

SOUTH SPENCER COUNTY SCHOOL CORPORATION
SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 13, 2021

Budget Hearing – Happened one hour prior to the start of this meeting of the board.

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

School Board President, Melissa Middleton, called the meeting to order. Everyone in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

The following Board Members attended:

- Melissa Middleton - President
- Chris Brown – Vice President
- Janet Stoermer - Secretary
- Matt Bunner – Member
- George Schwoeppe - Member

Statement by Melissa Middleton – “The board meeting is held in the public but are not for the public. The board will continue to allow public comments. I would like to remind the public speakers of the following:

1. All speakers will be given 3 minutes maximum to speak. Mr. Chris Brown will monitor the time. This is the time that you will express your views and concerns. When your name is called come to the podium and give your full name and the district you live in for the record.
2. All comment’s are expected to be respectful and directed to the board as a whole. Do not address questions to the board or to individual board members. This will not become a Q&A session.

The board’s goal for the public comments period is to hear your concerns, comments and opinions. Also, the board does not discuss personnel matters at a public board meeting. If a speaker’s comments are directed at or intended to be a personal attack to a Board member, I will stop the speaker and respectfully remind them that such are not appropriate in a public setting. If the speaker persists, I will end their time and ask them to take their seat. If the speaker continues, I will request the School Resource Officer, Kermit Lindsey, (who is not present) so I will ask Todd Dunsworth to escort the speaker outside.”

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The agenda of the September 13, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees were approved as presented.

Motion: Chris Brown
Second: George Schwoeppe
Vote: 5-0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the August 9, 2021 Regular Board Meeting, was approved as presented.

Motion: Matt Bunner

Second: Janet Stoermer

Vote: 5-0

STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Blake Bunner – (From Ohio Township but moved to Grass Township) Talked about Dr. Rutherford's contract. Feels the Board should give him the reason why they want to end his contract and give him a chance to fix the problem.

Brandon Neighbors – (Luce Township) Talks about how he and his wife are graduates of South Spencer and all four of their children go to South Spencer schools. Here as a concerned citizen and parent about the relationship between the Superintendent and the CTA. Concerned about staff leaving and what to tell his children.

Walter Phillips – (Ohio Township) Graduate of Luce Township High School. Would like to thank the Board members for being Board members because it is a huge responsibility. Would wholeheartedly recommend Dr. Richard Rutherford. Would also like to voice his opinion that we should not teach Critical Race Theory at South Spencer.

Starr Martin – Grandparent to two South Spencer students, middle school and elementary. Support to renew Dr. Rutherford's contract.

Cindy Laurrance – (Ohio Township) Read someone else's post/message from Facebook.

Tim Coomer – (Ohio Township) Believes that Dr. Rutherford has done a good job. Has talked to past members of the Board and past employees of the school. He searched for the truth. He got nothing other than he might do things different than what people are used to but that does not mean he is wrong. There are conflict of interest. What other superintendent is going to want to come to a messed up system like South Spencer.

Lindsey Hall – She and her husband are talking about moving their kids to another school system because they feel that they are not being heard. They feel that their kids are not getting the opportunities they would if they go somewhere else. Talked about how many dual credit classes there are at neighboring school systems.

Another individual spoke but they did not state their name.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- Rockport Elementary Backpack Program & Barb Bush
- Paul Schmidt, David Small, Tony Coomes and Kermit Lindsey for our sport facilities for looking great.
- Morris Grimes and Winkler's for keep all our yards looking amazing.
- Safety Grant – Dean Shipp matching \$50,000 grant to buy cameras and servers.
- ADM count is coming up on September 17, 2021.
- Update on the ULP it has been dismissed.
- There are housing projects in the works in our area.
- Homecoming Week this week with fun dress-up days.
- Powderpuff football game on Wednesday.

CONSENT ITEMS

1. Approved the payroll claim dockets and the accounts payable claims numbered 4493 – 4716.
2. Approved the Treasurer' Financial report.
3. Approved the monthly transfer from the Education fund to the Operations fund, per board resolution.
4. Accepted the resignation of the following, approved to post the positions and granted permission to hire:
 - a. Meleah Cowden – SSHS Part-time Cook – Effective August 24, 2021
 - b. Tom Rupert – SSHS Softball Head Coach – Effective August 9, 2021
 - c. Stephen Wathen – Bus Driver – Effective September 11, 2021
5. Approved FMLA for the following:
 - a. Jama Greene – SSHS Special Needs Aide – Continuous from August 2, 2021 to September 20, 2021

Motion: Chris Brown
Second: Janet Stoermer
Vote: 5-0

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approved to hire Lane Meece, South Spencer Middle School 2nd shift, full-time, 12 month custodian, effective August 9, 2021

Motion: Matt Bunner
Second: Chris Brown
Vote: 5-0

2. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approved to hire Renee Edge, South Spencer Middle School volleyball helper starting with the 2021-2022 school year.

Motion: George Schwoeppe
Second: Janet Stoermer
Vote: 5-0

3. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approved to hire Aimee Ambrose, South Spencer High School 10 month custodian, starting September 2, 2021.

Motion: Chris Brown
Second: Janet Stoermer
Vote: 5-0

NEW BUSINESS OF THE BOARD

1. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approved the 2021-22 High Ability Handbook.

Motion: Matt Bunner
Second: Chris Brown
Vote: 5-0

2. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, agreed to prohibit the teaching of Critical Race Theory at all South Spencer County Schools.

Motion: Chris Brown
Second: Matt Bunner
Vote: 5-0

3. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approved the agreement between Bose, McKinney & Evans LLP and South Spencer County School Corporation for the purpose of collective bargaining.

Motion: Matt Bunner
Second: Chris Brown
Vote: 5-0

4. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approved the contract change order No 2 on South Spencer High School Renovations 2021 (Locker room/restroom project).

Motion: Chris Brown
Second: Matt Bunner
Vote: 5-0

5. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approved the contract with Jack R Kinkel & Son Architects for the High School Football bleacher project.

Motion: Matt Bunner

Second: Janet Stoermer

Vote: 5-0

6. Upon the recommendation of the School Board of Trustees, from the June 14, 2021 meeting, have open discussion about Dr. Rutherford's contract.

Matt Bunner – Talked about what the board does and does not do. Talked about rules, confidentiality and communication. Last 5 years of Dr. Rutherford's reviews where he has been rated effective and highly effective. Also talked about the upgrades and safety in the buildings.

Melissia Middleton – Said that we are only preparing our students for a college education and not for getting a job right out of high school or going into the reserves. Advises that the relationship with the CTA is very concerning and does not feel it is salvageable.

Matt Bunner – Ask that if both sides, CTA and Superintendent, have issues you just get rid of one side?

Dr. Rutherford – Let the board know that all of our principals are coming off a 3-year contract and he is getting ready to ask for another 3 years for each of them. All of our positions are full at this time. Everyone just got a raise of 50¢ per hour and the teachers received \$1,500 per year.

On behalf of the Board of School Trustees of the South Spencer County School Corporation, I move that the Board non-renew Superintendent Rutherford's contract as superintendent effective at the end of the term of the superintendent contract. I hereby further move that the Board President is hereby authorized to give notice of the Board's decision to nonrenewal of said contract to Superintendent Rutherford by January 1, 2022.

Motion: Janet Stoermer

Second: George Schwoeppe

Vote: 3-2 (Opposed – Chris Brown and Matt Bunner)

INFORMATION ITEMS

These were written reports to the Board.

1. Technology Report
2. Maintenance Report
3. Transportation Report
4. New Volunteers Report

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next Regular Meeting of the Board will be Monday, October 18, 2021 at 6:00 PM in the multipurpose room at South Spencer High School.

ADJOURNMENT

Time: 7:11 PM

Motion: George Schwoeppe

Second: Chris Brown

Vote: 5-0

DOCUMENT SIGNING

All Students - All the Time