

**Independence Community School Board Meeting  
Special Meeting  
March 2, 2020**

The special meeting of the Independence Community School Board was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chair Eric Smith at the Administrative Office, Independence, IA and the pledge of allegiance was recited. Board members attending: Eric Smith, Kim Hansen, Gina Trimble, Jennifer Sornson and Matt O'Loughlin. Superintendent Russell Reiter and Board Secretary Laura Morine. Guests: Principal Howard, Asst Principal Hupke, seven teachers and two paras were present.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA** - Sornson moved to approve the agenda. O'Loughlin second, motion carried 5-0.

**OLD BUSINESS** - Consider Approval of the 2020-2021 School Calendar – Trimble moved to approve the 20-21 School Calendar. The motion failed due to a lack of a second.

**NEW BUSINESS** - Consider Approval of the New SIAC Recommended Courses for 2020-2021 – Hansen moved to approve the new SIAC recommended courses for 2020-2021. O'Loughlin second, motion carried 5-0.

**ADJOURNMENT** – Hansen moved to adjourn the meeting, O'Loughlin second. Motion carried 5-0 and the special meeting was adjourned at 6:12 pm.

**WORK SESSION**

The work session started at 6:12 pm with Board members attending: Eric Smith, Kim Hansen, Gina Trimble, Jennifer Sornson and Matt O'Loughlin. Superintendent Russell Reiter and Board Secretary Laura Morine. Guests: seven teachers and two paras were present.

**PRELIMINARY 2020-2021 BUDGET** – Supt. Reiter and Director of Finance Morine presented the preliminary budget with an estimated SSA rate of 2.3% since the SSA rate has not yet been set by our state legislators. The district will look at doing a surplus levy in order to pay off our debt sooner since one of the two General Obligation bonds will be paid off in June. The board also discussed ways that the district could have flexibility in revenue streams without increasing the overall tax rate. The tax rate for the district is projected to decrease from last year.

**BUILDING FACILITIES PLAN/BUILDING PROJECTS** - Our architecture firm, HSR was in the district the end of February and visited the East and West buildings. During the walk throughs, HSR received input from some of the staff members. Supt. Reiter reviewed the possible changes at East Elementary in order to find additional classroom space, better utilize space, increase security and changes to lighting, flooring, and hallways. HSR will bring back their ideas. For West Elementary, there would be a more extensive remodel in order to eliminate the metal addition and then create a drive along the west to help with traffic flow. An addition of four classroom and restrooms could then be added on to the south side to replace the lost classroom space due to the elimination of the west metal addition. HSR will bring back options in reconfiguring the facilities south of the kitchen/lunchroom. Finally, reviewed some preliminary plans for an additional gym on the north side of the Jr/Sr High school. There is a possibility that

this gym space could be shared with the city. Supt. Reiter will continue to have conversations with the city on what that could look like. Supt. Reiter handed out the current Facility Plan as we are on the last year of that five-year plan and the board needs to consider updating it for the next five years.

**FUTURE WORK SESSION DATES** – Morine reported that Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup> and Monday, April 13<sup>th</sup> were dates available for work sessions and the public hearing for the budget. Morine will try to get the budget published and public hearing set for the March 30<sup>th</sup> meeting, however if the state has not set the SSA rate then April 13<sup>th</sup> will be the public hearing. Future work session topics will include bond refinancing and board training through Iowa School Board Association.

**SCHOOL BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT COMMUNICATIONS** – The board discussed different ways of communication between the board and Superintendent.

Work session ended at 7:50 pm.

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Eric B. Smith, Chairperson

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Laura J. Morine, Board Secretary