



TO: EPC Representatives

FROM: Ken Swink, Director

DATE: September 13, 2024

RE: Minutes of September 10, 2024

The Southwestern Ohio Educational Purchasing Council met in person and virtually via Zoom at its regular meeting on September 10, 2024, at 12:30 p.m. at Aullwood Audubon Center, 1000 Aullwood Road, Dayton, Ohio. Executive Board Committee Chairperson, Scott Gilbert, called the meeting to order.

MEMBERS PRESENT: PJ Burgett, Ansonia; John Stephens, Arcanum Butler; Kevin Liming, Bellbrook Sugarcreek; Randy Dunlap, Blanchester; Robert Fisher, Dan Bassler, Carlisle; Jon Wesley, Chuck Cowgill, Centerville; Debbie Carson, Clark Co ESC; Rachel Tait, Jeff Parker, Eaton; Deanna Knapke, Fort Recovery; Daniel Cox, Brian Rabe, Great Oaks CC; Bryan Janson, Gary Doll, Huber Heights; Scott Butler, Lebanon; Jerry Ellender, Mad River; Brad McKee, Stephanie Harshbarger, Miami Valley CTC; Jennifer Couch, National Trail; Ann Ferraro, Brandon Knecht, Northmont; Jeff Patrick, Northwestern; Frank Eaton, Oakwood; Mike Corcoran, Preble County ESC; Ben Kitchen, Southeastern; Scott Gilbert, Springboro; Jennifer Bruns, St Henry; Denise Robinson, Tecumseh; Bill Derringer, Tim Watts, Tri-County North; Kathleen Bayes, Janice Allen, Trotwood Madison; Jeff Price, Troy; Scott Cottingim, Twin Valley; Anthony Fraley, Upper Valley CC; Charles Thiel, Urbana; Erick Depew, Joe Scholler, Andrea Cook, Valley View; Marcus O'Brien, Vandalia Butler; Mike Watt, Wapakoneta; Buckie Cauley, Washington Courthouse; Caroline Huber, Wayne; Curt Bone, Wilmington; Melanie Fox, Xenia; Doug Huffman, AEDventure; Belinda Kenley, Sara Little, Energy Optimizers USA; Mary Whitt, Evans Energy; Kelly Knapke, Friends Office; Todd Linklater, Tremco; Ken Swink, Doug Merkle, Connie Wright, Bonnie Muckenthaler, Robin Houston, Cristi Goldshot, JeanAnn Cloud, Bri Listermann, Mary Rodehaver, EPC. **Via Zoom:** Carla Surber, Joe Hurst, Bradford; Laura Peters, Delphos; John Stanley, East Clinton; Jeremy Pequignot, Franklin Monroe; Garth Whitaker, Greenon; Jenna Jurosic, Greenville.

Presentation – [Doug Huffman](#) of AEDventure demonstrated how the Lifepack CR2 Automated External Defibrillator works and discussed how [HB 47](#) now requires AEDs in all schools. [Click here to view the AEDventure Flyer](#) that was included in the meeting packet. You may contact Doug Huffman at doug@aedventure.com or 330-353-8821.

Presentation – [Kelly Knapke](#) of [Friends Office](#) introduced herself to the EPC Membership and provided free samples. Friends Office is an EPC Approved Vendor for Classroom & Office Supplies, Janitorial Products (under our Food Service Program) and Furniture. The following flyers were included in our meeting packet: [Amazon Comparison](#), [Printing for Sports/Newsletters/Tickets/Direct Mail](#), [Professional Printing List of Services](#), [Janitorial Supplies](#), [Furniture](#). Please reach out to Kelly Knapke or [Melissa Parsons](#) with any questions or orders.



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Presentation – [Todd Linklater](#) of [Tremco Roofing](#) offered his services for any schools looking to update their roofing. Tremco Roofing is an EPC Approved vendor through our AEPA Program so their products and services have already been bid on behalf of our EPC Members. You may view Tremco’s flyers on [Procurement](#) and [Asset Management](#) on the EPC Website.

2025-1. Approval of Minutes - Motion of Robert Fischer, seconded by Jeff Patrick, that the [minutes of May 14, 2024](#) be approved. Motion carried.

2025-2. Membership Applications - Ken Swink reported that [Bloom-Vernon Local Schools](#), [Brown County Educational Service Center](#), [Butler Technology & Career Development Schools](#), [Educational Service Center of Central Ohio](#), [Educational Service Center Council of Governments](#), [Hamilton County Educational Service Center](#), [Huron City Schools](#), [Liberty-Union Thurston Local Schools](#), [Lorain County Joint Vocational School](#), [Medina County Career Center](#), [Morgan Local Schools](#), [Ohio Hi-Point Career Center](#), [Pickaway-Ross Career & Technology Center](#), [Pleasant Local Schools](#), [Polaris Career Center](#), [Riverview Local Schools](#), [Rock Hill Local Schools](#), [Tri-County Career Center](#) and [Whitehall City Schools](#) have requested membership in the EPC. The Executive Board at its September 10th morning meeting recommended presentation of the new district to the general membership for approval. Motion of Janice Allen, seconded by John Stephens that the districts be approved for membership. Motion carried.

Welcome to the New School Year – Ken Swink thanked everyone for their continuing Membership with the Southwestern Ohio Educational Purchasing Council. The 2024-25 School Year will be the ninth year in which we will be waiving membership fees. A [list of EPC Programs and Services](#) was included in the membership meeting packet. If you need any assistance or have any questions on these programs, please [contact us](#).

COMMITTEE PROGRAM REPORTS

***Air Filters** – Ken Swink reported that Air Filter Pricing will be extended through December 31, 2024 with zero price changes. [Current pricing](#) and instructions on [how to order or set up an account](#) may be viewed on the EPC Website.

***Audio Visual/Technology** - Ken Swink announced that [Audio Visual Discounts](#) were approved over the summer and are valid July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. Approved vendors include Adorama, AVES and Brown Enterprises. You may view these [audio visual discounts on the EPC Website](#). Ken also reminded members that you may also order from CDWG which is an EPC approved vendor through our AEPA program.



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Classroom/Office Supplies – Ken Swink reminded members that [EPC Classroom & Office Supply vendors have one opportunity per bid year](#) to make updates on their pricing. These price changes went into effect on September 1, 2024. Our bid specifications do not allow for more than a 5% increase unless it is accompanied by a letter from the manufacturer that properly explains the reasoning. (Examples: unplanned increases in the cost of freight, raw materials and/or labor.) The EPC will have these letters on file and may be viewed upon request. This updated pricing will be in effect through January 31, 2025. By February 1st we will have a bid extension in place with the same vendors. You may view [current EPC Classroom & Office Supply pricing](#) from Acco/GBC, Carolina Biological, Friends Office, John R. Green/Kurtz Bros and Nasco on the EPC Website. [Contact information for the John R. Green Company](#) as well as flyers from Friends Office highlighting their [promotional printing](#) (Sports Programs, Calendars, Schedules, Newsletters, Tickets, Direct Mail & more), [a list of printing services](#), [Examples of Janitorial Supplies](#), [Furniture and free Design Services](#) and a [comparison of Friends Office Vs using Amazon](#) were included in the meeting packet.

Cloud Communication Systems – No report. WebEx, Go-To-Meeting, Multi-party video, Mobility, Redundancy, Disaster recovery, recording, easy-to-use management tools (web-based from anywhere), and Free phones, are just some of the features available to EPC Members from [Nebula Solutions](#). Please email epc@nebulasolutionsinc.com for your no-cost, no-obligation analysis or call 888-824-1755 with any questions.

***Copy Paper** – Ken Swink announced that [Copy Paper has been extended through October 31st](#) with Sterling Paper and ODP Business Solutions with zero changes. The lowest-priced white 8 ½ x 11 Copy Paper from Sterling Paper is their HiWhite at \$34.99/case and ODP's Boise X9 196517 at \$32.79/case. We will likely rebid our Copy Paper Program and will request approval for new pricing and vendor information at our November 5th EPC General Membership meeting. You may view all current [paper pricing](#) on the EPC Website.

***Design Build & Performance Contracting Services** – Ken Swink announced that we [extended our Design Build and Performance Contracting Services](#) with all 4 current vendors: Evans Energy, Energy Optimizers, USA, EBEB Solutions and Prodigy Solutions. [Belinda Kenley](#) of [Energy Optimizers, USA](#) and [Mary Whitt](#) of [Evans Energy](#) gave updates and were available for questions. Flyers from [Energy Optimizers, USA](#), [Evans Energy](#) and [Prodigy Building Solutions](#) were distributed.

***Drug & Alcohol Testing** - Ken Swink reported that the EPC has secured [Drug and Alcohol Testing pricing](#) through July of 2025. The recommended Vendors include Grand Lake Health Systems/Joint Township Hospital, Highland District Hospital, Mercer Health, Mercy Health, Mobile Health Services, Premier Occupational Health, TriHealth/Bethesda Care, and Wilson Occupational Health. Pricing, location listings and hours of operation are available on the EPC Website. If any district is currently utilizing a provider that is not on our list, feel free to [reach out to us](#) and share their contact information. We will contact them to see if they would like to participate in our program.



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***Facility Products & Solutions** – Ken Swink announced that [Facility Products and Solutions discounted pricing with Cintas](#) was recently extended through June 7, 2025. Items included on this program include Garments/Uniforms Rentals, Floor Mats, Clinic Supplies and Feminine Hygiene. A [Cintas flyer listing their many products and services](#) as well as a flyer highlighting [Feminine Hygiene Dispensers and products](#) were included in the meeting packet. [Contact Amanda Rowe](#) at Cintas for questions or ordering.

***Food Service** – Bonnie Muckenthaler announced that Food Service programs were rebid over the summer. A listing of all [2024-25 EPC Approved Food Service Vendors](#) was distributed. Approved programs include Food & Beverage, Bakery, Dairy, Ice Cream, Produce, Cafeteria Essentials, Equipment Dealers and vendors for Equipment Repair quotes. Bonnie also reviewed a [summary of all September EPC Food Service Updates](#) which include Bid Results, the requirement of a Balance Sheet for food service departments, Unpaid Meal Charges, the Community Eligibility Program and more. Our SWEPC Commodity Food Showcase is scheduled for November 6th at the Bridgewater Conference Center in Powell Ohio. Also announced was the [newly launched SWEPC Website](#) at www.swepc.org where you can view documents required for Procurement Reviews and more. If you need food service-related assistance, have procurement questions or if you are interested in our Food Service Consulting program, please contact [Bonnie Muckenthaler](#).

***Furniture** - Ken Swink announced that [EPC Furniture Discounts](#) were extended over the summer with AmTab, Fomcore, Friends Office, John R. Green/Kurtz Bros, K-Log, School Outfitters and Tom Sexton & Associates. These vendors offer discounts of up to 63% off manufacturer list prices and represent 107 manufacturers. Items include Instructional Classroom Furniture, Filing and Storage Cabinets, Workstations, Cafeteria, Library, Science, Laboratory and more.

Insurances – Doug Merkle announced that Open Enrollment meeting invitations have been emailed out to participating districts. Feel free to contact [Doug Merkle](#) with any Health Insurance related questions.

LED Lighting & Energy Savings Programs – [Belinda Kenley](#) of [Energy Optimizers, USA](#) shared a flyer on how to [Simplify Your Facility Projects](#). Please contact [Belinda Kenley](#) if you have any questions or if your district is interested in a [Free No Cost Energy and Lighting Audit](#). Thank you to Energy Optimizers, USA for sponsoring today's EPC General Membership Meeting lunch.

Liability Fleet & Property Insurance – Ken Swink announced that we recently added 47 schools to the EPC's Liability Fleet & Property Insurance program. This brings us up to a total of 102 participating districts. We are currently taking volunteers for the next group of schools to have their building appraisals. The average property appraisal went up 27%. The final group of our LFP members will have their appraisals the following year. The next EPC LFP meeting will be held on November 5th prior to our next EPC General Membership Meeting at Aullwood. If your district is interested in a quote from our EPC Liability Fleet & Property Insurance program, feel free to reach out to [Ken Swink](#) with your request.



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***Library Books** - Ken Swink announced that [EPC Library Book Discounts](#) were extended over the summer with Bound To Stay Bound, Capstone, Children’s Plus, Delaney Educational, Follett, Mackin and Rainbow Book Company. Only vendors that are offering a larger than standard discount or other incentives such as free shipping without a minimum order are recommended.

Transportation – Ken Swink shared that the next EPC Bus Bid Opening will be held on October 30th at the EPC Offices. If you are interested in participating in this upcoming bid cycle, please complete our [online survey](#) to let us know what types and sizes you are interested in. Links to our [online Trade In Sheet](#), a [sample Board Resolution](#) (which is required prior to purchasing any school bus) and the [Bus Purchasing Calendar](#) may be found on the [EPC Bus page](#) of the EPC Website. Ken also announced that we will do new bids for Passenger Vans and Pickup Trucks as soon as we hear that the 2025 models are available. You may view all EPC [Transportation Supplies](#), [Bus Cameras](#) and [2024 Vehicle Pricing](#) on the EPC Website.

Utilities/Natural Gas – Ken Swink reviewed a [10-year high level summary of the Natural Gas Hedge Program with the membership and current hedges in the AES Ohio/IGS Electricity Pricing](#). We are now hedging electricity supply in the same way we have hedged natural gas for many years. Instead of issuing a bid and accepting a single market day price as of that bid opening date, we have extended a new agreement with our supplier, IGS, to patiently watch the market each day and hedge in percentages as we seek to find the bottom of each market cycle. The EPC Utilities Committee agreed to a 50% hedge of our calendar 2025 usage on May 9 as we found the lowest price we have seen since January 2024 at 0.05723 kWh, which compares to our current energy rate of 0.03370 which is still in effect through December 2024. A second 25% hedge was placed on July 25 at 0.05614 which met our goal of securing additional hedges at a lower price. We were able to secure our final 25% hedge at 0.05599 on September 3 but our committee decided to wait and watch the market for another opportunity which may or may not happen, but we watch the market every day. The rates listed include everything except capacity charges which are passed through by the utility.

Ken then alerted members that beginning in June 2025, electricity capacity costs will rise sharply across the entire area. This increase could be as high as 800%, and thankfully this is only one component of the entire energy rate but will add significant costs to the total invoice. An [explanation given to us by IGS which explains why this is happening](#) was included in the meeting packet. This WILL affect your budget for every school and utility in Ohio next year. Some suggestions that were given to help mitigate this impact include Peak Day Notifications to help you reduce usage during those times, Demand Response Payments which are incentives for reducing load to balance the grid, LED Lighting Solutions which is energy efficient lighting to cut demand and consumption, Onsite Solar Rooftop or ground mount solutions to reduce reliance on grid power and Real-Time Monitoring which is a tool to measure and manage your energy load effectively. Feel free to reach out to [Maha Kashani](#) of IGS with questions or [Belinda Kenley](#) of Energy Optimizers, USA for questions on LED Lighting Solutions.



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Workers Compensation – No report.

2025-3. Motion of Rachel Tait seconded by Marcus O'Brien that the *programs be approved via consent. Motion carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Financial Report – Connie Wright reviewed the [financial summary of the general operating fund](#). The balance of the General Fund as of August 31, 2024 was \$1,239,861.13. Please contact [Connie](#) with any questions or concerns. Connie also reminded members that our annual rebate checks should be available at our November 5th EPC General Membership Meeting.

Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) – Ken Swink thanked Doug Huffman of AEDventure for coming to speak to our members at today's EPC Membership Meeting. Ken also reminded members to [check the manufacturer date on their AEDs](#). Many districts purchased their districts in 2013 and 2014, bringing them to their 8-10 year life expectancy and beyond their 8-year warranty. If you need help locating the manufacture date on the label affixed to the bottom of most AEDs, please feel free to contact Doug Huffman of AEDventure at sales@aedventure.com or 330-353-8821. [A flyer which includes AED rebate information is available on the EPC Website.](#)

AEPA – Ken Swink reviewed flyers from The OrganWise Guys - This whole-child, whole-school approach to nutrition and healthy living (including social-emotional learning) has content in both English and Spanish and includes lesson plans, implementation guides and complimentary virtual training for easy integration into your curriculum. Improve your student's health and academic status using this teacher-friendly digital platform correlated to math, science, ELA, health/PE state standards, and national STEM standards—all for about the cost of a school lunch! Great for Specials teachers, too! The complete [2024-25 AEPA Brochure](#) which lists contact information for all AEPA vendors is available on the EPC website.

Meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m.