

March 24, 2025

The 2025-26 Proposed Tax Hearing and the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of the Centerville Community School District was held March 24, 2025 at 5:30 pm in the board room of the Administration Office, 634 North Main, Centerville.

2025-26 Proposed Tax Hearing 5:30 PM

Call to order and roll call

President Mike Thomas called the 2025-26 Proposed Tax Public Hearing to order at 5:30 pm. Roll call to determine quorum:

Present: Tim Burger, Derek Carter, Carol Heffron, Tom Johnson, Mike Moore, Mike Thomas, Kevin Wiskus

Absent: None

Also present were Superintendent Mark Taylor and Chief Financial Officer Lisa Swarts.

Approve Agenda

It was moved by Derek Carter and seconded by Kevin Wiskus to approve the agenda as stated. Motion passed unanimously

Opening Statement on Proposed Tax information – Board President

President Mike Thomas made an opening statement for the hearing. He stated that the notice provided to each resident shows the maximum total property taxes the district will adopt as part of the certified budget. He mentioned that the board values the public's comments but gave a reminder that the board is present to listen and receive the comments but cannot engage during the public comment. The board could address issues at a future meeting.

Receive Written Comment

Lisa Swarts reported that after review, written comments did not need to be read out loud, they just need to be entered into the written record. The law states that the district shall receive comment from any residence or property owner of the district.

Lisa Swarts also reported that a written comment was brought into the Central office but the individual did not want give their name and wanted to remain anonymous so that person could not be verified as a resident or property owner. But in the spirit of remaining transparent, a copy of that written comment was provided to each board member anyway.

Receive Oral Comment

Janet Langley and Jan McDanolds officially made comments on the proposed tax rate. Several other members of the public that were present also made comments but did not give their names. Concerns raised were the increase in the rate shown on the statement, the structure of the statement, and the overall rate of property tax paid by patrons.

Mr. Taylor welcomed and urged any patron to contact him at any time to discuss and to further review the confusing statement.

Adjourn

It was moved by Mike Thomas and seconded by Carol Heffron to adjourn the public hearing at 5:45 pm. Motion passed unanimously.

Regular Board Meeting

Call to order and roll call

President Mike Thomas called the regular meeting to order at 5:45 pm. Roll call to determine quorum:

Present: Tim Burger, Derek Carter, Carol Heffron, Tom Johnson, Mike Moore, Mike Thomas, Kevin Wiskus

Absent: None

Also present were Superintendent Mark Taylor and Chief Financial Officer Lisa Swarts.

Welcome Visitors

Mike Thomas welcomed visitors.

Public Forum

Elizebeth Logsdon was present with Chad Butler, Lisa Carter, Rodney Robertson, and Matt Harryman to give comments on the trap shooting sharing agreement with Seymour Community School District. Comments shared included reasons why the Board should continue with the agreement.

Approve agenda

It was moved by Derek Carter and seconded by Carol Heffron to approve the agenda as stated. Motion passed unanimously.

Approve Minutes of previous meetings

It was moved by Mike Moore and seconded by Tom Johnson to approve the March 10, 2025 minutes as stated. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

There were no old business items.

New Business

Student Representative

Kinley Harvey was present to report out on activities at the high school. She reported out on sporting activities as well as student club activities.

Resolution Authorizing the Redemption of General Obligation School Bonds, Series 2021, Dated June 28, 2021, Approving an Escrow Agent Agreement, and Levying a Tax for Fiscal Year 2026 for the Redemption of General Obligation School Bonds, Series 2021, Dated June 28, 2021

It was moved by Kevin Wiskus and seconded by Derek Carter to adopt the “Resolution Authorizing the Redemption of General Obligation School Bonds, Series 2021, Dated June 28, 2021, Approving an Escrow Agent Agreement, and Levying a Tax for Fiscal Year 2026 for the Redemption of General Obligation School Bonds, Series 2021, Dated June 28, 2021” as stated and presented.

Roll call vote:

Ayes: Tim Burger, Derek Carter, Carol Heffron, Tom Johnson, Mike Moore, Mike Thomas, Kevin Wiskus

Nays: None

Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of AEA Proposal

Mr. Taylor reported that since this proposal had been made there had been a couple of adjustments. Overall spending didn't change, just adjustments to the amounts spent for each category.

It was moved by Mike Moore and seconded by Derek Carter to approve the AEA Proposal as amended.

Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Support Staff Make-up Day Plan

Mr. Taylor reported that in addition to the water main break day that had been approved last meeting as a forgiven day, he is proposing to forgive an additional day, bringing the total to two approved forgiven support staff make-up days.

It was moved by Tom Johnson and seconded by Mike Moore to approve the support staff make-up day plan as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion of Elementary Science Position

Mr. Taylor spoke about the new elementary science position that he is proposing to add. This position will be for an internal candidate to teach science as a special in the elementary. The belief is that it will help with test

scores and will be an addition that makes Centerville Schools unique. At this time, there is room with elementary staff to shift around to include this position. There was discussion on if it would be a continuing position and that would be decided in the future.

Discussion on Advertising Campaign

Analytics from both the Iowa Media Network and Ottumwa Radio were provided from their advertisements for the District. There was a lengthy discussion on the topic from board members on the item. Opinions on what type of advertising, what audience to target, and the point of if advertising is even necessary or financially beneficial were shared. The board would like to see a request for proposal from advertising groups on what they can provide.

Kevin Wiskus left the meeting at 7:05 pm and returned at 7:06 pm.

Discussion on Athletic Sharing Agreements

Mr. Taylor provided all of the existing athletic sharing agreements for reference. He also shared a document with a list of options that the Board could consider for moving forward. During the lengthy discussion with the Board, he shared that it was his recommendation that the Board continue with the sharing agreements but with a cost to the other school district. The attorney has advised that the fee should be based on a flat fee for each sport instead of on an individual student amount. Each sport can be charged differently based on the costs for each of those sports. It was a consensus of board members for their desire to extend all agreements with modification for the charging of the financial costs. It was a consensus for Mr. Taylor to work on bringing that back to the board at a future meeting for approval.

DCAP Presentation

Julie Caraccio gave a presentation on the district's DCAP Plan which is a roadmap for the district's implementation of career development for students.

Mike Thomas left the meeting at 7:47 pm and returned at 7:48 pm.

Approve Personnel Business Procedures

Resignations

1. Karen Oden – Retiring from Preschool Aide – Effective at the end of the 2024-2025 School Year
2. Pat Dole – Retiring from LKV Secretary – Effective at the end of the 2024-2025 School Year
3. Tierney Lain – Resigning from HS Ag Teacher & FFA Advisor – Effective at the end of the 2024-2025 School Year
4. Jolan Bishop – Resigning from all positions – Effective at the end of the 2024-2025 School Year
5. Mark Bishop – Resigning from CHS Science Teacher & Robotics Sponsor – Effective at the end of the 2024-2025 School Year

Employment/Contracts

1. Andrew Johnson – Athletics Custodian - \$14.27/hr (4 hours) – HS Night Custodian - \$13.62/hr (4 hours) – 76 Days – Effective March 17, 2025 – Replacing Kelly Garr
2. Pacey Hawkins – HS Ag Teacher & FFA Advisor - \$TBD – 189 Days + 15 Extended Days – Effective July 1, 2025 – Replacing Tierney Lain

Volunteer Agreements

1. Natasha Joiner – Trap Shooting – Effective February 7, 2025
2. Steve Logsdon – Trap Shooting – Effective February 28, 2025
3. Brandon Clark – Middle School Track – Effective March 17, 2025

A special statement of appreciation was made for retiring secretary, Pat Dole, for her many years of work with the Centerville Community School District.

It was moved by Kevin Wiskus and seconded by Mike Moore to approve all personnel items as presented with special recognition for Pat Dole to receive a lifetime activity pass. Motion passed unanimously.

Director Reports

Director reports were given by Kate Brauman, Brad Warren, Mike Kincaid, Aaron Beeson, Cameron Oehler, Jarred Johnston, and Julie Caraccio.

Principal Reports

All Principals reported out on the activities of their buildings with a focus on: student achievement, programs & culture, professional development & training, and families & community.

Mr. Taylor also reported out his appreciation of the Board for good conversation. He knew that it would be a big meeting with important discussion on several items.

Board Takeaways

Takeaway items included: appreciation for the Career Fair, sporting camps, and appreciation for staffing changes for next year. Takeaway comments also centered on the Board's frustration that they could not engage with patrons during the tax proposal hearing during public comment. It would have also been helpful if they could have been to the previous meeting with the preliminary budget presentation. There were comments about maybe doing that presentation during the tax proposal hearing next year if allowed to help answer questions. There was also frustration on the tax statement and how confusing it could be to taxpayers.

Adjourn

It was moved by Carol Heffron and seconded by Mike Moore to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 pm. Motion passed unanimously.

Board President, Mike Thomas

Board Secretary, Lisa Swarts