

May 13, 2019

The combined work session/board meeting of the Berwick Area School Board was held on Monday, May 13, 2019, in the Line Street Administrative Office. The meeting was called to order at 7:08 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:** Mrs. Wendy Kupsky, Attorney Bull, Ms. Renee Gomez, Mr. Steven Christian, Mr. Robert Croop, Mr. Benton Culver, Mrs. Wendy Daily, Mrs. Pamela Hegland, Mrs. Wendy Kupsky, Ms. Amy Melchiorre, Mr. Gregory Michael, Mr. Randy Peters, Mr. Patrick Sharkey, Mrs. Lori Frey, Ms. Susan Swartz, tax payers

Lord's Prayer

Flag Salute

Reading of the Minutes:

On motion of Jon Morell, seconded by Daniel McGann, we dispense with the reading of the minutes of the previous meetings on April 8, 2019 and April 22, 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: Treasurer's Report: Approval

On motion of Daniel McGann, seconded by Susy Wiegand, 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

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Daniel McGann, we approve the budgetary transfers as presented, pages 31-41. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - None and no abstentions.

Presentation of the Bills:

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Jon Morell, we pay the bills as listed.

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

“Nays” – None
 “Abstaining” – None

Motion carried.

Business: Renee Gomez

- The Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General, Bureau of School Audits is conducting a limited procedures engagement (LPE) for the period of July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2018. It is not a full blown audit. They were on site April 30th, at which time they were provided all the requested documents that they requested and are conducting their review at this time. As further information becomes available, I will advise you.
- A transportation RFP was conducted in Feb/March. After review of the RFP’s that were received, we are recommending that we continue operating business as normal. Tonight on the agenda, you will see that there are transportation contracts for a five year period with a 3% increase.
- As a follow up from the last meeting regarding the 2019 Bond, all paperwork has been completed and the closing is scheduled for tomorrow. Upon the closing, the \$500,000 that was the minimum balance requirement in the FNB account will be requested to be withdrawn, closed and transferred into the General Fund.
- As we come begin the last quarter of the fiscal year, in review of the Food Services fund and CEP we are trending at a breakeven for the fiscal year. This program year to date has proven to be successful. We have had increased participation by the students in both breakfast and lunch.
- The auditors have selected the 3 Booster groups that will be audited at the end of this fiscal year. They are:
 - Berwick Boys Basketball Boosters
 - Matbackers Wrestling Booster Club
 - PINE (*Parent Group at Nescopeck*)

These groups will be notified tomorrow.

Superintendent’s Report:

- Mr. Culver - update on the project at Nescopeck Elementary.
 May 6th we mobilized and got the Rupp house going. We are finishing up on that right now. After that is done, we will put construction fencing up and it will be a lay down area for the material for the school. Phase I abatement has begun on the 1980’s wing. They are moving pretty quickly. We have Element Environmental monitoring the air, monitoring the work and disposal of all material that is in the building. We currently have our electrical contractor in the gymnasium. They are working on the lighting. Following that, we will start painting that and then installing the new lighting. We will go to Phase II abatement in the basement after they are done with Phase I. Then, we will hold off on any other projects until the summer. It is scheduled for June 10th - August 16th. It is going well. Things are moving quickly. Maintenance and custodians have been great getting things out of the building.

- Amy Melchiorre - update on graduation.
Graduation will be June 7th in the Varsity Gym at 7PM. Our graduation speaker this year will be Dr. Gina Scala. She is a graduate of the Berwick Area High School. She is currently the Department Chair for the Special Education and Rehabilitation Department at East Stroudsburg University. Dr. Scala was inducted into the Berwick Area Academic Hall of Fame in 2015.
- The final day of school will be on June 10th with June 11th being an Act 80 day, which has been approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. That final day is a Monday that would be ½ day. Thursday, Friday will be ½ day. It's a little out of the ordinary but the weather put us into that situation so that is what we are looking at.
- Good luck to all who are running in the School Board election on May 21st - incumbents and any new candidates for the Board.
- Preliminary projections have our budgetary increase at a 1% spending increase. Ms. Gomez provided me some paperwork which shows that is the 2nd lowest among 13 districts that responded in IU survey application. Milton Area was the only one that was lower at .67%.
- Preliminary projections also show our millage rate as the lowest in Columbia County at 43.41 mills, with only Southern Columbia who did not respond to that. Southern Columbia has a significant higher millage rate than we do. We know we will be the lowest going forward as long as everyone passes their budget as proposed.
- Berwick Area High School is rated 141st of 673 in the Pennsylvania as per US News and World Report, which places us in the top quarter of all districts. We also have the best rating of all 12 Luzerne County districts, with Dallas placing 2nd at 230th and Crestwood 3rd at 327th. We placed 4th of all districts in CSIU #16 which included 17 school districts. The US News and World Report is one that carries a great deal of credibility. It has been out for many, many years. Right now it is looking at the amount of students that take advanced placement courses, your STEM program and your graduation rate. Our graduation rate is a little lower than we would like it to be. We are taking a look at that. We think there is some room for growth there. Last year, we were in the top 100. We got a banner and some plaques that we have around the district. We are proud of the accomplishment. Mr. Croop did a presentation not too long ago of all of our standard tests and it showed we were significantly above average in the State in all areas except a couple of areas in the middle school which were low. Obviously, we are still working on that. Next month we will talk about some of our plans going forward for next year. We are happy with where we are now but there is always room for improvement.
- Kindergarten registration is coming in low at this point. We're at 159 registered for 2019-20. We currently have 223 students enrolled in Kindergarten in 2018-19.
- Our current teacher contract expires on August 15, 2020. We should make a decision with how to proceed with upcoming negotiations within a year of the expiration of the current contract. Hopefully by August, we will decide on how we are going to do this. If it be a committee as we have done in past practices or how we are going to move forward with teacher negotiations.
- One thing as we have reviewed our fiscal history, we have kept the average increase in salaries and medical between one and two percent per year consistently for the last 12-14

years. The one thing that is still really driving any increase in costs, is pensions. It is several hundred percent over the last 12 years. That is still an area which the legislature talks about. They made some changes. They really haven't provided much relief for local school districts. They may have provided some political relief and gotten us away for that by putting some different plans on but in terms of what those plans are going to yield of us as a district, you are talking decades. Twenty-thirty years until we see any savings for what they have done.

Daniel McGann - On the no tax increase budgets, is there anything the district is not providing for the students that we need to provide?

Mr. Brookhart - No, we do class size averages. We check to make sure we are not over staffed in any area. We get some fluctuation. We have over 3,000 students here. Every once in a while we get a class that bumps a little higher than what we like. I look at averages. We put money into facilities. We are trying to be as compliant as possible with all equity issues. We are providing for our kids are well as in our facilities. I think we are in good shape. If there is anything we are not, let us know. We will look at it.

Daniel McGann - I was at the awards ceremony on Thursday night and I was very impressed. We have that big series of poster sized things about the people that have passed and gotten AP awards. It is very impressive with the number of students over the last several years.

Mr. Brookhart - At one time, we had six AP courses, now we have 18. We were the first district in all of IU 16, 19 and 20 and in all of Northeastern PA that received the AP award from the College Board. We were the only district that received it twice before anyone else received it at all. We made a commitment in the AP's and the dual enrollment. You have done a great job here as a Board and our administration and teachers. We are very pleased with where we stand. Looking to move forward and get better.

Public Comment on Agenda Items: None.

General:

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

G-1 Appointment of Daniel McGann as voting delegate for the PSBA Delegate Assembly for the October 18, 2019 meeting in Hershey.

~G-2 Approval to accept a grant from the Berwick Health and Wellness Foundation in the amount of \$17,296 for the Summer B.A.R.K. Reading Program.

~G-3 Approval to accept a donation in the amount of \$3,000 from the Volunteers in Philanthropy (VIP) of the Central Susquehanna Community Foundation. The funds will be used to support Students Overcome and Achieve through Running (SOAR) Program.

~G-4 Approval to accept a grant from the Berwick Health and Wellness Foundation in the amount of \$4,000 for the purchase of three AEDs.

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Maryann Kovalewski to approve G-1 through G-4 with one motion. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - None and no abstentions.

Academic Affairs:

AA-1 Acknowledgement of holding the June 7, 2019 graduation ceremonies at 7:00 p.m. in the Varsity Gymnasium at the Middle School.

On motion of Larry Clausen, seconded by Christy Monico to acknowledge the holding of the June 7, 2019 graduation ceremonies at 7:00 p.m. in the Varsity Gymnasium at the Middle School. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - None and no abstentions.

Approve Items AA-2 through AA-4 With One Motion

AA-2 Approval of the tentative list of graduates for the 2018-2019 school year. This includes all possible graduates. Some of the students may not yet meet graduation requirements. (enc.)

AA-3 Approval of the District's Summer School Programs. The programs will be funded by the students. There will be no cost to the district.

AA-4 Approval to adopt Essentials of Criminal Justice by Siegel & Worrall text book, in an amount not to exceed \$4,500. The text book has been available for review since the April board meeting. (enc.)

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Maryann Kovalewski to approve AA-2 through AA-4 with one motion. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - None and no abstentions.

Transportation:

T-1 Approval to enter into contracts with the following bus companies to provide student transportation for the term commencing July 1, 2019 until June 30, 2024. (enc.) (ROLL CALL VOTE)

**Gallagher Student Transportation, Inc.
John R. Bower Bus Co., Inc.
Ralph Wintersteen**

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Daniel McGann to approve to enter into contracts with the above listed bus companies to provide student transportation for the term commencing July 1, 2019 until June 30, 2024.

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

“Nays” – None

“Abstaining” – None

Motion carried.

Approve Items T-2 through T-4 With One Motion

- T-2 Approval of Joseph Knowles as van driver for Fishing Creek Transportation for the remainder of the 2018-2019 school term.**
- T-3 Approval of Sherry Welsh as school bus driver for Bower Bus Company for the remainder of the 2018-2019 school term.**
- T-4 Approval of Jack Sudbury as bus driver for Fishing Creek Transportation for the remainder of the 2018-2019 school term.**

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Daniel McGann to approve T-2 through T-4 with one motion. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

Personnel:

Approve Items P-1 through P-14 With One Motion

- P-1 Approval to accept with regret the retirement of Paula Lupashinski as part-time paraeducator, effective February 28, 2019. (enc.)**
- P-2 Approval to accept with regret the retirement of Georgene Ferguson as Special Education Secretary, effective December 31, 2019. (enc.)**
- P-3 Approval to accept with regret the retirement of Tina Kemmerer as assistant cook, effective September 20, 2019. (enc.)**
- P-4 Approval to add the following to the day to day substitute teacher list. Compensation will be at the rate of \$12.10 per hour.**
- | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Mark Wardrop | Britni Mikulanecz | Kylene Welsh |
| Joshua Larson | Jaime Clugston | |
- P-5 Approval for employee #2436 to take Family Medical Leave (FMLA) from May 9, 2019 through June 11, 2019. Employee #2436 was previously approved for Family Medical Leave (FMLA) but the dates needed to be adjusted. (enc.)**

- P-6 Approval for employee #2508 to take Family Medical Leave (FMLA) from August 19, 2019 through September 29, 2019. (enc.)**
- P-7 Approval for employee #2789 to take Family Medical Leave (FMLA) from October 23, 2019 through December 11, 2019. (enc.)**
- P-8 Approval of the following for the Summer 21st Century Grant Program from June 24, 2019 through August 16, 2019. Compensation will be at the rate of \$23.00 per hour.**

Pamela Hegland	Sheri McClaflyn	Beth Montana	Lexi Toburen
April Patton	Brianna Lynn	Robyn Ryman	

- P-9 Approval to hire Brendan Hinkle as part-time lifeguard, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork. Compensation will be at the rate of \$8.00 per hour.**
- P-10 Approval to hire the following part-time workers for the summer maintenance help program. Compensation will be \$8.00 per hour.**

Kyle Pierce
Ralph J. Norce (*pending receipt of appropriate paperwork*)
Olivia Gomez (*pending receipt of appropriate paperwork*)
Logan Meehan (*pending receipt of appropriate paperwork*)
Justin Robbins (*pending receipt of appropriate paperwork*)
Keanu Lopez (*pending receipt of appropriate paperwork*)
Brian Remley (*pending receipt of appropriate paperwork*)

- ~P-11 Approval to accept the resignation of Amy Britton as substitute teacher. (enc.)**
- ~P-12 Approval of the following teachers for the Summer B.A.R.K. (Building Achievement for Reading in Kindergarten) Program. The program will run Monday through Thursday 9:00 a.m. – noon from July 8, 2019 through August 1, 2019. Tutors will be paid at the instructional rate for teaching and the non-instructional rate for planning.**

Candice Gingrich	Amy Malin	MariJo Rupp
Elizabeth Tanribilir	Kathryn Terdiman	

****Nichole Lear** (substitute) ****Jen Craig** (substitute)
****Kyla Riccabon** (substitute) ****Dione Soboleski** (substitute)
****Valerie Anderson** (substitute)

Dara Scala - will act as coordinator and be paid at the non-instructional rate

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

~P-14 Approval to add Leighton Bull-Walsh as a volunteer coach for the Girls' Tennis Team for the remainder of the 2018-19 school year.

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Larry Clausen to approve P-1 through P-14 with one motion. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - None and no abstentions.

~P-15 Approval to hire Chrysogonus Curry as temporary Professional Employee, effective at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year. Mr. Curry will be employed as Special Education Teacher at the Bachelor's Step 1, \$39,837, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork. (ROLL CALL VOTE)

On motion of Daniel McGann, seconded by Keith Hess to hire Chrysogonus Curry as a temporary Professional Employee, effective at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year. Mr. Curry will be employed as Special Education Teacher at the Bachelor's Step 1, \$39,837, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork.

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.

Wayne Brookhart - As we are going through the hiring process and into June, you will find out that a lot of them will not have their certificates yet so they will be pending paperwork. Those coming out of college, PDE is kind of slow with them. We always make sure we have everything we need but they may not have them in hand yet.

~P-16 Approval to hire Sarah Wittle as temporary Professional Employee, effective at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year. Ms. Wittle will be employed as Special Education Teacher at the Bachelor's Step 1, \$39,837, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork. (ROLL CALL VOTE)

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Daniel McGann to hire Sarah Wittle as a temporary Professional Employee, effective at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year. Ms. Wittle will be employed as Special Education Teacher at the Bachelor's Step 1, \$39,837, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork.

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.

~P-17 Approval to hire Kirstin Lutz as Professional Employee, effective at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year. Mrs. Lutz will be employed as Special Education Teacher at the Master’s Step 9, \$48,577, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork. (ROLL CALL VOTE)

On motion of Maryann Kovalewski, seconded by Keith Hess to hire Kirstin Lutz as a Professional Employee, effective at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year. Mrs. Lutz will be employed as Special Education Teacher at the Master’s Step 9, \$48,577, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork.

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.

Reports:

Committee Reports:

Academic Affairs – Mrs. Kupsky

- We discussed the Orton Gillingham Reading Program.
- Update on CTE’s.
- Plans for the upcoming school year.

Athletic Committee – Larry Clausen

- Met this past week. First meeting with Mr. Orlando as our athletic director. Reviewed things that we talked about to keep him up to date.
- Social media presents for our athletic programs which will allow updates of cancellations.
- eSports (electronic sports) is coming into the high school level. The National Federation of high school sports contracted with a company called PlayVS last year. There are several other formats of eSports in the high school level. Today, there are over 200 colleges that offer scholarships from Division I all the way down through Junior Colleges for eSports. eSports today is a \$900 million industry with projections to take it up to \$1.8 billion by 2022. Today on Indeed, if you search eSports there are over 700 jobs nationally. There is a 10-12 week curriculum through eSports which teaches teamwork, communication, strategic thinking and leadership. They will be involved in quick problem solving. They will be forced to work with different people. The biggest thing is that we search for different ways to reach our students. 72% of the American teens play

video games. That is a way that we can reach more students whether it be through an academic program or an athletic program. The PIAA at this time has not acknowledged that program but there are well over 50 schools in the State of Pennsylvania that have this including Loyalsock, East Lycoming School District, East Stroudsburg North, Wyoming Seminary, and several others in the Harrisburg, Hershey and Lancaster areas as well as in Western Pennsylvania. It is something that is growing in the high school levels. There is one site that is called highschoolsportleague.com that shows over 1,000 high schools in the United States that are participating in this. It is one more avenue to a possible college education for people who might not necessarily think about that. It's also an avenue for people who might become a varsity sports member who might not traditionally play what the traditional varsity sports are. It's a great way to build character and community. I hope it is something that we look at moving forward. It's not going away. It is only going to grow and I think we should be jumping on that now to be ahead of the curve.

Budget Committee – Keith Hess

- We had one meeting since the April 8th meeting. The preliminary budget was finalized and passed at the April 22nd special meeting. Thanks again to Ms. Gomez for your help for getting us the budget balanced and no tax increase.

Buildings and Grounds Committee – Susy Wiegand

- No meeting.

CSIU – Daniel McGann

- Mr. Larry Neidig from Line Mountain who was the senior member of the Board down there resigned. We had the general operating budget for the 2019-2020 school year which was approved by every district unanimously which gives you an idea how much the people at the IU have sought to improve the service they give to the sending school districts. Years ago that did not happen.
- One of the senior managers down there has elected to resign and take a job in a different district down near Philadelphia. As a result, they rearranged some of the jobs of the senior members of the administration. I will have more detail on who does what down there at our next meeting.
- Vote for members of the CSIU Board of Directors. Each individual member gets to cast a vote. There is a meeting Wednesday, so I will hand carry and take the blue papers with me to the meeting.

Vo-tech - Keith Hess

- Last JOC meeting, we had input from the community, from alumni, parents and students. Currently six districts have approved the project with what looks like the hybrid with the 9-12 model which will be the one they will probably pursue taking to the JOC vote. I am anticipating probably won't happen next week, more likely happen in June. Right now the design cost for project, whatever we approve out to bid, is probably around \$50,000.
Susy Wiegand - When are we going to see numbers for that hybrid?
Daniel McGann - That is what we have to vote on in June.

Keith Hess - We don't have a finalized plan to vote on. Once we vote on it, they are going to take it to the architect to get the actual finalized plan, which is where the \$50,000 come in. Then from there it goes out to bid, then we will have hard concrete numbers minus equipment.

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Public Comment: None

Summarization of Executive Session: a contract negotiation discussion, three personnel items, real estate issue and another contract issue.

On a motion of Daniel McGann, seconded by Susy Wiegand 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