

Minutes
Joint Council Meeting
Muscatine School Board of Education
Muscatine City Council
Muscatine County Board of Supervisors
December 17, 2024
6:00 p.m. - Muscatine Administrative Center

The Muscatine School District Board of Education, the Muscatine City Council, and the Muscatine County Board of Supervisors in the County of Muscatine, State of Iowa, met in a work session on Tuesday, December 17, 2024. Board of Education President Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. School Board Directors Matt Conard, Karen Cooney, Ken LaRue, Kim Schneider, Lindsey Phillips and Denny Schuur were present, Director John Dabeet was absent. Mayor Brad Bark and council members; Don Lampe, Jeff Osborne, Peggy Gordon, Nadine Brockert, John Jindrich, Angela Lewis and Matt Conard were present. Board of Supervisors Chair Jeff Sorensen, and Supervisors Scott Sauer, Danny Chick, and Kurt Kirchner were present. Supervisor Nathan Mather was absent. Also present were Superintendent Clint Christopher, Muscatine City Administrator Matthew Mardesen, and City Clerk Cinda Hilger.

Board President Phillips welcomed the visitors and thanked everyone for coming to the joint meeting.

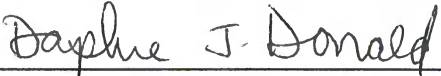
City of Muscatine - Mayor Brad Bark Mayor Bark introduced Matt Mardesen as the new City Administrator. Mr. Mardesen gave a brief overview of his background working in Law Enforcement and with JEO Consulting Group. Mr. Mardesen is looking forward to visiting and working with the people in Muscatine. He encouraged everyone to feel free to reach out to him with ideas. Mayor Bark shared that the city is working on goal setting and the city's Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan will be available for review at a public meeting in January. Mayor Bark anticipates the plan to be complete by June. Mayor Bark would like to have a meeting at least once a year with all the elected officials in Muscatine County to come together and work towards aligning the work the individual groups are doing.

Muscatine Community School District - Superintendent Clint Christopher Superintendent Christopher gave an update of the school district's construction projects. The Jefferson Elementary School Addition is almost complete; furniture will be moved into the new space over Winter Break and students will begin using the classrooms in January, noting that next year the district will begin transitioning some students to Jefferson. The first phase of the Central Project is complete. The parking lot and brick work is done, the roof has been replaced and renovations in the gym are complete. The next phase will be to renovate the Central Auditorium. The district has budgeted \$2,000,000 for the renovation and will be working with a Theater Consultant to determine the renovations. Bids for Phase II of the Central Project will be posted in the spring with renovation beginning in the summer. Superintendent Christopher reported that about 25 - 30 students are currently attending the alternative program at the Muscatine Center for Academic Performance (MCAP) on Houser Street. This program is for juniors and seniors who are at risk of not graduating. There are two Muscatine High School teachers and one paraeducator working with the students at MCAP. The district is no longer using online programs for individual student work. The online programs being used at Muscatine High School, and MCAP are supported by teachers. Superintendent Christopher announced that the high school will soon have an ROTC program available for students. The program requires hiring an enlisted person to work in the program teaching academic classes, artillery and leadership skills. Superintendent Christopher hopes to have the program beginning next fall. The district will continue to offer Work-Based Learning experiences and internships and hopes to increase student participation in the fall. Mr. Christopher reported that 75% of our high school kids are earning college credit by the time they are graduating, noting students with college credits before they finish high school are more likely to attend college after graduating. The district continues to use the Daily Desired Experience (DDE) Survey to solicit feedback from staff, students, and families. Superintendent Christopher said the number of people completing the survey has increased this year. District and building staff use the feedback to look for how the district can continue to improve.

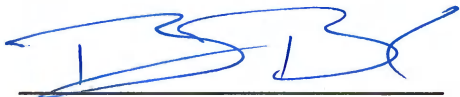
County Board of Supervisors - Chair Jeff Sorensen Supervisor Sorensen stated the major renovation under way at the Muscatine Courthouse is currently focused on working on the courthouse dome and re-doing the entire roof with slate tiles. The work on the Trolley Bridge is finished and Moscow Road has been repaved. The next major road project for the county is working on Stewart Road. That work is scheduled to begin next summer. The work that the county is planning will only be on Stewart Road. The road will be built to current safety standards. The guard rails around existing mine sites are covered by mining regulations and generally not under the county's right of way. Supervisor Sorensen acknowledged that the route for the proposed triathlon at Deep Lakes may need to be adjusted. The County Conservation Board is in the process of installing 25 Campsites at Deep Lakes Park. The Deep Lakes Campsites will utilize a septic tank and a well. Connecting to municipal water and sewer was not financially feasible. The Eastern Iowa Mental Health and Disability Service Region has had some recent changes that is causing some anxiety with the current staff and clients. Mr. Sorensen encouraged anyone with questions or concerns to reach out to him. The County is looking at numerous alternate energy developers looking at green energy in Muscatine County. The county currently has a moratorium in place on wind development and anticipates public hearings on ordinance proposals in early spring. The County project to make levee improvements and to move the incipient point is now complete.

Collaborate Muscatine - Summit Debrief Mayor Bark shared that he appreciated the education portion of the Summit and the collaboration between MCC and the Muscatine School District. Noting that 75% of the Muscatine High School students will graduate from high school with some college credit. Superintendent Christopher said there are a number of students who participate in the Work Based Learning Program. Working with community members and businesses gaining skills and working towards a certificate. Muscatine Community College now has a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) program for students interested in earning a CDL. Superintendent Christopher shared that Collaborate Muscatine is working together to share with the community all the great things that are happening in Muscatine. Superintendent Christopher stressed the importance of working together and said that the District has been able to lower the chronic absenteeism rate in our schools due to the Muscatine County Attorney's support. Board President Lindsey Phillips noted the work that the Community Foundation has been doing to alleviate the need for affordable housing in Muscatine. Everyone agreed about the importance of meeting the housing needs in Muscatine. Councilman Don Lampe said that the non-profit *Habitat for Humanity* can build a home in Muscatine for about \$160,000. *Habitat for Humanity* and *Rebuild Muscatine* are able to help people stay in their current homes, through renovations and home repairs. The group discussed ways to help residents with a variety of housing needs and discussed housing initiatives to attract more people to live in Muscatine.

A motion was made by Board of Education Director Kim Schneider and seconded by Mayor Brad Bark to adjourn the meeting. All ayes; motion carried. Time: 7:12 p.m.


Daphne J. Donald, MCSD Board Secretary

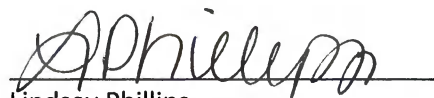
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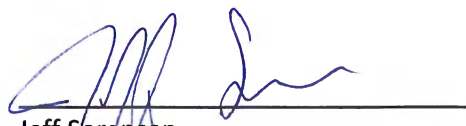
Brad Bark
Mayor



Matthew Mardeson
City Administrator



Lindsey Phillips
School Board President



Jeff Sorensen
Board of Supervisors