

**SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 92 (NISGA'A)  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
REGUAR BOARD MEETING  
SCHOOL BOARD OFFICE VIA TEAMS  
GITLAXT'AAMIKS, BC**

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2020 – 6:30 PM**

<b>In attendance:</b>	Norman Hayduk Jill Jensen Kory Tanner Sharlene Grandison	Nass Camp Trustee Superintendent of Schools Secretary Treasurer Recording Secretary
<b>Via Microsoft Teams:</b>	Elsie Davis, Board Chair Floyde Stevens Charlene Ousey Alvin Azak	Laxgalts'ap Trustee Gingolx Trustee Gitlaxt'aamiks Trustee Gitwinksihkw Trustee

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

Trustee Stevens, Chairing the meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m.

**2. DECLARATION OF QUORUM:**

Board Chair declared a quorum

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA FOR JUNE 16, 2020:**

**R02-1321**

That Board of Education approve the September 22, 2020 Agenda as presented.

Trustee Ousey/Trustee Hayduk

Carried

**4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING:**

**R02-1322**

That the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board held on June 16, 2020 be approved as presented.

Trustee Ousey/Trustee Azak

Carried

**5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:**

none

**6. PRESENTATION:**

none

7. **EDUCATION:**  
Jill Jensen, Superintendent

7.1 Enrolment

Projected enrolment for 2020/2021 was 382 students on which the budget is based. Current enrolment as of today is:

NESS: Elementary – 89 / Secondary – 117 = 206  
GES: 27  
AAMES: 77  
NBES: 36

Total: 346

For information only

7.2 School Start Up

School startup went well despite our one-week delay of getting students into the classroom. Yesterday was our first day of classroom instruction, it seemed to go really well. Visited Nathan Barton Elementary School today, and the students seemed very happy to be back at school. Teachers seemed happy to have them back and it was really nice after six months to have teachers and students in the building. Thanks to the Operations Department for helping to have everything ready and in place for a safe start.

- Start up went as smoothly as possible under the circumstances
- Professional Development Day was well received and included: staff sharing of practice in like-level groupings with a focus on cross-curricular, project and place-based learning; core competencies; MyEd; health & safety protocols, safe work procedures and understanding guiding documents (District Response Plan, BCCDC Guidelines for K-12 schools, and WorkSafe BC protocols); language and culture; draws & door prizes
- Week one for students started September 14 with at-home learning plans
- Looking forward to working with Peter and having an expert in language & culture overseeing district programming, building staff capacity, and enhancing student learning

For information only

7.3 2020/2021 School Calendar

- The School Calendar was adjusted due to the Education Conference scheduled for September 21, 2020 was postponed due to COVID.
- The Conference is tentatively scheduled for February 5, 2021

For information only.

#### 7.4 Student Achievement Report

Normally in the Spring we have a whole range of student assessments that we do and because of COVID last year, we were unable to do those Spring Assessments. We do not have a clear picture of where our students ended academically last year. We do have their assessments from the Fall. In the Fall students in grades 4 and 7 write the Foundation Skills Assessment. Students will be writing that again this year between October 5 and November 13. Below is a brief summary of our results from last year.

Grade 4	Participation Rate		Emerging		On-Track		Extending	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Reading	33	97	21	65.6	11	34.4	0	0
Writing	33	93.9	15	48.4	16	51.6	0	0
Numeracy	33	97	29	90.6	3	9.4	0	0

Grade 7	Participation Rate		Emerging		On-Track		Extending	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Reading	31	84	16	61.5	10	38.5	0	0
Writing	31	64.5	12	60	8	40	0	0
Numeracy	31	77.4	24	100	0	0	0	0

For information only.

Trustee Ousey:

Saw a lot of posts on facebook of kids first day of school and lining up. Parents expressed concern that there was not a lot of social distancing. Are there supervisors outside to remind students of social distancing?

Superintendent Jensen:

Staff should be outside reminding, and we knew when students returned this week, the first task for our teachers would be educating students on safety measures, school is different. One thing teachers are very good at is setting up routines and teaching children how to follow routines. When I was a NBES today, it was amazing how well the children at day 2 were starting to pick up the routines.

Trustee Azak:

With the fear that I hear from the parents in the community, what percentage of the registered students actually show up in the classroom?

Superintendent Jensen:

My understanding is that all of the registered students are showing up. With our plan right now, we have extremely small class size learning, teams and cohorts are very small. We have students in class 50% of the time, and they are engaging at home learning 50% of the time. Teachers are trying to be more intentional with their instruction when children are there and give them activities they can do independently when they are at home. I feel we are very fortunate based on our

smaller size that we are able to address those concerns and I hope that having students back will help to ease them of those concerns as parents see the safety measures that are in place.

Trustee Davis:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our teachers, our staff, our Administration, our Operations and especially the parents and caregivers of our children for all of the work that has been put into ensuring that our children are safe in our district and all of the understanding. It is not an easy time right now and we are all fearful. Thank you especially the parents for understanding and working with the district to ensure that are kids are getting an education in the safest possible way.

Trustee Hayduk:

On the assumption, let's hope that we do not get to that situation where there is a COVID positive event in one of the schools. Has that been sorted out as to how the district would respond if that was to come about?

Superintendent Jensen:

There are Provincial protocols in place and unfortunately there have been several schools in the Province that have already dealt with COVID cases with students and staff. There are very clear protocols in place. Should that happen, we work very closely with Nisga'a Valley Health. We have been in close communication with Nisga'a Valley Health over the summer and the start of the school year.

Trustee Hayduk:

When it comes to the FSA in the 4 and 7 level, is there any kind of modification of expectations? This is province wide, and students not having the regular school opportunities, does that change anything when it comes to expectations for FSA results?

Superintendent Jensen:

My guess would be no because the FSA's are based on curricular outcomes. They are basically assessing where students are at by the end of grade 3 in accumulating of skills they have developed in K-3. I think provincially it will give us a good measure of where our students are at and how and if COVID has affected their achievement, and it's just one measure of assessing.

## 7.5 Language & Culture Report

District Principal for Language & Culture, Peter McKay presents his Language and Culture report:

A few concerns and successes pulled from the report:

Success:

Have a wealth of knowledge in our district, the language and culture program in our building. That material has been sitting there for a long, long time. Somethings have been there since the 70's. What I have started doing is revamping some of the useful pieces that we could use a curriculum in the

school setting ex: Have an older version of a reader that is used for teaching language, it is used for teaching conversation. The book and its layout are not very appealing to children, it is a beautiful resource. What I have decided to do is to take the document as such and start revamping them. So we have in the printing press right now through the generosity of the NESS FNEESC Program a new version of the book, a digitized version that will be used in the classroom setting, something that is appealing not only to children, but all learners.

Trustee Azak:

Peter, for the time you have been there, have you come up with any specific plans as to where you want to go in the near future with the language and culture program?

Peter McKay:

It would be great if at the high school level, we had a position for a high school teacher. I have come to learn that over the years that position fell out of existence because of low enrolment. When I arrived back at the district, I was put in that classroom and enrolment started to come up again. Still it sits as an option for high school teacher or high school students to enroll for credit option. I would like for the high school programming because there is time to do it for all Nisga'a students in high school, that it become mandatory for them from grade 8 – 12 to take our language, not just for credit, but to have that infused in their daily experience at NESS. We have the resources to do that, so that needs to be developed. The curriculum in BC calls for an infusion of Aboriginal content. We have a wealth of information that we can develop so that it is of use to students on a digital platform and in the classroom setting. Currently I am working with two primary teachers who have started the process of taking Nisga'a seasonal calendar and incorporating that into the lesson planning and year planning so that there is an infusion of Nisga'a content in the classroom aside from language learning. So, the plan is that eventually we will get to the space where the rest of the Province is saying "look what the Nisga'a are doing" let's follow their lead.

Trustee Azak:

You mentioned all the resources that are in the building, are you going to be able to as one person do as much as you want with the resources that are there?

Peter McKay:

Knowing that we have aboriginal enhancement fund in our district, I have lobbied for one of our E.A.'s to be released and return to the title of Language Assistant, so that we can go through boxes and decide what do to with them. So, lobbying for assistance with Human Resources that we have currently in the district. I know another project that we are doing right now, and this is only through the FNEESC Grant, and has nothing to do with the district, but students I am working with, will receive credit for the painting of the house front of the long house/smokehouse, so why can't we rely on student body as well as to received credit for digitizing sorts of things. There is a lot of ideas there.

Trustee Ousey:

I have been with PAC, not recently. One of the main concerns from PAC has been that there is a curriculum for Nisga'a language and culture and I am not sure if I heard you correctly, but what I heard was, this teacher is pulling from the calendar, I am just hoping that there is a curriculum so that if somebody, a family moves from Kincolith to Greenville, their children are learning the same thing in each Nisga'a class. Is that happening?

Peter McKay:

Yes, we are in the first stages of that happening. Through the First Nations Language Essential Program. The school district did develop a K-3 primary focused curriculum, that curriculum has been in use because the digitization process is lacking in our district. There are recordings there that we can no longer access. So, there is work to be done to bring that back in use. There is also a language program I did encounter in the files at the Language and Culture building, an immersion program, so at one point our district did have an immersion program, a curriculum developed, it has been sitting. Having found these three different types of curriculum that we do use or that have been developed in the district is going to be a few moons before we use that again effectively. Again, we lack Human Resources in the teaching of Nisga'a language.

Trustee Davis:

Thank you, Mr. McKay, for your very thorough and honest report. A couple of questions, and I'm not sure if you would be the person to answer, possible our Secretary Treasurer might answer them. Looking here it says that our sim algax teachers are currently employed at .5, it was my understanding that our sim algax teachers are employed full-time at the schools. Since you have been here, a two-part question:

Are the teachers in the schools full-time and the other part of this question is if they are in the schools full-time, where are the dollars coming from for that?

Peter McKay:

Currently the teacher we have are not full-time, and they are .5. Which basically is 2 ½ days of time to deliver just the language. It is a small portion of time for our teachers, one thing that we know can happen is we risk losing them, just like anywhere else in the Province, you need more than that to survive on. If we were to and I know their wages come from the fund 131 Aboriginal Enhancement dollars. A beautiful thing happening right now with the FNEESC Grant is we are able to bring a few more people on board. However, that's not going to last. So, we have to really digest that and look deeper as to what are we going to do as a district at district level, once those funds dry out.

Trustee Davis:

In regard to the delivery of the language at Laxgalts'ap Elementary, last year they were utilizing the AskMe document. I do know that there was some

success in that. I was able to be present at a few presentations where Kindergarten students were creating their own songs in Nisga'a language, creating games online with Nisga'a language. The AskMe document, are you seeing this as part of the future?

Peter McKay:

Yes, I think that as we work with the document and translate it. We've just been translating as we go, it is quite a thick document. It's absolutely beautiful and useful and the students are retaining the learning in that document. The document itself, the version we have is level one. There is going to be a level two and level 3 that will come from the Chief Atahm School is Chase, BC. It's a program that is utilized all throughout the Province, all aboriginal schools are using this curriculum. We're hopeful that when we do receive level 2 and 3, that this will really kick start and be a foundation, not only for students, but for adults to learn from. It's been a good device to train the teachers we've hired.

Board Chair:

I've been on the record myself as a Trustee, advocating the language and culture program for the district. We must do everything we can to ensure that our children are learning the language. We put very high value on that for our Nation. If we draw on resources from other people within our Nation to assist us, then we should look at that. To me a Nisga'a language teacher is important as the English teacher. It's the future of our language. One of the things I suggested in the past, when COVID hit, and Nisga'a home sent home, that maybe develop a handbook for young parents who may not know the language, or an answer sheet, so they can interact with students at home.

Trustee Ousey:

You are trying to recruit an E.A. to return back, if that is successful, would the E.A. be replaced? If you take somebody away, then somebody has to be replaced.

Peter McKay:

Currently our E.A.'s are employed through the Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement dollars, and for recording purposes we need evidence that Aboriginal Enhancement is taking place in our schools and evidence isn't always there. If we're using the money to support E.A. wages and so it will be a changing of title with one E.A. in a school setting that had as many E.A.'s so it falls within the guidelines of the money set aside for such a purpose.

Trustee Ousey:

I need to follow up with that then; I thought we had children tested and if that child tests at a certain level, then a E.A. was assigned to that child. That's not Aboriginal Enhancement, that's student learning.

Peter McKay:

Anywhere else in the Province, there is a separate account for that. There is a whole other route for those dollars.

Trustee Ousey: So, we have been spending our money incorrectly?

Peter McKay: Do not know. Been here only a few weeks.

Trustee Davis:

A bit of a follow up to Trustee Ousey's question. The dollars are there for children to be tested and to have an E.A. assigned to them. However, that is not happening in a lot of our schools. It is very difficult to 1) begin that conversation with parents and 2) we have just followed history again where there is an E.A. in most classrooms and that just has not changed. The kids that we do have are, that are designed does not reflect the amount of 8 E.A.'s that we have in the district.

Board Chair:

I think there are a few take aways here that we can contemplate, 1) there is the notion of moving the Nisga'a Language Program out of the elective stage and into mandatory stage. That would be something for the Superintendent to look at and see whether or not we can do that. When I attended NESS, it was mandatory Grade 8 – 12, so I took Nisga'a from K – 12. Making Nisga'a language a mandatory course from 8-12, I think would solve the problem with low enrolment numbers.

**8. BUSINESS:**

Kory Tanner, Secretary Treasurer

District Auditor presented an overview of the 2019/2020 Audited Financial Statements to the Board.

8.1 The Auditor has completed a final review of the Financial Statements and Notes to the Statements prior to the September 22, 2020 Board meeting. The Statements must be approved and submitted to the Ministry of Education by September 30, 2020. The Auditor will present the Financial Statements to the Board of Education.

**R02-1323**

That the Board of Education approves the 2019/2020 Audited Financial Statements Version: 3362-2617-9634 of School District No. 92 (Nisga'a) as presented.

Trustee Hayduk/Trustee Davis

Carried

8.2 Monthly Financial Statements – September 30, 2020

There are no Monthly Financial Statements until the 2019/2020 Audited Financial Statements are approved, the year is rolled over and the annual budget is entered. Usually by the end of October.



### 8.3 Maintenance Report – May 31, 2020

Director of Operations, Calvin Morven presented his May 31, 2020 report:

Continuing with housing improvements, unit – 48 complete repaint, 75% completed, unit – 52 – minor repairs and painting, completed, unit - 17 Kitchen cabinet replacements, minor renovations, painting and floor replacements, completed, unit 1 – minor repairs, painting, bathtub replacement, kitchen cabinet replacement and flooring replacement, completed, unit - 10 Minor renovation, completed, unit 1, Units to be completed, units- 1,15,16, All tri-plex crawl-space concrete completed except for Gingolx tri-plex, crawl-space is too low to access, crawl-space is sealed with vapor barrier with no moisture problems.

Day Care Centre, remaining office renovations in progress, minor repairs, painting, and flooring, 70% completed.

Nisga'a Elementary/Elementary - Proceeding with tender process for July 01,2020 start on concrete replacement project at front of school, completed, project was delayed for completion due to a lot of rain. Also proceeded with plumbing replacement components project start date July 01,2020, 80% completed. Included concrete in K-Block crawlspace with concrete replacement project, completed.

Nisga'a Elementary/Secondary language and culture smoke house project, in progress.

Alvin A McKay Elementary bio – mass project in progress. Completed

Nathan Barton Elementary bio- mass project in progress. 95% completed.

On-going work orders, grounds work.

A part from all the work completed over the summer break, prior to the start of this school year, some of my staff, including myself were impacted strongly from reporting to work due the positive test on Covid-19 in our valley and the recent deaths.

Report for information only.

Bus Shelter Update:

We kind of stalled on it with Village Governments as far as for completion of that one, as far as land requirements and replacements. I will be working with Village Governments to see if there is a possibility of putting those somewhere in the villages. Start up on school this year, I did change the bus schedule, so the students don't have to wait for the bus at all. One bus driver that does Gingolx run, he makes one stop in Gitwinksihlkw. The pickup times are posted so the students know when the bus arrives. Greenville, there is only the one run coming from there, the bus departs from Greenville, he waits until all students arrive before departure.

Trustee Davis:

Mr. Morven, when you are saying there was a stall for the bus shelters due to working with the Village Governments, can you elaborate on that, is that a zoning issue, a space issue?

Calvin Morven:

It is a zoning issue, it's where the liabilities lie on that, if we put them in the village on their streets. There has to be an agreement put in place for the usage of the area, mainly because of the liability. As far as school grounds go, there is limited space to put up that type of structure.

Trustee Ousey:

It is a matter of getting the bus shelter on the streets, and the village is saying that the streets belong to them?

Calvin Morven:

Yes, it is a public - example: in Municipalities, certain stop areas they approve. Lot of the bus shelters are built by the municipalities. Because of our unique situation for the school district we have to work together with village governments to place out projects throughout the villages.

Trustee Ousey:

Wouldn't that be more of a capital project instead of a village...could we not go to NLG's Capital Finance Committee asking if we can go on village roads?

Calvin Morven:

No. Only Village Governments have the authority as to what goes on their roads.

Trustee Hayduk:

When it comes to the operation for COVID 19 at the schools, are we getting any help from Nisga'a Valley Health in sort of assessing what precautions are being taken at the school through the buses, are they assisting in that regard?

Calvin Morven:

The guidelines that Northern Health comes out with, we follow, including the Province. Also, Nisga'a Lisims Government has authority on Nisga'a Lands. So, the impact the district has, Lisims is still under Phase I of COVID, make a lot of impact on how we do things within our facilities. The Province is in Phase II, their limits are a little bit further along in other school districts.

Trustee Azak:

I am still interested in what is happening with the gym at Gitwinksihlkw Elementary School.

Calvin Morven:

We contracted it out to the .... plan the Ministry required for funding at the Treasury Board level. We contracted it out to a company in Vancouver. I just

got an updated from them today on where .... I forwarded the draft to my Planning Officer today. The only thing I am waiting for is the cost analysis for the gym, should receive by this Thursday. That gets put into the ..... plan for final submission to the Ministry.

#### 8.4 IT Report – September 2020

Secretary Treasurer Tanner presented IT Report for September 2020:

Projects:  
Implementing Windows computers  
Server Space  
Server backups  
Phone System  
Printers/Photocopiers

For information only.

**9 POLICY DEVELOPMENT:**  
none

**10 TRUSTEE REPORTS:**  
none

**11 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:**  
none

**12 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

8:30 pm

Taron Scott:

In the District Principal Report it says language teachers are .5 due to lack of funding. Who decides how the funding is allocated? How much is directly allocated for language instruction and how much is spent? Is there a financial report that shows this?

Secretary Treasurer Tanner:

It is not so much due to a lack of funding, it is based on the amount of time that the Ministry dictates how the curriculum should be taught, which is 30 minutes a day. That is why most of our teachers are .5. The Superintendent and the Secretary Treasurer as well as people pertinent to the department sit down and talk about the budget. As you know Mr. McKay was hired after the budget was already set in place by the past Superintendent. The Aboriginal Enhancement dollars that we do receive, they are not a lot of dollars. There is a report and it is in the Financial Statements and as Mr. McKay pointed out it is the object of 131.

Katherine:

It was announced prior to the school year starting Province-wide that the Minister of

Education would be providing 2 masks for every student. Has this happened for our students?

Superintendent Jensen:

We do have at all of our schools, 2 reusable masks that can be provided to students and staff. We also have lots of disposable masks.

Rich Hotson:

Where is the surplus being spent?

Secretary Treasurer Tanner:

It is in the Notes to the Financial Statements.

Jeffery Stanley:

Mr. McKay, will there come a time when language teachers will be fully funded by the district and not part-time from FNEESC?

Peter McKay:

It is on a list of things to consider.

Garrett Davis:

In our classes we have split classes, it normally increases in numbers of students in classes, gives the teacher less time to work with students, overall, our teachers work with children's entirety of their elementary school classes. What can we do for classes with same age and in same grade?

Peter McKay:

It might be a call for individual grade classes and not split grade classes.

Superintendent Jensen:

We teach children rather than grades. Any grade we have a range of abilities with students. So, teachers are there to meet the needs of the students that they have in their classroom, whether they are the same age or not.

Rich Hotson:

Has the Board decided where the \$367,000 unrestricted surplus will be spent?

Secretary Treasurer Tanner:

No, the Board has not decided that as of yet.

Taron Scott:

Will there be an update to the community in the near future regarding the discrepancy between the report that the 131 dollars are not being spent where the other to be?

Secretary Treasurer Tanner:

On the Financial Report it is noted teachers, Principals and E.A.'s salaries are located from the 1312 Indigenous funds. We can assure the public that the 131 funds are being spent appropriately, they are being spent on language teachers, on

the District Language and Culture Principal and E.A.'s are in the classrooms working with our Nisga'a students. Even though it says 131, it is still E.A.'s working with our Nisga'a students. The money is being allocated and spent appropriately and reported to the Ministry.

Jeffrey Stanley comments in Nisga'a

Peter McKay:

He is basically blessing everyone of us and told us that we are doing a superb job.

Dianna Rai:

Will the district continue to support the AskMe document once the FNESC funds are done?

Superintendent:

Peter and I can answer that question. Since neither of us was here to provide input for the current budget, it is something we have talked about quite a bit. We understand the importance of Nisga'a language and culture and how central that is to what we do in this district and feel that needs to guide our decision making. So that is front and center.

Peter McKay:

As we work with this document in translating it and creating resources to go along with it, our dream is, our plan is to have it vetted and once it is vetted, we bring it to the Board to be adopted as a official document for our School District to use.

Superintendent Jensen:

We will be reviewing and updating our Strategic Plan for the next three years and asking for input from communities this fall, so we have an opportunity there to demonstrate the value of language and culture and using the AskMe document.

Cherie Mercer:

Are the students who are entitled to an E.A. by testing, need diagnosis all receiving the E.A.'s? Trustee Davis mentioned it is a difficult conversation to have with families, does this mean the funding is not being appropriated and the student is going without?

Secretary Treasurer Tanner:

I can assure you that all of our students who receive funding are receiving services as a matter of fact we have more students than we receive funding for, and we put extra money in, making sure we have supports in place for all of our student. Even the ones that don't necessarily have an IEP.

Trustee Davis:

Thank you for that questions Mrs. Mercer. It wasn't my intention to insinuate that students that were designated were not receiving the support they needed. My intention was to illustrate that we have more E.A.'s than we have designations. We have E.A.'s in almost every classroom.

Cherie Mercer:  
Is there declining enrolment this year?

Superintendent Jensen:  
It would appear so at this point, yes.

Taron Scott:  
Do regular classroom teachers infuse indigenous content already? Will we hear success stories of these teachers and students?

Superintendent Jensen:  
It is a curricular expectation, yes, that all teachers infuse indigenous content knowledge and ways of knowing into everything they do in the classroom. I think because this is a newer part of the curriculum, there is still lots of area for growth. Thank you, it would be an excellent idea to share stories of success.

Trustee Hayduk:  
A follow up on a question about the enrolment. Is the Province expecting any kind of modification to the end of September head count regarding funding or carrying out as usual? Is there a different plan in place?

Superintendent Jensen:  
There is a not different plan, the 1701 will be submitted September 30<sup>th</sup> as usual.

Trustee Hayduk:  
Since our projected numbers are quite different, are we taking any action in possibly informing the people of the consequences of significantly lower numbers?

Superintendent Jensen:  
The consequences are reduced funding. We are funded per pupil, so if we have a significant decrease in enrolment, we will have a significant decrease in funding.

Trustee Hayduk:  
I am wondering whether or not if there is any value in contacting parents for .... students who have been attending, are still in the valley, but not showing up to be counted.

Superintendent Jensen:  
Absolutely, we have had the secretaries and school-based administration on that for the last 2 to 3 weeks. We continue to do our best to find where our students are at.

Board Chair:  
Do you have a breakdown per school that have lowered enrolment?

Superintendent Jensen:  
NESS is down significantly.  
GES and NBES are also down.  
AAMES is the only one consistent, or perhaps up a little bit.

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**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Trustee Azak/Trustee Ousey

Carried



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Certified correct,  
Elsie Davis,  
Board Chair



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Certified correct,  
Kory Tanner,  
Secretary Treasurer