

Board of Directors Board Meeting Minutes



June 9, 2020

REGULAR BOARD MEETING*

Ms. Sheri Benson, president, called the meeting of the Heartland AEA Board of Directors to order at 5:32 p.m.

Board Members Present: Ms. Sheri Benson, Ms. Margaret Borgen, Ms. Liz Brennan, Dr. Earl Bridgewater, Mr. Bruce Christensen, Mr. John Kinley and Dr. Steve Rose. *Absent:* Mr. Pete Evans.

Ms. Margie Schwenk joined the meeting immediately following roll call.

Administrative Staff Present: Ms. Nia Chiamonte, Mr. Kevin Fangman, Ms. Sheila King, Dr. Jon Sheldahl, Mr. Kurt Subra and Ms. Jenny Ugolini.

Approval of Agenda

A MOTION was made by Dr. Rose and seconded by Mr. Christensen to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes from May 12 and 26, 2020

A MOTION was made by Dr. Bridgewater and seconded by Ms. Borgen to approve the minutes from May 12 and 26, 2020. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Forum and Correspondence

There was no one from the public present to speak to the Board.

Discussion Items

Update on Heartland AEA's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Ms. King, Heartland AEA Chief Information Officer, shared that the Agency's Task Force continues to meet several times a week. She shared highlights from their work, which include:

- Developing protocols for staff to return to agency workplaces.
- Developing plans for use of office space and how best to use the space safely given social distancing and CDC guidelines. This includes looking at capacity levels for each building.
- Purchasing and distributing personal protective equipment (PPE) for staff: face masks, shields, gloves, hand sanitizer, etc.
- Engaging with staff through department meetings and surveys about their concerns on returning to work in agency facilities, district buildings, homes, daycares, etc.
- Continuing conversations with the Iowa Dept. of Education and with the statewide AEA system about planning and guidance on service delivery, common procedures and sharing resources.
- Reviewing training videos to help staff re-engage in delivery services to children and schools.

Ms. Chiamonte, Heartland AEA Director of Human Resources, shared details about the pandemic's impact on hiring. She reported that the impact at this time has been minimal. A few employees did not renew their contracts due to underlying health concerns and fear of contracting the virus through their work. Many candidates were hesitant to change jobs because of stability issues. The biggest impact has been on substitutes, as the pool consists mainly of retirees who are no longer willing to work. Districts have also experienced this loss.

Legislative Update

Dr. Sheldahl, Heartland AEA Chief Administrator, discussed the bill (SF2360) that was started early in the session in response to classroom clears in schools. There are groups that object and who are actively trying to encourage how people register for it. The AEAs support the bill as it gives us some authority to develop the criteria and training around therapeutic classroom settings and other variables dealing with escalated behavior.

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It allows districts to create therapeutic settings with greater ease. Most of the bill is about contractual processes for developing the classrooms. Opponents refer to it as school to prison pipeline and that it will over-identify students of color. It's messy and not perfect, but it allows the AEAs to create therapeutic settings and empowers us to train all educators around best practices and criteria. It will help the AEAs broaden their continuum of services.

Commitment of Funds for Facility Improvements

Mr. Subra, Heartland AEA Chief Financial Officer, recommended no additional funds be set aside for facility improvements. The current amount is adequate, and he recommends no changes.

Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) Legislative Priorities

Board members discussed their priorities for next year and chose their top four: 1) Mental Health, 2) AEAs, 3) Teacher Leadership Development and 4) Expanding Educational Opportunities, with modifications. Ms. Ugolini, Heartland AEA Board Secretary, will submit the priorities to IASB.

Medical Flex Spending Account (FSA)

Mr. Subra shared that in May the IRS provided some more options for employees with FSA account balances. Since many medical procedures were postponed for several months due to the pandemic, the IRS is allowing an extension of when FSA funds can be spent. Mr. Subra recommends a two-month extension through Aug. 31, 2020 for a plan year that would have ended June 30, 2020. The extension would be for this year only. He also recommends inflation-adjusting the FSA carryover balances to the IRS amount.

Action Items

Commitment of Funds for Facility Improvements

No changes were made, so the action item was not needed.

Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) Legislative Priorities

A MOTION was made by Dr. Rose and seconded by Ms. Brennan to approve IASB legislative priorities #7 Mental Health, #10 AEAs, #12 Teacher Leadership Development and amended #27 Expanding Educational Opportunities (removing the bullet on establishment of charter schools). The motion passed unanimously.

Inflation-Indexing of the Agency's Flexible Spending Account (FSA) Medical Carryover Balances

A MOTION was made by Mr. Kinley and seconded by Ms. Schwenk to approve extending the medical flex spending account by two months, for this year only, and to index the carryover balance amount to the IRS amount. Motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda

Ms. Brennan reviewed the financial statements and indicated the Agency hasn't spent as much due to lack of travel and because of unused funds from Des Moines Public Schools. The self-insurance fund hasn't had as many expenses due to lack of medical service claims because of the pandemic. A MOTION was made by Mr. Kinley and seconded by Dr. Rose to approve the consent agenda including payment of warrant numbers 410348 through 410799 and electronic warrant numbers 30368 through 30523. Motion passed unanimously.

- Personnel Report and Addendum
- Purchase Orders:
 1. AVI Systems, Inc. - \$32,989.16
 2. Morningside College - \$162,000.00
 3. Marco Technologies - \$127,761.48
 4. Grand View University - \$45,000.00
 5. Drake University - \$72,000.00

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6. All Makes Office Equipment. - \$23,763.83
 7. Apple Computer, Inc. - \$56,000.00
 8. iBoss (3-yr contract) - \$186,228.70
 9. Morningside College - \$36,000.00
 10. Drake University - \$36,000.00
 11. Grand View University - \$36,000.00
 12. Encore One, LLC - \$42,062.64
 13. Wex Bank - \$22,200.00
 14. Great Prairie AEA (L. Williams) - \$56,740.00
 15. PowerSchool - \$60,112.14
 16. Iowa Association of AEAs - \$701,035.00
 17. Four Oaks - ~~\$527,495.04~~ **Correction:** S/B \$564,219.00
- Memorandum of Understanding between Heartland AEA and Polk County Juvenile Detention Center
 - Great Prairie AEA (Laura Williams) and Heartland AEA Contract
 - Contract between Heartland AEA and the Iowa Correctional Institution for Women and Newton Correctional Facility
 - Orientation and Mobility Service Agreement
 - Itinerant Teacher Service Agreement between Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired and Heartland AEA

Chief Administrator Comments

- Dr. Sheldahl shared that the Agency's leadership team has been discussing the social unrest resulting from the George Floyd tragedy. Leaders are having powerful conversations about how the Agency can improve as an organization and how leaders can improve as individuals. Look for more information soon.

Board Comments

- Ms. Benson shared that the Agency will be contracting with IASB next May for a review of the board policy manual.
- The Board will hold a virtual retreat on July 28 from Noon – 4 p.m. Dr. Sheldahl, Ms. Benson and Ms. Borgen will set up a time later this month to begin planning the agenda.
- Dr. Rose inquired about acknowledging the birthdays of retirees. Heartland AEA currently has an alumni Facebook page that retirees can join.

Adjournment

A MOTION was made by Dr. Bridgewater and seconded by Dr. Rose to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Reports and documents and the full text of motions, resolutions or policies considered by the Board at this meeting are on file in the Board Secretary's office, (515) 270-9030 ext. 14441, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m.

– 4:30 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sheri Benson", written over a horizontal line.

Ms. Sheri Benson
Board President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jenny Ugolini", written over a horizontal line.

Ms. Jenny Ugolini
Board Secretary

*Iowa Code 21.8 - Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and current directives from the state and federal government restricting the size of public gatherings, the emergency meeting of the Heartland AEA Board will be held electronically. Heartland AEA facilities have been closed starting March 17-until further notice to mitigate the spread of the virus.

Iowa Code 21.4 (2a.) - Under Iowa Code 21.4 (2a) "good cause," it was impossible to post the agenda at our regional offices due to facility closures. The agenda was posted on the front doors of Heartland AEA's main office located at 6500 Corporate Drive, Johnston and on the Agency's website.

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