



**ECASB Budget/Finance**  
**FINAL Meeting MINUTES—Thursday, September 14, 2023**  
**Erie 1 BOCES—Room B2B**  
**6:30 pm – 7:30 pm**  
**Presiding: ECASB Vice President James McDermott**

**Attendees:**

**Present:** Vice President James McDermott (Maryvale), Stephanie Coffta (Akron), Lorry Goldhawk (Amherst), Andy Loeb (Erie 1 BOCES), Linda Hoffman (Erie2CC BOCES/NYSSBA Area 1), District Clerk Jessica Hedges (Cheektowaga), Zachary Smith (Cheektowaga-Sloan), Tricia Andrews (Clarence), Michael Montoro (Cleveland Hill), Joe Cassidy (East Aurora), Davis Podkulski (Frontier), Sherry Steffans (Grand Island), Jane Sullivan (ECASB/Iroquois), Peter Bellanti (Sweet Home), Linsey Neal (Tonawanda), Elizabeth Gates (West Seneca), Maureen Poulin (Williamsville), David Lowrey (ECASB/ Erie2CC BOCES), and Sue Beier (ECASB).

**Excused:** President Denise McCowan, Paul Kunkel (Cleveland Hill), John Waterman, (Gowanda), Laura Heeter (Hamburg).

**Absent:** Richard Karalus (Alden), Jennifer Mecozzi (Buffalo), Justin Young (Depew), Jennifer Horschel (Eden), Anthony Catuzza (Lackawanna), Arlene DeJoy-Meckes (Lake Shore), Shannon Cohen (Lancaster), Heather Puntillo (North Collins), Michele Idzik (Springville Griffith Institute).

- I. Pledge of Allegiance 6:35 p.m. – **Meeting was called to order by James McDermott**
- II. Job Description/Task – **Dave reviewed the job description and pointed out housekeeping guidelines.**
- III. Approval of Agenda – **Motion by Linda Hoffman, Second by Lorry Goldawk. MCU**
- IV. Approval Minutes annual meeting previously sent **Motion by Paul Spors, Second by Linsey Neal, MCU**
- V. Recap of Annual Dinner; recap of governance training and fiscal oversight responsibility training. **Great turn out with more people than in recent years. Issues with the venue, so we won't go back there. Governance and FORT had about 20-25 people at each program. A few from neighboring COLSBA's. Both programs were 100 % in person, broke both sessions up into two sections 2 hours on a weeknight/ 4 hours on a Saturday morning. In person works better for engagement than having a virtual period. A few people with emergencies and Buffalo BOE members did have some one-on-one training with Dave to keep everyone current. ECASB competes with the NYSSBA Virtual program; 3-4 Board Presidents and Superintendents have called asking for copies of the information that is shared because many of their**

new Board Members “are not getting it”. They do not know what their role is on the Board of Education.

Our program is geared towards local people with local presenters. Linda Hoffman agrees that our training is specific to our area where NYSSBAs by necessity must be more generalized as attendees are from across the state. Linda also likes the personal connection of in-person training. We can drill down to local level. People can take the courses again, at no charge, as a refresher.

- VI. Financial condition of organization Accountant has prepared all the paperwork and once approved will be sent to the Fiscal Oversight Committee. Non-profit’s should have about 3 years of operating expenses in reserve accounts. We are not quite there yet. From 2017 to now we have increased the savings by about \$ 150,000 over where we were in reserves. This has occurred even without raising dues among member districts for the last 10 years. We have increased sponsorships to help accommodate for this, and part of the savings were due to staffing issues not being fulfilled at the time.
- VII. ECASB Table on First Floor of Convention Center at Convention Update – We will have a table on the first floor of the convention center. A few Board Members and a few district clerks will help at the table. A small committee will meet next week probably virtually to discuss what we will do. “Committ-mint” Mint candy give aways. Flyers with best places to go in Buffalo. ECASB Logo cookies are some of the ideas.
- VIII. Recap of Summer Programs
  - Board and Brews Second year... more people this year. Free event. Hamburg Brewery. Because it is a social gathering with no specific program, there is no cost to attend the program. This year we had a major thunderstorm during the event, but the venue is quite large and everyone had a good time. Tonawanda City School Board Members closed down for the second year in a row. They were joined by Iroquois CSD Board Members.
  - Back to School Dinner Carmella Hopkins from Aptegy presented. Pioneer associate member attended as one of the about 60 people who came.
- IX. 2023-2024 Team and Committee Assignment recommendations and discussion- Dave along with Nominating Committee Chair from 2023 Davis Podkulski reviewed this years team members.
- X. Appoint Nominating Committee Motion by Linda Hoffman; Second by Maureen Poulin, approve Nominating Committee. MCU. Motion by Lorry Goldhawk, Second by Heather Jacobs to amend number 8 to add Mike Cornell and Brian Graham as the alternate. MCU. Motion by Linda Hoffman, Second by Lorry Goldhawk to accept the remaining nominations. MCU
  - 1. Appoint: Financial Oversight Team
    - Tricia Andrews (Clarence), Stephanie Dombrowski (Cheektowaga-Sloan), and Andrea Wisniewski (Tonawanda)
  - 2. Appoint Legislative Chairs
    - Scott Johnson (Sweet Home), Kathleen Chiavetta (Lake Shore) and Erik Polkowski (Akron)
  - 2. Appoint Awards Review Team
    - Lorry Goldhawk (Amherst), Dawn Snyder (Clarence), Renee Wilson (Cheektowaga/Erie 1 BOCES), Kristin Schmutzler (Tonawanda), and Sherry Steffan (Grand Island)
  - 4. Appoint Nominating Committee
    - Davis Podkulski (Frontier), Elizabeth Gates (West Seneca), Tricia Andrews (Clarence), Michele DeCarlo (North Collins), Stephanie Dombrowski (Cheektowaga-Sloan) and Mary Busse (Erie 1 BOCES).

5. ECASB Representative on NFIEC Board – **Mary Busse (Erie 1 BOCES)**
6. ECASB Representative to WNED
  - **Kristy Pingitore (Akron), Maureen Poulin (Williamsville), and Vincent Vanderlip (West Seneca)**
7. ECASB Representative to BPO
  - **Kristy Pingitore (Akron) and Mike Montoro (Cleveland Hill)**
8. Superintendent Representative on Legislative Team
  - **Mike Cornell and Brian Graham**

- XI. Review of 2023-2024 Events-Dave discussed the new events that are scheduled for this coming year. There are some Boards of Education that have a place on the agenda for the representatives of the various ECASB committees to report out. There are some Boards of Educations that discuss what they learned by attending ECASB events. There are some school boards that make no mention of ECASB within their Board Meetings. For those that do share information at the Board Meeting, a few new events that members may want to mention include:
- Kick off to Convention will be held at Resurgence Brewery-Free event the day before Convention- limited number of people. Flyer will be sent next week.
  - Legislative Dinner in Fall- Nov. 16- Plated dinner at the Columns, Due to the fact that Veterans Day and Thanksgiving Holiday fell within November, it was not real convenient or timely to have a Legislative Breakfast. Chautauqua County School Boards has a dinner. We chose to move in this direction.
  - ECASB/NYSSBA joint venture will be on January 27<sup>th</sup>. The event will be held at Erie 1 BOCES with a breakfast. There will be a minimal charge (\$15)- The event will most likely be about school safety or mental health. School Boards outside of Erie County will also be invited as long as they are a member of NYSSBA as well.
  - Community Partnership Event - Feb. 8- Community partnership and Sponsor trade show- If you know of any organizations that might be good to have on hand (perhaps they work with your district, please let us know). We want Board Members to be able to get information from various vendors and organizations that they may not be familiar with and would like to possibly begin working with them. If a district has a group or organization that they think would be beneficial to have at the program, please let either Jane or Dave know.
  - Speed Boarding- Fall-Nov. 30- Family Court Judge Deanne Tripi will talk about the Family Court connection with schools; Harris Beach will present on Student issues; BPO panel discussion on music education will feature panelists from the Buffalo Public School District along with Amherst and Lancaster.
  - Speed Boarding - Spring- Exploring the possibility of looking at the newest Erie 1 BOCES campus at the Calspan center. Andy Loeb said that the center is the first career tech high school program in an industrial park- Industry and education partnership. “State of the Art”
  - Legislative Wrap-up- May 11 Breakfast- similar to last year’s dinner- except a breakfast. Legislators speak about what they were able to do and what hurdles they met. One thing from last year we learned... was to set up local meetings prior to the capital conference. Capital conference is too late. We were urged to meet with legislators to discuss our wants and needs prior to the Governors Budget being prepared.

- **THURSDAYS are ECASB NIGHTS.** ECASB Staff members are attending meetings this fall. Just as Dave does. Jane is required to attend about 10 meetings, Sue Summers attends 5, and Sue Beier attends about 3 meetings. Dave will look at the calendar specifically for Alden and Lackawanna to see if we can arrange programs and meetings to fall on the Thursdays when they are not having their Board Meetings.

- XII. Discussion of Proposed NYSSBA Resolutions (IF NEEDED)- Interview in AAM with Linda Hoffman, she mentions that ECASB used to have a meeting where Boards would discuss the proposed resolutions. ECASB will look at adding that to the calendar in the fall of 2024. Linda expresses her pleasure with this newly planned event for next year. Voting Delegate needs to attend trainings. Voting is Oct. 16. Boards should be discussing them prior to the voting meeting so that the vote is what the Board wants and not just the voting delegate should decide. It would be nice to be able to hear the conversations from how other Boards from our area view some of the resolutions.
- XIII. New Award This Year- RAY CARR EMERGING LEADERS AWARD Erie 1 BOCES proposed last fall that ECASB creates this award. At Annual Dinner this past year Ray earned the Wayne Schlifke Award. He's proud to now have an award in his name. Award will be given to a person in their first year/term. For some boards that will be within a 3 year window, while others it will be within a 5 year window
- XIV. Discussion about ECASB involvement in Community organizations Do we want to support community organizations ie BPO/ Buffalo Zoo/ SPCA ... please think about this for discussion at future meetings. Possibilities are endless. This could look like a donation money and/or combine programing...we supply volunteers for their events. Looking at possibilities are opportunities. Dave will also be discussing with Executive Board.
- XV. ECASB President Report-Denise McCowan was excused, No report was provided
- XVI. Committee Chair reports- Davis has nothing further to add after Nominating committee. Lorry spoke about Award Committee and award process. Dave urges all Boards to take a good look around their Board table and consider recognizing and nominating Board Members that serve on their Boards of Education.
- XVII. **NYSSBA Area One Director**-Last meeting was last weekend. No mega issue presented. Past couple of meetings, talking about violence in schools, discipline in schools- moving away from in-school and out-of-school suspension. Past meeting-two years into the strategic plan. They are currently fine tuning it.
- XVIII. Program Services Manager – No report from the Program Services Manager.
- XIX. Round Robin minute updates
  - Maryvale- asylum seekers- 76 new students- getting through it. Need 5 new staff members just for them. Also CVA case awards and how district is paying them with Bonds etc. James talks about meeting Senator Gallivan about CVA. Stresses it is important to work with Legislators on this. Clarifies questions about CVA what it is and why it is impacting school districts.
  - Iroquois- Mascot change. This graduating class is the last Chiefs class. Community involved student run committee. Cost is a big issue.
  - East Aurora- Policy committee full review- over 12 months got through them all and adopted Board Docs. Starting to review it again to keep in the habit. (Dave talks about policy questions from district clerks and mentions the district clerk program Oct.5 with guest speakers
  - Amherst- pass
  - Akron- Superintendent search- complicated, but have a good consultant helping (Alan Pole and Associates is conducting the search)
  - Cheektowaga-Sloan- They have reduced the tax levy increase to 0.
  - Holland- Good- CVA case issues too. Teacher union contract issues.

Erie 2CC BOCES- Going through Code of Conduct to make it readable, understandable and gender neutral. Currently working on Dress Code section. Tedious work.

Tonawanda- Mascot change- Last year as the Warriors. Moving it forward faster than Iroquois.

January Student body will have final say from top three. Brand new Elementary \$53 million capital project with consolidation and new building including an outdoor classroom.

Ken-Ton-Security enhancements- people walking through open gates (football game incident in the paper)- putting time and training into staff for security. Staff was well prepared and handled situation. Trying to make it seamless and not feel like a prison.

Clarence- Security capital project- New Student Rep is going above and beyond, everyone engaged, taking it to a new level.

Sweet Home- finished capital project- stadium seating auditorium is awesome. Asylum seeker students are also impacting the district. Teachers' union and district at a crossroads- mediator being assigned.

Orchard Park- Middle of first phase of capital project- getting field ready for homecoming football. Next phase may need scope deduction due to rising costs.

Frontier- big picture program for juniors and seniors is a new program that is going well. Grand opening highlighted program. Provides more real-world individualized experiences for students.

Cleveland Hill- Dedicating Community room to School Board President- 27 years in board service as president of his 35 years.

Cheektowaga- Mascot (warriors) changing.

Erie 1 BOCES- Cal span project. Discussed earlier in the program when we were discussing the potential of having Spring Speed Boarding at the location.

Grand Island- Adding a mental health committee.

West Seneca-Searching for a new superintendent in the coming months. Three new board members, all education advocates bringing energy. Transportation hiccup made the news. Excellent interim superintendent setting them up for a capital project. Exploring options for Superintendent search.

Williamsville- finished security capital project- new entries. Setting up Raptor system. Looking to set up a family support center with Amherst. Looking into AC for buildings.

XX. Drawing for Back to School Committee Meeting Door Prize Linda pulls a name- Ryan from Orchard Park wins Bills blanket and Pillow for first meeting of the year.

XXI. Motion to Adjourn Motion by Linda Hoffman, Second by Paul Spors MCU