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-USD 403 holds board meeting-

OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF U.S.D. NO. 403, RUSH COUNTY, KANSAS ON OCTOBER 7, 2026.

The Otis-Bison U.S.D. No. 403 Board of Education meeting was called to order on October 7, 2026, at 7:30 p.m. by President Bernard Juno. At the roll call Bernard Juno, Phillip Funk, Lance Hoopingarner, Dustin Smith and Amanda Wiltse were present. Robert Mitchell was absent. Also attending were Superintendent Karen Maier, Assistant Principal Travis Starr and Clerk Ann Kenyon.

Motion was made by Phillip Funk and seconded by Lance Hoopingarner to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried 5-0.

Superintendent Report: We are up 4 students overall this year. Elementary (Pre K – 5) 76, Jr./Sr. High (6 -12) 67, OBA 23. Professional Development with Greenbush went well. Discussed the At-Risk Accountability Plan and the state requirements associated with this plan. Title I paperwork has been completed. Approaching the end of the first quarter. Parent/Teacher conferences will be at the end of the month. Reminded the board of their "High Five Friday" at the Elementary on November 13.

Principal Report: Tuesday, October 6th the K – 5th grade students attended a "Day on the Farm" at the Rush County Fairgrounds. Tuesday, October 13th Cougar Buddies will meet for a picnic and fun.

Superintendent Maier advised of a possible conflict the night of the regularly scheduled November board meeting. The decision was made to move the November meeting to Wednesday, November 11, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.

Motion made by Amanda Wiltse and seconded by Phillip Funk to approve the consent agenda that contains the September 14, 2026 RNR Hearing, Budget Hearing and Regular Meeting Minutes, Treasurer's Report, Accounts Payable, Activity and Petty Cash Funds. Motion carried 5-0.

Superintendent Maier provided statistics on activity bus route utilization throughout school year 2025-26. Alternate options were discussed along with the pros and cons of each. No action was taken.

The WEX Fuel Card Program was introduced and some of the benefits it would bring to the district.

Travis Starr left the meeting at 8:14 p.m.

Motion was made by Phillip Funk and seconded by Amanda Wiltse to go into Executive Session with the board and Superintendent Maier to discuss personnel pursuant to the non-elected personnel exception under the Kansas Open Meetings Act, and that we return to open meeting in the boardroom at 8:37 p.m. Motion carried 5-0.

President Juno called the meeting to open session at 8:37 p.m. with no action to be taken.

Motion was made by Phillip Funk and seconded by Dustin Smith to go into Executive Session with the board and Superintendent Maier to discuss personnel pursuant to the non-elected personnel exception under the Kansas Open Meetings Act, and that we return to open meeting in the boardroom at 8:58 p.m. Motion carried 5-0.

President Juno called the meeting to open session at 8:58 p.m. with no action to be taken.

Motion was made by Phillip Funk and seconded by Lance Hoopingarner to go into Executive Session with the board and Superintendent Maier to discuss personnel pursuant to the non-elected personnel exception under the Kansas Open Meetings Act, and that we return to open meeting in the boardroom at 9:29 p.m. Motion carried 5-0.

President Juno called the meeting to open session at 9:29 p.m. with no action to be taken.

Motion was made by Phillip Funk and seconded by Dustin Smith to go into Executive Session with the board and Superintendent Maier to discuss personnel pursuant to the non-elected personnel exception under the Kansas Open Meetings Act, and that we return to open meeting in the boardroom at 9:34 p.m. Motion carried 5-0.

President Juno called the meeting to open session at 9:34 p.m. with action to be taken.

Motion was made by Amanda Wiltse and seconded by Phillip Funk to give a $300.00 stipend to coaches who held weekly coaching sessions, participated in league/rec games and attended and/or held a camp during the 2026 summer break and a $150.00 stipend to coaches who participated in fewer summer activities, such as holding less than weekly team sessions or only attending a camp. Motion carried 5-0.

Phillip Funk moved to adjourn. Dustin Smith seconded the motion.

Motion carried 5-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Bernard Juno, President **Ann Kenyon, Clerk**



Johnathan Gilbert Chapter members hold their November 18 meeting at the Barnard Library in La Crosse. (courtesy photo)

Jonathan Gilbert DAR Chapter holds meeting at Barnard Library

by Joy Schell

The Jonathan Gilbert Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution met in La Crosse at the Barnard Library for our November 18, 2026 meeting. Our members enjoyed a quick lunch at Jct. 4 Diner before the meeting began.

Susan Keith, Regent, and Lou Windholz, Chaplain, started off the meeting with the DAR opening ritual. They also led us in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and the Preamble to the Constitution. Mary Beth Peach read a message from State Regent, Denise Bullock, which was posted in the November Cyber Sunflower. A look back to the Revolution came from Susan Rebel. How the Men of Marblehead assisted Washington in crossing the Delaware River. Juanita Hanhardt gave the Indian Minute report. Other reports talked about a PBS special, "A Moccasin Speaks"; the DAR scholarship program; and Challenge Coins for seniors who are entering the military. The minutes of our last meeting were approved and seconded. Carolyn Thompson presented the treasurers' report and handed out membership cards. We had many members who participated in Veterans' Day events and Susan K. recorded the time involved. Mary Beth handed out beautiful pins made by her son, Zach. The Wreaths Across America program for La Crosse City Cemetery was updated. For anyone who would like to purchase wreaths, attend the ceremony, or place wreaths to honor our veterans, you are welcome. Please check the website wreathsacrossamerica.org /KS0100P.

Our busy little hands were put to good use making 100+ Thanksgiving cards for the men/women living in the Ft. Dodge Veterans' home. We also divided up angel tree requests for some of these brave soldiers. Thank you to Susan R. Lou led us in the closing prayer. Others in attendance were Juanita Parker and Myra Pfannenstiel. Our next meeting will be on December 16 at the home of Joy Schell.

News from Bison Community Library

By LaVetta Stephens, Librarian

We had our annual Hunters Breakfast/Lunch fundraiser on November 14th. We had a really good turnout of about 190 people. I wanted to thank everyone for the generous donations, as this is a donation based fundraiser. We had all good comments about the food, no one went away hungry.

I wanted to thank all those that donated supplies for the meals, volunteered their time to help with the cooking, serving and the cleaning up after. Without all the help we could not do this each year. We had a lot of yummy dessert donations for the lunch crowd, thank you to those that took the time to fix something.

Special thanks to the library board for all the hard work, starting with the planning back in September, all the way to the long hours they put in the day of, some were there from 4:30 a.m. until we finished at 2:30 p.m. So now we get to rest for a few months, then start over again.

Now we will be looking forward to planning activities for 2027. So far we are looking at possibly some oil painting workshops, watercolor workshops, beginning quilt/tips and tricks, as always if anyone has a suggestion for a workshop, please call (785-356-4803) or email (bisoncommunitylibrary@gmail.com)the library.

I have received several of the new books that I ordered with my fall order, come in and check them out.

Don't forget that we have senior exercise Thursday morning at 9:30 a.m. and coffee after at 10:00 p.m.

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