

**School District U-46**  
**Elgin, Illinois**

October 2, 2017

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was called to order at 7:05 p.m. at the Educational Services Center, 355 East Chicago Street, Elgin, Illinois. The following Board members answered roll call: Phil Costello, Traci O'Neal Ellis, Sue Kerr, Veronica Noland, Melissa Owens, Jeanette Ward, and Donna Smith.

Also present were Chief Executive Officer Tony Sanders, Chief Legal Officer Miguel Rodriguez, and the following administrators: Dr. Suzanne Johnson, Dr. Jeff King, Melanie Meidel, Ron Raglin, Christopher Allen, Mary Fergus, John Heiderscheidt, Tracey Jakaitis, Brian Lindholm, Bruce Phelps, Trisha Shrode and April Wells. Also present were media representatives Rafael Guerrero of the Courier, Seth Hancock of the Examiner, and Madhu Krishnamurthy of the Daily Herald. There were also other administrators, guests, and visitors. Mrs. Smith led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

A moment of silence was held in honor of Mary Katherine Ninis Czekajlo, a recently deceased Food Service employee, and for the victims of the Las Vegas shooting.

1. Accent on Achievement

A. National School Lunch Week

In recognition of National School Lunch Week, October 9-13, 2017, a Proclamation of Appreciation was read by Mr. Sanders. The U-46 Food & Nutrition Services Department serves more than 4,000 breakfast meals and 20,000 lunches every day. They continue to encourage our students to eat healthily and live healthy lifestyles.

2. Strategic Plan Report

A. Human Resources Update

This item was tabled until October 16, 2017 meeting.

3. Comments from the Audience

Megan Larson spoke about the Board Member Code of Conduct and Oath of Office. Ms. Larson believes that the failure to uphold the Oath of Office would make a Board member unfit to represent the students and families of U-46.

Veronica Betz spoke about the middle school health curriculum and in support of statements made by Mrs. O'Neal Ellis. Ms. Betz said she hoped the Board would approve the proposed health curriculum and hoped the Board could have an adult conversation about statements that were made in private.

Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford spoke in support of statements made by Mrs. O'Neal Ellis. Ms. Brumbaugh-Cayford thanked Mrs. O'Neal Ellis for her statements and found her

words to be an appropriate reminder of how the nation has abused black people throughout history.

Mary Shesgreen spoke in support of statements made by Mrs. O'Neal Ellis. Ms. Shesgreen feels that patriotism is about love for all the people of the country and respect for the amended constitution and all the ways that freedom has been expanded.

Shirley Sadjadi Sotomayor spoke in support of statements made by Mrs. O'Neal Ellis. Ms. Sadjadi Sotomayor thanked Mrs. O'Neal Ellis for always standing up for the values of the District.

Earl Silbar spoke in support of statements made by Mrs. O'Neal Ellis. Mr. Silbar feels that Mrs. O'Neal Ellis always upholds the interest of all students but Mrs. Ward does not.

Linda Rusenovich spoke about her concerns with statements made by Mrs. O'Neal Ellis. Ms. Rusenovich feels that Mrs. O'Neal Ellis' statements are an insult to all that respect the flag as a symbol of the country.

Prezel Hardy spoke in support of statements made by Mrs. O'Neal Ellis. Mr. Hardy feels that this has been blown out of proportion and Mrs. O'Neal Ellis' comments were inflammatory but truthful.

Mark Handrock spoke about his concerns with statements made by Mrs. O'Neal Ellis. Mr. Handrock feels that everyone is accountable for what they say and the effect it has on others.

Herb Porter spoke in support of statements made by Mrs. O'Neal Ellis. Mr. Porter stated that he would like to see the Board maintain its focus and not get misdirected with these types of issues.

Lauren Prowicz spoke about her concerns with statements made by Mrs. O'Neal Ellis. Ms. Prowicz feels that it is very inappropriate for Mrs. O'Neal Ellis to be influencing children this way and she is appalled at the support Mrs. O'Neal Ellis is getting.

Vivienne Bailey spoke in support of statements made by Mrs. O'Neal Ellis. Ms. Bailey believes that Mrs. O'Neal Ellis' comments present a teachable moment for the District and that this silent protest is not disrespectful to the military and the flag.

Greg Addy spoke in support of statements made by Mrs. O'Neal Ellis. Mr. Addy feels there is a history of segregation and violence against blacks in this country and he hopes this will be the beginning of communication and change.

Andre Allen spoke in support of statements made by Mrs. O'Neal Ellis. Mr. Allen feels that the flag has not been lived up to in regard to all Americans and a person's feelings towards the flag are not representative of their patriotism.

April Wells spoke in support of statements made by Mrs. O'Neal Ellis. Ms. Wells stated that the same flag that evokes patriotism begs to recognize the double consciousness that exists.

4. Other Business – Board Member and CEO Update

A. Additional Information

Mr. Costello stated that at the September 25, 2017 meeting Mrs. O'Neal Ellis interrupted Mrs. Ward's request to read a statement on his behalf. As a result, the Board did not allow Mrs. Ward to read his statement. Mr. Costello feels that this is another case of selective censorship. Mr. Costello stated that when he decided to run for this position he set his calendar to be at the Board meetings on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays of every month. His conflicts were provided to the Board President and administration well in advance of setting the annual Board calendar and no attempts to accommodate his conflicts were made. Mr. Costello stated that he will not apologize for physically missing meetings. He feels that he does more to prepare for these meeting than other Board members. Mr. Costello feels that he offers objective and challenging questions to administration especially on financial issues. Mr. Costello feels that there are Board members that blindly vote in favor of each agenda item that administration brings forth. Mr. Costello is deeply concerned that Mrs. O'Neal Ellis felt compelled to broadcast to the public that he was out of the country and that was totally irresponsible on her part. Mr. Costello stated that he appreciates that Mr. Sanders has decided that administration will now disclose Board questions and answers to the public. Mr. Costello stated that he plans to continue to challenge U-46 outcomes so he can be resourceful in evaluating the District's strategic objectives, CEO performance, and setting impactful policy.

Mrs. Ward thanked everyone that came to the meeting tonight. Mrs. Ward stated that the American flag is neither a white nationalist symbol nor a false symbol of hope. Mrs. Ward feels that you cannot love and respect the flag while at the same time saying it means nothing more than toilet paper. Mrs. Ward stated that American freedoms extend to Americans of all colors including Mrs. O'Neal Ellis. Mrs. Ward stated that there are many African Americans that are proud of America and her symbols. Mrs. Ward stated that Americans are a tolerant people but typically do not appreciate people who disrespect the flag. Mrs. Ward condemns Mrs. O'Neal Ellis' remarks in the strongest possible terms but does not support forcing Mrs. O'Neal Ellis to resign. Mrs. Ward stated that the remedy for those that disagree with her is elections. Mrs. Ward hopes that constituents of U-46 remember this when the next School Board elections are held in 2019.

Mrs. O'Neal Ellis apologized and stated that she never intended for her post on her personal Facebook page to cause one moment of distraction from educating the students of this District. Mrs. O'Neal Ellis stated that it was her responsibility to be here and say that she is sorry. Mrs. O'Neal Ellis stated that she makes no apologies for her comment about the flag. She made the comment on her personal Facebook page about a matter of importance in the current national discourse and

based on her personal experiences. However, she completely owns that as an elected official she could have been much more circumspect in her criticism and elegant in her language. Mrs. O'Neal Ellis thanked those that came out to support her and those that spoke about how they were personally offended. Mrs. O'Neal Ellis stated there is a huge gap between the America that we say we are and the America that we actually are and that is the gap that her comments were addressing. Mrs. O'Neal Ellis reported on the hundreds of offensive private messages she has received. Mrs. O'Neal Ellis stated that she hopes the District will accept her heartfelt apology for the distraction.

Ms. Noland thanked Mrs. O'Neal Ellis for her comments. Ms. Noland appreciates that Mrs. O'Neal Ellis' speaks her truth. Ms. Noland also appreciates that Mrs. Ward pointed out that they do not ask the Board members to resign. Ms. Noland stated that there is a political process and it needs to be followed. Ms. Noland hopes there is a way to have this community conversation that is needed so badly.

Ms. Owens thanked the Bartlett High School band for playing at the Kickstand bike race in Bartlett on Sunday. Ms. Owens also thanked all the public commenters. Ms. Owens agrees that the call to conversation is very important and thanked Mrs. O'Neal Ellis for her comments and her friendship.

Mrs. Ward condemned in the strongest possible terms the messages that were sent to Mrs. O'Neal Ellis. Mrs. Ward stated that the comments were disrespectful, appalling, and disgraceful. Mrs. Ward would never support talking to a human being like that.

Mrs. Smith stated that she received several emails asking her to remove or control the Board members on this Board. Mrs. Smith stated that neither she nor any other Board members have the power to remove an elected Board member. Mrs. Smith stated that as Board members they need to remember that their comments and actions are more visible than they would be if they were not sitting in these seats. Mrs. Smith stated it saddens her that once again this Board is in the news rather than the students that are working hard to be successful graduates.

Mrs. Ward asked if there was a policy regarding whether or not she is able to read statements from an absent Board member.

Mrs. Smith feels that if she is not at a meeting she does not expect to have her voice heard.

Mr. Costello stated that his statement was a public statement and he does appreciate that the statement was shared with the public online. Mr. Costello does, however, take offense with the fact that Mrs. Ward was not allowed to read his statement.

B. FOIA Requests – 3

Mr. Sanders, Chief Executive Officer, reported on the requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act.

5. Consent Agenda

- A. Personnel Report and Workers' Compensation Cases
- B. Minutes of Board Meeting - August 14, 2017
- C. Contract - Financial Operations - 403(b) General Consulting Services - Grant Thornton

Mr. Costello requested that item C. Contract – Financial Operations – 403 (b) General Consulting Services – Grant Thornton, be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed under Discussion/Action.

Motion by Ms. Kerr, second by Mrs. Ward, to approve the Consent Agenda of October 2, 2017, items A and B, as presented. Upon roll call, yes votes: Mr. Costello, Mrs. O'Neal Ellis, Ms. Kerr, Ms. Noland, Ms. Owens, Mrs. Ward, and Mrs. Smith. No votes: 0. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

6. Discussion/Action

- A. Contract - Financial Operations - 403(b) General Consulting Services - Grant Thornton

Motion by Ms. Owens, second by Ms. Kerr, to approve the Contract - Financial Operations - 403(b) General Consulting Services - Grant Thornton as presented.

Mr. Costello stated he believes the District needs to focus more on getting multiple sources of competitive bids for contracts rather than going with sole-sourced vendors. Mr. Costello understands that Grant Thornton is an exceptional organization, but he would just like to see options put before the Board.

Ms. Kerr asked if this was a one-year contract that will come before the Board again in a year.

Mr. King responded that no, their services are temporary to help put the RFP (Request for Proposal) out and evaluate the respondents then the contract will be complete.

Upon roll call, yes votes: Mrs. O'Neal Ellis, Ms. Kerr, Ms. Noland, Ms. Owens, and Mrs. Smith. No votes: Mr. Costello and Mrs. Ward. The motion carried by a vote of 5-2.

- B. Itemized Bills – October 2, 2017

Dr. King, Chief Operations Officer/Chief School Business Official, presented the itemized bills of October 2, 2017. Administration recommended the Board of Education approve the List of Bills in the amount of \$6,966,418.29.

Motion by Ms. Owens, second by Mrs. Ward, to approve the itemized bills of October 2, 2017, in the amount of \$6,966,418.29 as presented. Upon roll call, yes votes: Mr. Costello, Mrs. O'Neal Ellis, Ms. Kerr, Ms. Noland, Ms. Owens, Mrs. Ward, and Mrs. Smith. No votes: 0. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

C. Proposal - Curriculum and Instruction - District-Wide Professional Development - Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

Mr. Phelps, Interim Director of Business Services, and Dr. Johnson, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, reviewed the proposal. Administration recommended approval of the proposal from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt in the amount of \$54,700.00 and requested authorization for District administration to execute related documents. This expenditure will be charged to Title I and Title II grant funds. The cost is included in the budget for the 2017-2018 school year.

Motion by Ms. Kerr, second by Ms. Owens, to approve the Proposal - Curriculum and Instruction - District-Wide Professional Development - Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, as presented. Upon roll call, yes votes: Mr. Costello, Mrs. O'Neal Ellis, Ms. Kerr, Ms. Noland, Ms. Owens, Mrs. Ward, and Mrs. Smith. No votes: 0. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

D. Proposal - Curriculum and Instruction - District-Wide Professional Development - American Reading Company

Mr. Phelps, Interim Director of Business Services, and Dr. Johnson, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, reviewed the proposal. Administration recommended approval of the proposal from American Reading Company in the amount of \$67,500.00 and requested authorization for District administration to execute related documents. This expenditure will be charged to Title I and Title II grant funds. The cost is included in the budget for the 2017-2018 school year.

Motion by Mrs. Ward, second by Ms. Kerr, to approve the Proposal - Curriculum and Instruction - District-Wide Professional Development - American Reading Company, as presented. Upon roll call, yes votes: Mr. Costello, Mrs. O'Neal Ellis, Ms. Kerr, Ms. Noland, Ms. Owens, Mrs. Ward, and Mrs. Smith. No votes: 0. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

7. Other Business - CAC Update

There was no update from the CAC.

8. Work Session - Bids/Proposals

A. Bid - Plant Operations Department-Bartlett High School Booster Club - Bartlett High School Sports Complex - Phase 1

Mr. Phelps, Interim Director of Business Services, Mr. Allen, Director of Plant Operations, and representatives of the Bartlett High School Booster Club presented the bid. Administration recommended that the Board of Education approve the low bid meeting specifications as submitted by L.J. Morse Construction Company for the Base Bid and Alternates 1 & 2 in the total contract

sum of \$1,577,700.00. This expenditure will be charged to the Bartlett High School Booster Club, Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZAB), and the Operations and Maintenance Fund.

B. Proposal - Curriculum and Instruction - Middle School Health Technology Purchase

Mr. Phelps, Interim Director of Business Services, Ms. Jakaitis, Student Wellness Coordinator, and Ms. Shrode, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, presented the proposal. Administration recommended approval of the proposal from Heartland Business Systems in the amount of \$66,339.00 and requested authorization for District administration to execute related documents. This expenditure will be charged to the Educational Fund. The cost is included in the budget for the 2017-2018 school year.

9. Work Session – Change Orders

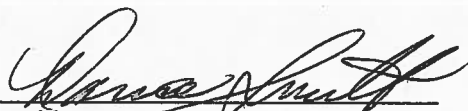
A. Change Order - Coleman Elementary - Domestic Water Piping Replacement

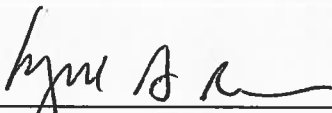
Mr. Allen, Director of Plant Operations, presented the change order. Administration recommended the Board of Education approve the change order from Northwest Contractors, Inc. in the amount of minus \$23,153.02.

10. Adjournment

Motion by Mrs. Ward, second by Ms. Kerr, to adjourn the Regular Board Meeting of October 2, 2017, at 8:40 p.m. Upon roll call, yes votes: Mr. Costello, Mrs. O'Neal Ellis, Ms. Kerr, Ms. Noland, Ms. Owens, Mrs. Ward, and Mrs. Smith. No votes: 0. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

Approved this 4<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2017.

  
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President

  
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Secretary