



CENTRAL RIVERS AREA EDUCATION AGENCY

Central Rivers AEA Board of Directors Closed Work Session Minutes Wednesday, March 6, 2024

Call Work Session to Order

Board President Dr. Debra Rich called the Central Rivers AEA Board of Directors work session to order via Zoom at 4:02 p.m. Board members attending via Zoom were Dennis Craun, Maureen Hanson, Dr. Darshini Jayawardena, and Dr. Mary Stevens. Attending in-person were Bryan Burton and Board Secretary Lori Thomas.

Closed Session per Iowa Code 21.5, 1i: Chief Administrator's Annual Evaluation

Bryan Burton made a motion to enter into a closed session per Iowa Code 21.5, 1i for the annual evaluation with Chief Administrator Joel Pedersen, seconded by Dr. Mary Stevens. A roll call vote was taken: Ayes: Bryan Burton, Dennis Craun, Maureen Hanson, Dr. Darshini Jayawardena, Dr. Debra Rich, and Dr. Mary Stevens. Nays: none. Motion carried unanimously and the board entered into closed session at 4:03 P.M.

Dr. Tony Reid joined the closed session in-person at 4:04 pm, Kathy Enslin joined via Zoom at 4:09 pm, and Chief Administrator Joel Pedersen joined via Zoom at 4:14 p.m.

The board discussed Chief Administrator Joel Pedersen's annual evaluation per Iowa Code 21.5, 1i and Dr. Debra Rich declared the closed session concluded and brought the board back into open session at 5:07 P.M.

Adjourn Work Session

Dr. Debra Rich declared the work session adjourned at 5:07 p.m. on a motion by Dr. Tony Reid, seconded by Bryan Burton. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lori A. Thomas

Lori Thomas, Central Rivers AEA Board Secretary

Dr. Debra Rich 4-8-24

Dr. Debra Rich, Board President

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 board meeting to order via Zoom at 5:13 p.m. Board members attending via Zoom were Dennis Craun, Kathy Enslin, Maureen Hanson, Dr. Darshini Jayawardena, and Dr. Mary Stevens. Attending in-person were Bryan Burton and Dr. Tony Reid. Nicole Lovik-Blaser joined the meeting electronically at 5:26 p.m.

Also present in-person was Board Secretary Lori Thomas and attending via Zoom were Joel Pedersen, Chief Administrator; Jennifer Coombes, CFO/Board Treasurer; Amy Knupp, Executive Director of Special Education; Karl Kurt, Assistant Chief/Director of HR; Beth Strike, Director of Creative Services/Communications; and Jen Sigrist, Executive Director of Ed Services. Visitors included staff member Pam Morrissey.

Approval of Agenda

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

Approval of Consent Agenda

Bryan Burton made a motion to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Dr. Darshini Jayawardena. Dr. Debra Rich noted that the board accepted Amy Knupp's retirement and Jen Sigrist's resignation with regrets. Dr. Mary Steven thanked Amy Kniupp for staying until December 31, 2024. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Zoom Renewal Agreement

Dr. Mary Stevens made a motion to approve the Zoom renewal agreement as recommended for a cost of \$38,620.80, seconded by Maureen Hanson. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of the Contracts for the Central Rivers AEA Education Association Certified Staff for 2024-25 based on the Collective Bargaining Agreement for 2024-25

Dr. Tony Reid made a motion to approve the contracts for the Central Rivers AEA Education Association Certified Staff for 2024-25 based on the Collective Bargaining Agreement for 2024-25, seconded by Dr. Mary Stevens. Nicole Lovik-Blaser joined the meeting at 5:26 p.m. before the vote on this agenda item. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of the contracts for the CWA Staff for 2024-25 based on the Collective Bargaining Agreement for 2024-25.

Maureen Hanson made a motion to approve the contracts for the CWA Staff for 2024-25, based on the Collective Bargaining Agreement for 2024-25, seconded by Dr. Tony Reid. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Salary Increases and Contracts for Non-Union Support Staff for 2024-25.

Bryan Burton made a motion to approve the salary increases and contracts for Non-Union Support Staff for 2024-25, seconded by Dr. Mary Stevens. Motion carried unanimously.

Central Rivers AEA is committed to ensuring equitable, efficient, and effective educational services that prepare all Iowa children for a life well-lived.

Approval of Salary Increases and Contracts for Administration for 2024-25

Maureen Hanson made a motion to approve the salary increases and contracts for Administrative Staff for 2024-25, seconded by Dr. Darshini Jayawardena. Motion carried unanimously.

Reports to/from Board:

Amy Knupp

Amy shared that she is holding weekly meetings for staff in order to support them during this stressful time of waiting for legislation to be decided regarding the AEA's. She expressed her concern about our ability to hire staff during this time.

Beth Strike

Beth relayed that legislative advocacy is consuming most of her time right now. Creative Services is getting ready for their busy season and her team is working hard.

Jennifer Coombes

Jennifer reported that the DE is changing budget requirements for the AEA's and she will have more to report on this at an upcoming meeting.

Jen Sigrist

Jen thanked the board for approving contracts and feels this sends a message to staff that the agency values their quality work. She has started asking school districts about their needs for next year and is assisting them with planning for services.

Joel Pedersen

Joel shared advocacy work he is doing with legislators and spoke to the great uncertainty that is prohibiting the AEA's from planning for future needs of the districts. He told the board about a rally being held in Des Moines on March 16 and encouraged their attendance. Joel thanked his Cabinet members for their support of him in his role.

Maureen Hanson

Maureen asked a couple clarifying questions regarding proposed legislation which Joel addressed. Maureen thanked Joel Pedersen for letting the board know he will be staying with the agency long-term.

Bryan Burton

Bryan thanked Joel Pedersen for presenting at the Rotary Club with Brena Huber. He noted that it was a great message about our services.

Kathy Enslin

Kathy gave a shout-out to Regional Administrators Ashley Sires and Amy Thoms-Starr for presenting to district school boards.

Dennis Craun

Denny expressed his appreciation to Karl Kurt and the HR team for issuing contracts to staff and spoke to his concern over staff burnout due to the legislative situation.

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Dr. Deba Rich

Deb shared her concern for staff during this uncertain and difficult time and thanked the board and the leadership team for their care of agency staff.

Adjournment

Dr. Debra Rich declared the meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m. on a motion by Dr. Mary Stevens, seconded by Maureen Hanson.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lori A. Thomas

Lori Thomas, Central Rivers AEA Board Secretary

Dr. Debra Rich 4-8-24

Dr. Debra Rich, Board President