

June 24, 2020

The special meeting of the Berwick Area School Board was held on Wednesday, June 24, 2020, via virtual zoom meeting. The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m. by President, Mrs. Susy Wiegand.

PRESENT: Mrs. Susy Wiegand, Mr. Keith Hess, Ms. Carol Bodwalk, Mr. Joseph DeMelfi, Mrs. Maryann Kovalewski, Mr. Jon Morell, Mrs. Brenda Post, Mr. Ronald Robsock, Mrs. Sandra Slavick

ABSENT: None

Also **PRESENT:** Mr. Wayne Brookhart, Ms. Renee Gomez, Attorney Bull, Mrs. Wendy Kupsky, Ms. Susan Swartz, tax payers

Susy Wiegand - There was an executive session before the special meeting.

General:

G-1 Approval of the Pennsylvania Charter School funding resolution. (enc.)

On motion of Maryann Kovalewski, seconded by Sandra Slavick, we approve the Pennsylvania Charter School funding resolution. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - none and no abstentions.

G-2 Approval to award bids for general supplies for the 2020-2021 school term. (enc.)

On motion of Ronald Robsock, seconded by Brenda Bodwalk, we award the bid for general supplies for the 2020-2021 school term. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - none and no abstentions.

G-3 Approval to award bids for custodial supplies for the 2020-2021 school term. (enc.)
TABLED

Extra Curricular:

EC-1 Approval of the Berwick Area School District Extracurricular Activities Guideline and Protocols for the Resocialization of Sports/Activities. (enc.)

On motion of Ronald Robsock, seconded by Joseph DeMelfi, we approve the Berwick Area School District Extracurricular Activities Guideline and Protocols for the Resocialization of Sports/Activities.

Maryann Kovalewski – I would ask that we consider adding a check off sheet for the cleaning of equipment and facilities for the sports so that we can kind of keep track of what has been cleaned and when. It would be done by whomever is doing the cleaning. It would be added to the protocol.

Joseph DeMelfi – PIAA is looking at cleaning periodically, like during a practice if you are using some type of equipment. They want it cleaned every 15-20 minutes. Somebody goes in and wipes it down. Are you talking about that type of thing or our player’s equipment?

Maryann Kovalewski – Both. At the end of the day, I am asking for them to check it off that it was cleaned.

Wendy Kupsky – That’s not a problem.

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

Personnel:

P-1 Approval to hire Stephen Toczylousky as Temporary Professional Employee, effective at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork. Mr. Toczylousky will be employed as a Social Studies Teacher at the Bachelor’s Step 1, based on the collective bargaining agreement. (ROLL CALL VOTE)

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Brenda Post, we hire Stephen Toczylousky as Temporary Professional Employee, effective at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork. Mr. Toczylousky will be employed as a Social Studies Teacher at the Bachelor’s Step 1, based on the collective bargaining agreement.

ROLL CALL VOTE: “Ayes” – Keith Hess, Maryann Kovalewski, Ronald Robsock, Sandra Slavick, Joseph DeMelfi, Jon Morell, Carol Bodwalk, Brenda Post, Susy Wiegand
 “Nays” – None
 “Abstaining” – None

Motion carried.

On motion of Sandra Slavick, seconded by Keith Hess, we approve P-2 and P-3 to the addendum. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - none and no abstentions.

P-2 Approval to modify the retirement date of Mr. Wayne Brookhart, Superintendent from August 27, 2020 to August 10, 2020.

On motion of Ronald Robsock, seconded by Joseph DeMelfi, we modify the retirement date of Mr. Wayne Brookhart, Superintendent from August 27, 2020 to August 10, 2020. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - none and no abstentions.

P-3 Approval to modify the starting time for Mrs. Wendy Kupsky, as our new Superintendent, from August 28, 2020 to August 11, 2020.

On motion of Maryann Kovalewski, seconded by Brenda Post, we modify the starting time for Mrs. Wendy Kupsky, as our new Superintendent, from August 28, 2020 to August 11, 2020. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - none and no abstentions.

Wendy Kupsky – I wanted to update the Board on some of the pandemic committee conversations that we have had. We met with both the elementary pandemic committee and the secondary pandemic committee, going over the guided questions from PDE of the reopening. We had some great discussions. As we all know from the last board meeting, we discussed and approved changing our calendar for teachers starting on August 10th, 11th and 12th. Students would come back on August 13th. After meeting with the pandemic committee and learning some additional information about the reopening, I am now going to propose that we change that again. I’ve learned that Columbia County does not have our own Department of Health. There is a Department of Health that provides us information and guidance. We have to follow what the State guidelines are for reopening the school. Some of the information is coming from other counties and that is different on how they plan on reopening in the schools. Geisinger has been working with our IU and all of our local school districts. They are coming out with a tool-kit for secondary education this week and one for public schools next week or the week after. That is pushing everything back. We ordered chromebooks for our elementary students and we have enough for our second grade now. The chromebooks for kindergarten, first, third and fourth grades are not slated to be delivered until mid to late August. That date continues to be pushed back. Lastly I did a training on contact tracing. It was very helpful in guiding us if there are any symptoms or positive cases in our school, classroom and community. They talked about the types of things we will need to do to keep staff, students, support staff and administrators safe and their families they go home to. I propose that we do five days of teacher in-service when we start school, to front load all of our in-service days. I propose that we do in-service days on August 13th and 14th. They would be virtual so they can be done from anywhere. We need to make sure we provide them with as many tools to be able to have the flexibility of being in and out of the classroom. In the building, the teachers would do three in-service days on August 17th, 18th and 19th. Students will start August 20th. Now if you recall from the last meeting, we are definitely concerned if we have to close. We may have to shut down if we have teachers out sick because if they are truly sick, they cannot teach virtually. Yes, we do have substitutes. If the child is sick, I don’t expect the student to be doing it virtually. I still propose that we come in the week of the fair. I think that it is essential for this year. I think it is important for our kids to be here. The last tentative day would be May 26th.

Keith Hess – So, we are still going all fair week with instruction? Last I heard, we are the only district in the entire area doing that.

Wendy Kupsky – They have chosen not to change that. I do want to stay as consistent with the other districts in our area.

Joseph DeMelfi – I don’t think we have any choice this year.

Wendy Kupsky – There are some districts that shut down that whole week. Some districts are going three days and off two. There is a variety. At this time, I think this is what is best for our students instructionally.

Sandra Slavick – I would like to vote on it tonight. I think the parents what to plan for vacations.

Wendy Kupsky – If the teachers had plans, they can do their in-service on the 13th and 14th virtually. That was the point.

Keith Hess – I just don't want to keep changing the calendar.

Susy Wiegand – We keep meeting. We talk about things that are changing as we go. If we have to modify it again, we will. At least, we have something and the parents and teachers will have something.

Brenda Post – I think at this time, we have to be flexible.

Maryann Kovalewski – Is it my understanding that they are not getting at least one day for the fair?

Brenda Post – That is right.

Sandra Slavick – They can always take an educational day.

G-4 Approval to modify the calendar as presented for the 2020-2021 school year.

On motion of Maryann Kovalewski, seconded by Brenda Post, we modify the calendar as presented for the 2020-2021 school year. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye” except Ronald Robsock and Keith Hess. “Nay” – Ronald Robsock and Keith Hess and no abstentions.

Susy Wiegand – This may be changed/modified again. At least we will have something to go by.

Ronald Robsock – We voted on the fall coaches and I was wondering if everyone knows how much the head coaches are going to make? I see a lot of them are below \$4,000. When I left the school board, they were all \$4,000 or above. I talked to Mr. Brookhart and he approved it. Now I see Sarah Warner is at \$3,150 and Matthew Schrader is at \$3,150.

Wayne Brookhart – Those terms at that time were \$2,000 minimum for an assistant and \$3,000 minimum for a head coach. That doesn't mean you can't start higher. That was probably 4-5 years ago.

Joseph DeMelfi – We just raised taxes. I would be in favor of that if we had some excess money. We do not have excess money. I don't think it is appropriate at this time. Mr. Robsock, if you want to make a motion to see if it goes, that's fine with me. I don't feel good about that right now.

Keith Hess – We talked about it in budget committee when we were planning it months ago and when we realized how tight we were that was one of things we had to eliminate even before the pandemic hit. I would like to see a bit more money to but there is only so much money in the pot.

Maryann Kovalewski and Sandra Slavick – We just can't afford it right now.

Susy Wiegand - There was an executive session before the special meeting. We discussed personnel and the teacher contract.

Keith Hess – Ms. Gomez, we had a presentation about borrowing funds. When do we need to act for the interest rate? We have multiple facilities that need to be done.

Renee Gomez – The sooner the better. It should be by September. If you wait until the end of the year, the rates may go up.

On a motion of Maryann Kovalewski, seconded by Sandra Slavick we adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye.” “Nay”- none and no abstentions.

Meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Janet K. Kovach, Secretary to the Board