Fisher. Motion carried.

Roberts Rules  
Of Order

10-20

Upon Mr. Kujala's recommendation, Mr. Arndt moved, seconded by Mr. Dana, that Roberts Rules of Order and the Laws of the State of Ohio be used during the 2020 calendar year in regard to Board of Education meetings. Roll Call: YES: Ortiz, Arndt, Dana, Fisher and Metzler. Motion carried.

Treasurer

11-20

Upon the Superintendent's recommendation, Mr. Dana moved, seconded by Mr. Arndt, the following for 2020:

1. Authorization of the Treasurer to approve, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, expenditures within the limits of appropriations as established by the Board.
2. Authorization of the Treasurer to pay the warrants in advance in order to take advantage of discounts, where applicable, within the limits of the Board adopted appropriations.
3. Authorization of the Treasurer to request advances of the 2020 tax collections and/or settlements, and to invest Board funds, or to borrow necessary funds to meet the Board's requirements in compliance with the limitations and regulations of the laws of the State of Ohio up to an amount sufficient to meet the needs of the district until the next regular meeting.
4. Authorization of the Treasurer to post interest income directly to the OSFC Maintenance fund; Permanent Improvement fund; Private Purpose Trust Funds (formerly Expendable) and Permanent Funds (formerly Non-Expendable); and student-managed, active Student Activity funds.
5. Authorization of the Treasurer to accept donations, to be reported to the Board at the next regular meeting.

Roll Call: YES: Arndt, Dana, Fisher, Metzler and Ortiz. Motion carried.

Uniform Accounting  
System

12-20

Upon the Superintendent's recommendation, Mr. Dana moved, seconded by Ms. Fisher, approval for the Treasurer to add new funds, receipts and appropriation accounts as necessary to comply with the State-mandated Uniform School Accounting System within all existing funds and any new funds approved by the Board of Education, according to the approved budgets for State and/or Federal programs. Roll Call: YES: Dana, Fisher, Metzler, Ortiz, and Arndt. Motion carried.

Application for  
Supplemental  
Monies

13-20

Upon the Superintendent's recommendation, Mr. Arndt moved, seconded by Ms. Fisher, authorization for the Superintendent to apply for supplemental Local, State or Federal monies including but not limited to, Local Professional Development, Title I, Title II-A, Title III-LEP, Title IV-A, Title V-B Rural, Part B-IDEA, ECSE-IDEA, SchoolNet, SchoolNet Plus, Career Education, OhioReads, Safe School Helpline, and Ohio School Facilities. Roll Call: YES: Fisher, Metzler, Ortiz, Arndt and Dana. Motion carried.

Board Service  
Fund Account

14-20

Upon the Superintendent's recommendation, Mr. Arndt moved, seconded by Ms. Fisher, that \$10,000 be set aside from the general fund to be placed in the Board Service Fund account for 2020-2021. Mr. Arndt asked what is the purpose of this \$10,000. Mr. Lillie explained the purpose of this service fund is to pay the expenses actually incurred by Board members in the performance of their duties. This includes professional development and training expenses that are approved by the Board. Roll Call: YES: Metzler, Ortiz, Arndt, Dana and Fisher. Motion carried.

Treasurer, Supt.,  
President's Bond

15-20

Upon the Superintendent's recommendation, Mr. Dana moved, seconded by Mr. Arndt, that the Bond for the Treasurer be established at \$100,000, and Bond for the Superintendent and Board President be established at \$50,000 each for the 2020 calendar year. Mr. Dana asked if these amounts had been lowered. Mr. Lillie responded that there has been no change in the bond amounts. Mr. Lillie added that there was new legislation passed that permits school districts to purchase an employee dishonesty and faithful performance of duty policy in lieu of surety bonds, but he has not priced that option. The bonds are relatively inexpensive and are currently purchased through the Crawford Insurance Agency using the Cincinnati Insurance Company. Roll Call: YES: Ortiz, Arndt, Dana, Fisher and Metzler. Motion carried.

Official Newspaper

16-20

Upon the Superintendent's recommendation, Mr. Dana moved, seconded by Ms. Fisher, the designation of the Star Beacon as the official newspaper for the publication of those notices required by law to be made in a newspaper. Mr. Arndt asked if there was any choice here. Mr. Lillie explained that some notices are required to be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the political subdivision, which is often construed to mean daily. The Star Beacon is the only local paper that fits that requirement. Roll Call: YES: Arndt, Dana, Fisher, Metzler and Ortiz. Motion carried.

2020 Meeting Times

17-20

Upon Mr. Kujala's recommendation, Mrs. Metzler moved, seconded by Mr. Arndt, that the regular meetings of the Board of Education for the 2020 calendar year be held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the High School Auditorium, except for the January meeting which will be held January 22, 2020 and the June

meeting which will be held on June 24, 2020. Roll Call: YES: Dana, Fisher, Metzler, Ortiz, and Arndt. Motion carried.

#### Valuation Complaints

Mr. Lillie reported that he received an email from Tess Tannehill with Bricker & Eckler asking if we'd like them to track recent sales for the school district this year to identify properties that recently sold for substantially above Auditor's value. He reminded the Board that Bricker & Eckler initiated last year's valuation complaint for the Pine Grove Realty property, which resulted in a \$1,576,800/year increase in market value. If Bricker & Eckler performed this search, they would present a summary of their findings, and the Board could then decide on what properties, if any, they would like Bricker & Eckler to file complaints. Mr. Lillie polled the Board on their interest, and the Board was interested in having Bricker & Eckler track recent sales to possibly pursue increase complaints.

#### Happy Hearts Waiver

Mr. Kujala shared a resolution with the Board that he said required no action, but he needed to make the Board aware. He reported that we are over the number of students permitted in the Geneva Middle School Happy Hearts Academy classroom, so the ESC needed to apply for a waiver. This waiver ensures that affected students will be provided services consistent with the requirements under IDEA and the Ohio Operating Standards for the Education of Students with Disabilities.

#### New SPIRE Owner

Mr. Kujala informed the Board that he met twice with Jonathan Ehrenfeld, the new SPIRE owner, to share our previous experiences and feelings about SPIRE. The meetings were very positive. He said there was a Harpersfield Township Trustees meeting on Monday, January 6<sup>th</sup> regarding the SPIRE property that he was not able to attend, but Ray Gruber, Jr. gave him an update this morning. Blue Ocean Realty and MV Residential Land, LLC were proposing a senior living complex of 40 to 60 rooms with an additional 40 rooms for workforce that would require a zoning change. Mr. Ehrenfeld indicated that they are looking to gradually have 300 student-athletes in their academy. They have brought on a new marketing person from Maryland and an education consultant by the name of Richard Odell, the CEO of Heads Up Educational Consulting. Mr. Kujala said he would be meeting with Mr. Odell on Monday, January 13<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.

#### New Board Office

Mr. Kujala said the main item he wanted to bring up was the need for a new Board office location. The Strategic Plan Facilities Team had identified the number one strategy to be to "determine the most cost effective and sufficient option for replacing the current Board office." Suggestions included building a new office at the High School; renovating the house in front of the HS that was purchased for that purpose, and if not using the house, repurpose it; or look at other locations. A District team looked at the Key Bank building, but the listed cost was prohibitive at \$800,000, the building was much bigger than needed, and there would be

many renovations needed. The current owner of the Board office property offered that they could build us a new Board office somewhere on the old Geneva Elementary site or renovate the Key Bank building using historic tax credits. He was asked to provide some written estimates, but nothing has been received.

Mrs. Metzler asked if there were any cost estimates for building on the High School site or renovating and adding an addition to the house. Mr. Lillie responded that we had no estimates prepared by an architect or engineer, but there were some rough estimates prepared by Serge Grenier and Scott Sidoti. Mr. Arndt recalled that the estimate to renovate the house was between \$1.2 and \$1.4 million, and he thought that was outrageous. Mr. Dana felt that we needed to weigh the cost of building new or renovating, and that we should get more information from the current property owner.

Adjournment

18-20

Mr. Arndt moved, seconded by Ms. Fisher, to adjourn the organization meeting at 6:54 p.m. Roll Call: YES: Fisher, Metzler, Ortiz, Arndt, and Dana. Motion carried.

The foregoing is a true and accurate record of the minutes and proceedings of the organization meeting held by the Board of Education of the Geneva Area City School District on January 8, 2020.