

SOPER BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Monday, June 21, 2021
7:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order by Dr Scotty Van Worth.

Members present: Robert Spaulding, Gaylen Branton, Arlis Young, Bruce Roebuck. Angella Dancer was not present. It was determined there were enough members present for a quorum.

Administration present: Scotty Van Worth, Tina Jeffreys. Parker Harless was not present.

It was determined that the agenda for this meeting was posted in due time.

The members agreed to postpone the decision of whether or not to approve the Regular Meeting minutes for the Soper School Board for May 24, 2021, until next meeting.

The Board welcomed one visitor, Nathan Jeffreys, who gave positive feedback on the bid from Bryan County Steel as presented by Dr Van Worth.

As he offered the Superintendent's report, Dr. Scotty Van Worth went over the Bryan County Steel bid as offered by Chase Crites. The quote given by Crites includes the entire construction of the pitched roof with skirted porticos, as well as the awning spanning the front of the new cafeteria building. The pitched roof will solve the leaking issues, which have caused mildew problems within the building. This will qualify the work for the Covid money which is specific for air quality/ventilation in preparation for in-person learning. The new HVAC system will be part of the plan for these monies.

The pitched roof and awning work with materials are quoted at \$343,280 with 30 days to accept starting from June 16. The timing is crucial because of rising materials costs. If accepted, the materials will be secured, although the construction will likely happen around October. There are two other bids expected but neither had been submitted at the time of the meeting. The Board is willing to give them time to come in and might change the date for the next Board meeting in order to consider them before the first bid expires. The concern is the

rising materials costs, and the Board wants be able to make a decision in the very near future to avoid the risk of price increases.

The current HVAC units are over 15 years old, so the timing for this replacement and being able to use the Covid money is perfect. The units will be removed from the flat roof, which will correct many issues, but will also require four closets to house the inside parts. There will be a total of 18 units over the campus at a cost of \$106k. This expenditure would have been necessary in the near future either way, so this is the perfect way to dovetail the projects and to utilize the assistance.

With the ability to spread most of the Covid funds over a three-year period, there will be some amount to save and budget for future projects, such as continuing the expanded summer school programs and after-school learning for those who need to catch up. Also the new activity bus can be purchased, as well as a few other projects, such as renovations on the old cafeteria building so that it can be used for other purposes.

About \$300k of CARES Act money and two months of Federal claims will be coming in soon. Some of the money paid to Summer School teachers will be reimbursed by Choctaw Nation.

A new Grasshopper mower was purchased as previously discussed. Dr Van Worth is pleased with its performance.

Terry Anderson from Boswell has applied to the bus driver and maintenance position. Hiring him would allow Soper to continue all bus routes for the coming year. Bus driver qualifications are more time-consuming than in the past, so extra time will be required to bring him on should the Board decide to hire him. The Board is in agreement for the Superintendent to pursue the hiring processes.

A motion was made by Robert Spaulding and seconded by Gaylen Branton to approve the general fund encumbrances 343-362 and 70125-70137 and checks. Robert Spaulding—Aye, Arlis Young—Aye, Gaylen Branton—Aye, and Bruce Roebuck—Aye.

In her Principal's Report, Tina Jeffreys, reported that Summer School would be finishing up during the coming week with a trip to Durant to the fish hatchery and

the recycling plant, then lunch in the park. Thursday would complete the summer with water play and ice cream.

End-of-year assessments were also being completed, whereby the district could determine academic growth for the recent year. The hope was to be finished in the coming week.

Mrs Jeffreys said that the intention to absorb the position recently vacated by Julie Harless does seem possible with the largest elementary class moving into 7th grade for the next school year. So far, there are almost 30 students enrolled for the new Kindergarten class.

Gaylen Branton moved to approve open transfers, which means that other school districts may not deny students who want to transfer into our district. Soper may deny transfers coming in for one of two reasons: discipline problems; poor attendance. Bruce Roebuck seconded the motion. Gaylen Branton—Aye, Bruce Roebuck—Aye, Robert Spaulding—Aye, Arlis Young—Aye.

Dr Van Worth had been seeking another bus, but the companies were reporting that none were available. He was able to contact Midwest Bus Sales and was offered 2 new 3-year leases with a 45,000-mile limit at a cost of about \$4,000 less than other options. This would be a 2022 Thomas Freightliner C2 Softliner 71-passenger bus. With few options and the desire to keep all bus routes running for now, Dr Van Worth recommended this option to the Board. Robert Spaulding made the motion to approve the contracts. Gaylen Branton seconded the motion. Bruce Roebuck—Aye, Gaylen Branton—Aye, Robert Spaulding—Aye, and Arlis Young—Aye.

Gaylen Branton moved to approve the OSIG Insurance policy, which covers all buildings. It comes with a 2% increase in cost for the coming year. Bruce Roebuck seconded the motion. Gaylen Branton—Aye, Arlis Young—Aye, Bruce Roebuck—Aye, Robert Spaulding—Aye.

Dr Van Worth presented the “Safe Return and Continuity of Services Plan,” which is a requirement to receive the Covid monies. He used the OSDE and CDC guidelines to draft the plan. At this time, the plan does not mandate the wearing of masks. It does recommend certain safety precautions and leaves room for

adjustment in case of Red Zone times. For the most part, it makes possible for a return to normal classroom education. Vaccines are not currently required.

This plan must be on the school's website, and Safe-Return must be a community-wide agreement with plenty of signatures. To receive the State and Federal assistance money, the plan is a requirement. Robert Spaulding moved to approve the Plan as written. Gaylen Branton seconded the motion. Bruce Roebuck—Aye, Gaylen Branton—Aye, Robert Spaulding—Aye, and Arlis Young—Aye.

There were no further purchase requests and no new business.

A motion was made to adjourn by Gaylen Branton, and it was seconded by Arlis Young. Gaylen Branton—Aye, Bruce Roebuck—Aye, Robert Spaulding—Aye, Arlis Young—Aye.

Bruce Roebuck

Arlis Young
Robert Spaulding