



CENTRAL RIVERS AREA EDUCATION AGENCY

Central Rivers AEA Board of Directors Board Meeting Minutes Wednesday, February 7, 2024

Call to Order – Welcome Visitors

Board President Dr. Debra Rich called the Central Rivers AEA Board of Directors Meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Board members attending via Zoom were Dennis Craun, Maureen Hanson, Dr. Darshini Jayawardena, Nicole Lovik-Blaser, Dr. Mary Stevens, and Dr. Tony Reid (in-person). Absent were Bryan Burton and Kathy Enslin.

Also in attendance were Joel Pedersen, Chief Administrator; Lori Thomas, Board Secretary; and Amy Knupp, Executive Director of Special Education. Attending electronically were Karl Kurt, Assistant Chief/Director of HR; Jennifer Coombes, CFO/Board Treasurer; Jen Sigrist, Executive Director of Ed Services; and Beth Strike, Director of Creative Services/Communications. Visitors included Reporter Angela Stirm-McLaughlin from the WCF Courier and via Zoom were staff members Pam Morrissey and Shannon Sterling..

Approval of Agenda

Dr. Mary Stevens made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Dr. Tony Reid. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing Regarding the Proposed Budget for 2024-2025

Board President Dr. Debra Rich opened the public hearing at 5:01 p.m. No written or oral comments or objections to the proposed 2024-25 budget were filed with the board secretary prior to the hearing. Dr. Rich asked for comments and/or objections from those attending and hearing none, she declared the hearing closed at 5:03 p.m.

Approval of the Proposed Budget for FY 2024-25 and Amended Budget for FY 2023-24

Maureen Hanson made a motion to approve the proposed budget for FY 2024-25 and the amended budget for FY 2023-24, seconded by Dr. Darshini Jayawardena. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Dr. Tony Reid made a motion to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Dr. Mary Stevens. Motion carried unanimously.

Accept the Central Rivers AEA Audit Report

Maureen Hanson made a motion to accept the Central Rivers AEA Audit Report for the year ending June 30, 2023, seconded by Dr. Mary Stevens. Motion carried unanimously.

Reports to/from Board:

Karl Kurt

Karl thanked the board for their condolences on the passing of his father. He reported on the work he and Beth Strike are doing with school boards and also on the work of the behavior team.

Jen Sigrist

Jen updated the board on the planned review of the 800 series of board policies and shared that she is working with an attorney to ensure any new policies are in compliance.

Amy Knupp

Amy told the board she has had many staff members wanting to share their appreciation to the board for their care and concern for staff during this uncertain time.

Beth Strike

Beth reported that she has worked with four separate districts on threats they received recently and assisted them with communicating to their communities. She is conducting annual cycle visits with districts regarding their use of our services. Beth shared her appreciation for our news partners in helping tell the AEA's story and also expressed her gratitude to Joel Pedersen for leading us through this stressful time.

Joel Pedersen

Joel acknowledged Jen Sigrist's work as a statewide leader in educational services and also shared his appreciation for Beth Strike who assists him in communicating with legislators and communities. Joel spoke to the fact that the AEAs have serious concerns about the Governor's bill and how students will be impacted.

Dr. Mary Stevens

Mary thanked everyone for the phenomenal advocacy that is being done on behalf of students to continue receiving AEA services.

Dr. Darshini Jayawardena

Darshini thanked Beth Strike for helping her communicate to legislators and community members.

Nicole Lovik-Blaser

Nicole shared that she attended a legislative forum in her community and she was grateful for the outpouring of support for the AEAs.

Dr. Deba Rich

Deb thanked Jennifer Coombes for her work on preparing the budget for next year. She also thanked Joel Pedersen for his tireless work advocating for students to continue receiving our services and for his care and support of our agency staff. Deb reported that she missed the recent AEA state meeting due to work obligations and mentioned the fact that the AEA Purchasing Consortium saves the districts large amounts of money in lower costs and rebates. Deb reminded the board members of the Coffee with the Chief meeting scheduled for the end of the week.

Adjournment

Dr. Debra Rich declared the meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m. on a motion by Dr. Tony Reid, seconded by Nicole Lovik-Blaser..

Respectfully Submitted,

Lori A. Thomas

Lori Thomas, Central Rivers AEA Board Secretary

Dr. Debra Rich 3-6-24

Dr. Debra Rich, Board President