

March 18, 2019

The combined work session/board meeting of the Berwick Area School Board was held on Monday, March 18, 2019, in the Line Street Administrative Office. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by President, Mr. Donald Butz.

PRESENT: Mr. Donald Butz, Mrs. Susy Wiegand, Mr. Larry Clausen, Mr. Keith Hess, Mrs. Maryann Kovalewski, Mr. Daniel McGann, Mrs. Christy Monico, Mr. Jon Morell
Mrs. Sandra Slavick

ABSENT: None

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 Kupsky, Ms. Amy Melchiorre, Mr. Gregory Michael, Mr. Randy Peters, Mr. David Robbins, Mr. Patrick Sharkey, Mrs. Lori Frey, Ms. Susan Swartz, Mrs. Melissa Strother, tax payers

Lord's Prayer

Flag Salute

Presentation:

Mr. David Bacher – Administrative Director/Columbia-Montour Area Vocational Technical School (CMAVTS)

Randy Galiotto – One of the Principals at Alloy5 Architect. The firm that did the feasibility study at CMAVTS.

- Possible renovations, possible expansion of CMAVTS.
- Option 1 was about \$16 million
- Option 2 was about \$24 million
- Option 3 was about \$32-\$33 million

We are currently working on a hybrid option hopefully addressing everyone's concerns.

Larry Clausen - The numbers that you are talking about do not include the equipment for any of the programs that you are going to add, correct?

Randy Galiotto - That does not include the specific equipment in the program, correct. I put a 10% contingency on those numbers. I think it is going to be between 3-5%. It is money that we will take out of the allotted contingency amount.

Wayne Brookhart - You talked about grants that would help defray the costs.

Mr. Bacher - We will aggressively pursue every grant that is out there.

Randy Galiotto - We are going to apply for an ACE grant, RACP grant, along with some federal grants, etc.

David Bacher - Matching equipment grant.

Maryann Kovalewski -What about the Perkins grant?

David Bacher - Perkins grant is tied to enrollment. Increase in enrollment could increase the Perkins grant down the line. I have a meeting in 2-3 weeks about the Perkins 5. We currently use the Perkins money for equipment, supplies and we fund the professionals and paraprofessionals with it.

Jon Morell - If you add these programs or the hybrid, what is it going to do to your maintenance costs and ongoing costs?

David Bacher - Probably \$400,000-\$500,000 per year.

Larry Clausen - What is our percentage of the estimated costs?

Wayne Brookhart - It is based on the real estate property value opposed to enrollment.

Keith Hess - 19.39%

David Bacher - One of the ideas we had was a SOCK program. It's a life skills program. They go for a short amount of time, perhaps a semester or a marking period. They earn a micro-certification. They learn to do specific tasks very well and then we get them hooked up to an OVR and get them out to work and get them in the community.

Christy Monico - Will you let our representatives know when you apply for grants and the outcome of those?

David Bacher - Absolutely.

Randy Galiotto - For grants, the first thing they ask for is a commitment to do the project. We want to make sure that we are doing our homework and get all seven districts' needs, wants and concerns addressed. We can get that, we can start that process. Once we get that, we will get hitting that hard.

David Bacher - We don't necessarily need a resolution for funding to apply but we need an ok from the JOC to go ahead and move forward with the next step in the process.

Wayne Brookhart - I think we need to publicly acknowledge, like most districts have, that the Vo-tech is an aging facility and is in need of attention. Obviously, it costs money.

Reading of the Minutes:

On motion of Daniel McGann, seconded by Jon Morell, we dispense with the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting on February 25, 2019, as everyone had received copies prior to the meeting. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - none and no abstentions.

Business Manager's Report

Financial Report: Approval

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Susy Wiegand, we approve the financial report as presented. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - None and no abstentions.

Treasurer's Report: Approval

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

Budgetary Transfers: Approval

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

Presentation of the Bills:

On motion of Maryann Kovalewski, seconded by Daniel McGann, we pay the bills as listed.

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

“Nays” – None

“Abstaining” – None

Motion carried.

Business: Renee Gomez

- On the agenda, there are seventeen professionals that are retiring this year. I do have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) from the Union regarding option 1. That will need to be voted on at this meeting to move forward with removing option 1 and offering the incentive. In addition to that, we have three support staff that are retiring. The resolution at the last meeting called for seven, so an agreement or decision would need to be required by the Board to either move forward with the three that are retiring and offer them the incentive or you have the ability to remove that \$11,000 incentive which those individuals then can remove their retirement letters as well.
- We also have a resolution from Buildings and Grounds for the Nescopeck Elementary School Project. Mrs. Wiegand will comment on that later in the meeting. There is a resolution needed for the fund balance as well to move forward with those funds for the Nescopeck Project. We need to use our fund balance to pay for that project initially for approx. \$1.2 million dollars.
- Presently, we have a Request for Proposal (RFP) out for financial services to refinance our present debt load to address the interest that is increasing come May of 2019. During the April 8th meeting is when we will be presenting the options to you.
- Last item is the RFP for transportation. Those results have come in. We are still in the process of calculating those results. I anticipate having that information at the April 8th meeting, to make a decision on that as well.

Superintendent’s Report: Wayne Brookhart

- Congratulations to all who were associated with the “Beauty and the Beast” production this weekend. The productions were well-attended and received rave reviews. We’d like to invite those cast members as well as those advising, to a future Board meeting for recognition. We will bring them in at the April meeting.
- Wendy Daily and Amy Melchiorre have some information to provide regarding use of our Cyber program for the upcoming year.
Amy Melchiorre - The two options we have right now: we are currently using in our cyber program for our AP Psychology course. That is going very well. There are new courses that need to be approved that go with our Accounting CTE and our Management Information CTE. We would like to use some cyber courses in those programs as well. It’s very nice. It’s a hybrid approach. A teacher facilitates the program. We talked about having a cyber-class mandatory for all students. It would be a .25 credit health class.

There would be a cost associated with that. We are just in the discussion phases of that right now. There is a lot of research out that says it is good to expose students to an online learning course.

Wayne Brookhart - This would not lead to a staff reduction. You are also going to be asking to add some courses as well. We will take that to the April meeting for approval. Ms. Melchiorre gave the Board a preview of the courses.

Wendy Daily - This is our 5th year of the cyber academy. We have been taking this full-time cyber option that we offer students obviously it saves the district money. We have really grown. We are offering students to accelerate in courses that they can't fit into their schedule. We are doing some credit recovery. This new wave of CTE is fantastic because we got together and looked at some of the stuff that we already have in this extensive catalog that we use and to see if the standards align up that we can use it. There will be somewhat of a cost but it may not be as much as to order text books. We will look at that. Seven states require an online class to graduate. Many others are encouraging it. We are doing a great service for our students if we do provide that. If they are going to higher education, almost every student at one point will be taking some type of online course. If they are going into the work force they are often asked to take trainings online. When they don't have the ability to do that, there is a skill set for that, then they are at a disadvantage. I think we can do a wonderful program when we especially blend it. We are talking about having a teacher there with the online curriculum to start and then as that grows and the students feel a little bit more comfortable, it can go in other directions too. Not an issue with teachers, we need teachers. That's part of the program.

Wayne Brookhart - We are still offering credit recovery to Vo-Tech as well.

Wendy Daily – Yes. We have 26 Vo-Tech students this year that we service. You can't fail a class and graduate at the Vo-Tech school. We enroll them in our online program throughout the year and it has been a fantastic thing for both of us.

- We have a decision to make regarding this year's school calendar. We still have to account for two days missed due to weather. We can make Holy Thursday a school day and/or make Easter Monday a school day. We can also apply for Act 80 days on June 10th and 11th through the state and schedule curriculum development duties in the buildings. Adding days at the end is also an option. All those options are on the table. We still are not to the point that we aren't going to have any more snow days. I think at this point, if there would be a recommendation, it would be to have school on Holy Thursday and add a day at the end or apply for an Act 80 day or just put the two Act 80 days at the end. I would say those are your two best options. That would keep graduation the same. We have done both in the past. You want to give people some notice.

Maryann Kovalewski - Could you review/remind people why we are off the week of the Bloomsburg Fair?

Wayne Brookhart - Several years ago, we did a study of the attendance that week and we found that our high school attendance dropped into the 70's. It didn't impact the elementary or middle school quite as much but it was still lower. High school attendance in the 70's is really low. That impacts your subsidies and it impacts academics. We always had time off during fair week but five days started about eight years ago.

Bloomsburg, Central and Vo-Tech have fair week off. I wish the whole County would do it. Right now, we have conflicting bus schedules and we share a lot of services. We have a policy that says “as much as possible” to coincide to work with our Vo-Tech school with our scheduling because of some of the benefits that they have. That is why we did it.

- We have seventeen retirement letters from teachers, along with three support staff members. Pending approval, we wish them well in retirement. We are losing a lot of experience and expertise. We do wish them well.
- In anticipation of having several teaching openings, we’re sending administrators to teacher job fairs to publicize our prospective needs. We have been to Bloomsburg Moravian and we will be at Wilkes as well.
- Spring sports are underway. Thank you to Tara Scholla, Amy Melchiorre and Mary Hmelak for their diligence in preparation for our athletic teams while we have a vacancy in the position of Athletic Director.
- I’d like to stress the importance also of intensifying our CMVT discussions tonight following the presentation by Mr. Bacher. If a project is to proceed, we have seen that they become more expensive as time passes. The earlier we can give them some direction the less it will cost in the end.
- Best of luck for those who are running for election to Board seats beginning in December of 2019. Eight candidates have filed for five vacant seats. Primaries are May 21st.
- The Pennsylvania Athletic Equity Committee continues to lobby for separation of private and public school state tournaments. The topic is gaining momentum as state basketball playoffs are prioritized in the news media. It gets hot around football state playoff time. The committee is working diligently through the legislature. Scott Conklin in State College is going to propose legislation to separate them. That will be done in Harrisburg and we will see where it goes from there. Our feeling at that time was not necessarily to totally separate them but to separate them to the end, have a public and a private and a tournament champion at the end. That is the position we have taken.
- We’re currently received nearly 30 inquiries regarding the vacant Athletic Director and Head Football Coaching positions. We will take them until we hire someone.

Public Comment on Agenda Items: None.

General:

Approve Items G-1 through G-6 With One Motion

- G-1 Approval to accept a donation from Gallaghers Student Transportation Inc. in the amount of \$500 for the High School Musical.**
- G-2 Approval to accept a donation from Rochelle Woodeshick in the amount of \$100 for the High School Musical.**
- G-3 Approval to accept a donation from David Kovach in the amount of \$100 for the High School Musical.**

G-4 Approval to accept a donation from Philip Geiser in the amount of \$200 for the High School Musical.

G-5 Approval to accept a donation from Bob Lanning in the amount of \$300 for the 2018-2019 Football banquet.

**G-6 Approval of the final reading of the following policies:
(enc.)**

806 Child Abuse

819 Suicide Awareness, Prevention and Response

On a motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Maryann Kovalewski, we approve Items G-1 through G-6 with one motion. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

Budget & Finance:

BF-1 Approval of the Columbia-Montour Area Vocational-Technical School Budget for the 2019-2020 school term. Berwick’s share is \$1,855,950. This is an increase of \$46,057.74 (enc.) ROLL CALL

On a motion of Daniel McGann, seconded by Christy Monico, we approve the Columbia-Montour Area Vocational-Technical School Budget for the 2019-2020 school term. Berwick’s share is \$1,855,950. This is an increase of \$46,057.74

Daniel McGann and Keith Hess - It is 2 ½% increase in our portion.

Keith Hess - It is an overall 5% increase with the total budget.

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

“Nays” – None

“Abstaining” – None

Motion carried.

Wayne Brookhart - For those who have not been here for the Vo-Tech budget votes, it is not only based on how many districts approve. It’s the total number of Board members in the seven sending districts. We have to take a Board vote.

Daniel McGann - Five districts have to approve and 32 out of the 63 total school directors in the sending districts have to approve.

BF-2 On a motion of Daniel McGann, seconded by Keith Hess, we approve the resolution of the Berwick Area School District, Columbia and Luzerne County, Pennsylvania for the usage of fund balances for the Nescopeck Elementary Building Project. (wording below)

BERWICK AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF THE BERWICK AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT, COLUMBIA AND LUZERNE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA FOR THE USAGE OF FUND BALANCES

WHEREAS, the Governmental Accounting Standards Board ("GASB") has adopted Statement 54 ("GASB 54"), a new standard for governmental fund balance reporting and governmental fund type definitions which the Berwick Area School District ("School District") is obligated to implement;

WHEREAS, the School District has or will in the near future adopt policies implementing GASB 54;

WHEREAS, in compliance with GASB 54, the School District wishes to now formerly commit various amounts from the general funds of the School District to specific purposes.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED as follows:

1. \$1,200,000 (not to exceed) of the committed funds of the School District will be utilized for expenditures related to the capital projects of Nescopeck, the School District as formerly approved by resolution of the Board of School Directors of the School District ("Board").
2. The proper officials of the School District are hereby authorized and directed to take all actions which are necessary or appropriate to carry out the intent of this resolution.

We hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Board at a meeting thereof duly and legally held on the 18th of March, 2019.

Daniel McGann - Does this leave anything else that we need to do over there or does this solve our problems?

Renee Gomez - This will cover the expenditure cost that is in the resolution that was forthcoming from Buildings and Grounds.

Daniel McGann - I am talking about how much more work should we do?

Susy Wiegand - When we had the Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting, we actually saw the bidding. All these bids were checked with the architect.

The General Construction Contract – D&M Construction Unlimited, Inc. - \$684,000

Asbestos Abatement Contract – Sargent Enterprises, Inc. - \$96,424

HVAC Construction Contract – Leibold, Inc. - \$89,000

Electrical Construction Contract – Apollo Group, Inc. - \$209,600

Total Construction Contracts #1 through #4 - \$1,079,024

Daniel McGann - What else do we have to do?

Jon Morell - We added the AC and the boiler to that.

Susy Wiegand - We did not include the air conditioning units. They are separate.

Daniel McGann - This is not the end of the project?

Benton Culver - Right. This completes the immediate needs of the building, just like the roof was. It is going to be a phase as we go over time. Right now doing the flooring, the ceiling tile, electrical and lighting. We are getting everything that we need to do now. We are looking at some structural things. Over time there is still going to be things that are going to need some updates that we may need to look at. I wouldn't say this finishes everything there but it gives us a head start to what we need to do in the future.

Christy Monico - So all together, how much money will we have in the project after we release this \$1.2 million with the roof and this?

Benton Culver - The roof came in so we would be \$1,729,000. We are heavy with the allowances. We saved some money by choosing to put in the AC units on our own. We will search out our own vendor to do the boiler repairs. We are trying to find a couple of ways to save costs.

Wayne Brookhart -Your fund balance was \$13.1 million going into this year. We still anticipate PlanCon money coming for the new building which we have not received. As you do projects you continue to pull them off the fund balance. If you have money at the end of the year left over from your yearly budget then that goes back into the fund balance. We have been able to manage that well over the years. We have done a lot of work at Salem as well.

This will take a roll call vote and we are recommending an approval of all bids to be awarded.

ROLL CALL VOTE: "Ayes" – Susy Wiegand, Daniel McGann, Maryann Kovalewski,
Christy Monico, Sandra Slavick, Keith Hess, Larry
Clausen, Jon Morell, Donald Butz

"Nays" – None

"Abstaining" – None

Motion carried.

Transportation:

Approve Items T-1 through T-3 With One Motion

T-1 Approval of the following as bus drivers for Gallagher Student Transportation for the remainder of the 2018-2019 school term.

Shannon Johnson

Carl Hosler

T-2 Approval of Kaitlyn Cochran as bus driver for Fishing Creek Transportation for the remainder of the 2018-2019 school term.

T-3 Approval of Theresa Waldron as van driver for Fishing Creek Transportation for the remainder of the 2018-2019 school term.

On a motion of Susy Wiegand, seconded by Maryann Kovalewski, we approve Items T-1 through T-3 with one motion.

Christy Monico - Are they currently employees?

Wayne Brookhart - I don't recognize any of the names.

Janet Kovach - Nothing outstanding.

Wayne Brookhart - I bring it to you if there are any concerns.

Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - None and no abstentions.

Personnel:

Approve Items P-1 through P-13 With One Motion

- P-1 Approval to accept the resignation of Priscilla Yacuboski as paraeducator, effective March 29, 2019. (enc.)**
- P-2 Approval for employee #2583 to take Family Medical Leave (FMLA) from October 15, 2019 through December 3, 2019. (enc.)**
- P-3 Approval for employee #2251 to take Family Medical Leave (FMLA) from May 6, 2019 through January 20, 2020. (enc.)**
- P-4 Approval for employee #2436 to take Family Medical Leave (FMLA) from June 7, 2019 through to the end of the 2018-2019 school year. (enc.)**
- P-5 Approval for employee #2097 to take unpaid days on February 8th, 11th, 14th, 15th, 19th, 22nd, 25th, 26th of 2019. (enc.)**
- P-6 Approval to accept with regret the retirement of Brenda Hudelson as part-time paraeducator, effective June 11, 2019.**
- P-7 Approval to accept the resignation of Frank Sheptock as Athletic Director and Head Football Coach, effective March 13, 2019. (enc.)**
- P-8 Approval for employee #2695 to take an unpaid day on March 5, 2019. (enc.)**
- P-9 Approval to accept the resignation of Christopher Soboleski as High School Art Teacher. (enc.)**
- P-10 Approval of the following staff members and their stipends for the High School Musical:**

Amanda Ziegler	Pit Musician	\$420
Diane Wasser	Pit Musician	\$420
Reed Lehman	Lighting and Sound Assistant	\$800

Reed Lehman	Stage Construction	\$100
Philip Dicriscio	Stage Construction	\$100

P-11 Approval to accept with regret the retirement of the following personnel: (enc.)

Robert Beiter, effective at the end of the 2018-2019 school year
Linda Crossley, effective at the end of the 2018-2019 school year
Cindee Soback-Carrathers, effective at the end of the 2018-2019 school year
Richard Klingerman, effective at the end of the 2018-2019 school year
Robert Calarco, effective at the end of the 2018-2019 school year
Wendy Shultz, effective at the end of the 2018-2019 school year
Paula Cagigas, effective at the end of the 2018-2019 school year
Christina Zerbe, effective at the end of the 2018-2019 school year
Penni Kinn, effective at the end of the 2018-2019 school year
Mary Ann Michaels, effective at the end of the 2018-2019 school year
Paula Parmenteri, effective at the end of the 2018-2019 school year
Tania Snavely, effective at the end of the 2018-2019 school year
Stavroula Marinakos, effective at the end of the 2018-2019 school year
Janet Oravec, effective at the end of the 2018-2019 school year
Cindy Forsythe, effective at the end of the 2018-2019 school year
Jill Trapane, effective at the end of the 2018-2019 school year
Donna Schechterly, effective December 31, 2019

~P-12 Approval to accept the resignation of Jillian Zanoline as a day to day substitute teacher. (enc.)

~P-13 Approval to add Areal Mello to the day to day substitute teacher list, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork. Compensation will be at the rate of \$12.10 per hour.

On a motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Maryann Kovalewski, we approve Items P-1 through P-13 with one motion.

Daniel McGann - There are probably hundreds of years of experience that we are losing and there is no way we can replace that all at once. I want to congratulate these people and I want to feel sorry for us.

Wayne Brookhart - We are losing some great people. This group ranges in years. Most of them are at least 25 years; two as many as many as 41 years in the district.

Daniel McGann, Donald Butz, Wayne Brookhart and Jon Morell - And they will be missed. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - None and no abstentions.

P-14 On a motion of Daniel McGann, seconded by Maryann Kovalewski, we approve the memorandum of understanding - Early Retirement Incentive 2018-2019 between the Berwick Area School District and the Berwick Area Education Association (BAEA).

Memorandum of Understanding – Early Retirement Incentive 2018 - 2019
Berwick Area Education Association
and
Berwick Area School District

This memorandum regards the Berwick Area School District (BASD) Early Retirement Incentive offer originally approved by the Berwick Area School Board at the February 25, 2019 board meeting and applies to the retirees of 2018 – 2019.

In exchange for this incentive offer, the Berwick Area Education Association (BAEA) agrees that at the conclusion of the current Collective Bargaining Agreement, August 14, 2020, between the BASD and the BAEA, Retirement Option I as described in Section XIV “Retirement Benefits” will be eliminated from the next Collective Bargaining Agreement.

This agreement is contingent upon the school board’s final approval of the early retirement resolution referenced in paragraph one of this MOU and the board’s final acceptance of the list of 2018-2019 retirees.

Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

P-15 On a motion of Maryann Kovalewski, seconded by Keith Hess, we pursue the agreement with the support staff. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

Reports:

Committee Reports:

Academic Affairs – Maryann Kovalewski

- We met and Ms. Melchiorre did a pretty good summarization of what we discussed about cyber.
- We also talked about the development with the CTE’s. An interesting thing about the Criminal Justice track, I believe there is going to be a course related to Fish and Game. Robert Croop - With this CTE, it will be more than just police force. It could be Fish and Game. It could be Law. It could be Security. All that will be built in. It’s just not for Police.
Maryann Kovalewski - It is going to be broad based. In this area, it should be very, very popular.
- We talked about the possibility of further discussions on returning the 5th grade to the elementary schools. The committee has stated that there is not enough information available. It needs additional conversation with teachers just to gather more information if we consider that at all, and it may not be considered.

Athletic Committee – Larry Clausen

- We met this past week. The topic of conversation was the time table for Athletic Director and also Football Coach. Amongst the board members, we decided to move towards hiring an Athletic Director as soon as possible so they can be involved with the selection of the football coach.
- With spring sports starting, we had no student athletes that were flagged through the PIAA or our academic standard that were held up starting out.

Budget Committee – Keith Hess

- We met tonight. We are still doing our preliminary budget reveal which was contingent upon our retirement incentive tonight. We are hoping to have the preliminary budget ready for our review at the April 8th meeting. Right now our next budget meeting is set for April 1st at 5:30 p.m.

Buildings and Grounds Committee – Susy Wiegand

- We met and talked about the bids for Nescopeck Elementary School. We talked about the Gateway Project. It is going for pre-bid. We talked about the middle school roof restoration.

CSIU – Daniel McGann

- No meeting last month due to weather. The next meeting will be in two days.

Vo-tech – Keith Hess and Daniel McGann

- Daniel McGann - The building project that was summarized tonight and the costs. The budget was approved tonight.
- Keith Hess - The next JOC meeting is tomorrow night. We talked last month about the JOC wanting to know which plan each district would like to get behind.

Jon Morell - I would like to see a hybrid.

Daniel McGann - Could we inform them that we are interested in the hybrid as the option?

Larry Clausen, Susy Wiegand, Maryann Kovalewski - I think option 1 is out.

Wayne Brookhart - Two or hybrid or three? The project has our continued support that we are willing to move forward with something. We just want more specificities on the hybrid.

Keith Hess - Do you feel comfortable for us to tell them tomorrow night that we want more information on the hybrid plan?

Jon Morell - I would like to see what the other school districts are thinking too.

Daniel McGann - There is a big difference between the different districts based on the size, in their share of the cost.

Jon Morell - Right, but if we are going to approve one but it is never going to pass because of the other school districts.

Larry Clausen - How does the approval process with the other districts work? For the project to move forward, what needs to happen as far as districts?

Daniel McGann - The same as the regular annual budget. Five school districts and 32 individuals but you can't force any.

Wayne Brookhart - Funding commitment from all seven.

Daniel McGann - You cannot force any of the seven districts to supply money for the project. They have to do it willingly.

Jon Morell - So, if five districts approve it, two don't, then the total funds will be split between the five districts that approve it?

Daniel McGann - It depends on if they are willing to do their fair share of the support for the finances or not, even if they lost the vote. If they decide they want to not support the project at all, they can withhold their share of money.

Sandra Slavick - If they withhold their money, do we withhold their kids?

Daniel McGann - I don't think we can do that.

Wayne Brookhart - A lot of that is covered under Act 339 mandating that if a student wants a tech program and it is available to them, they need to be sent. Then you get into other options for some of these districts that may not be in support. That is where it is going to get sticky. The best case is to get all seven with the same option. That is neat and clean.

Jon Morell - It's based on real estate value and not enrollment. Now you are going to have a smaller school district because of their real estate value going to be footing the bill.

Wayne Brookhart - We are lucky here at Berwick in that we are in extremely low debt. Some of the districts that are looking at this, do not. They are occurring more debt. We are in pretty good shape. We are fiscally stable. Our debt load is extremely low but that is not the case everywhere. I hope it goes smoothly. Here we have a solid consensus but we just want a little more information.

Daniel McGann - I think the information we will take back tomorrow night, if everybody is ok that we are in favor of a hybrid program somewhere between two and three or three as the two chooses.

Christy Monico - I would still like to know about the grant money. When you know how much money you are going to get, there are enough pieces to this puzzle, they could put it in for HVAC. We are going to need this much for HVAC. They are not putting in for a grant for the entire school. So regardless, they could piece it out to different subsidies so that would help us make a decision.

Daniel McGann - It sounds like a chicken and the egg kind of thing. We have to tell them that we are going to do a project before we can apply for the grants.

Jon Morell - I think based on what we said here tonight and what you are going to say tomorrow, you need to tell them you need to put a plan together for your grants and before we make the final decision we want to know approximately how much we could bring in with grants. Some of this money they were talking about is going to be used to maintain the equipment, not buy new equipment.

Donald Butz - Dan and Keith, will you be able to relay that?

Daniel McGann and Keith Hess - Yes. Absolutely.

Wayne Brookhart - The Press Enterprise did a nice job reporting. We know publicly, Southern is going out for a referendum and there has been fairly extensive discussions with at least Benton and Central that you reported on. I feel for Mr. Bacher. He came out to seven sending districts. Trying to get seven districts to go in one direction is a challenge. It was done 50 years ago and we are back again.

Daniel McGann - We did a project approximately 20 years ago but it was nowhere near the scope of this. It was mostly renovations and repairs.

Jon Morell - From their numbers, we by all means have the most students that were passed over. If we could do a hybrid and get the majority of our students that want to be there, then I think it is money well spent.

Daniel McGann - That's the biggest concern.

Sandra Slavick - Absolutely.

Christy Monico - That is why we are definitely going to do something.

Daniel McGann - Some people may think it is a different school, but it's not. It's our school. It's one of our two high schools.

Old Business: None

New Business:

On a motion of Jon Morell, seconded by Keith Hess and Daniel McGann, we change the calendar making April 18, 2019 as a school day and applying for one Act 80 day at the end of the year.

Christy Monico - When is graduation?

Wayne Brookhart - Graduation is June 7, 2019.

Christy Monico - It is not going to bother graduation?

Wayne Brookhart - No. That is why we do this. We want graduation to stay the way it is. We reached out to Josh Shapiro, Pennsylvania Attorney General. He is going to be our graduation speaker.

Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - None and no abstentions.

Wayne Brookhart - We will bring the 2019-2020 school calendar back in April.

Public Comment:

Melissa Strother - Wood to finish her son's project at school.

Donald Butz - Mr. Brookhart will get back to you tomorrow.

Summarization of Executive Session:

Wayne Brookhart - Two personnel issues and one contract (MOU) issue which was a contract modification.

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Janet K. Kovach, Secretary to the Board