

**LASALLE/PUTNAM COUNTY EDUCATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION**  
**1009 Boyce Memorial Drive Ottawa, IL 61350**  
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**Open Meeting Minutes**

Date: February 7, 2023

Time: 9:06 a.m.

Location: L.E.A.S.E. Office Board Room

Type of meeting:  Regular

Name of person taking the minutes: Colleen Stefan

Name of person presiding: Mrs. Kristi Eager

Members in attendance:

1. Mr. Mike Cushing
2. Mrs. Kristi Eager
3. Mrs. Lisa Gifford
4. Mr. Ryan Linnig
5. Dr. Dan Stecken
6. Dr. Clayton Theisinger

Members absent: Mr. Jamie Craven

Also present

1. Mrs. Kathy Fox, Director

**Reception of Guests and Visitors & Opportunity for Public Comment**

Mrs. Fox introduced representatives from Veregy, who included Thomas Mooneyham and Brendan Kinzler. Mr. Mooneyham and Mr. Kinzler are attending today's meeting to discuss optional projects to improve the energy efficiency of the LEASE building and CBS. Mr. Mooneyham reported that he has looked at both the L.E.A.S.E. building and the school and submitted three different project options. Although both buildings were evaluated for repairs, the project will only include the C.B.S. facility. It was decided that the project of importance was the HVAC project at CBS.

Mr. Mooneyham explained that he will allow us to use any preferred vendor we wish to use, and that Veregy will do all the leg work in bidding. It was told to the board that the boiler is old and that the piping and ventilation is at least 40 years old and in some cases original to the building. The total bid will be between \$1.55-1.65 million.

Mr. Mooneyham discussed the different improvements and repairs that will be completed along with stressing to the board a couple important items: 1.) informed the board that they (Veregy) will use TIPS as a purchasing co-op. 2.) will also seek out any energy incentives that are available with hopes that any refund or rebate can bring in some additional funds. 3.) the start date on this project would be in June, with a completion date of October 15, 2023.

**Approval of Items on Consent Agenda (Open and Closed Session Minutes from the Board meeting held on January 10, 2023; December 2022 Bank Reconciliation; Bills, and Financial Statements,)**

Summary of discussion: One additional bill list was added to the board packet.

Motion made by: Mr. Linnig

Motion:  To approve the open and closed session minutes from the board meeting held on January 10, 2022; December 2022 Bank Reconciliation; Bills, and Financial Statements and the destruction of the August 10, 2021, tape recorded closed session minutes.

Motion seconded by: Dr. Theisinger

Roll Call: “Yeas” – Linnig, Theisinger, Cushing, Eager, Gifford and Stecken  
“Nays” – none.

Action:  Passed

### **Remaining Agenda Items**

#### **Agenda item: Approve the date for the 2022-2023 budget amendment hearing**

Summary of discussion: Mrs. Fox explained that presenting a motion to approve a budget amendment hearing must be done annually. The proposed formal public amended budget hearing date of May 2, 2022, is being presented to the board for approval.

Motion made by: Dr. Stecken

Motion:  To approve May 1, 2023, as the date for the 2022-2023 budget amendment hearing

Motion seconded by: Mr. Linnig

Roll Call: “Yeas”- Stecken, Linnig, Cushing, Eager, Gifford and Theisinger  
“Nays” – none.

Action:  Passed

#### **Agenda item: Approve the date for the 2023-2024 budget hearing**

Summary of discussion: Mrs. Fox explained that presenting a motion to approve a budget hearing must be done annually. The proposed meeting date of the formal public budget hearing being presented for approval is June 6, 2023.

Motion made by: Dr. Stecken

Motion:  To approve June 6, 2023, as the date for the 2023-2024 formal public budget hearing

Motion seconded by: Dr. Theisinger

Roll Call: “Yeas”- Stecken, Theisinger, Cushing, Eager, Gifford and Linnig  
“Nays” – none.

Action:  Passed

#### **Agenda item: Approve the LaSalle County Board ARPA grant/sign agreement**

Summary of discussion: Mrs. Fox was excited to announce that L.E.A.S.E. was awarded \$1.2 million from the LaSalle County Board ARPA grant. Mrs. Fox shared grant documents and told the board that these papers need to be signed and returned. The funds from this grant will be used for the C.B.S. renovations-HVAC project.

Motion made by: Mrs. Gifford

Motion:  To approve the LaSalle County Board ARPA grant and sign agreement

Motion seconded by: Mr. Linnig

Roll Call: "Yeas"- Gifford, Linnig, Cushing, Eager, Stecken and Theisinger  
"Nays" – none.

Action:  Passed

**Agenda item: Approve the posting of a School Social Worker Intern position for L.E.A.S.E.**

Summary of discussion: Mrs. Fox shared her concern over the need for social workers within our 27 district cooperative. Because of this need, she would like to have the board approve the posting of a school social worker internship position. Mrs. Fox told the board she hopes that the intern would accept a position within the L.E.A.S.E. Cooperative upon completing the internship. The stipend that Mrs. Fox suggested is \$12,000 for the 2023-24 school year.

Motion made by: Mrs. Gifford

Motion:  To approve the posting of a school social worker intern for L.E.A.S.E. with a stipend of \$12,000 for the 2023-2024 school year.

Motion seconded by: Mr. Linnig

Roll Call: "Yeas"- Gifford, Linnig, Cushing, Eager, Stecken and Theisinger  
"Nays" – none.

Action:  Passed

**Agenda item: Approve to amend the agenda to add action item**

Summary of discussion: Mrs. Fox asked for board approval to amend the agenda. She would like to add an action item regarding a board vote to move forward with Veregy and to sign the Letter of Intent for the C.B.S. renovation-HVAC project at an estimate bid of \$1.55-1.65 million due to the urgency of the project.

Motion made by: Mr. Linnig

Motion:  To approve the request to amend the agenda to add the action item regarding a board vote on accepting Veregy's bid.

Motion seconded by: Dr. Cushing

Roll Call: "Yeas"- Linnig, Cushing, Eager, Gifford, Stecken and Theisinger  
"Nays" – none.

Action:  Passed

**Agenda item: Approve bid and signing the Letter of Intent from Veregy for renovation project at C.B.S.**

Summary of discussion: Mrs. Fox explained to the board that the bid from Veregy for the C.B.S. renovation-HVAC project was given at an estimate of \$1.55-1.65 million. Veregy has been assessing the needs of the Cooperative building over the last couple of months. The money has been obtained to complete the project and the urgency of these repairs is becoming more evident.

Motion made by: Mr. Linnig

Motion:  To approve the request to accept Veregy's bid of \$1.55-1.65 million and to move forward with signing the Letter of Intent for HVAC renovations at C.B.S.

Motion seconded by: Mrs. Gifford

Roll Call: "Yeas"- Linnig, Gifford, Cushing, Eager, Stecken and Theisinger  
"Nays" – none.  
Action:  Passed

### **Adjourn to Closed Meeting**

Date: Feb. 7, 2023

Time: 9:52 a.m.

Location: L.E.A.S.E. Office Board Room

A motion was made by Dr. Stecken

Motion:  To adjourn to closed meeting to discuss the Collective Bargaining matters between the Alliance and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees and for the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the Alliance or legal counsel for the Alliance, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or against legal counsel for the Alliance to determine its validity.

Motion seconded by: Mr. Linnig

Roll Call: "Yeas" – Stecken, Linnig, Cushing, Eager, Gifford and Theisinger  
"Nays" – none.

Action:  Passed

Time of adjournment of closed meeting and return to open meeting: 10:48 a.m.

### **Motion to Return to Open Meeting**

A motion was made by Dr. Theisinger

Motion:  To return to open session meeting

Motion seconded by: Mr. Linnig

Roll Call: "Yeas" – Theisinger, Linnig, Cushing, Eager, Gifford and Stecken  
"Nays" – None

Action:  Passed

### **Anticipated Action items:**

#### **Agenda item: Approve resolution related to the employment of staff**

Summary of discussion: As discussed in Closed Session

Motion made by: Mrs. Gifford

Motion:  to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS: There exists an opening for a twelve month Bookkeeper at L.E.A.S.E. for the remaining 2022-2023 school year and ...

WHEREAS an applicant has been found that meets the requirements of the position, therefore be it . . .

RESOLVED to employ Justine Whittington to fill the vacancy for the 2022-2023 school year, at a pro-rated salary based on \$62,000 starting salary.

Motion seconded by: Mr. Linnig

Roll Call: “Yeas” – Gifford, Linnig, Cushing, Eager, Stecken and Theisinger  
“Nays” – none.

Action  Passed

**Agenda item: Approve resolution related to the employment of staff**

Summary of discussion: As discussed in Closed Session

Motion made by: Dr. Cushing

Motion:  to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS A vacancy exists for the position of L.E.A.S.E. Assistant Director beginning July 1, 2023 and . . .

WHEREAS after screening and interviewing for this position, L.E.A.S.E. administration now has a recommended candidate for this position. Therefore be it . . .

RESOLVED to employ Dawn Roalson-Zavada as the new L.E.A.S.E. Assistant Director for the 2023-2024 school year at a base salary of \$110,000.

Motion seconded by: Mrs. Eager

Roll call: “Yeas” – Cushing, Eager, Gifford, Linnig, Stecken and Theisinger  
“Nays” – none.

Action  Passed

**Agenda item: Approve the retirement request resolution for Kathy Fox**

Summary of discussion: As discussed in Closed Session

Motion made by: Dr. Stecken

Motion:  Adopt the resolution for retirement request from staff

WHEREAS After 15 years of service to the L.E.A.S.E. Cooperative, and 37 years providing educational services, Mrs. Kathy Fox has officially indicated her intent to retire on June 30, 2026, and...

WHEREAS Kathy Fox is requesting the Executive Committee consider a 6% increase in creditable compensation for each of the periods of July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024, July

1, 2024-June 30, 2025 and July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026, therefore be it formally...

RESOLVED to accept Mrs. Fox's formal notification of pending retirement as a formal letter of resignation as of February 7, 2023 without 6%. A contract will be agreed upon at later date.

Motion seconded by: Mrs. Eager

Roll Call: "Yeas"- Stecken, Eager, Cushing, Gifford, Linnig and Theisinger

"Nays" – none.

Action:  Passed

### **Agenda item: Approve the retirement request resolution for Julie O'Brien-Smith**

Summary of discussion: As discussed in Closed Session

Motion made by: Dr. Cushing

Motion:  Adopt the resolution for retirement request from staff

WHEREAS After 17 years of service to the L.E.A.S.E. Cooperative. Mrs. Julie O'Brien-Smith has officially indicated her intent to retire on June 30, 2026, and . . .

WHEREAS Julie O'Brien-Smith is requesting the Executive Committee consider a 6% increase in creditable compensation for each of the periods of July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024, July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025 and July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026, therefore be it formally...

RESOLVED to approve a 6% increase to creditable earnings on July 1, 2023 and July 1, 2024, and July 1, 2025, and to accept Mrs. O'Brien's formal notification of pending retirement as a formal letter of resignation as of February 7, 2023.

Motion seconded by: Mrs. Eager

Roll Call: "Yeas"- Cushing, Eager, Gifford, Linnig, Stecken and Theisinger

"Nays" – none.

### **Information Items**

#### **C.B.S. monthly report**

Mrs. Fox presented a power point from C.B.S. that showcased different activities and positive happenings at the school.

There are four new students, two boys and one girls. Mrs. Fox reported that one student is returning to their home district. An update was given that the bus issues that have occurred previously are improving. Mrs. Fox told the board that three or four students are now riding on the Lighted Way bus. The aides and bus driver have been removed and the new driver and aides have taken the CPI course.

## **FOIA Request from Illinois Retired Teachers**

Mrs. Fox shared this FOIA request with the Executive Committee as required. A reply has been emailed back stating L.E.A.S.E. does not have any certified staff retiring this year.

## **Professional Development Calendar**

Mrs. Fox explained that the calendar for FY24 is included in the board packet. She also informed the board members that Autism training will be renamed as “Structured Teaching” and will be held in August. LEASE will partner with the R.O.E. for courses on Institute Day and Mike Grenda will do Threat Assessment training and LEASE Coordinators will do a CO-teaching training.

## **Parochial Needs Assessment**

The Parochial Needs Assessment results are included in the board packet. Mrs. Fox informed the board that LEASE will now reach out to leadership teams at the parochial schools and invite them to our training courses and professional development classes.

## **IEP Parent Training**

Mrs. Fox was excited to share that 20 families have signed up for the Saturday, Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>, training class. LEASE will also offer this course in Spanish.

## **Approval of Motion to Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn made by Dr. Theisinger

Motion seconded by Mr. Linnig

Action:  Passed

Time of adjournment: 11:02 a.m.

## **Post Meeting Action**

Date minutes approved: March 7, 2023

Date minutes were available for public inspection: March 7, 2023

Date minutes were posted on Alliance website: March 7, 2023