

**NORTHWESTERN ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING #5, FY13 AGENDA**

Open Meeting Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER

Date: Wednesday, February 20, 2013
Time: 4:30 p.m.
Location: Ogle County Special Education Office, Byron, IL
Type of meeting: Regular
Name of person taking the minutes: Jean Tritle, Board Secretary
Name of person(s) presiding: Sarah Willey, Chairperson

II. ROLL CALL

Members in attendance:

1. Kathy Countryman (arrived at 4:58 p.m.)
2. Dennis Daly
3. Drew Hoffman
4. Kimberly Moore
5. Mike Noble
6. Lisa Wiet
7. Sarah Willey
8. Tom Zelten

Members Absent:

1. Karen Sanders

Also present:

1. Laura Frankiewicz, Regional Director
2. Jean Tritle, Board Secretary

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by: Daly

Motion: to approve the agenda as presented

Motion seconded by: Zelten

The Chairperson asked for a voice vote.

Voice Vote: "Ayes" – All "Nays" – None

Action: Pass

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Reception of Guests & Visitors & Opportunity for Public Comment

There were none.

V. CLOSED SESSION TO CONSIDER THE APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION, DISCIPLINE, PERFORMANCE, OR DISMISSAL OF SPECIFIC EMPLOYEES OF THE PUBLIC BODY OR LEGAL COUNSEL FOR THE PUBLIC BODY, INCLUDING HEARING TESTIMONY ON A COMPLAINT LODGED AGAINST AN EMPLOYEE OF THE PUBLIC BODY OR AGAINST LEGAL COUNSEL FOR THE PUBLIC BODY TO DETERMINE ITS VALIDITY, AS MANDATED BY SECTION 2.06 [5 ILCS 120/2.06].

Motion made by:

Hoffman

Motion:

to move into Closed Session at 4:35 p.m.

Motion seconded by:

Daly

The Chairman asked for a roll call

Roll Call:

“Ayes” – Daly, Hoffman, Moore, Noble, Wiet, Willey, Zelten

“Nays” – None

Action: Approved

Motion made by: Daly

Motion: to move return to Open Session at 5:11 p.m.

Motion seconded by: Wiet

The Chairman asked for a roll call

Roll Call:

“Ayes” – Hoffman, Moore, Noble, Wiet, Willey, Zelten, Countryman, Daly

“Nays” – None

Action: Approved

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes of FY13 Meeting #4 on January 23, 2013**
- B. Approval of Closed Session Meeting Minutes of Meeting #4 on January 23, 2013**
- B. Approval of Personnel Report**
- D. Approval of Accounts Payable for the Month of February 2013**
- E. Acknowledgement of Receipt of Treasurer’s Report for the Months of December 2012 and January 2013 (Handout)**

Motion made by: Daly

Motion: to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion seconded by: Moore

Frankiewicz noted that the closed session minutes needed the following corrections: Change date from January 23, 2012 to January 23, 2013; change the fiscal year from FY12 to FY13; and change the meeting number from #9 to #4.

The Chairman asked for a roll call

Roll Call:

“Ayes” – Moore, Noble, Sanders, Wiet, Willey, Zelten, Countryman, Daly, Hoffman

“Nays” – None

Action: Approved

VII. REGIONAL DIRECTOR’S REPORT

A. HLERK – The Extra Mile – January 2013

B. NIA FY14 Service Fees Summary (Handout)

Frankiewicz explained that the handout was a preliminary summary of the service fees for FY14 compiled as a result of the Needs Assessment process. She explained that the numbers are similar to what they were last year, adding that some of the fees were increased. There were no great swings seen in services being recommended. However, we will not know the final numbers for services until the Needs Assessment forms are received back from the Districts on March 31, 2013, though any large change in services would have to have been requested by the Directors by now. Frankiewicz noted that NIA staff has been holding regional meetings with the Directors to go over their Needs Assessments. Frankiewicz has

received positive feedback from the Directors, who appear to like these meetings as they offer “one stop shopping” for services. Hoffman agreed that he likes this process as well.

C. NIA Policies and Procedures Manual

Frankiewicz reported that the NIA Policies and Procedures manual had been updated and will be distributed to all of the NIA offices. A copy of the manual was shown to the Board members. Moore suggested that an electronic version of the manual be made available to employees, as this gives them easy access to the topics in which they are interested. Frankiewicz stated that she would definitely consider this, as we are trying to put as many documents and forms as possible on the NIA website.

D. College Expo

Frankiewicz informed the Board members that Sheri White, a supervisor in the Vision/Ortho/Multi Department who oversees the STEP Program, organized a College Expo, which was held on February 13, 2013. The purpose of the expo was to showcase programs that offer a college experience to students with cognitive disabilities. 250 people from 17 different counties attended the expo; registration actually had to be halted due to the large turnout. Each participating college gave a presentation after which parents and students could ask questions. The local Edward Jones Financial Planner was also available, as well as representatives from Rehabilitative Services. Frankiewicz said that Sheri White expressed an interest in holding this event on an annual or biannual basis.

Noble stated that a group of students and staff members from his organization attended the expo; they all thought it was a good program. However, the tuition for some of the college programs is the same as it is for regular students. He thought it would be helpful to find programs with reduced tuition for students with disabilities.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Approval of NIA Staff Suspension Policy

Motion made by: Zelten

Motion: to approve the NIA Staff Suspension as presented

Motion seconded by: Daly

Frankiewicz explained that the need for this type of policy became apparent when we experienced a problem with tardiness by some of the paraprofessionals in the Hearing Impaired Program that needed to be addressed. The progressive discipline policy was followed, but NIA has no formal suspension policy.

The policy itself is the first page of the document. It gives the Regional Director the authority to suspend a staff member, with or without pay, for 30 employment-days or six weeks. Willey asked, if a holiday occurs in the 30-day period, would it extend the time the employee would be suspended. Frankiewicz answered that it would, but she still preferred this time period as opposed to six weeks.

The Rules and Regulations had some areas in which Board input is needed. The Board needs to decide if a suspended employee would appeal to them or to a Hearing Officer appointed by the Board, with the Board having the ultimate say. Frankiewicz recommended the appointment of an experienced Hearing Officer. The Board members agreed, as this person would be independent of the Board. This decision resulted in having the first motion fail and a second motion made to include the changes agreed upon by the Board.

The Chairman asked for a roll call

Roll Call:

“Ayes” – None

“Nays” – Noble, Wiet, Willey, Zelten, Countryman, Daly, Hoffman, Moore

Action: **Failed**

Motion made by: **Hoffman**

Motion: **to approve the NIA Staff Suspension with the addition of language for a 30 employment-days suspension period and the appointment of a Hearing Officer throughout the policy**

Motion seconded by: Daly

The Chairman asked for a roll call

Roll Call:

“Ayes” – Wiet, Willey, Zelten, Countryman, Daly, Hoffman, Moore, Noble

“Nays” – None

Action: **Passed**

B. Approval of Amended 403(b) Plan

Motion made by: **Zelten**

Motion: **to approve the amended 403(b) Plan**

Motion seconded by: Moore

Frankiewicz explained that the Plan Document we had on file contained no signatures or updated appendices. The entire document was revised by the attorneys to include recent changes to the laws governing these plans. The Plan Document is now clean and accurate.

The Chairman asked for a roll call

Roll Call:

“Ayes” – Willey, Zelten, Countryman, Daly, Hoffman, Moore, Noble, Wiet

“Nays” – None

Action: **Approved**

C. Approval of the Reduction in Audiologist Base Days

Motion made by: **Daly**

Motion: **to approve the Reduction in Audiologist Base Days**

Motion seconded by: Noble

Frankiewicz informed the Board that the audiologists have been asking for this change for a while. The NIA currently employs 5 audiologists of whom one is 1 full-time and four are part-time. Two of the audiologists have over 30 years of service with the NIA. One of the audiologists conducted a comparison with other co-ops concerning salaries and number of days worked. Based on the results, the audiologists are asking for a reduction in the base number of days they work with no corresponding reduction in salary. They also pointed out that at 215 base responsibility days, they must work more days than most other staff members in order to be eligible for benefits. Frankiewicz reminded the Board that we do have other employees who work more than 215 days, such as the Therapy Operations Executive, who works 220 and the secretarial staff, who work 250. The audiologists are required to work more days than other professional staff members due to the fact that they perform summer evaluations.

would have privately-owned computers. The member districts may not allow NIA employees to bring them on-site and plug them into their servers. Moore agreed. Frankiewicz answered that they could get access to the internet as a “guest”. Noble and Hoffman both stated that their employees gain access through WIFI.

Moore expressed concern that there would be student information on these computers and wondered what would happen if the computer was lost or stolen. Also, what would happen to this information if the employee leaves the NIA? Daly stated that in Winnebago, the employees must bring their laptops into the IT Department so these files can be cleaned off of the employee’s computer before they leave their employment. Frankiewicz stated that the Board could say no to the incentive plan and require the employees to purchase their own computer; this still would leave us no control over the personal use of the laptops.

Countryman stated that another point to consider is that the whole computer – both personal and work files - could be subpoenaed in a court case.

Zelten reiterated that these employees are district employees and, therefore, it should be the responsibility of the district to provide them with IT services. Noble disagreed, stating that the districts pay the NIA for the employees’ services. He added that he would rather hire someone who already has a computer; he would not contract with a party who does not have their own equipment. He clarified if the plan is to give each employee \$100 or \$200 to help with the purchase of a laptop; the employee would then be responsible for the remaining cost. Frankiewicz confirmed that this is correct. Noble wondered about ownership rights if both the NIA and the employee pay a portion of the total cost.

Hoffman asked what happens to the computer if the employee terminates their employment with the NIA. Frankiewicz answered that they would keep it. Hoffman stated that NIA should provide the laptops and the districts should provide adequate work space and access to the internet.

Wiet stated that she is uncomfortable with this plan as some employees may not have the financial means to purchase a laptop, even with the incentive payment. If a laptop is an integral tool needed by the employee to perform his/her job, then NIA should provide it. Noble suggested looking into leasing the laptops; this could cost less and solve the question of ownership. Frankiewicz said she would explore this option.

Willey stated that she is worried about legal issues that could come to play if the employee owns the laptop, such as FOIA requests.

Hoffman recommended that the motion be tabled until information concerning the leasing of the laptops is received. Without that piece, the Board cannot make an informed decision. Willey agreed.

E. Approval of Provision of NIA Services to Barrington #220 and Lake Zurich #95

Motion made by: Daly

Motion: to approve the Provision of NIA Services to Barrington #220 and Lake Zurich #95

Motion seconded by: Hoffman

Frankiewicz explained that neither district is a part of the NIA ten-county region. They both used to purchase services from SEDOL. The NIA guidelines were changed to allow out-of-region districts to purchase services from the NIA. This past year, both districts purchased

services from the NIA based on the new guidelines. Their request to purchase NIA services must be approved every year.

Zelten asked about audio services versus audio baseline services. Frankiewicz answered that neither district purchases audio baseline services as they do not perform screenings. Zelten asked if they are receiving any services for which they are not paying through audio. Frankiewicz answered that they are not, as we do not provide any early intervention services. The audiology services are for kids with a hearing impairment who need yearly audiologists. She added that we will eventually eliminate baseline services as they are difficult to understand. She recommended that the Board approve the motion.

The Chairman asked for a roll call

Roll Call:

“Ayes” – Countryman, Daly, Hoffman, Moore, Noble, Wiet, Willey, Zelten

“Nays” – None

Action: Approved

F. Acceptance of Donation from the Family of Kathy Blaha

Motion made by: Daly

Motion: to accept the Donation from the Family of Kathy Blaha

Motion seconded by: Noble

Frankiewicz explained that Kathy Blaha worked for the NIA as an Occupational Therapist for eight years. Kathy was a valued therapist who was devoted to her profession. She passed away in December 2011. As a part of her dedication, Kathy acquired a vast array of OT materials. Her family wishes to donate these materials to the NIA. She added that the Board always approves the acceptance of a donation. Frankiewicz said that she would write a letter to the family to thank them for the donation.

The Chairman asked for a roll call

Roll Call:

“Ayes” – Daly, Hoffman, Moore, Noble, Wiet, Willey, Zelten, Countryman

“Nays” –

Action: Approved

G. Acceptance of Board Member’s Resignation

Motion made by: Daly

Motion: to accept the resignation of Board member Carla Cumblad

Motion seconded by: Moore

Frankiewicz explained that Cumblad resigned because her co-op is going out for bid for therapy services and this could be construed as a conflict of interest with her position on the Board. Frankiewicz asked her if she could resign temporarily until a decision is made. Cumblad’s attorneys advised against this.

Hoffman added that the resignation is accepted with regret and a big thank you.

The Chairperson asked for a voice vote.

Voice Vote: “Ayes” – All “Nays” – None

Action: Pass

IX. Chairperson’s Comments and Other Business

There were none.

X. ADJOURNMENT – The Chairperson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion made by: Wiet

Motion: to Adjourn.

Motion seconded by: Moore

The Chairperson asked for a voice vote.

Voice Vote: “Ayes” – All “Nays” – None

Action: Pass

The meeting was adjourned at 6:22 p.m.