

## BURLINGTON USD 244

# Teacher addresses BOE with spending concern

**Katie McMurray**  
Reporter

BURLINGTON — Burlington USD 244 teacher Kathy Freeman addressed the district's Board of Education with a concern regarding spending at the BOE's regular monthly meeting Monday, Aug. 10.

Freeman began by saying when you look at the five-year capital outlay plan, with the acknowledgement it's a working document and there are sometimes changes made to it, there was a reason for prioritizing it in the first place.

"I think that sometimes we lose track of what we're doing at different times," Freeman said. "One of the things mentioned when you were voting, for example, on the concession stand and scoring room and storage and the restrooms facility — I would like to thank Lucas (Allen) and Mike (Thorp) for bringing up that it's kind of going a little overboard. So I thought, and I left before the meeting and it was my mistake, I thought it was possibly going to be reevaluated because there are only two fields up there. I know you plan for the future in case there are more fields that are put up there, but that facility looks like it belongs in Kansas City. It looks like a Miller Woods facility. And I sit there and I think, when did we get away from being where Burlington was known because it had great educational programs and great sports teams for kids who worked hard. It wasn't about what it looked like. I just feel like we've maybe lost touch of — yes, we like nice facilities but in the long run we do have to keep those facilities up. And in a year when who knows what's going to happen with COVID and everything, what expenditures are going to be just dealing with that, I just am concerned that we need to make certain that we keep things in check."

Freeman also touched on the proposed motorized flag for BHS.

"I can also say I was highly offended, and I don't know if it's because I work with the kids so hard all during Veterans Day time teaching about patriotism and everything, but when the comment was made that this flag that we're looking for that costs anywhere from \$4,000-\$9,000 somehow shows patriotic thoughts, I'm thinking no, our flag, not one that is such a high extent of money, that's not what makes patriotism," Freeman said. "And so, I just think sometimes we look at things and we are putting too...I don't want to say too much money into things that aren't important, but a flag is a flag is a flag, and we have one in our high school already. It's not in a place where it interferes with any of the activity that takes place in there yet it still has a grand scale because it's a large one. And when I was in there today, I looked and I thought, if nothing else maybe put one on the opposite side so there's two in there. But I just think that sometimes we're spending money without looking at the whole big picture. You put a motorized flag in there so now you're adding, and I know it's minimal, but you are adding to electric, you are adding to maintenance of that flag, because somebody's got to make sure it keeps working, going up and down and everything."

Freeman also mentioned the lighted score tables.

"They're beautiful but did we really need to put that type of money into a table where people sit to keep score?" Freeman said. "I just have concerns that we need to, just personal, as a taxpayer, that we need to maybe reel in a little bit and make certain that we're staying to those listings that we saw as being the big priorities ahead of time. Thank you."

All seven board members were present for the meeting, Selena King, Lucas Allen, Michael Thorp, Shane Fejfar, James Higgins, Stacy Augustyn and Monique Hart. Also present were Freeman, Superintendent Craig Marshall, Board Clerk Tracey Moerer, BHS Principal Stacy Reed, BHS Assistant Principal/Activities Director Dave Watkins, BMS Principal Matt Spring, BES Principal Darla Long, Technology Director

## Learning assurances and policies

The board approved the remote learning 2020-21 assurances on a 6-1 vote, with Thorp voting no. The assurances is a document that had to be filled out for the Kansas State Department of Education. The document puts into words assurances that the district will follow requirements to ensure that remote learning approximates the student learning experience taking place in the on-site classroom for the 2020-21 school year. The requirements include:

- ✓ Remote learning curriculum and instruction will coincide with each student's on-site classroom to ensure that when a remote learning student returns to the on-site classroom, he or she is able to make a seamless transition.

- ✓ Remote learners will have at least one meaningful daily connection with a local teacher.

- ✓ Each remote learner's academic progress will be monitored daily by local teachers to ensure that when the student is able to return to the on-site classroom, that he or she is able to make a seamless transition.

- ✓ Each remote learner's daily activity logs are made available to local teachers to assist monitoring the student's academic progress. Daily logs will also be made available to KSDE auditors.

- ✓ Timely and relevant professional development will be provided to all local educators providing services to remote learners.

A few changes to the district's learning options and health guidelines documents were also discussed. A few amendments were made to the learning options document, mostly to add detail to what was already there, but the most notable changes were to the definition of ill and to the mask policy in the health guidelines document.

The definition of ill was amended to be at least two of the following: fever (100 degrees or higher), chills, rigors (stiffness and extreme shivers), myalgia (muscle aches), malaise (general feeling of not feeling well), headache, sore throat, lower respiratory illness (cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing), new olfactory and taste disorders, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea without an alternate more likely diagnosis.

The mask policy was amended to state masks will be worn in schools and on buses by everyone unless valid exceptions apply. "Mask or other face covering" was defined as a covering of the nose and mouth that is secured to the head with ties, straps or loops over the ears or is simply wrapped around the lower face.

Exceptions to the mask policy were defined and include while eating, while working — other than to prepare food or meals — in a room or office that is not open to students or visitors and in which all individuals present can maintain a six-foot distance from other individuals with only infrequent or incidental moments of closer proximity, while engaged in an activity during which it is unsafe or impossible to wear a mask or other face covering, children who are not students and are five years of age or under and in particular those under two years of age, persons with a medical or mental health condition or disability that prevents wearing a face covering, persons who are deaf or hard of hearing or communicating with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication, persons for whom wearing a face covering would create a risk to the person related to their work and persons engaged in any lawful activity during which wearing a mask or other face covering is prohibited by law.

Personnel and more

The board amended the July 13 meeting minutes to reflect that Lida Lawson retired from her position effective June 30, then approved a motion to reverse its previous action of accepting Lawson's resignation at the July 13 meeting. The board later approved a motion to amend the July 13 resignation motion for Lida Lawson and to accept the retirement request of Lida Lawson, with regret, as a food service employee effective June 30. It was noted Lawson has been working for the district since 1983.

Resignations included April Butterfield as a USD 243 paraprofessional effective July 22, JoAnn Harritos as a district part-time custodian effective July 26, Emily Stephens as a USD 243 paraprofessional effective July 29, Morgan Griffith as a BMS paraprofessional effective July 30 and Jordan Fleming as a BES paraprofessional effective Aug. 4.

New hires include Michael Vander Linden as BMS/BHS assistant cross country coach for the 2020-21 school year; Marcia Rolf as a BHS food service staff member effective Aug. 3; Lydia Millhouse, Kara Bostic and Hailie Gifford as BES paraprofessionals effective Aug. 4; Michelle Vander Linden as a BMS paraprofessional effective Aug. 6; Christa Freeman as a BES instructional aide effective Aug. 17; Derie Guptill as a grant-funded BMS/BHS nurse aide effective Aug. 17; and Crystal Nickel as a grant-funded BES food service staff member effective Aug. 24.

The architect fee for the baseball/softball field restroom project was reviewed. There were 167.75 hours spent so far, with a bill already received for 125 hours which leaves 42.75 hours to be billed. The cost of the hours is \$4,098.75. Structural, mechanical and electrical engineering fees of \$8,000 have not yet been billed, which brings the total for unbilled services to \$12,098.75. Architect Clark Simpson has spent 23 hours working on a possible wick building plan and putting together outline specs. A good portion of this was not used in the final design when it was decided to proceed to bid a conventional building, and Simpson was not initially planning on needing to draw the site plan or the issues encountered with utilities, particularly sewer on site. He has spent approximately 34 hours working on the site plan and issues. This 57 hours accounts for \$6,840. Simpson proposed a fixed fee of \$28,850, which works out to 6.37 percent of the total project. Normally, a percentage fee would be nine percent for a project this size. The proposed fee includes the mechanical and electrical engineering fees. Simpson was available via phone for any board members who had questions, but there were no questions for him. The board approved a contract with GMCN for a fixed cost of \$28,850 for architectural fees for the baseball/softball restrooms and concession stand by a 6-1 vote. Thorp abstained.

Preliminary enrollment numbers were presented. Long said BES has 42 pre-K, 35 kindergarten, 47 first grade, 52 second grade, 47 third grade and 63 fourth grade students, for a total of 286 students at BES. There is one remote learner in each grade from kindergarten through third grade and two in fourth grade, for a total of six remote learners. Spring said the middle school is hovering around 240 students, with two remote learners in fifth grade, two in sixth grade, one in seventh grade and one in eighth grade. In his written report for the board, Spring's numbers included 60 fifth grade, 53 sixth grade, 71 seventh grade and 62 eighth grade students, for a total of 246. Reed said the high school had a total of 273 students, with three remote learners, but didn't provide a breakdown by grade level. Marshall said the district's total enrollment was around 799.

Several handbooks were approved as presented. They included the substitute teacher handbook, BHS teacher handbook, 2020-21 BMS staff handbook, BES faculty handbook, transportation manual and final classified handbook.

In other action, the board approved the Kansas Pre-school Pilot Grant in the amount of \$34,390, bills and financial reports, the amended July 13 regular meeting minutes and the July 24 and July 27 special meeting minutes.

## SOUTHERN LYON COUNTY USD 252

# Board hears updates, OKs personnel

HARTFORD — President Kevin Flott called the regular meeting of the Southern Lyon County USD 252 Board of Education to order 7 p.m., Wednesday, Aug. 12, at the Board of Education Office.

Board members present included Jon Breshears, Emily Darbyshire, Kevin Flott, Steve Redeker, Charles Steffes and Gene Windle. Member present via ZOOM was Rich Sleezer. Others present included Superintendent Dr. Michael Argabright, Clerk Cassie Dieker, Principals Shane Clark and Douglas Hes, and visitors Annabelle Peyton, Annamarie Wilson, Kevin Darbyshire, Will and Carolyn Davis.

Principals Clark and Hes each gave a preliminary enrollment report broken down by Pre-K, Elementary, Jr. High, and High School. Approximate total students are 536.

Recommended personnel approved were: Kolton Neil, Hartford Jr. High assistant football coach and Amanda McDonald, early childhood para.

Argabright reported fire alarm inspections and bus/vehicle inspections have been completed. Camera and secured entrance inspections will be completed before school starts.

Clark and Hes presented information on school fundraising. An overview of organizations that fundraise, fundraising methods, the application process for fundraising requests, and outcomes of fundraising were presented to the board.

Argabright presented updates to the Hartford Paving Project, which is underway. Playground resurfacing should be completed before school starts. Warranty work will begin soon on the Olpe flooring, which was delayed due to COVID-19.

The USD 252 budget for the 2020-21 school year was approved as published in the Emporia Gazette.

Argabright presented transportation updates. Two trans-

portation vehicles have been ordered from John North Ford. Dodge Caravan upgrades will be visited later in the year. Fleet inventory was made available to board members. He also presented updates on the Back to School Plan. Teachers have begun in-service training. Informational videos are being made and sent out to parents to discuss some of the main points of the back-to-school plan. The school will continue to follow guidelines from KSHSAA/LCL on athletics and activities. Technology upgrades have been made for internet bandwidth throughout the district. HVAC updates with purifying capabilities are being requested. Board members and administration addressed questions and concerns throughout the Back to School Plan document. The plan will be in the agenda every month for board review.

The advertising policy was presented again for discussion and approved as presented.

The following items were approved on the consent agenda: approval of minutes from the regular BOE meeting July 15, and the minutes from the special BOE meeting July 28, bills payable \$53,805.48 and additional paid bills \$34,434.17, July 17 payroll \$34,026.65 and the July 31 payroll \$52,734.60, pledged securities, journal entries, and SLCEF account balances baseball/softball \$6,372.14, Hartford weights, \$6,733.36, Honor Flight, \$69,005.80, Olpe Fitness Complex \$56,493.15, SLCEF total: \$130,218.36, approval of transfer students for the 2020-21 school year, Neosho Rapids Elementary - Parker Barnett, Landon Ruther, Brigham Pinick, Hartford High School - Rheyanna Thomas, Kort Thomas, approval of Heather Finnerty to the Southern Lyon County Rec Commission, Bonnie Garcia as a certified substitute for the 2020-21 school year, 2020-21 KASB policy updates, donation from the Emporia State Federal Credit Union for the all staff in-service luncheon - \$300.

Argabright thanked the 12 month employees, administrators, and directors for all their time and commitment dedicated to the kids and staff. He also thanked Anna Baum for organizing the produce

food trucks to the community. "It is great to have our staff back in the buildings!" he concluded.

Board members expressed their appreciation to the administrators and the staff for their hard work and for keeping safety as the top priority.

## New Strawn

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will take the council's request to him to finalize.

In other action, the council approved:

- \* The purchase of a salt spreader extension kit from American Equipment in the amount of \$1,037.

- \* The purchase of five 1-ton bags of rubber mulch, not to exceed \$3,000, including shipping.

- \* The purchase of up to eight "20 MPH Speed Limit" signs, not to exceed \$500.

- \* A letter of engagement for services with Jarred, Gilmore, Phillips, PA for the purpose of performing the audit for the year ended Dec. 31, 2020, not to exceed \$5,000.

- \* A letter of engagement for services with Jarred, Gilmore, Phillips, PA for the purpose of budget preparation for the years ended Dec. 31, 2021 and 2022, not to exceed \$1,400.

- \* Warrants dated July 13 through Aug. 13 for \$72,934.36 and additional warrants for \$4,449.88.

- \* July payroll at \$13,606.07.

## Special Meeting

A full governing body was present for a special meeting 1 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 12, for the sole purpose of interviewing three city clerk applicants.

Candidate No. 1 was interviewed at 1 p.m. The meeting recessed at 1:39 p.m. then reconvened at 4 p.m. to interview Candidate No. 2. The meeting recessed at 4:30 p.m. then reconvened at 5:30 p.m. to interview Candidate No. 3.

The meeting adjourned at 6:06 p.m.

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