

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
HOMER COMMUNITY SCHOOL  
March 11, 2024

A meeting of the Board of Education of Homer Community School was convened in open and public session on Monday, March 11, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the Library at Homer Community School, Homer, Nebraska. The following board members were present or absent:

Present: Ryan Harris, Tyler Kirkholm, Paul Tighe, Kristina Nelsen, Byron Hall and Aaron Reis

Administration present: Superintendent Gregg Cruickshank, Principals Abbie Uhl and Tom Coviello and Board Secretary Amy Brand.

Visitors present: Several

Notice of the meeting was given in advance by publication and/or posting in accordance with the Board approved method for giving notice of meetings. Notice of this meeting was given to all members of the Board of Education. The Secretary of the Board maintains a list of the news media requesting notification of meetings and advance notification to the listed media of the time and place of the meeting and the subjects to be discussed at this meeting was provided. Availability of the agenda was communicated in the publicized notice and a current copy of the Agenda was maintained as stated in the publicized notice. All proceedings of the Board of Education, except as hereinafter noted, were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

I. Call Meeting to Order and Notification of Open Meeting Law

The meeting was duly called to order and the Chairperson announced and informed the public that a current copy of the Open Meetings Act is posted in the Library.

II. Roll Call – All members present.

III. Approval of Agenda and Changes to Agenda

Motion was made by Nelsen and seconded by Harris to approve the agenda as presented.

On roll call vote, the Board voted as follows:

Voting for: Tighe, Reis, Nelsen, Hall, Kirkholm, Harris

The motion carried 6-0.

IV. Consent Agenda

1. Approve the Minutes of the February 14<sup>th</sup> regular meeting, February 23<sup>rd</sup> work session, February 28<sup>th</sup> special meeting and February 29<sup>th</sup> special meeting.

2. Approve claims and accounts and payroll expense from General Fund.

Motion was made by Reis and seconded by Nelsen to approve all Consent Agenda items.

On roll call vote, the Board voted as follows:

Voting for: Nelsen, Hall, Reis, Kirkholm, Harris, Tighe

The motion carried 6-0.

## V. Communications

Principal Uhl reported on the successful Title 1 Read In on March 1<sup>st</sup> as well as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Knight PRIDE celebration on March 5<sup>th</sup> which celebrated 44 students. Elementary Student Council will be hosting a fun night on March 22 and the Kids Heart Challenge kicks off on March 18<sup>th</sup> and will run through April 5. The PK-5 Spring Concert is March 21 and will have a Country theme. Grades 3-5 will be attending the NAIA Tournament on March 22<sup>nd</sup> and field trips are starting to be scheduled. Angela Ford is the Elementary Summer School Coordinator which will be held June 10-28 for Grades K-5. Veronica Schmidt, new Elementary Guidance Counselor, is interested in a new K-5 Guidance Curriculum.

Principal Coviello reported that a total of 16 people donated for the NHS/Student Council Blood Drive. Spring sports have started, and we have a total of 48 Secondary students and 52 Junior High students participating in track. We also have 18 golfers this year. The Junior high band and choir received several high ratings for individual students at the WSC festival day. Thank you to several parents for their help during the day. Mr. Coviello also reported the Construction Class is building a shed and will be replacing bleacher seats on the visitor side.

Superintendent Cruickshank reported the enrollment is at 436. Information was shared regarding board meetings in Nebraska that are streamed. Jeff Reed shared additional information and considerations. Mr. Cruickshank shared information regarding the last Lewis and Clark Conference meeting. Visits are scheduled this week with the health care inspector care office and the fire marshal office to evaluate and audit the feasibility of hosting child care. A transportation update was given; there may be a presentation from 1<sup>st</sup> Student at the April meeting on a contract proposal for the 2024-2025 school year and beyond. Tyler Kirkholm, Byron Hall and Samantha Johnson are running for school board and the election is in November. The term of office begins in January, 2025. Mr. Cruickshank and Jeff Reed had an on-site conversation with the representatives from Morrissey Engineering, MTC (installers of the new HVAC) and Climate Control Specialists. It is a priority for them to fix the HVAC issues. More information was shared by Jeff Reed. The Nebraska Department of Education has a \$10 million grant for school safety enhancements. A proposal is being worked on to fully integrate the fire alarm system between the new addition and the old structure.

Public Comment: Several community members raised concern regarding why the public isn't involved when choosing the school calendar for the next school year. Several expressed interest in the school year starting later in August.

A thank you was given from the Junior Knights for letting their kids use the wrestling room and also expressed interest in new basketball hoops going up with the proposed new playground equipment.

## VI. Closed Session

Motion was made by Nelsen and seconded by Harris to enter into closed session at 7:40 p.m. to discuss collective bargaining strategies for administration for the protection of the public's interest. On roll call vote, the board voted as follows:

Voting for: Kirkholm, Nelsen, Hall, Harris, Tighe, Reis

The motion carried 6-0.

The board exited closed session.

Motion was made by Reis and seconded by Nelsen enter regular session at 7:42 p.m. On roll call vote, the board voted as follows:

Voting for: Harris, Tighe, Reis, Kirkholm, Hall, Nelsen

The motion carried 6-0.

VII. Discussion

- a. Information was shared regarding legislative updates.

VII. Discussion/Action

- a. Different options have been shared to enhance both the Preschool and K-5 playgrounds. Alex O'Dell was present and offered information on the proposals for both playgrounds. Discussion was also held regarding a timeline to move forward with the project and considerations for funding. More information will be shared at April's meeting.
- b. Motion was made by Nelsen and seconded by Reis to approve the ending date of May 24<sup>th</sup> for the 2023-2024 school year. This will be a noon dismissal with staff checkout to follow. Snow days will be waived. On roll call vote, the Board voted as follows:  
Voting for: Kirkholm, Harris, Tighe, Reis, Hall, Nelsen  
The motion carried 6-0.
- c. Discussion was held regarding the 2024-2025 calendar. This will be tabled until April's meeting.
- d. Motion was made by Reis and seconded by Kirkholm to approve the digital device use plan for Grades 6-12 to start on April 2<sup>nd</sup> as presented by Mr. Coviello. On roll call vote, the board voted as follows:  
Voting for: Reis, Kirkholm, Harris, Nelsen, Hall, Tighe  
The motion carried 6-0.
- e. Motion was made by Reis and seconded by Hall to approve the new gymnasium sound system enhancements as presented by Jeff Reed. On roll call vote, the board voted as follows:  
Voting for: Nelsen, Hall Kirkholm, Harris, Tighe, Reis  
The motion carried 6-0.
- f. Motion was made by Kirkholm and seconded by Hall to approve Mrs. Uhl's total compensation increase of \$6,000 and Mr. Coviello's total compensation increase of \$4,000 for the 2024-2025 school year. On roll call vote, the board voted as follows:  
Voting for: Hall, Kirkholm, Harris, Nelsen, Tighe, Reis  
The motion carried 6-0.

IX. Action Items

Motion was made by Reis and seconded by Kirkholm to approve the employment of Dr. Joey Lefdal as Superintendent, effective July 1, 2024. On roll call vote, the board voted as follows:

Voting for: Hall, Nelsen Kirkholm, Harris, Tighe, Reis  
The motion carried 6-0.

Motion was made by Nelsen and seconded by Kirkholm to approve the employment of Aspen Bennier, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher, effective the 2024-2025 school year. On roll call vote, the board voted as follows:

Voting for: Nelsen, Hall, Kirkholm, Harris, Tighe, Reis  
The motion carried 6-0.

X. Time/Date of next meeting

The next regular board meeting is set for Monday, April 8, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

XI. Motion to Adjourn

Motion was made by Reis and seconded by Kirkholm to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 p.m. on March 11, 2024.

Voting for: Reis, Kirkholm, Hall, Harris, Tighe, Nelsen  
The motion carried 6-0.

The meeting was duly adjourned.

Dated this 11th day of March, 2024.

ATTEST:  
Kristina Nelsen  
Secretary

Dakota County School District #31R  
a/k/a Homer Community School  
BY: Paul Tighe, President