

# SPEED S.E.J.A. #802

## GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Regular Meeting  
SPEED Governing Board  
Zoom Teleconference  
7:00 p.m.

March 25, 2021

### CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Bean called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

### ROLL CALL

On roll call the following answered present: Ms. Kathy Taylor, District 144 (arrived at 7:24 p.m.); Ms. Deborah Havighorst, District 153; Ms. Vlietstra, District 161; Mr. Ron Bean, District 162; Ms. Christina Dupee, District 163; Mr. John Dixon, District 167 (arrived at 7:03 p.m.); Ms. Sanders, District 170; Ms. Karen Turner, District 194; Cheryl Roop, District 201U; Ms. Karen King, District 206; Ms. Cheryl Coleman, District 227 and Ms. Annette Bannon, District 233

Absent: Mr. Joe Sherman, District 169; Ms. Tammy Jones, District 168; and Mr. Sons, District 172.

Dr. Halliman, Superintendent was present as well as the following SPEED Staff: Ms. Brenda Murillo, Director of Business and Finance; Ms. Vanessa Duffin, Director of Human Resources; Dr. Maureen White, Director of District Services; Mr. Gregory Furgason, Director of Technology; Mr. Joe Kekelik, Director of Buildings and Grounds, Ms. Sue Janacek, Program Supervisor and Principals: Ms. April Brown, Ms. Linda Wilson, Ms. Nicole Taylor and Ms. Amina Payne.

Also present: Mr. Ray Hauser, Attorney from Hauser, Izzo, Petrarca, Gleason & Stillman, LLC

### RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

None

### SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- **Vaccination Update**

We have a total of 239 employees at SPEED. We have heard back from 229 employees of which 33% (75 employees) have reported that they will not at this point be getting vaccinated however approximately 10% (23 employees) are still trying to get appointments and we are working with them to assist in this process. We have been sending appointment updates about 2-3 times per week. We have 4% (11 employees) that already have an appointment scheduled to receive the vaccination. 53% (111 employees) have been partially or fully vaccinated. We are roughly at 57% of our staff that will be vaccinated.

Additionally, Dr. Halliman thanked all of our partners that helped us to get over 50% of our staff vaccinated namely, TF South, Chicago Heights SD 170, Prairie Hills SD 144 as well as Cottage Grove Cook County Health Department.

- **Spring Reopening Plan**

Dr. Halliman reported that our kids returned on Monday, March 22. We have 183 students out of 304 students (60%) who have signed up to come back on the hybrid A or B schedule. 10% of our population are participating in remote instruction but are coming in by appointment for their therapy services. We have roughly 89 students (30%) who continue to be remote.

Dr. Halliman gave Kudos to the remote planning team and administrators who help get the logistics together to make this happen.

- **TRS Supplemental Savings Plan**

In last month's SPEEDY Board Briefs, we shared information concerning the TRS Supplemental Savings plan indicating that we needed to bring information to the Board for approval on March 31. This has now been placed on hold pending further instructions from TRS. TRS is revising their instructions to districts. Once we receive it, we will work with our attorney and bring the topic back to the Board.

- **E-Learning Plan**

Dr. Halliman shared that our eLearning plan is different than our remote plan. Our eLearning Plan is actually the plan that would be used should we have an emergency day at school e.g., a snow day.

We have been notified by ISC4 that our eLearning Plan has been approved. The plan will be good for a period of 3 years and will expire on June 30, 2023.

- **CLIA Certification**

Dr. Halliman explained that the CLIA (Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendment) is a certification obtained through the state if you plan to either 1) host vaccinations or 2) offer some type of rapid COVID testing on-site. We have not received or asked for any COVID tests, but we did get approved. Down the road we will consider having rapid COVID testing in the future.

- **Mobile Museum of Tolerance**

Dr. Halliman reported that we were the host of Mobile Museum of Tolerance. We were afforded this opportunity to have this museum on our campus one week ago. We had a total of 33 students in our Independence program who participated either in-person or via remote. The presentation provided was on the Holocaust, Discrimination and Becoming an Upstanding Citizen. Dr. Halliman thanked Principal Nicole Taylor and Assistant Principal Matthew Williams for providing this enriching an engaging learning opportunity for our students.

- **Infinitec Award**

The Southwest Infinitec Coalition selected one of our Speed students; Zion Cerrano, Chicago Heights SD #170, as the recipient for the 2020-2021 Outstanding Student Technology Award. All recipients were honored at a virtual ceremony which she attended. Dr. Halliman extended congratulations to Zion, Elizabeth Gebbia and Sandra Novak, who are his teachers; Jill Raymond, Special Education Director at SD 170 and Board members Mr. Tom Amadio and Ms. Nicole Sanders in having a student achieve that award.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

- **Budget Summary Report**

At the end of February, we received 45% of the revenue budget and expended 57%. As of February 28<sup>th</sup>, we spent \$42,032 on PPE. This does not include technology, cleaning supplies, labor or other purchases related to COVID.

- **Grant Revenue Update**

In March, we were award \$19,781 from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief II. We received \$7,292 in the first round of distributions. This yields a total of \$27,073.

- **Invoices**

The invoices for February were sent out on March 19 with reminders concerning past due invoices.

- **BMO Past Due Balances**

Ms. Murillo reported that she was made aware of some past due balances on the credit card which caused us to reconcile some past due invoices. These amounts are reflected on this month's vouchers.

- **Open Enrollment**

We will be hosting Open Enrollment May 1 – 21, 2021.

- **410 S. Ashland**

An ad has been placed in the Chicago Heights Patch to run February 20 – March 7 and in the Chicago Tribune from March 4 and 7, advertising our Ashland properties. We've had a few inquiries and have scheduled visits to view the space.

- **Inspections**

The Chicago Heights Code Enforcement department conducted an inspection of our kitchen and we received a perfect score.

A Health and Life Study Inspection was conducted on February 11 and there were no violations issued.

Ms. Murillo extended kudos to our Building and Grounds Director, Mr. Joe Kekelik and his staff who make sure our buildings stay in compliance.

- **Food Service Update**

The request for bid will be published in the Chicago Tribute April 1, 2021. In May, we will present all of the information received for a June Governing Board vote.

Mr. Dixon asked if we anticipate getting 100% of the revenues budgeted for by the end of this school year? Ms. Murillo stated yes.

Mr. Dixon asked if the deficits in the Fund Balance will be erased by the end of the school year? Dr. Halliman stated that there are some line items that show we may have spent over but we will reallocate/reconcile numbers internally to balance our records.

Dr. Halliman further explained each of the Budget Summary reports and what each column represents.

Ms. Vlietstra asked Dr. Halliman to explain how the CARES money is allocated. Dr. Halliman provided a detailed explanation of how the CARES money is disbursed and her conversations to pursue some of the funding. She further stated that the SPED Cooperatives across the state are now working with legislators who are drafting a bill that will include SPED Cooperatives.

Dr. Halliman stated that we are at the point now where they are now finally with the legislators that are trying to draft some language around SPED Cooperatives have some sort of set aside or monies off the top of the grant.

Ms. Vlietstra stated that if they have legislator friends, they can reach out to them on behalf of SPEED.

Dr. Halliman stated that with the Board's permission, she would like to share some recent survey data that shows how much we have expended in totality on COVID related things not just the PPE that Ms. Murillo shared. Ms. Vlietstra said she would like to receive this data.

Ms. Bannon stated that she appreciated Dr. Halliman being so proactive in this manner. Dr. Halliman stated that she will forward information as to which legislators are working on the language.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

At 7:24 p.m., Mr. Dixon, District 167 moved, seconded by Ms. Vlietstra, District 161 That pursuant to the Opens Meeting Act, Section 2(c)(1), the Governing Board will enter into closed session to discuss the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of a specific employee.

On roll call vote: Ms. Kathy Taylor, District 144; Ms. Deborah Havighorst, District 153; Ms. Vlietstra, District 161; Mr. Ron Bean, District 162; Ms. Christina Dupee, District 163; Mr. John Dixon, District 167; Ms. Sanders, District 170; Ms. Karen Turner, District 194; Ms. Cheryl Roop, District 201U; Ms. Karen King, District 206; Ms. Cheryl Coleman, District 227 and Ms. Annette Bannon, District 233

Absent: Mr. Joe Sherman, District 169; Ms. Tammy Jones, District 168; and Mr. Sons, District 172

Nays: None

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Mr. Dixon, District 167 moved, seconded by Ms. Taylor, District 144 that the Governing Board ratifies the Consent Agenda items A, B, C, D, and E as approved Operating Committee at its March 18, 2021 meeting.

- A. Personnel Report
- B. Approval of Minutes of January 28, 2021
- C. Approval of Closed Session Minutes of January 28, 2021
- D. Approval of Recurring and Non-Recurring Bills
- E. Approval of Imprest and Activity Funds

On roll call vote: Ms. Kathy Taylor, District 144; Ms. Deborah Havighorst, District 153; Ms. Vlietstra, District 161; Mr. Ron Bean, District 162; Ms. Christina Dupee, District 163; Mr. John Dixon, District 167; Ms. Sanders, District 170; Ms. Karen Turner, District 194; Ms. Cheryl Roop, District 201U; Ms. Karen King, District 206; Ms. Cheryl Coleman, District 227 and Ms. Annette Bannon, District 233

Absent: Mr. Joe Sherman, District 169; Ms. Tammy Jones, District 168; and Mr. Sons, District 172

Nays: None

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. Consideration of the Superintendent's Extended Employment Agreement for the School Years 2021-2026**

Ms. Taylor, District 144 moved, seconded by Ms. Havighorst, District 153 that the Governing Board ratifies the School Year 2021-2026 Superintendent's Extended Employment Agreement and the increase for the school year 2025-2026 at 3.0% for Dr. Tina Halliman as approved by the Operating Committee at its March 18, 2021 meeting.

On roll call vote: Ms. Kathy Taylor, District 144; Ms. Deborah Havighorst, District 153; Ms. Vlietstra, District 161; Mr. Ron Bean, District 162; Ms. Christina Dupee, District 163; Mr. John Dixon, District 167; Ms. Sanders, District 170; Ms. Karen Turner, District 194; Ms. Cheryl Roop, District 201U; Ms. Karen King, District 206 and Ms. Cheryl Coleman, District 227

Absent: Mr. Joe Sherman, District 169; Ms. Tammy Jones, District 168; and Mr. Sons, District 172

Nays: Ms. Annette Bannon, District 233

#### **B. Appointment of Township Treasurer for SPEED**

Ms. Taylor, District 144 moved, seconded by Ms. Vlietstra, District 161 that the Governing Board ratifies utilizing the services of Bloom Township School Treasurer for the 2021/2022 school year as approved by the Operating Committee at its March 18, 2021 meeting.

On roll call vote: Ms. Kathy Taylor, District 144; Ms. Deborah Havighorst, District 153; Ms. Vlietstra, District 161; Mr. Ron Bean, District 162; Ms. Christina Dupee, District 163; Mr. John Dixon, District 167; Ms. Sanders, District 170; Ms. Karen Turner, District 194; Ms. Cheryl Roop, District 201U; Ms. Karen King, District 206; Ms. Cheryl Coleman, District 227 and Ms. Annette Bannon, District 233

Absent: Mr. Joe Sherman, District 169; Ms. Tammy Jones, District 168; and Mr. Sons, District 172

Nays: None

#### **C. Assignment of Banking Facility**

Ms. Roop, District 201U moved, seconded by Mr. Dixon, District 167 that the Governing Board ratifies the continued use of Old Second Bank as the depository for SPEED S.E. J.A. #802 Imprest and Activity Funds as approved by the Operating Committee at its March 18, 2021

meeting.

On roll call vote: Ms. Kathy Taylor, District 144; Ms. Deborah Havighorst, District 153; Ms. Vlietstra, District 161; Mr. Ron Bean, District 162; Ms. Christina Dupee, District 163; Mr. John Dixon, District 167; Ms. Sanders, District 170; Ms. Karen Turner, District 194; Ms. Cheryl Roop, District 201U; Ms. Karen King, District 206; Ms. Cheryl Coleman, District 227 and Ms. Annette Bannon, District 233

Absent: Mr. Joe Sherman, District 169; Ms. Tammy Jones, District 168; and Mr. Sons, District 172

Nays: None

#### **D. IEP Software**

Ms. Taylor, District 144 moved, seconded by Ms. Vlietstra, District 161 that the Governing Board ratifies going forward with Embrace IEP software for SPEED's IEP Management System starting the 2021-2022 school year as recommended by the Superintendent

On roll call vote: Ms. Kathy Taylor, District 144; Ms. Deborah Havighorst, District 153; Ms. Vlietstra, District 161; Mr. Ron Bean, District 162; Ms. Christina Dupee, District 163; Mr. John Dixon, District 167; Ms. Sanders, District 170; Ms. Karen Turner, District 194; Ms. Cheryl Roop, District 201U; Ms. Karen King, District 206; Ms. Cheryl Coleman, District 227 and Ms. Annette Bannon, District 233

Absent: Mr. Joe Sherman, District 169; Ms. Tammy Jones, District 168; and Mr. Sons, District 172

Nays: None

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

##### **A. Auditing Firm Agreement**

Mr. Bean stated that we were notified by our current auditing firm that they were not going to be in the business of performing audits going forward and based upon that, we asked the Superintendent to poll our existing 15 member boards to ask them which auditing firms did they use. We did not get a response from all of the 15 but of the responses, the four that are being presented are firms that are being used by the current membership. The list includes the firms that are being used, the cost, the number of school districts that they service and the number of Coops, if any, that they service. We asked for this information from the Superintendent but at the Operating Committee level and at the Governing Board level, the selection of an auditing firm is the responsibility of the Operating and Governing Boards in as much as the auditing firm audits the activities of the superintendent and her staff. It would be inappropriate to have her provide us a recommendation for an auditing firm to audit themselves. At the Operating Committee level, there was a spirited discussion and their recommendation as referenced in the board packet is GW and Associates. Mr. Bean further stated that he thought it would be appropriate to have a discussion and then a motion, if appropriate, to approve the recommendation of the Operating Committee.

Mr. Bean asked if there were any comments from the board?

Mr. Dixon stated that his concern was why we were spending an extra almost \$7,000 for GW and Associates and also looking at Miller Cooper, Mueller and GW and Associates, it seems that Miller Cooper has been in business for 100 years, apparently working with 32 school districts; Mueller (\$22,000) apparently been in business for 53 years and at least they service an Special Education Cooperative and GW & Associates have been in business for 24 years and only 6 years servicing school districts and they only have two school districts that they work with and we're going to pay them an extra \$6,000 - \$7,000. It doesn't seem that they have the expertise that the other companies have.

Mr. Bean stated that there was a spirited discussion about that, and it was felt that GW provided opportunities for minorities. SD 168, SD 170 and SD 206 all spoke favorably about the fact the GW provided minority associates to work on the audits where the other firms do not.

Ms. Bannon asked if they actually got numbers on all of the vendors? How did they decide to go with this vendor? What was the rationale other than the minority associates? Did they ask the other companies how many because that it a little bit of an unusual thing to ask when you are looking at this kind of stuff? How did they really know that?

Mr. Bean stated that they asked the superintendents that were present about the staff that had been assigned to do the audits.

Ms. Bannon: So, we don't know about the other places if they have minority associates? I'm thinking they probably do.

Mr. Bean: To the extent that the superintendents who were present answered the question, they did not indicate that the other firms had minority associates on the audit and that must 've made a strong point made by GW in respect to GW & Associates.

Ms. Coleman: Is GW and Associates really out of Hillside, IL? I thought they were in Chicago Heights.

Mr. Bean: As far as I know yes. I know of no other reason to think otherwise.

Ms. Taylor stated the information should be listed.

Ms. Coleman stated that it is listed as Hillside, but she thought they were located in Chicago Heights.

Dr. Halliman clarified that they do have an office in Chicago Heights but when they sent their package, she thinks the information was sent from their larger office in Hillside, but they do have an office in Chicago Heights.

Ms. Taylor asked how many districts on the Operating Board are affiliated with GW?

Mr. Bean stated there are two districts on the Operating Board that are affiliated with GW.

Ms. Taylor further questioned if these were the only two districts that gave favorable information that was needed to make a decision?

Mr. Bean replied that the districts gave information about their experience and the other districts appeared to be impressed with the fact that there was minority participation.

Ms. Taylor stated, "so you mean to tell me that there were no other districts on the Operating Board affiliated with Mueller or affiliated with the other audit firms?"

Mr. Bean replied that was votes in favor of Miller Cooper. SD 167, 168 and 227 use Miller Cooper.

Mr. Taylor stated that she did not understand how they spoke favorably for GW and not for anyone else. Miller Cooper has 3 districts and GW has 2. It seems like they would have a few more people speak up for them; in favor of them or disliked them.

Mr. Bean pointed out that one of the districts that has Miller Cooper voted for GW and Associates based on the discussion about using minority auditors. She shifted her vote and voted for GW and Associates. The other member after discussion abstained on the vote. There were 4 abstains.

Ms. Bannon stated that she thought that Legacy was still conducting school audits. Mr. Bean clarified that they are still in the auditing business, but we had an extensive discussion with counsel and his recommendation was that Legacy had not submitted a timely bid with the others and if we were to accept their bid it would be challenged by others because they had an opportunity to see the bids of the four we are discussing so Legacy was not in consideration at all.

Ms. Bannon said their district uses Legacy and they ended up using them an additional year. Additionally, Ms. Bannon stated that she was leery of the rationale used in selecting GW & Associations.

Ms. Coleman stated that she is very concerned with the fact that GW was chosen with 2 schools represented and you have one company listed with 100 years and 32 schools which is proven track record which is not based on the fact of minorities. To choose one of the highest of the three with the least number represented is what was most concerning to her. She stated that we reconsider that thought.

Ms. Bannon stated that she seconded everyone's concerns.

Mr. Bean stated that he is hearing discussion that some members of the board would approve of going with the lowest responsible bidder which is Miller Cooper. He further stated that he had not heard any discussion in favor of GW and Associates. Mr. Bean asked if Ms. Giles would poll the board asking them to share which firm they would approve, Miller Cooper or GW & Associates.

Ms. Bannon asked if Mueller any schools in our Sped Cooperative use them? Dr. Halliman replied no. They do not serve any of our member districts.

The poll results for Miller Cooper or GW & Associates are:

**Miller Cooper**

Ms. Kathy Taylor, District 144; Ms. Christina Dupee, District 163; Mr. John Dixon, District 167; Ms. Sanders, District 170; Ms. Karen Turner, District 194; Ms. Cheryl Roop, District 201U; Ms. Karen King, District 206 and Ms. Cheryl Coleman, District 227



## **GW & Associates**

Mr. Bean, District 162

**Abstain:** Ms. Havighorst, District 153; Ms. Vlietstra, District 161; Ms. Bannon, District 233

**Absent:** Mr. Joe Sherman, District 169; Ms. Tammy Jones, District 168; and Mr. Sons, District 172

Mr. Bean stated that the Governing Board is in favor of Miller Cooper. We will entertain a motion to enter into a contract with Miller Cooper to provide auditing services for SPEED SEJA 802.

Ms. Taylor, District 144 moved, seconded by Ms. Coleman, District 227 that Miller Cooper be retained as the auditors for SPEED S.E.J.A. 802.

On roll call vote: Ms. Kathy Taylor, District 144; Mr. Ron Bean, District 162; Ms. Christina Dupee, District 163; Mr. John Dixon, District 167; Ms. Sanders, District 170; Ms. Karen Turner, District 194; Cheryl Roop, District 201U; Ms. Karen King, District 206 and Ms. Cheryl Coleman, District 227

Abstain: Ms. Deborah Havighorst, District 153; Ms. Vlietstra, District 161 and Ms. Annette Bannon, District 233

Absent: Mr. Joe Sherman, District 169; Ms. Tammy Jones, District 168; and Mr. Sons, District 172

Mr. Bean stated: "Ms. Giles, I consistently try to support the vote of the Operating Committee. Reflect that I voted for GW".

Ms. Giles stated that "it does say that you voted, in the poll or you mean on your vote?"

Mr. Bean said, "to my vote".

Ms. Giles: Ok change your vote to no/nay?

Ms. Giles: Ok, got it.

Mr. Bean closed the discussion stating that "Miller Cooper is the choice of the Governing Board".

## **INFORMATION**

- Student Enrollment Report

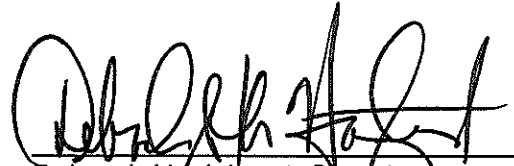
Dr. Halliman reported that we have 304 students that are placed within the 4 programs and we have a host of other students that are on our itinerant staff case loads where we do provide Speech, OT/PT services to member districts.

**AUDIENCE TO VISITORS**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Bean adjourned the meeting at 8:24 p.m.



Deborah Havighorst, Secretary  
Cassandra Giles, Recording Secretary

Date: 3/30/21



Mr. Bean, President  
SPEED Governing Board