

**SCHOOL CITY OF HOBART
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
REGULAR SESSION MEETING
January 6, 2022**

The Board of School Trustees of the School City of Hobart met in regular session on January 6, 2022, in the Board Room at Hobart High School, 2211 East Tenth Street, Hobart, Indiana.

ROLL CALL: Terry Butler asked Board Members to log in. The following Board Members and Administrators were present or absent as noted:

Board Members Present:

Terry D. Butler
Rikki A. Guthrie (After meeting began)
Frank Porras
Karen J. Robbins
Olivia Garcia, HHS student representative
Morgan Sanchez, HHS student representative

Board Members Absent:

Donald H. Rogers
Stuart B. Schultz

Administrators Present:

Peggy Buffington
Christopher N. King
William J. Longer
Jonathan Mock
Tim Krieg

Administrator Absent:

Bob Glover

EXECUTIVE SESSION: President Butler indicated that no executive session was scheduled prior to the regular session.

CALL TO ORDER: Terry Butler, President, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: President Butler led everyone present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

AUDIENCE: The following were present in the audience:

Brian Snedecor, Mayor, City of Hobart
Rick Zormier, Chief of Police, Hobart Police Department, and his wife
Garrett Ciszewski, Captain, Hobart Police Department
Simon Gresser, Lieutenant Commander, Hobart Police Department
Officer Matthew Bisig, SRO at Veterans Elementary @ Mundell
Sergeant Monte White, SRO at Hobart High School

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Frank Porras moved that the Board approve the regular session minutes of December 16, 2021. Karen Robbins seconded. Vote on motion: Aye – Porras, Hillan, Robbins, and Butler. Motion carried 4-0 in favor.

FINANCIAL REPORTS: Mr. Butler indicated that there no financial reports.

COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS: There were no comments from the audience on the listed agenda items.

PERSONNEL: Jonathan Mock, Director of Human Resources and Compliance, indicated the Personnel Report and Personnel Report Addendum, which was larger than the Personnel Report, were included in the electronic meeting packet for the Board's consideration.

Mr. Mock recommended approval and requested Board action.

Karen Robbins moved that the Board approve the Personnel Reports as presented. Seconded by Frank Porras. Vote on motion: Aye – Porras, Hillan, Robbins, and Butler. Motion carried 4-0 in favor.

In the discussion, Dr. Buffington commented that it has been “very challenging” for the Human Resources Department, and Mr. Mock was thanked for his hard work.

The approved personnel items are as follows:

Extra Duty Contract –

Hobart High School, November 8, 2021/February 26, 2022:
Ken Cawthon, boys varsity swim coach, \$5,358.00

Transfer of Assignment –

Cristeen Johnson

From: Early Learning Center/aide-student supervisor

To: Early Learning Center/aide-recreation, effective January 3, 2022, \$12.75 per hour

Resignations –

Gervea Sison, Hobart Middle School/teacher, effective January 14, 2021

Abby Bood, Veterans Elementary @ Mundell/teacher, effective January 14, 2022

Brittney Schmidt, Early Learning Center @ George Earle/counselor, effective January 6, 2022

Trevor Wiesemann, Veterans Elementary @ Mundell/teacher, effective February 4, 2022

Homebound Teaching Contracts –

November 2, 2021/January 21, 2022: Carol Fonner, English/language arts and math, two hours per week, \$51.00 per hour

January 3/February 4, 2022: Amanda Newton, all subjects, 12 hours total, \$33.20 per hour

Transfer of Assignment – Teacher Contract –

Ashley Boege, January 3/June 3, 2022:

From: Early Learning Center/teacher

To: Early Learning Center/Skills Development Coordinator, 100 days, \$29,891.00

Teacher Contracts – 2021-2022 –

January 3/June 3, 2022:

Cynthia Helminski, Early Learning Center @ George Earle/teacher, 100 days, \$24,130.00

January 3/June 7, 2022:

Hannah Lucas, Early Learning Center @ George Earle/counselor, 102 days, \$25,176.00

2 Returning Teacher Contracts Adjusted to Contract Negotiations that Reflect Salary Increases from the Collective Bargaining Agreement Ratified on October 21, 2021

Request for Leave of Absence –

Debbie Mladenovski, Hobart Middle School/media aide, unpaid leave, effective January 3 until June 3, 2022 (end of school year)

New Employees –

Hobart Middle School:

Monica Solis, MTSS Aide, part time, effective January 10, 2022, \$12.18 per hour

Mary Anderson, custodian, effective January 10, 2022, \$15.75 per hour with probation waived

BOARD REORGANIZATION: Terry Butler indicated that the Board would reorganize for the 2022 calendar year by electing a president, vice-president, and secretary, as follows:

1. Nominations for President –

Terry Butler opened the floor for nominations for President. It was noted that after the election, the newly elected president would continue with the Board's reorganization.

Karen Robbins moved that Terry Butler be nominated to serve as President of the Board. Sandra Hillan seconded.

Mr. Butler asked if there were any other nominations. There being none, he asked Board members to vote.

Vote on motion: Aye – Porras, Hillan, Robbins, and Butler. Motion carried 4-0 in favor.

2. Nominations for Vice President –

President Butler opened the floor for nominations for Vice President.

Mr. Butler noted that Rikki Guthrie had expressed an interest in serving as Vice President, and he moved that Rikki Guthrie be nominated to serve as Vice President. Karen Robbins seconded.

Mr. Butler asked if there were any other nominations. There being none, he asked Board members to vote.

Vote on motion: Aye – Porras, Hillan, Robbins, and Butler. Motion carried 4-0 in favor.

3. Nominations for Secretary –

President Butler opened the floor for nominations for Secretary.

Karen Robbins moved that Sandra Hillan be nominated to serve as Secretary of the Board. Frank Porras seconded.

Mr. Butler asked if there were any other nominations. There being none, he asked Board members to vote.

Vote on motion: Aye – Porras, Hillan, Robbins, and Butler. Motion carried 4-0 in favor.

Congratulations were offered to Mrs. Hillan, and she and Mrs. Robbins moved to their new seating assignments. It was noted that the nameplates could be changed after the meeting.

4. Appointment of Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer –

Superintendent Peggy Buffington recommended the reappointment of Mrs. Dawn Powers and Mrs. Judy Henry to serve as Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer, respectively. Mrs. Powers and Mrs. Henry are bonded separately from the blanket bond which covers other employees.

Dr. Buffington indicated that Mrs. Powers and Mrs. Henry were “doing outstanding jobs” and requested Board action.

Karen Robbins moved that the Board appoint the Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer as recommended by Superintendent. Seconded by Frank Porras.

In the discussion, the Board appreciated the job they were doing and for “taking on such an important role.”

Vote on motion: Aye – Porras, Hillan, Robbins, and Butler. Motion carried 4-0 in favor.

5. Appointment of School Board Attorney –

It was noted that currently, William Longer serves as Board attorney. Per Board policy, the Board appoints a school attorney at their annual organizational meeting, and if they wish, the Board may set the retainer amount and additional costs for administrative and employee discipline and discharge proceedings and for litigation matters at this time.

Karen Robbins moved that the Board William Longer be appointed as the School Board Attorney. Seconded by Sandra Hillan.

In the discussion, Dr. Buffington indicated that a salary consideration for the retainer for this year was included with the electronic meeting information. President Butler indicated the retainer consideration was to increase the retainer fee by \$2,000.00, which was the amount that teachers received, for a total retainer of \$26,100.00 for the 2022 calendar year plus \$125.00 per hour for administrative and employee discipline and discharge proceedings and \$150.00 per hour for litigation matters. Mr. Butler extended his appreciation to Mr. Longer for his willingness for the continuation of hourly rates, as noted.

Mr. Butler asked Board members to vote on the motion.

Vote on motion: Aye – Porras, Hillan, Robbins, and Butler. Motion carried 4-0 in favor.

Mrs. Robbins noted that Rikki Guthrie was on her way. Mr. Longer indicated it was “his honor” to serve.

6. Establishment of Regular Meetings –

President Butler indicated that the establishment of Regular Meetings: I.C. 20-5-3-2 establishes the parameters for regular, statutory and special meetings. The Board needed to reestablish the time and place of their regular meetings. Presently, meetings are held on the first and third Thursdays, 7:00 p.m. prevailing time in the Board Room at Hobart High School. Statutory meetings are set by statute or rule, and special meetings of the

governing body shall be held on call by the Board President or the Superintendent of the school corporation.

Karen Robbins moved that the Board establish the parameters for regular, statutory and special meetings as follows: First and third Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. in this Board Room for regular meetings, special meetings are established by state statute or rule, and special meetings shall be held on call by the Board President or the Superintendent of the school corporation. Seconded by Frank Porras.

Vote on motion: Aye – Porras, Hillan, Robbins, and Butler. Motion carried 4-0 in favor.

7. Board Compensation –

Terry Butler indicated that Board Compensation’s maximum levels of compensation are established in accordance with I.C. 20-26-4-7, at \$2,000.00. For those school districts that have adopted per diem rates for attendance at school board meetings, the maximum rates continue to be \$112.00 for regular meetings, which are those meetings established by board resolution and \$62.00 for other meetings, such as special meetings, executive sessions, and committee meetings. Currently, members of the Board of School Trustees receive \$2,000.00 plus \$100.00 for each regular session meeting attended. Board members do not receive per diem compensation for attending any other Board meetings, such as special meetings, executive sessions, or committee meetings.

Sandra Hillan moved that the Board establish Board Compensation, as follows: \$2,000.00 plus \$100.00 for each regular session meeting attended. Board members do not receive per diem compensation for attending any other Board meetings, such as special meetings, executive sessions, or committee meetings. Seconded by Karen Robbins.

In the discussion, Terry Butler extended his appreciation to his fellow Board members for continuing with the same salary compensation. He noted that some school districts take advantage of the per diem rates and schedule additional meetings to earn additional compensation during the year.

Vote on motion: Aye – Porras, Hillan, Robbins, and Butler. Motion carried 4-0 in favor.

8. Board of Finance –

President Terry Butler indicated that I.C. 5-13-7-6 requires the Board of Finance to organize yearly after the first Monday and on or before the last day of January by electing a president and secretary. The Board of Finance meeting will be on January 20th. Per Board policy, the Board of Finance is the same as the regular Board, and the officers are the same. This needs to be acknowledged in the Board minutes of this meeting by motion as outlined in Board policy.

President Butler called for a motion.

Sandra Hillan moved that per Board policy, the Board of Finance is the same as the regular Board and the officers are the same and will convene a Board of Finance meeting on the January 20th. Frank Porras seconded.

Vote on motion: Aye – Porras, Hillan, Robbins, and Butler. Motion carried 4-0 in favor.

PROCLAMATION: School Board Recognition Month: Superintendent Peggy Buffington presented Proclamation No. 2022-1 that proclaimed the month of January as School Board Recognition Month and recognized the dedication and hard work our school board members, as well as their service. She indicated that the Board members work tirelessly for the students and expressed her thanks and appreciation to them.

Proclamation No. 2022-1, as presented and read is as follows:

School City of Hobart
Superintendent of Schools

Proclamation No. 2022-1
School Board Recognition Month

WHEREAS, an excellent public education system is vital to the quality of life for all citizens and communities; and

WHEREAS, local school board members are committed to children and believe that all children can be successful learners and that the best education is tailored to the individual needs of the child; and

WHEREAS, school board members work closely with parents, educational professionals and other community members to create the educational vision we want for our students; and

WHEREAS, school board members are responsible for building and maintaining the structure that provides a solid foundation for our school system; and

WHEREAS, school board members are strong advocates for public education and are responsible for communicating the needs of the school district to the public and the public's expectations to the district; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the public schools is to meet the diverse educational needs of all children and to empower them to become competent, productive contributors to a democratic society and an ever-changing world;

NOW, THEREFORE, I do hereby proclaim that the School City of Hobart proudly recognizes the dedication and hard work of its school board members and the month of January as School Board Recognition Month.

DATED this 6th day of January, 2022.

SCHOOL CITY OF HOBART

Peggy Buffington, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

PRESENTATION AND RECOGNITION: Partnership with the City of Hobart and the Hobart Police Department: Dr. Peggy Buffington welcomed Mayor Brian Snedecor, Chief of Police Rick Zormier, Capt. Garret Ciszewski, Lt. Commander Simon Gresser, Officer Matthew Bisig, and Officer Monte White to the meeting. She indicated that Police Chief Rick Zormier was retiring, and she wanted to recognize the partnership that the school district had with the City of Hobart and the Hobart Police Department. She reminisced that she had known the Mayor back to when she was teaching third grade at Foreman School, and the students raised money to purchase vests for Hobart police officers. In addition to those funds, her class raised funds for a vest for Rocky, the K-9 dog of then Officer Brian Snedecor. She said that the Mayor's relationship with the school district continued when he became a SRO. After attending a national school board conference, Board members decided they wanted to have a police dog in the school and felt it would make a difference in the school district. Dr. Buffington told the Mayor that she wanted Simon Gresser and Scout, but the Mayor told her that he did not think Officer Gresser would accept the assignment, nor did anyone else. After she spoke with Simon, he did accept. She indicated the partnership was very successful and a positive experience for all involved. The students at the high school loved having Scout in the building, as did all the other students when Simon and Scout visited their schools. After Sandy Hook, Dr. Buffington indicated that the school district, the Mayor and Deb Longer, Clerk-Treasurer, and Chief of Police brainstormed together and found the funds to have a SRO in every school to provide for the safety of students and staff. She said that this would not have happened without the partnership of the school district with the City of Hobart and the Hobart Police Department. This partnership has had a huge impact on our students, and the City and the Hobart Police Department were thanked for their participation with it.

On behalf of the Board and Dr. Buffington, Dr. Buffington presented a gift to Chief of Police Zormier in appreciation of everything he had done in providing for the safety of students and staff and for his retirement. It was a bronze statue of children, titled "Pulling for Kids" with a wooden base and an inscription. On behalf of the Board and Dr. Buffington, Dr. Buffington with the assistance of the student board representatives, Olivia Garcia and Morgan Sanchez, presented Certificates of Recognition to the Mayor, Chief of Police, Captain Garret Ciszewski, and Lt. Commander Simon Gresser as well as a treat bag for each of them. Morgan read the verbiage of the certificate aloud. The certificate for Clerk-Treasurer Deb Longer, who was unable to attend the meeting, was given to her husband, William Longer. Chief Zormier's wife was thanked for the sacrifice that she and her family have given in support of her husband throughout his career.

Mayor Snedecor noted he enjoys the partnership with the school district and working with Dr. Buffington and spoke about how hard everyone worked to be able to have a SRO in every school. He noted that Police

Chief Zormier was the second longest Chief of Police to serve the City of Hobart. He noted that usually Chiefs of Police serve three to three and one-half years, and “ten years is almost unheard of.” He indicated that Chief Zormier started the afterschool recreation program in the recreational area at the police station for the kids to play basketball and/or do their homework in a corner. It provides a safe place for those children to be after school. The police officers “rallied around” the program and realized the investment of time would be worthwhile in the long run. He knew that Chief Zormier had prepared Capt. Ciszewski to “carry on” after he retires. The Mayor thanked the Board for the partnership and was “looking forward to working together.” Dr. Buffington commented, “People follow good leadership.” She thanked Chief Zormier for his service and wished him well in his retirement. Mayor Snedecor commented that Chief Zormier would be close because he will be teaching the new recruits at the Law Enforcement Academy in Hobart. Terry Butler commented that as with everything, the times have changed in the operation of the police department as it has with schools. He noted a personal experience with one of his children violating curfew. He expressed his appreciation for all of the work that the police department does. Sandra Hillan commented that the SRO’s were also part of the community and recognized for the job they do. She noted the SRO’s “bring a sense of safety for the community and schools,” and she thanked them “for stepping up” and for their service. Karen Robbins thanked Lt. Commander Gresser for bringing Scout to the high school and noted they both “made a difference.” Mr. Butler noted the connection made with the students would always be of assistance for the SRO’s. Rikki Guthrie thanked Officer Bisig for “putting children first.” Dr. Buffington hoped that the “National Night Out” activities could be held this year because it always was a nice way to showcase the police department to the community.

RESOLUTION: School Resource Officers Appreciation Day: Dr. Peggy Buffington presented Resolution No. 2022-1 recognizing National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day on January 9, 2021. The resolution recognized our SRO’s and Hobart law enforcement officers’ commitment to keeping Hobart students, staff and community safe each day.

Secretary Sandra Hillan read Resolution No. 2022-1, aloud, as follows:

Resolution No. 2022-1

National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day

Whereas, the Hobart law enforcement goes above and beyond to protect the Hobart community; and

Whereas, the school district is fortunate to have School Resource Officers (SRO’s) in our schools; and

Whereas, the SRO’s go above and beyond to keep our students and staff safe on a daily basis; and

Whereas, the sacrifices of our SRO’s and local police officers are not unnoticed; and

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, that January 9, 2022, is designated as National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board urges the entire community of Hobart to recognize and appreciate the impact that our SRO’s and Hobart law enforcement has on the lives of our students and staff, as well as the Hobart community.

Dated this 6th day of January, 2022.

SCHOOL CITY OF HOBART
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

President

ATTEST:

Secretary

President Terry Butler called for a motion and a roll call vote.

Karen Robbins moved that the Board adopt Resolution No. 2022-1, as presented. Seconded by Rikki Guthrie.

Vote on motion: Secretary Sandra Hillan called roll on the vote as follows: Aye – Porras, Hillan, Robbins, Guthrie, and Butler. Nay – No one. Motion carried 5-0 in favor.

In the discussion, Dr. Buffington indicated that two of the district's SRO's were present, Officer Matthew Bisig and Sergeant Monte White. She expressed her appreciation to the SRO's for the outstanding job that they do at their respective schools. She spoke about how the SRO's jobs have changed, especially when the safety and wellbeing of students were involved and is a 24/7 job to which Sgt. White was able to attest to. The job is stressful especially in times after a school shooting occurs. An important factor of the SRO's jobs are getting to know their students and establishing trust with them, and this was something the students would remember. In addition, they interact with the staff and parents. Dr. Buffington noted at this year's annual Indiana school board conference there was discussion about virtual schools, and those offering virtual schools were asked how they take care of those students. They indicated they did not, and she noted that was not how our district takes care of our students. She noted the threat assessments and A.L.I.C.E. training that is done with the assistance of the SRO's. The school staffs appreciate the SRO's, as do the students. Certificates of Appreciation were presented to Officer Bisig and Sgt. White as well as treat bags. The remaining SRO certificates and treat bags were given to Officer Bisig and Sgt. White to pass on to them.

President Butler invited the audience to stay, but he excused anyone who needed to leave. No one remained in the audience.

CONSIDERATION: Renewal of Trademark License Agreement with Blythe's Athletics, Inc.: Dr. Peggy Buffington highlighted the renewal trademark license agreement with Blythe's Athletes, Inc. in Valparaiso for a royalty of 10%, payable quarterly. It is a two-year agreement effective through September 16, 2023.

Dr. Buffington recommended approval of the agreement with a royalty of 10% and requested Board action.

Frank Porras moved that the Board approve the trademark agreement with Blythe's Athletics, Inc. with a 10% royalty and authorize the superintendent to sign the agreement. Karen Robbins seconded.

In the discussion, Terry Butler inquired about the amount of monies that have been generated from the trademark license agreements. Dr. Buffington indicated that it was not a lot of monies, and the funds are given to support the Building Brickies Program. Mr. Butler asked for a report on the amount of funds that have been received.

Vote on motion: Aye – Porras, Robbins, Hillan, Guthrie, and Butler. Motion carried 5-0 in favor.

UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENTS/REPORTS: The Board received the following information:

➤ School Information – weekly agendas from all of the schools, the BricksCenter weekly newsletter, the January newsletters from the Early Learning Center, Joan Martin School, and the Transportation Department, and the January Activity Calendar from the Early Learning Center.

➤ Upcoming Activities/Events – the latest list of upcoming activities/events. Superintendent Buffington highlighted the following upcoming activities/events:

January 7 – eLearning Day

January 14 – HHS Records Day – No school for high students, but K-8 students are in school

January 17 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday – No school for all students

January 28 – K-8 Parent/Teacher Conferences – No school for students in these grades but high school students are in school.

February 3 – Showcase of Preschools @ the Early Learning Center, 6 pm

February 10 – PSAT/SAT Information Night – Virtual Zoom Meeting, 6-7:30 pm

➤ FOCUS ON EDUCATION – the January issue of the school district's newsletter, *Focus on Education*. Dr. Buffington noted that there were many good things happening in the district and said the Board members could review the newsletter at their convenience.

➤ UPDATE: Return to In-Person Instruction Plan: Brickie Forward 2021-0222 School Year – The Return to In-Person Instruction Plan: Brickie Forward 2021-2022 was updated with the latest CDC-IDH Guidelines for protocols pertaining to isolation and quarantine, as of December 30, 2021. Dr. Buffington supplied the updated information to staff and parents

and highlighted the nine page update with the Board. The page titles are, as follows:

- ◀ CDC: Isolation Guidance Updates
- ◀ CDC: Quarantine Guidance Updates
- ◀ K-12 **Isolation** Guidance: When all are masked
 - If student **tests positive**
- ◀ K-12 **Quarantine** Guidance: When All Are Masked
 - If student is **exposed** to someone with COVID-19 **in the classroom**
- ◀ K12 **Quarantine** Guidance: When All Are Masked
 - If student is **exposed** to someone with COVID-19 **outside of the classroom**, including home contacts:
 - If **fully vaccinated** (have received all doses of vaccines, including booster if eligible)
 - If **unvaccinated or partially vaccinated**:
- ◀ K-12 Enhanced Precautions
- ◀ Parent Daily Screening Tool
- ◀ K-12 Reminders
- ◀ Masks ARE REQUIRED on school buses

There was discussion along with Dr. Buffington's comments for each area. She noted that it was challenging, and the next two weeks continue to be so. The area hospitals are being swamped again with many of them on bypass. The goal is to keep students in school, and the staff has done a good job of being vaccinated. She indicated that the district was managing right now, and everything was being done to make people safe and "to keep the doors open." Everyone was reminded to be vigilant about wearing masks, social distancing, and washing their hands.

COMMENTS: From the administration, Peggy Buffington commented this was the first week back from winter break and had been a challenging week. She indicated on the Brickie Forward update and noted that 100 students were positive and said that the district was managing with the goal of staying open. She was worried about the loss of learning if the district would have to return to virtual e-learning. She indicated that the district would try to stay open, and the staff was working very hard to stay healthy. In addition, she said the school nurses were doing an awesome job. She was proud of everyone in the district for the work they are doing. Terry Butler commented that the ramifications of the loss of learning would probably not be felt until 2030's regardless of the measures taken to keep up. "It's lost time." Sandi Hillan agreed with Mr. Butler. Olivia Garcia said her little sister was having a difficult time with reading even with her help. Mr. Butler told her to "keep reading" to her and noted math skills would be difficult to pick up. Chris King commented the partnership with the city and the Hobart Police Department and recognizing the district's SRO's. He noted that the SRO's presence make a difference in the schools. He indicated Monte White, high school SRO, takes the time to visit with and interact with the Esports kids during club time. Mr. King appreciated the partnership and the work the SRO's do. Bill Longer commented that he had dealt with a number of police chiefs over the years and indicted that working with Chief Zormier was made easier because he has a law degree. Because Chief Zormier values education, it has changed the culture within the police department for staffing and promotion considerations. He thought those values would continue within the department. He commented on the value of the partnership with the city and the police department. He indicated that his wife was not able to attend tonight's meeting because she had to attend a Plan Commission meeting. Mr. Longer commented on the relationships the SRO's have with students and their families and noted the benefits will last long beyond the school years and help diffuse situations because of the relationships made during the school years. Jon Mock echoed Dr. Buffington's comments about everything that was going on. He had been busy filling positions and extended his appreciation to the nurses for their efforts in keeping students "healthy and ready to learn" and the SRO's for their presence in the schools. Whenever he goes to the schools, he likes seeing the SROs' cars in front of the schools, and he was sure that the students, staff, and parents do also. The staff and students appreciate the SRO's and all that they do for them. The district is fortunate to be able to have SRO's in each of the schools. Tim Krieg wished everyone "Happy New Year." He noted the great relationships with the city and police department, our outstanding Board members and the district's Work, Work, Work motto. He indicated the district may not be "utopia," but was a good place to work.

From the Board, Frank Porras appreciated the SRO's recognition and noted they were "a valuable asset" to the district. He said that Monte White was very accessible to the students and that connection would be there after they graduate and become community members. He thanked Mr. Mock for his HR work and noted the growth in personnel from Tuesday to Thursday. He thanked Bill Longer for his service and noted he was "a very valuable asset and great resource" for the Board. He commented on in-person teaching and noted how important the interaction between teachers and students was and hoped the district would be able to continue with in-person teaching. Karen Robbins thanked Dr. Buffington for recognizing the Board, and she thanked everyone on the opposite side of the room "for all you do." She appreciated the

recognition of the SRO's and was pleased that every school had one. Olivia Garcia indicated she was having a good week and noted the wearing of masks was being taken a little more seriously than before winter break, which she appreciated. Morgan Sanchez concurred about the wearing of masks, and she noted many of her friends got COVID over the break. She was "looking forward to a good year and staying safe." Sandi Hillan noted her appreciation of the school district's partnership with the city and Hobart Police Department. She indicated Jeff Hicks, a former Hobart police officer, recently passed away, and that his father passed away several months ago. She noted that she attended Foreman School as did the Hicks children and said the Hicks family had been an important part of the Hobart community for many years. She asked everyone to keep the Hicks family in their thoughts. She concurred with comments made about the SRO's and their presence and connections made with students and having SRO's in the schools "sends a message we care about our kids and their safety." She commented about an emergency situation when she was an elementary principal in another district and contacted that police department. It was two days before they responded to her call. That does not happen here because of the SRO's being in the buildings. She said the commitment level here is very great and "sends the message to the kids that they are important." Dr. Buffington noted that Jeff Hicks was one of the school district's first SRO's and said he was a great person. In addition, she noted that Jim Jaracz, former Hobart Fire Marshal, recently passed away and said he was of great assistance with the opening of the high school. She indicated that he worked with the state fire marshal in getting the necessary approvals at the state level and had impact on the opening of the school. Mr. Butler noted that Mr. Jaracz was one of his neighbors. Rikki Guthrie wished everyone "Happy New Year" and welcomed them back. She commented that the school year was about half-way completed and hoped the district would be able to stay open for the remainder of the school year because in-person instruction was the best option for teachers and students. She thanked all employee groups for everything they have done to keep the schools open for the students, expressed her appreciation for this, and indicated, "It takes all of them." Mrs. Guthrie indicated that she would be willing to fill in wherever needed on her days off. In addition, she mentioned that COVID-19 "had been tough for the students." Terry Butler thanked Rikki Guthrie and Sandi Hillan for being officers this year. He appreciated the recognition for the SRO's and the work that they do in the schools. Mr. Butler expressed his concern about this year's state legislature and legislation that was being proposed. There was discussion about the legislation and the need to contact the legislators was noted. Some of the legislation noted was a bill that seeks to require all school curricula (such as lesson plans, worksheets, presentations and other materials) to be vetted by parent review committees and posted publicly on line, another bill would add political party identifications for school board elections, rather than keeping nonpartisan boards, and a bill that would do away with the gun permits. Dr. Buffington did indicate that through the district's Canvas program our parents have access to this curricula information for their student whenever they access the program. The Board was not in favor of any of the proposed bills.

Since no one was in the audience, there were audience comments.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Board, President Butler adjourned the meeting around 8:36 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: The next regular session meeting is January 20, 2022.

BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
SCHOOL CITY OF HOBART

By _____
Terry D. Butler, President

ATTEST:

By _____
Sandra J. Hillan, Secretary

Submitted for Approval: January 20, 2022