

Last night, December 17, 2015, during its regularly-scheduled meeting, the Prairie Central Board of Education . . .

Recognized the attendance of

»Board members Jeffrey Austman, Jason Dotterer, Patricia Haberkorn, Timothy McGreal, Mark Slagel, Corey Steffen, and Ann Steidinger.

»Administrators Dr. John Capasso, Superintendent; and Principals Daniel Casillas (PCHS) and Tonya Dieken (PCJHS).

»Guests Debra Vaughan, Glenda Knauer, Rebecca Casson, Nicole Joiner, Jennifer Steidinger, and Barb Taylor (PCEA reps); David Hammer and Bob Walter (Prairie Lands Foundation representatives); and Rep. Dan Brady (R-105<sup>th</sup> District).

Took general action

»To approve the minutes of its November 17, 2015 regular meeting.

Recognized public comment from

»Rep. Brady, who expressed Holiday best wishes and heard concerns regarding recent or pending legislation.

Recognized invited guests from

»Prairie Lands Foundation, Mr. Hammer and Mr. Walter, who presented the Board with a check for \$6,000 to maintain after-school programs in Chenoa and Chatsworth. The two representatives also presented information about the Foundation and fielded questions about how Prairie Central CUSD #8 can form a Foundation under the auspices of Prairie Lands for educational, athletic, and fine arts purposes.

Heard the Superintendent's report and learned (or was reminded) that

~HB 691 & SB 318, measures now being considered by the General Assembly to freeze property values for a two-year period, will cost the District approximately \$478,000 (based on average new dollars/year) in property taxes.

»The U.S. Congress has reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and, in so doing, has replaced “No Child Left Behind” with “Every Student Succeeds”; has confirmed the continuance of assessments for grade 3-11, with science added; and has replaced AYP with goal-setting and monitoring of interim progress.

»The State budget is still not approved, delaying categorical payments. Capasso reported that only general state aid and a single grant payment have been made since July 1. He added that, since FY11, the State has prorated general state aid and transportation reimbursement, resulting in the loss of ~\$3.4 Million for the District.

»Invenergy is considering a gas-fired electricity generation plant north of Chenoa, outside the boundaries of the TIF district. It is likely the company will seek a property tax abatement from the District.

»The Greater Livingston County Economic Development Council is applying for enterprise zones in several communities, including Fairbury, Forrest, and Chatsworth. The State of Illinois waives certain taxes for industries in enterprise zones.

»Curriculum councils have discussed a number of items, including supportive software.

»Preparations for attendance centers are on-going and include enrollment projections, program determinations, staffing needs, logistics (library materials, playgrounds, technology, maintenance projects), and transportation.

»CSFT (sales tax) revenues and expenditures since the beginning of collection. Capasso shared that \$1,352,473.64 has been collected to-date, while \$957,010.36 has been spent in categories of technology infrastructure, health/life-safety, security/telecommunications, and pay-as-you-go OBM.

»The Boys and Girls Club of Prairie Central will keep the Chatsworth program open for the remainder of the year, owing in part to a donation from the District of \$10,000 from the Title I grant.

»The aging PC bus fleet can be replaced through funding bonds, with slightly more than \$100,000 in interest over three years for 18 vehicles. Given the limitations of State funding, on which public schools rely heavily for purchasing new equipment, this may be the only option to replace a large portion of the fleet, which averages >200,000 miles per vehicle. Board member McGreal and others expressed interest in pursuing propane engines in at least some of the prospective vehicles, citing better per-gallon pricing and the availability of government incentives for a more environment-friendly emissions.

Conducted/considered old business, by

»Approving the 2015 levy in the aggregate amount of \$10,566,608, or 5% higher than the previous year's extension. The District will likely receive ~\$10.3 Million, or \$275,327 over the previous extension.

Conducted/considered new business, by

»Approving the District Report Card and causing it to be placed on the District's website for viewing by parents and citizenry.

Held an executive session for the purpose (exception to the Open Meetings Act) of discussing personnel and, following, made personnel decisions to

»Accept the resignations of **Kevin Murphy** (as a part-time bus driver, effective 12/31/15) and **Becky Barker** (as a paraprofessional, retirement, effective following the 2016-17 term).

»Appoint **Laura Aberle** (as a paraprofessional at Meadowbrook and Chatsworth Elementaries for 2015-16); and **Bill Casner** and **Jeff Bergstrahl** (as auxiliary wrestling coaches @ PCJHS for the current year).

»Slate the following people for administrative assignments in 2016-17: **John Capasso** (Superintendent), **Dan Casillas** (PCHS Principal), **Tonya Dieken** (PCJHS Principal), **James DeMay** (PCUE Principal), **Paula Crane** (Prairie Central Elementary, grades 2-4), **Dan Groce** (Prairie Central Early Learning Center-West, grades PK-1), **Karen Hazelrigg** (Prairie Central Early Learning Center-East, grades PK-1), **Amber Buss** (Director of Special Education), and **Trish Paulson** (Program Supervisor & Special Liaison to Special Education Co-op-LCSSU, funded entirely by IDEA grant and co-op contract).

»Approve a budget reduction plan in the amount of ~\$1.3 Million for the 2016-17 school term: 18.75 FTE certified staff positions (11.00 resulting from Meadowbrook closure), 6.00 FTE ESP positions (all resulting from Meadowbrook closure), 15.50 FTE extra-duty positions (all 7-12), and salary/benefit savings resulting from retirement.

Took general action to  
»Adjourn at 11:47 PM.