The Dike-New Hartford Board of Education met March 26, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. for the Budget Hearing with Lotts, presiding and members Badker, Horner, McCarter and Petersen. Also present was administrator Stockdale.

Visitors present included Lorista Ambrose, Carrie Sherwood, Doug Stewart, David Dryer, Bill Close, Dave Steinfeldt, Andi O'Neill, Sully O'Neill, Mark Bystricky, Travis Druvenga, Brian Petullo, Tom Textor, Chad Bixby, Waylon Bern, Barry Cuvelier, and Cody Eichmeier.

The agenda was approved on motion of McCarter and second of Badker. Vote all aye.

During the public hearing, visitors shared their concerns about property owners on fixed incomes facing rising property taxes without additional income to offset the increases. It was suggested that the district start working on next year's budget earlier to allow more time for public input. There was also a call to review the budget for possible cuts, especially given declining enrollment, to prevent further tax increases. Additionally, the visitor/s would like to see what cost-saving measures the district has taken to understand what efforts have already been made. The question was also raised about whether public schools have a lobbying mechanism to address ongoing underfunding despite the state's surplus. Visitors also extended compliments for the Board's work to make Dike-New Hartford Community Schools a great place for kids, while navigating turbulent times with regard to funding and legislative expectations.

The board discussed different options for setting our total tax rate. The total tax rate of $14.81 (the same as the initial posting of $14.81) will be published for our Budget Adoption Hearing on April 16, 2025 at 5 p.m. The rate could be adjusted at the April 16, 2025 meeting pending any school funding changes during the state of Iowa legislative session.

Being no further business, the public hearing adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

The Dike-New Hartford Board of Education met on this date at 6:12 p.m. for the regular monthly meeting with Lotts presiding and members Badker, Horner, McCarter and Petersen. Also present was administrator Stockdale.

Visitors present included Travis Druvenga, Brian Petullo, Tom Textor, Chad Bixby, Waylon Bern, Barry Cuvelier, Mark Bystricky, and Cody Eichmeier.

The regular meeting agenda was approved as amended on motion of Badker and second of Horner. Vote all aye. Amendments included approval of the resignations from Sarah Triplett, a high school science teacher, and Jeff Jensen, a junior high baseball coach. The agenda had already been completed before receiving the resignations. The board needed to approve the resignations to be able to begin the hiring process of their replacements.

Minutes of the February 19, 2025 regular meeting and the February 26, 2025 work session were approved as written on the motion of McCarter and second of Petersen. Vote all aye.

Focus on Learning - Barry Cuvelier presented to the board on the health class that is offered for the 6-8th grade students. All students will get CPR training through the American Heart Association. This school year he has received some grants in order to get mannequins for the students to practice on to get more realistic training.

Principal, Technology and Building & Grounds Reports were reviewed with no action taken.

On motion of McCarter and second of Horner, the 28E Agreement with the Waterloo Career Center was approved for the 2025-26 school year. Vote all aye.

The student teaching agreement with Morningside College was approved on motion of Badker and second of Petersen. Vote all aye.

The board discussed adding a new high school assistant girl's tennis coach position due to the increase in the number of student athletes compared to 2024. A total of 25 girls have joined the tennis team for the 2024-25 season. An additional position was approved on motion of Petersen and second of Horner. Vote all aye.

Resignations were approved on motion of Badker and second of Horner:

- James Amling - Bus Driver
- Sarah Triplett - HS Science Teacher
- Jeff Jensen - JH Assistant Baseball Coach

Vote all aye. This item was acted upon as an amended item due to the timing of receiving the resignations and needing to start the hiring process.

Contracts were approved on motion of Horner and second of Badker:

- Abbie Banwarth - 8th Grade Girls Track Coach
- Chase Kueter - HS Girls Soccer Assistant
- Ben Freese - HS Assistant Boys Track
- Don Betts - HS Assistant Boys Track (0.5)
- Nick Durnin - HS Assistant Boys Track (0.5)
- Biz Martin - HS Assistant Girls Tennis
- Taylor Kiewiet - Co-Head Fall Cheer Coach
- Tianna Butteris - School Nurse

The second reading of board policies 401.6, 710.1E2, and 710.1R1 were approved on motion of Petersen and second of McCarter. Vote all aye.

The first reading of board policies 905.1 to allow Superintendent Stockdale's discretion to begin allowing facility rentals on Sundays to start earlier than 1:00 p.m. was approved on motion of Horner and second of Badker. Vote all aye.

The AEA Purchasing Contract for the 2025-26 school year was approved on motion of McCarter and second of Petersen. Vote all aye.

The Local Government Risk Pool for Natural Gas contract for the 2025-26 school year was approved on motion of Horner and second of Badker. Vote all aye.

The board discussed options regarding the allocation of the interest from the CD that came due in March. Going forward, the interest will be allocated to the Management Fund to offset the costs of the increase of the property insurance premiums, and the wind/hail deductible provision.

Bills of the General, Activity and Nutrition funds were approved for payment on motion of McCarter and second of Petersen. Vote all aye.

Financial Reports of the General, Activity and Nutrition funds were approved as presented on motion of Badker and second of Horner. Vote all aye.

The 5-year facility plan was reviewed with the board to discuss both current and future projects for the district.

Other items of discussion with no action taken included a legislative session update, scheduled the People's Savings Bank board member and administrator dinner for the April board meeting, and set the date for the DNH FFA banquet. Being no further business, the board transitioned into the work session at 7:19 p.m.

Following the regular meeting, the board held a work session to discuss dual sporting at Dike-New Hartford. The board reviewed the notes from the prior work session and took the feedback from coaches, administrators, parents, and students into consideration when discussing both the pros and cons of dual sporting. The board will take action at the April 16, 2025 board meeting. The work session adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

APPROVED: _____ _____

Christa Lotts, President Kayla Sabbah, Secretary