

**HOMER COMMUNITY SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**August 17, 2009**

The regular meeting of the Homer Community Schools Board of Education was held in the high school media center on August 17, 2009.

**Members Present:** Gary Tompkins, Dick Folk, Kevyn VanWert, JoAnne Miller, Derek Allen, Josh McCullough, Chad Rocco

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Superintendent Rob Ridgeway, Martha Robinson, Tom Salow, Drew Bordner, Scott Sallow, Robynn Paul, Jeff Daglow, Rick Cooley, Kathy Mills, Sarah Stonestreet, Isabell Nazar, Bruce Dunn

Board President Gary Tompkins called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**STUDENT RECOGNITION** None

**CHILDREN ARE OUR  
REASON FOR EXISTING  
(CARE)**

Bruce Dunn, Auditor

Bruce Dunn from Maner Costerisan referred Board members to the audit report and gave the Board a positive review for the 2008-09 audit.

**ADMINISTRATION  
REPORTS:** None

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** None

**COMMUNICATIONS** None

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- Finance/Building & Site Committee meeting was scheduled for 7:00 a.m. on Wednesday, September 16, 2009.
- Curriculum Committee meeting was scheduled for 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 29, 2009, with school improvement teams attending.
- Policy Committee meeting was scheduled for 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 15, 2009.

**POLICY** None

**EMPLOYMENT**

Superintendent Ridgeway announced that JoEllen O’Keefe has been hired as the new HS Spanish teacher. Chad Rocco moved to approve JoEllen O’Keefe as the new HS Spanish teacher. The motion was

supported by JoAnne Miller and passed unanimously.

Superintendent Ridgeway read letter of retirement from Creasie Ralston, Special Education Aide and letter of resignation from Tara Wilbur, HS English teacher. Dick Folk moved to accept Creasie Ralston's retirement and Tara Wilbur's resignation. The motion was supported by Chad Rocco and passed unanimously.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Minutes

The following consent agenda items were covered:

Approval of minutes of the regular meeting of June 29, 2009.

Approval of minutes of the reorganization/regular meeting of July 13, 2009.

Financial Report

Bills/Reimbursements

Approval of checks numbered 04211 – 042358.

Correction to the minutes dated July 13, 2009, to add Chad Rocco's name to the Curriculum/Tech Committee. Noted that check number 042239 was missing. Chad Rocco moved to approve the consent agenda with the above listed correction to the July 13, 2009, minutes and the missing check number noted. The motion was supported by JoAnne Miller and passed unanimously. Dick Folk abstained on checks numbered 042153 and 042325.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Summer Maintenance

Superintendent Ridgeway and Maintenance Supervisor Jeff Daglow reported on the large summer maintenance projects of expanding the high school computer lab, replacing of 5 drop ceilings in the elementary, and setting up the new portable classroom for pre-school.

2009 State Aid Loan

The 2008 – 09 State Aid Loan will be paid off on August 20, 2009.

2010 State Aid Loan

The State Aid Loan in the amount of \$900,000 will be received on August 20, 2009.

Qualified School  
Construction Bond  
Prog.

Superintendent Ridgeway reported that he had contacted the school bond attorney about the Qualified School Construction Bond Program. This program is for interest free bonds up to \$15M. To qualify the Board would need to have a bond proposal by the May 2010 election. While there was concern about the tight timeline, the Board felt they had an obligation to inform the public of this opportunity. It was decided that the Board would start educating the community about this program through personal contacts, school open house, article in the Homer Index, survey, and a community forum. JoAnne Miller volunteered to help create a survey. Once feedback is received from the community, the Board will decide by the February meeting whether to move forward or withdraw their application.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Student Numbers –  
New Hires

Superintendent Ridgeway informed the Board about job postings for a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher, a HS English teacher (to replace Tara Wilbur) and an alternative education teacher (to replace Cindi Blackman). The budget was set for not hiring a replacement for a retiring teacher at the elementary, but because of student numbers this position is needed. Hiring this position will cause the budget to be \$20,000 short. Chad Rocco and Dick Folk expressed concern over hiring the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher until more solid student numbers were known. Derek Allen felt it was important for students to hire the teacher before school started. JoAnne Miller asked the Board to think about the Board goals for students. The Board decided to move forward with all three hires and that the Finance Committee will look into ways to offset the \$20,000.

School Nurse Contract

Superintendent Ridgeway presented the School Nurse Contract for the amount of \$35,067 to the Board. Grant funding for this contract is lower for this year. The Regional Health Alliance in collaboration with Kellogg Community College is working to come up with ways to help finance the school nurse. Dick Folk made a suggestion to look into sharing this position with another school district or making the position part-time. Derek Allen made a motion that the School Nurse Contract be signed and that additional funding would be looked into through grants, community support and the Regional Health Alliance. The motion was supported by Kevyn VanWert and passed unanimously.

Athletic Trainer

Oaklawn Hospital is no longer providing funding for athletic training service to schools. Last year HCS paid \$5,200 for this service because of an increase in liability insurance. The Board discussed continuing the same service for \$6,700 or to cap the amount at \$5,200 and reduce the amount of service. Josh McCullough made a suggestion of funding this position equally from each of the varsity sports' budgets. Following discussion JoAnne Miller made a motion to cap the athletic trainer position at the amount of \$5,200, and to have the superintendent and athletic director look into additional funding. The motion was supported by Chad Rocco and passed unanimously.

Volunteer Energy (Natural Gas)

Volunteer Energy is a natural gas provider that uses SEMCO infrastructure to deliver their gas at a reduced price. Superintendent Ridgeway referred members to the handout titled Volunteer Energy Services, Inc. which showed significant savings. The Board approved pursuing this option.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S  
UPDATE**

All Staff Luncheon  
Open House  
First Day of School

Wednesday, September 2, at noon in the cafeteria.  
Wednesday, September 2 from 6 to 8 p.m.  
Tuesday, September 8<sup>th</sup>.

Michigan Merit Exam  
(MME) Results

Superintendent Ridgeway referred members to the handout and newspaper article titled MME that showed the results of the Homer students MME scores compared to other schools in the area. Homer students fell below the state average in several areas. Work has already begun with Tom Salow to work with staff to come up with a plan of action to help students perform better. A plan of action will be presented to the Board at the September meeting. Homer Alternative Education did not make AYP and a letter will go out to parents giving those students an option to attend Homer High School.

Fleet Maintenance Cost  
Analysis

Superintendent Ridgeway gave a report on the privatizing of the fleet maintenance to American Truck Services. This has worked very well and has saved money.

Chartwell's Director

Robynn Paul was introduced as the new food service director.

Coke Rebate

Homer received a \$1,000 rebate check.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Dick Folk moved to adjourn at 9:15 p.m. Chad Rocco seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
JoAnne Miller