

October 8, 2018

The combined work session/board meeting of the Berwick Area School Board was held on Monday, October 8, 2018, in the Line Street Administrative Office. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by President, Mrs. Susy Wiegand.

PRESENT: Mrs. Susy Wiegand, Mr. Donald Butz, Mr. Keith Hess, Mrs. Maryann Kovalewski (arrived 7:10 p.m.), Mr. Daniel McGann, Mrs. Christy Monico, Mrs. Sandra Slavick

ABSENT: Mr. Larry Clausen, Mr. Jon Morell

Also **PRESENT:** Mr. Wayne Brookhart, Attorney Bull, Ms. Renee Gomez, Mr. Steven Christian, Mr. Robert Croop, Mr. Benton Culver, Mrs. Wendy Daily, Mrs. Pamela Hegland, Mrs. Janet Kovach, Mrs. Wendy Kupsy, Ms. Amy Melchiorre, Mr. Gregory Michael, Mr. Randy Peters, Mr. Christopher Rivera, Mr. David Robbins, Mr. Patrick Sharkey, Ms. Lori Frey, Ms. Cindy Shoemaker, Ms. Susan Swartz, tax payers

Lord's Prayer

Flag Salute

Reading of the Minutes:

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Daniel McGann, we dispense with the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting on September 10, 2018, as everyone had received copies prior to the meeting. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - none and no abstentions. Mrs. Kovalewski was absent for the vote.

Business Manager's Report

Financial Report; Treasurer's report: Approval

On motion of Daniel McGann, seconded by Christy Monico, we approve the financial report and the treasurer's report as presented. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - None and no abstentions.

Budgetary Transfers: Approval Pages 25-31

On motion of Daniel McGann, seconded by Sandra Slavick, we accept the budgetary transfers as presented. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - None and no abstentions.

Presentation of Bills: Approval

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Christy Monico, we pay the bills as listed.

ROLL CALL VOTE: "Ayes" – Sandra Slavick, Daniel McGann, Christy Monico, Keith Hess, Maryann Kovalewski, Donald Butz, Susy Wiegand
 "Nays" – None
 "Abstaining" – None

Motion carried.

Business – Renee Gomez

- I'm in the process of finishing up with the auditors. I am hoping to have the fund balance information report next week. Next month, we will be able to report on the Annual Financial Report (AFR) and where we stand.

Superintendent's Report – Wayne Brookhart

- Our Strategic Plan is in the final stages of development. The final document must be submitted in November.
Mr. Croop stated the date is November 30th.
Wayne Brookhart - Special Education was submitted in the spring.
- Our Annual Financial Report (AFR) is also in its' final stages. The document must be submitted to Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) by October 31st. We have always hit that deadline.
- The race for the Office of Governor of Pennsylvania may have a profound impact on funding of public schools. The candidates have opposing views on property tax elimination, sales tax expansion, income tax, as well as the new "Fair Funding Formula." There was a statement made at one time by each of the candidates regarding how much money that is put out in public education that would fall under that Fair Funding Formula. In the PA Fair Funding Formula, some win and some loose. It is fair to the people who actually drove the legislation through. The Fair Funding Formula is not advantageous for our district or our area. I'm not saying that the formula it is wrong, but it does recognize to a greater extent decline in enrollment for the previous Hold Harmless that we had. It gave us the same amount of money each year regardless of what happened with our enrollment. So right now, this new Fair Funding Formula, the only money that is pushed out through is about 8%. Any money that is put out new from the State in 2015-2016 is under the Fair Funding Formula, everything else is under the new formula that was used. Just keep an eye on that. There are also some proposals out there which would move us away from property tax, eliminate property tax. Mr. Hess, we talked about that Senate Bill 76.
Mr. Hess - The plans I have seen floating around out there, people need to do their research because you might get lucky and get rid of \$5 property tax bill, but you might get hit by \$800-\$1000 of additional sales tax and earned income, so what might seem like a good deal may not be one. People need to do some research.
Mr. Brookhart - I have always taken the position as a Superintendent with other Superintendents in the region, that we should not be concerned with the mechanism by which we are funded. We should be concerned with the fact that we are funded. A lot of times, letters are put out there and you see I don't sign them. After some consultation with Board members, I don't sign them because I don't think we should engage in the political debates over who the Governor is or how we are going to fund schools. Our concern is that we are going to be funded at the level of previous levels. We are going to have some type of coverage from the mistakes that are made at the State level that fall back on local taxpayers. That has always been my position and will continue to be my position. The one person who has actually gone against the grain and did not support the

whole pension situation about 15 years ago was John Gordner. I think John voted no on that. Good for him because we have seen what has happened with our public schools and the way we are able to proportion our funds after that decision was made. That is the position I have taken and we have always taken, only that we are funded and how we are funded is none of our concern.

- New legislation in Pennsylvania provides for expanded latitude in discussing school safety in School Board executive sessions. There will be times that we will be discussing safety issues in an executive session.
- Homecoming weekend will be on October 12th and 13th. It is the Crestwood football game.

Ms. Melchiorre - The ceremony will take place Saturday at 7 pm followed by the dance. The ceremony will be held in the auditorium where the kids will perform. The court will be announced at 7 pm and the dance will follow. This week is Spirit Week, starting tomorrow leading up to the football game.

- The late Coach George Curry will be posthumously inducted into the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame on November 3rd at the Woodlands. Thanks to Mr. Monico. He is the one who passed this on to me. We didn't get any direct communication from the Commission. If you would like to attend, please contact Mrs. Kovach for further details. It is open to the public. It is a great honor to the late Coach Curry and I'm sure it will be well attended. The coach at Dunmore will also be recognized that night.
- We're currently reaching out to a prospective graduation speaker for the Class of 2019. I will let you know how that works out. If not, I will ask for ideas. I will let you know in November.
- The Berwick Industrial Development Authority (BIDA) has made a commitment of scholarship money for two students. They must be graduates of Berwick Area School District or Vo-Tech to be eligible. The Vo-Tech graduate must be a Berwick resident to qualify.

Daniel McGann - We had a brief meeting with Mr. Bacher, Mr. Brookhart and a couple of our respective counselors from the High Schools. We came to the determination that in order to help promote the same ideas that the BIDA is promoting in industry, we also want to promote those same principles in education. So, we decided that we will make available scholarships to two students from the Berwick Area whether they go to the Berwick High School or the Vo-Tech School. It really doesn't matter. We will make available \$1,000 to each of those two students. The qualification would be that they are intending to go to school and further their education in fields of vocational in nature or industrial in nature. Those types of things are lacking in this area as well as other areas like welders and diesel mechanics, etc. There will be two students chosen each year, each will get \$1,000. They will get \$500 up front and \$500 in their second semester. The possibility that at some year it would be two from one school, none from the other or one from each. We will see how this works out and maybe expand it in the future. Kelly O'Brien Gavin is the new Executive Director at the BIDA. It was her idea.

- The final Kindergarten number for the year is 225. This is our largest class in five years. Nescopeck Elementary has 44 Kindergarten students, which is its' largest class since the current 6th grade was in kindergarten. All other classes at Nescopeck are in the 30's.
- We'd like to take a look at our job descriptions and titles of our Central Office Secretarial Staff with the possibility of a couple of changes for the next school year. I talked to Ms. Gomez and we think some of them have some skills that they probably should be accounted for in their job description. That is something that we will work on for next year.
- We did do bids for the Nescopeck roof and we will get to that shortly in a presentation. We talked about this with the Buildings and Grounds Committee earlier tonight.

Public Comment on Agenda Items: None

General:

Approve Items G-1 through G-4 With One Motion

- G-1 Approval of the Radiological Emergency Response Plan. (Copy is available for review.)**
- G-2 Approval to accept a \$200 donation issued from Carol Bodwalk from the Berwick High School Class of 1978.**
- G-3 Approval to accept a \$1,000 grant from Schwab Charitable designated for S.O.A.R. for as acknowledgment for Payden Montana – Gatorade Pennsylvania Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year.**
- G-4 Approval to accept a \$1,000 grant from the Central Susquehanna Community Foundation for S.O.A.R. This grant is funded from Ian C. and Patricia A. Missien and the Berwick Health and Wellness Fund.**

On a motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Daniel McGann and Maryann Kovalewski, we approve Items G-1 through G-4 with one motion. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye." "Nay"-none and no abstentions.

Transportation:

Approve Items T-1 through T-2 With One Motion

- T-1 Approval of Jamie Powers as van driver for Fishing Creek Transportation for the 2018-2019 school term.**
- T-2 Approval of the proposed bus run due to crowding concerns on buses. (enc.)**

On a motion of Maryann Kovalewski, seconded by Keith Hess, we approve Items T-1 through

T-2 with one motion. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye.” “Nay”- none and no abstentions.

Personnel:

Approve Items P-1 through P-12 With One Motion

- P-1 Approval to accept the resignation of Ryan Burt as assistant football coach, effective September 10, 2018. (enc.)**
- P-2 Approval of the enclosed list of winter coaches for the 2018-2019 school term, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork. (enc.)**
- P-3 Approval for employee #2051 to take unpaid days from October 9, 2018 through October 12, 2018. (enc.)**
- P-4 Approval to accept the resignation of Amanda Fink as Reassignment Room Aide at the Middle School, effective December 21, 2018. (enc.)**
- P-5 Approval of the following staff members for the Summer 21st Century Grant Program from October 1, 2018 through June 11, 2019. Compensation will be at the rate of \$23.00 per hour.**
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|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Pamela Hegland | Sheri McClafin |
| Beth Montana | April Patton |
- P-6 Approval to hire Michael Ehnot as assistant football coach. Compensation will be at a stipend of \$2,000.**
- P-7 Approval to remove Reanna Buehler from the payroll records, as she no longer works for the district.**
- P-8 Approval to add the following to the substitute teacher list for the 2018-2019 school year. Compensation will be at the instructional rate.**
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|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Beverly Bull | Ann DeMelfi | Sandra Hilton |
| Theresa Kalanick | Cindy McGann | |
- P-9 Approval to hire Cindy Drasher as substitute paraeducator. Compensation will be at the rate of \$8.72 per hour.**
- P-10 Approval of Christy Kehl-Hess as mentor teacher for the 2018-2019 school year. Compensation for this position will be \$600.**
- P-11 Approval to hire Teresa Conrad as Confidential Secretary for Child Accounting, effective January 1, 2019. Compensation for this position will be \$47,373, prorated.**

P-12 Approval to hire Tammi Cruice as a part-time School Counselor for the 2018-2019 school year. Compensation will be at the rate of \$18.00 per hour, not to exceed \$17,041.

On a motion of Maryann Kovalewski, seconded by Sandra Slavick, we approve Items P-1 through P-12 with one motion. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye.” “Nay”- none and Daniel McGann abstaining from P-8 and Keith Hess abstaining from P-10.

Benton Culver – We did bid openings last Wednesday. We had nine (9) bids from thirteen (13) prospective bidders. We chose a product that we thought would work best and install it in the timeline we want to do it in.

John Kowalski from AEM – We went with a self-adhered TPO membrane. It’s an O6O 60 mil membrane. I believe it has a fifteen (15) year warranty. All the seams are heat welded which in our opinion is the best that you can get. The self-adhered membrane does not have any adhesives that need to be applied so the possibility of smells around the building are eliminated and because of the self-adhered system, we can put down in colder temperatures so if October and November get a little chilly it won’t slow down the project.

Susy Wiegand - We are going with the TRS Roofing.

Renee Gomez - I have a recommendation for the usage of the fund balance, committed fund balance for construction of expenditures related to Nescopeck at \$595,000. That would incorporate the roof bid as well as AEM Architects fees at the present that will be paid presently.

Wayne Brookhart - That is percent of project? Is that what we are calculating in? The architect fees?

Renee Gomez - I just have what we have paid at the present time so it can then be further analyzed as to how much per the cost.

Wayne Brookhart - What is the total Renee?

Renee Gomez - \$595,000.

Wayne Brookhart - So the motion would be to.

Renee Gomez - Approve the resolution of the fund balance of \$595,000.

Wayne Brookhart - In order to pay for the Nescopeck project. So it is one motion?

Renee Gomez - Yes.

Wayne Brookhart - Is there any problem with doing it this way with the motion?

Daniel McGann - No.

BG-1 On a motion of Daniel McGann, seconded by Keith Hess, we approve the resolution of the fund balance of \$595,000, in order to pay for the Nescopeck project.

ROLL CALL VOTE: “Ayes” – Daniel McGann, Christy Monico, Keith Hess, Maryann Kovalewski, Sandra Slavick, Susy Wiegand

“Nays” – Donald Butz

“Abstaining” – None

Motion carried.

G-5 Motion to reimburse Norfolk Southern Railroad Company for over payment on realty transfer taxes in the amount of \$4,853.93. This takes advantage of an offer of a discount of 26.5% provided this payment is made within ten days of approval.

Wayne Brookhart - This is something that municipalities, boroughs and school districts are dealing with throughout the region. This is a railroad, that if it runs through your area, you are going to be providing this money back to the railroad company.

Attorney Bull - This is realty transfer tax that Norfolk Southern Railway Company paid back on September 18, 2015 when various railway property was transferred. Norfolk Southern has filed this petition with the court against multiple school districts and municipalities throughout the State requesting refund/reimbursement for an over payment of this amount. Sweet, Stevens has reviewed this and recommended that it be paid. Norfolk has offered that if the payment was made of 10 days of acceptance you would only paid 73.5% of the total amount. The total amount is \$6,603.98.

Maryann Kovalewski - Are you ok with this?

Attorney Bull – Yes, I am. There are many districts and municipalities that had received a much larger amount in the transfer taxes which are going to be sought back.

G-5 On a motion of Sandra Slavick, seconded by Christy Monico, we reimburse Norfolk Southern Railroad Company for over payment on realty transfer taxes in the amount of \$4,853.93. This takes advantage of an offer of a discount of 26.5% provided this payment is made within ten days of approval.

ROLL CALL VOTE: “Ayes” – Christy Monico, Keith Hess, Maryann Kovalewski,
Donald Butz, Sandra Slavick, Daniel McGann, Susy
Wiegand

“Nays” – None

“Abstaining” – None

Motion carried.

Reports:

Committee Reports:

Academic Affairs – Maryann Kovalewski

- No meeting.

Athletic Committee – Daniel McGann

- Athletic Budget.

Budget Committee – Daniel McGann

- No meeting.

Buildings and Grounds Committee – Susy Wiegand

- Talked about capital projects.
- Nescopeck roof.
- Repairs that have been done throughout the district.
- Future plans.
- Softball and baseball field.
- Security and modification in our buildings to make them safer.

CSIU – Daniel McGann

- Normal business meeting and demonstration of the proper use of a drone. Summer camps at the CSIU now to promote knowledge of drones to the students. Eventually, they are thinking about developing into a course of study that will be offered by the CSIU. Driver education for drones.

Vo-tech – Keith Hess

- Had a meeting last month. The architect for the feasibility study came. The topic for this month is the space that they have and the space limitation that they have. The meeting this month is for additional programs.
- They had a BoardDocs training. It is supposed to go live this month. I'll let you know how it goes.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Keith Hess - Are our interest rates up to date for our savings accounts?

Renee Gomez - For the different checking accounts?

Keith Hess - Yes.

Renee Gomez - We just received a date on some rates. I will send that information after the meeting regarding the balance in the accounts.

Keith Hess - No, I mean the interest rate itself.

Renee Gomez - They vary based off the balance.

Keith Hess - I thought they were on the low side for what I am paying personally.

Renee Gomez - I know they just contacted me 1-2 weeks ago and we did discuss it. It is based off the balance. All seven municipalities have their own separate account now. I can review how each account is structured and I will come back with that information.

Public Comment:

Cindy Shoemaker - I was wondering when the Affordable Care Act (ACA) restrictions will end our loss of work?

Renee Gomez - There is no change on the status regarding that. Everything is still in effect. I just had a conversation with our actuary regarding our ACA reporting. The status is the same.

Summarization of Executive Session:

Susy Wiegand - student issues, real estate and litigation with the Railroad Company.

On a motion of Maryann Kovalewski, seconded by Keith Hess we adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye." "Nay"- none and no abstentions.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Janet K. Kovach, Secretary to the Board