

**Minutes for Regular Called Meeting
Pope County CUSD #1
Board of Education
J. H. Hobbs Memorial Library
October 15, 2020
7:00 p.m.**

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by President Hansen and the following members were present: Walker, Aly, Wallace, Simmons, Hogg, and Hansen. Schuchardt was absent.

Motion to approve agenda was made by Wallace and seconded by Walker. Roll call vote: all ayes.

Motion was made by Simmons and seconded by Aly to approve the consent agenda including the following: 1) Approve Minutes of Board Meetings on 9/24/2020; 2) Approve Closed Session Minutes; 3) Approve Bills for Payment; and 4) Accept Financial Reports. Roll call vote: all ayes.

Under Administrative reports, Mr. Blankenship reported the following: 1) 1st quarter grade cards will go out on October 19th. We moved the date to give the remote students a chance to get all work turned in; 2) The Parent-Teacher conferences took on a different look this year. The teachers made phone calls to the parents who had signed up and to students who had D's or F's. There has been an increase in lower grades, especially in K-2; 3) Our Health-Life Safety inspection was done on October 9th; 4) The Jr. High Cross Country team

competed in their regionals this past Saturday. Braxton Murphy qualified at Regionals to compete at State on October 23rd in DuQuoin; 5) Enrollment is 323; and 6) Current numbers: 285 in-person (88%) and 37 remote (12%). Mr. Blankenship added that 55 students returned to in-person, 27 are remote, 2 have left the district, and we are down 18 from this time last year.

Mr. Graves reported the following: 1) The First Quarter has ended. Report Cards go out October 19th; 2) Seniors have completed the SAT thanks to Mr. Climer and Mrs. Hosfeldt; 3) Parent Teacher Conferences went well. Although numbers were low of parents requesting a conference, parent/teacher contacts are up this year due to remote planning days. We have also implemented giving “Incompletes” to students who have not turned in all their work to giving them a grace period. We have seen a drop in grades in all students; 4) Hometown Heroes have sent out their business letters for their 2020-2021 project; 5) Cross County GEC Conference was held here today. Vance Hertter won overall and 1st place was Gracie Markus with Briley Wise placing 2nd for the girls; 6) Mr. Forthman has started driving with the first set of student drivers; 7) October 17th, FFA is hosting a small tractor show. The show will now be held at the courthouse. (Restrictions in place); 8) Health Life Safety inspection was held Friday, October 9th. The inspection went well with only two minor infractions; 9) Pepsi will be coming in to install three hands free water dispensers; 10) Mr. Climer has been working with Seniors on scholarships and FAFSA information; 11) Breakfast and Lunch distribution is going very well as well as sanitation

schedules kept by the janitors; 12) Enrollment: 170, Remote Learners: 30% (51), Packets: 21, and E-Learning: 30.

Mr. Fritch reported on the following: 1) The first tax payment has been received; 2) \$15,000 of grant money has been re-designated for PPE supplies and eight new water fountains with bottle fillers; 3) The Breakfast and Lunch program has been extended and all students will receive free food for the remainder of the school year; and 4) Waiting on IDPH for guidance on winter sports. We have been told to look for something by November 1st. Mr. Fritch was asked if the Driver's Ed car has been repaired; it has and is back on the road.

Motion to enter executive session for the purpose of personnel performance, procedures, and employment was made by Walker and seconded by Wallace. Roll call vote: all ayes. Board entered executive session at 7:19 pm.

Motion to return to regular session was made by Simmons and seconded by Wallace. Roll call vote: all ayes. Board returned at 7:31 pm.

President Hansen stated at the last meeting the Hometown Heroes committee had a nice presentation sharing their project proposal for this year. He asked the Board for thoughts on a donation. Mr. Fritch stated the budget looks good for any amount they see fit to donate. Motion to make a donation of \$2,500 to Hometown Heroes was made by Hogg and seconded by Simmons. Roll call vote:

Walker, Aly, Wallace, Simmons, Hogg, ayes; Hansen abstained but wanted to note that he is super supportive of the program but due to the circumstances, he didn't feel it appropriate to vote on the item.

President Hansen addressed the Board with the reading of his letter of resignation.

Superintendent Fritch, Principal Graves, Principal Blankenship, and Fellow Board Members,

It is with heavy heart that tonight I resign from the Pope County School Board. 2020 has been a very challenging year for the world and as most of us, I have also had many challenges both personally and professionally. I offer my sincerest apologies to the community and my fellow Board members for not being able to finish out my term.

For the past five and half years it has been an honor to serve the Board, the Faculty and the Community. It has also been a tremendous honor to serve as President for the past three and a half years. I have been fortunate enough to give two nephews, a niece, and my daughter their grade school diploma, and I am sad that I won't be able to present them with their high school diploma. I will not bore everyone with an exhaustive list of what I am proud of, but I would like to highlight a few items. I am

very proud of the fact that in five and a half years, I was able to attend every meeting. I still remember that very cold night in February, with the support of this board, and several faculty members that we pressed the County to work with us on the School Resource Officer. It was an absolute honor to address the Class of 2020 at our "Parking Lot" graduation, and our Hometown Heroes at the dedication of the Eddyville Pirate Park.

As my time on this Board is coming to an end, I offer a few words of advice for this Board and future Boards. Please remember that we are not voted to this Board for personal gain. We are here to make decisions that are not always popular but are what we think are in the best interest of our students and staff. Please continue to engage the public to attend our meetings, and be careful to pay attention to what is written on social media. The latter is something that I have definitely struggled with.

My hope is that I served you all to the best of my ability, I am going to miss this engagement and comradely that we have each and every month. I hope that I am still invited back to speak with the students through Hometown Heroes and through other engagements and you have my word that I will continue to support that as much as I can. We have a great Board, a great staff, and a great administration. I know Pope County School System is in great hands. I wish you the best of luck in the coming years.

Thank you all for everything – “once a pirate, always a pirate”

Sincerely,

Michael A. Hansen

President Hansen appointed Jeremy Hogg as President *pro temp*. Hogg stated that he appreciated the time he has served on the Board with Hansen and hated to see him go.

Motion to accept resignation of Michael Hansen was made by Wallace and seconded by Simmons. Roll call vote: Walker, Aly, Wallace, Simmons, and Hogg; ayes.

The floor was then open to nominations for Vice President. Wallace nominated Bronwyn Aly. With no other nominations, Aly accepted the nomination.

Under Old Business, Mr. Fritch reported that the Elementary Building doors and windows project is almost complete. Randy Jones has been here this week and have five units completed with five to go. Mr. Blankenship added that one unit has a gap and has addressed the issue with Randy Jones.

Mr. Fritch stated to Hansen, on behalf of the administration, teachers, and staff, I would like to express our appreciation for all you have done for the district and students during your time of service on the Board. With all members in agreement, all stood with a round of applause.

Walker asked for an update on track being added to the sports offered at the high school. Mr. Fritch stated it was in the works and will be set in motion for the Spring. Most likely to compete on the individual level with minimal cost to the district.

With no further business to be discussed, a motion was made by Wallace and seconded by Simmons to adjourn the meeting until the next scheduled meeting to be held on Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at 7:00 pm in the J.H. Hobbs Memorial Library. All members present voted aye.

Meeting adjourned at 8:48 pm.

Jeremy Hogg, President
Board of Education

Paula Baker, Secretary
Board of Education