

# Independent School District #850 School Board Minutes

December 10, 2018  
Board of Education Regular Meeting

The Board of Education of Rothsay Independent School District 850 held its regular meeting on December 10, 2018, in the Media Center at the school. Chairman Justin Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Board members Kevin Brenden, John Reber, Chad Larson, Mike Metzger and Jessi Christ also were present, as were Superintendent/HS Principal Wade Johnson, Elementary Principal Emily Sternberg, District Secretary/Bookkeeper Diane Haugrud and Business Manager Neil Kusler.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Superintendent Johnson read the mission statement “To prepare our students to become responsible citizens and life-long learners.”

Justin Phillips reflected on the band/choir concert. Chad Larson will reflect at the January board meeting.

Metzger made a motion to approve the agenda with two additions; Larson seconded this motion, which carried on vote.

Larson moved to approve the full minutes of the regular December meeting; Brenden seconded this motion, which carried on vote. The school mailer and the Rothsay Regional Report will publish the minutes.

Reber made a motion, which carried on vote following Christ’s second, to approve the financial reports and to authorize the fiscal agent for ISD 850 to pay accounts payable and hand payables in the following amounts: General Fund - \$185,594.50, Food Service - \$13,594.10, Community Service - \$4,647.56, Construction - \$0.00, total- \$203,836.16.

The student activity account balance is \$78,017.44.

Wade Johnson gave the superintendent/principal’s report.

Emily Sternberg gave the principal’s report as well as a teacher presentation done by video.

Trevor Hone gave the activities director report.

At 6:15 p.m. Wade Johnson and Emily Sternberg presented the World’s Best Work Force Report.

The technology report was reviewed. The Tiny Tigers/TCC Report was reviewed.

The preschool report was reviewed. The Budget Committee updated the board on their meeting.

Enrollment is at 288.

At 7:00 p.m. the Levy Hearing was held. Neil Kusler gave a presentation on the levy.

Larson moved to approve Halle Schuman as the speech coach for the 2018-2019 school year. Brenden seconded this motion, which carried on vote.

Brenden moved to approve the World’s Best Workforce Report as presented. Metzger seconded this motion, which carried on vote.

Reber moved to set the 2018 payable 2019 Levy at \$1,363,573.36. Larson seconded this motion, which carried on vote.

Metzger moved to approve the purchase of a bassoon, at a cost of \$2,658.00 for the band out of the initiative funds. Christ seconded this motion, which carried on vote.

Reber moved to approve the initiative fund request of \$349.86, from special education for an iPad and three apps. Larson seconded this motion, which

carried on vote.

Brenden introduced the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING COMBINED POLLING PLACES FOR MULTIPLE PRECINCTS AND DESIGNATING HOURS DURING WHICH THE POLLING PLACES WILL REMAIN OPEN FOR VOTING FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT ELECTIONS NOT HELD ON THE DAY OF A STATEWIDE ELECTION**

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the School Board of Independent School District No. 0850, State of Minnesota, as follows:

1. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 205A.11, the precincts and polling places for school district elections are those precincts or parts of precincts located within the boundaries of the school district which have been established by the cities or towns located in whole or in part within the school district. The board hereby confirms those precincts and polling places so established by those municipalities.

2. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 205A.11, the board may establish a combined polling place for several precincts for school district elections not held on the day of a statewide election. Each combined polling place must be a polling place that has been designated by a county or municipality. The following combined polling places are established to serve the precincts specified for all school district special and general elections not held on the same day as a statewide election:

(Set forth each combined polling place explaining which precincts are being served, such as:)

Combined Polling Place: Rothsay Public School, 2040 Co Rd 52, Rothsay, MN 56579

Name and address of combined polling place

“This combined polling place serves all territory in Independent School District No. 0850 located in Akron Township; Manston Township; Meadows Township; Oscar Township; Tanberg Township; Trondhjem Township; and the City of Rothsay; in both Wilkin and Otter Tail County, Minnesota.”

\*3. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 205A.09, the polling places will remain open for voting for school district elections not held on the same day as a statewide election between the hours of 4:00 o’clock p.m. and 8:00 o’clock p.m.

4. The clerk is directed to file a certified copy of this resolution with the county auditors of each of the counties in which the school district is located, in whole or in part, within thirty (30) days after its adoption.

5. As required by Minnesota Statutes, Section 204B.16, Subdivision 1a, the clerk is hereby authorized and directed to give written notice of new polling place locations to each affected household with at least one registered voter in the school district whose school district polling place location has been changed. The notice must be a nonforwardable notice mailed at least twenty-five (25) days before the date of the first election to which it will apply. A notice that is returned as undeliverable must be forwarded immediately to the appropriate county auditor, who shall change the registrant’s status to “challenged” in the statewide registration system.

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Larson. On a roll call vote, the following voted in favor: Metzger, Christ, Reber, Larson, Brenden, Phillips; and the following voted against: none whereupon said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

Chad Larson, Clerk  
Approved January 14, 2019  
(January 28, 2019)

## Backer Urges Govenor To Not Raise Health Care

Rep. Jeff Backer (R-Browns Valley) joined fellow Minnesota House Republicans at a press conference Tuesday urging the new DFL House Majority and Governor Walz not to raise health care costs on Minnesotans by restoring the sick tax—a two percent tax levied on most patient services in Minnesota, including things like baby deliveries, chemotherapy treatments, routine doctor visits, emergency room visits, and more.

“I simply do not understand why Democrats and Governor Walz would want to raise health care taxes by \$600 million a year when Minnesota families are struggling to pay for their health care,” said Rep. Backer. “It should be obvious that taxing health care to the tune of \$600 million a year does not lower the cost of health care. With a \$1.5 billion surplus, we should be looking at ways to reduce the burden on Minnesota families, not make it worse. As a volunteer EMT, I have a first-hand understanding of the costs of health care and believe we should focus our energies on proven policies that have a track record of lowering health care costs.”

The tax, which was eliminated as part of bipartisan legislation passed by a Republican-controlled legislature and signed into law by Governor Dayton in 2011, is set to expire starting January 1, 2020. In total, restoring the tax would result in a more than \$600 million increase on health care costs for Minnesotans next year alone. Over the past week, Governor Walz called it a “nonstarter” to end the tax, and DFL House HHS Finance Chair Tina Liebling said it was “essential” to restore the tax or replace its revenue.

# Heroes Of Cell Block OTC



Otter Tail County Correction Officers recognized for their services on January 9, 2019.

Otter Tail County Corrections Officers work within the detention facility to provide services to those in custody. Often, people who work in jails are overlooked in the law enforcement profession. People are very curious to know who is in custody but know very little about the professionals who take care of inmates in jail.

Invisible from the community, correctional officers work twelve-hour shifts confined themselves in the Otter Tail County Detention Facility. The job is very complex and takes a diverse set of skills. Corrections officers must fulfill the roles of security guard, health care provider, food service provider, maintenance worker, IT technician, and counselor all while ensuring their own protection.

What does it take to be a corrections officer in a county jail? When asked, most officers replied: thick-skins, big hearts, helping hands, quick wit and occasionally some brawn.

“Law enforcement is a calling. Not everyone is cut out for the job,” said a correctional officer. “We do good work and I’d like to think we make a difference.”

Corrections officers, though public servants, are not always held in as high esteem as firefighters or police officers. A common perspective is that those who work in jails are ‘babysitters’, ‘keepers’, or ‘just a jailer.’ The profession is often misunderstood and not seen as law enforcement. Despite this public misperception, the corrections officers of Otter Tail County behave

like ‘firm, fair and friendly’ law enforcement professionals.

There is no ‘typical’ shift to describe. Each shift poses new challenges and requires organized and well-trained officers to carry out a multitude of roles. Inmates must be escorted to court appearances, daily routines and meals are adhered to, and healthcare and wellness checks are provided by officers. There is also an increasing number of mentally ill, suicidal, intoxicated and high individuals with complex medical situations, such as detox, that need to be managed with on-call healthcare providers. Those on the night shift also must know how to fix issues that are taken care of during the day by other county staff, such as computer technology or building maintenance. The correctional officers are trained to carry out a very diverse set of skills.

“It can be a great career,” said one officer who has worked for the county for 28 years. “It is the quality of people hired and the teamwork. I love my team-we are like family.” One skill that officers repeatedly said was necessary in this line of work was “verbal judo” or the ability to communicate and relate well with inmates. Good communication is an important skill in deescalating situations.

One officer spoke about how the work can change a person. “You want to help people, but you cannot become emotionally invested and the rate of failure in making a difference seems high.” Shift work, rotating days and nights and long hours are proven to take a toll on any

professional’s health and wellbeing. Corrections officers also have the additional stress of constantly being on high alert and managing potentially unsafe conditions.

“What really gets to me? Seeing little kids in the visiting area and not understanding why their (loved one) is there,” said a veteran officer. “We don’t take our jobs home and we use humor a lot as a coping mechanism.”

When asked what type of personality most likely would not fit the role of a corrections officer, one officer responded, “someone with a power trip because they have a badge or a very timid person.”

An officer, relatively new to the team who chose to follow his dream and took a substantial pay cut to join law enforcement, advised people interested in the field to job shadow at the jail or participate in a ride along with a deputy. “Law enforcement is a great career and working in a detention facility is good experience to advance in law enforcement.”

Law Enforcement Appreciation Day was January 9th. Otter Tail County expresses appreciation to all law enforcement employees. Correction officers are important public servants and we thank you for your service. If you are interested in a corrections officer employment opportunity, please visit [ottertailcountymn.us](http://ottertailcountymn.us)

## REGIONAL REPORT

Rothsay, Minn.  
Winter 2019  
Edition

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# Help Is Available From State Energy Assistance Program

With subzero temperatures arriving in much of the state, the Minnesota Commerce Department reminds Minnesotans to apply to the state’s Energy Assistance Program for help paying their heating bills.

For those who have not already applied for help this heating season, there is still time. Households with young children, people with disabilities, veterans or seniors are especially encouraged to apply.

“Energy assistance is an essential safety net that can help vulnerable Minnesotans avoid the cruel choice between buying food or medicine and paying the heating bill,” said Commerce Commissioner Steve Kelley. “Heating your home is a necessity in Minnesota, and we don’t want anyone’s health or safety put at risk because they can’t afford to pay for heat.”

The Energy Assistance Program serves households that earn less than 50 percent of the state’s median annual income (\$49,698

for a family of four). It helps low-income homeowners and renters with heating bills through grant money paid directly to their utility companies or heating fuel vendors. Funds are also available to help some homeowners repair or replace malfunctioning heat systems.

In October, Minnesota received about \$116 million in federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funds for this year’s Energy Assistance Program. The program is not affected by the federal government shutdown.

Average annual grant is \$545. Last year the Energy Assistance Program served more than 126,000 Minnesota households, with an average grant of about \$545. These households included nearly 56,000 seniors and more than 8,000 veterans.

The Minnesota Commerce Department administers the program in partnership with 29 local service providers throughout the state. The

service providers can also help residents facing heat disconnections or needing emergency fuel delivery.

**How to apply for Energy Assistance**

New applicants have until May 31 to apply, but funding is limited and administered on a first-come, first-served basis.

The WCMCA Energy Assistance Program covers Clay, Douglas, Grant, Pope, Stevens, Traverse and Wilkin counties. Eligible households apply for assistance by contacting WCMCA’s Energy Assistance Department at 800.492.4805, Prompt 1 or 218 685-4486, Prompt 1.

If you are out of WCMCA’s seven-county service area, you may find your local service provider, visit the Energy Assistance Program section of the Commerce Department website ([mn.gov/commerce](http://mn.gov/commerce)) or call the Commerce Department toll-free at 800-657-3710.

# Samuelson Sez



Orion Samuelson

*Orion Samuelson*

## WE SALUTE FARM WOMEN

This week we salute to Women in Agriculture, in farm management or farm ownership, because recently the American Farmland Trust, the organization behind the national movement, ‘No Farms – No Food’ published it’s Women for the Land Program Report. I thought I knew a lot about farm lady’s activities on and off the farm, but I learned a lot that I want to share with you.

For example, nearly 301-million acres of U.S. land – about a third of the nation’s land in farms – are now farmed or co-farmed by women, and at least 87--million additional acres are in the hands of women landowners. Research shows many women farmers and landowners have a strong conservation and stewardship ethic. The report said they are deeply committed to healthy farmland, farm families and farm communities, yet they still encounter gender barriers affecting their ability to manage their land for long-term sustainability.

Several groups, the Women, Food and Agriculture Network’s ‘Women Caring for the Land’ program and several other organizations including the USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service have come together and done something a little bit different. They have formed more local groups of women-only learning circles designed to break down gender gaps and expand women landowner’s knowledge and confidence.

Between 2014 and 2017, the Natural Resources Conservation Service facilitated 13 learning circles in Illinois and 31 in Indiana. Jerry Raynor, state conservationist for Indiana said, “This type of outreach is new for our agency. We usually try to reach the masses at our field days or workshops, however these women’s learning circles are small and intimate. You can actually see women connecting and forming relationships.

Women do play an important role in American agriculture and this week, thanks to the American Farmland Trust, we salute their accomplishments in conservation.

My thoughts on Samuelson Sez.