

Board of Directors Board Meeting Minutes



April 13, 2021

BOARD MEETING*

Ms. Sheri Benson, president, called the meeting of the Heartland AEA Board of Directors to order at 4:30 p.m.

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

Ms. Margaret Borgen joined the meeting immediately following roll call.

Administrative Staff Present: Ms. Nia Chiaramonte, Mr. Kevin Fangman, Ms. Sheila King, Dr. Jon Sheldahl, Mr. Kurt Subra and Ms. Jenny Ugolini. *Absent:* Dr. Kristi Upah.

Approval of Agenda

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

Work Session

Jester Insurance

Ms. Janelle Friedman and Mr. Mark Stearns, President and Account Executive from Jester Insurance, reviewed the Agency's property and casualty coverage. They discussed the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, climate change and social inflation on the insurance industry. These factors have led to rate increases and more restrictive coverages. Heartland AEA can expect a 7% rate increase this year, which given market conditions, isn't a drastic increase. Board members asked to be kept updated on claims related to errors and omissions (professional liability).

Association of Educational Service Agencies (AESAs) Annual Report and State-by-State Report

Dr. Jon Sheldahl, Heartland AEA Chief Administrator, reviewed the AESA Annual Report and State-by-State Report. The reports provide information on national advocacy, outline the organization's legislative and policy priorities and announce upcoming conferences and professional learning opportunities.

Dr. Bridgewater left the meeting at 5:10 p.m.

The Board recessed from 5:25 – 5:35 p.m.

Board Meeting

Approval of Minutes from March 9 & 30, 2021

A MOTION was made by Mr. Christensen and seconded Dr. Rose to approve the minutes from March 9 & 30, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Forum and Correspondence

There was no one from the public present to speak during the forum.

Discussion Items

Chief Administrator's Report and Recent Activities

COVID-19 Update

- Dr. Sheldahl updated the Board on the current number of staff who have been fully vaccinated, which stands at 460. Nineteen staff members have indicated they don't plan to be vaccinated at this time. The Agency will continue to monitor the number of staff being vaccinated as this will help determine when mitigation efforts can be eased.

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- The Heartland Administrators' Assoc. (HAA), which is the monthly meeting of area superintendents, met April 6. Participants had the option to attend electronically or in-person. Approximately 15 superintendents attended in-person.
- A survey has been drafted about agency workspace and the supports staff need to be successful in their work. It will be sent to all employees later this month. The results will help guide future decisions on dedicated work and storage space, remote work options and impact on staff productivity.

Legislative Update

Dr. Sheldahl provided an update on bills pending approval in the Iowa Legislature. They are expected to pass after final revisions and/or amendments. He also shared information about the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER II) funds districts will receive this spring.

- HF 532 provides one-time supplemental money to districts. The AEAs would receive a portion of those funds.
- HF 228 allows students to open enroll out of districts with diversity plans.
- HF 744 protects free speech at universities and public schools.
- HF 813 changes the rules for establishing charter schools and is expected to be approved by the Governor.

Board Policies – Second Reading – 600, 700, 800 Series and Board Policy 300

Board members held their second reading of board policies in the 300, 600, 700 and 800 series. There were no additional changes.

Four Oaks Therapeutic Classrooms

Mr. Kurt Subra, Heartland AEA Chief Financial Officer, reviewed the updated Four Oaks Therapeutic Classrooms contract.

Board Summer Retreat Options

Board members discussed possible dates and topics for their summer retreat, which will be held on Tuesday, Aug. 10, 2021. Topics will include sharing the results of the Agency's equity audit. Board members confirmed there would be no July board meeting.

Action Items

Board Policies – Second Reading – 600, 700, 800 Series and Board Policy 300

A MOTION was made by Mr. Christensen and seconded by Mr. Evans to approve board policy 300, the 600 and 700 series and all of the 800 series except board policy 805. The motion passed unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Borgen and seconded by Mr. Evans to approve board policy 805. Ms. Brennan abstained from voting on this policy due to conflict of interest. Motion passed unanimously (Benson, Borgen, Christensen, Evans, Rose and Schwenk. Absent: Bridgewater and Kinley. Abstained: Brennan)

Four Oaks Therapeutic Classrooms

A MOTION was made by Mr. Evans seconded by Dr. Rose to approve the Four Oaks Therapeutic Classroom contract. Motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda

Ms. Schwenk reviewed the financial statements and indicated the Agency's budget was on track. Everything is indicative of the amount of work that goes into the budget. The pandemic has greatly reduced the amount of spending on travel and mileage. A MOTION was made by Dr. Rose and seconded by Mr. Evans to approve the consent agenda including payment of warrant numbers 412859 through 413060 and electronic warrant numbers 32902 through 33262. The motion passed unanimously.

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- Personnel Report
- Purchase Orders:
 - Webspec Design, L.L.C. - \$53,812.50
- Bohnsack & Frommelt, L.L.P. Letter of Understanding

Chief Administrator Comments

- Dr. Sheldahl shared that his annual evaluation will take place at the May 11 board meeting.

Adjournment

A MOTION was made by Dr. Rose and seconded by Mr. Evans to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:35 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) 473-6644, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sheri Benson".

Ms. Sheri Benson
Board President

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Jenny Ugolini".

Ms. Jenny Ugolini
Board Secretary

*Iowa Code 21.8 - Pursuant to Governor Reynolds' proclamation of public health emergency currently in effect, an electronic meeting will be held because it is impossible or impractical to host the meeting and hearing in person due to concerns for the health and safety of the school community and public due to COVID-19.