

March 8, 2021

The board meeting of the Berwick Area School Board was held on Monday, March 8, 2021, via virtual zoom meeting. The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by President, Mrs. Susy Wiegand.

**PRESENT:** Mrs. Susy Wiegand, Mr. Keith Hess, Ms. Carol Bodwalk, Mrs. Maryann Kovalewski, Mr. Jon Morell, Mrs. Brenda Post, Mr. Ronald Robsock, Mrs. Sandra Slavick (virtual)

**ABSENT:** Mr. Joseph DeMelfi

Also **PRESENT:** Mrs. Wendy Kupsy, Mrs. Renee Jilinski, Attorney Bull (virtual), Mrs. Janet Kovach, Mr. Steven Christian, Mr. Robert Croop, Mr. Benton Culver, Mrs. Wendy Daily, Mrs. Pamela Hegland, Mr. Gregory Michael, Mr. Trevor Palmatier, Mr. Randy Peters, Mr. David Robbins, Mr. Patrick Sharkey, Ms. Jill Shipman, tax payers, teachers

**Moment of Silence**

**Flag Salute**

**Reading of the Minutes:**

On motion of Maryann Kovalewski, seconded by Jon Morell, we dispense with the reading of the minutes of the previous meetings on February 8, 2021 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:**

On motion of Jon Morell, seconded by Brenda Post, we approve the financial/treasurer's report as presented. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - None and no abstentions.

**Budgetary Transfers:**

On motion of Jon Morell, seconded by Sandra Slavick, we approve the budgetary transfers on pages 18-20. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - None and no abstentions.

**Presentation of the Bills:**

On motion of Ronald Robsock, seconded by Jon Morell, we pay the bills as listed.

ROLL CALL VOTE: "Ayes" – Maryann Kovalewski, Ronald Robsock, Brenda Post,  
Keith Hess, Jon Morell, Carol Bodwalk, Sandra Slavick,  
Susy Wiegand

"Nays" – None

"Abstaining" – None

Motion carried.

**Business:** Renee Jilinski

None.

**Superintendent's Report: Wendy Kupsky**

Wendy Kupsky – Attendance report presentation was postponed until the April meeting.

- February was Black History month. Check the school's webpage.
- CDC guidelines are out for school districts to return. We are in the schools with social distancing, wearing masks and good hand washing.
- Johnson & Johnson vaccine has been approved. Educators have been pushed to the front of the line to get vaccines. We are going through the CSIU for distribution starting this Friday, March 12<sup>th</sup> through Monday, March 15<sup>th</sup>. Times are Friday and Monday from 2pm – 9pm. Saturday and Sunday 8am to 8pm. We are providing some of our police officers to help them with traffic flow and with getting people in and out in a timely manner at the IU. Teachers have been notified. We have approximately 213 that are requesting to get the vaccine which includes the bus drivers, food service, all of the support staff and the coaches. Anyone that has contact with the students. Emails were sent to the people who were selected in the first round. Berwick was allotted 174 in the first round. Some of the other schools have not used all of their allotted amounts. The IU was then helping coordinate with the company the State had chosen for the IU to distribute the vaccine. Those amounts that were not used would then be given to other school districts. There are less than 500 in the entire IU district that may not get in on the first round of distribution. By the end of March, the expectation is for every school district employee to have the opportunity to be vaccinated. It may create a scheduling conflict. We don't know the schedule of how many are going after hours or during the school day. It will be first come first serve for the vaccine. I am going to send out a survey. Once everyone gets their schedule, please share it with us if they need coverage or worried if they may need coverage. It's for the functionality of keeping the school district open and keeping the kids educated.
- At the secondary level, principals have already started the at risk students coming in five days a week. They started it last week. The fourth marking period, March 26<sup>th</sup> we will be opening up on Friday's as well. The hybrid schedule will be Monday, Wednesday and Friday one week and Tuesday, Thursday, Friday the following week. We will still be social distancing but it will not meet the six feet guidelines. If we have a positive case, we will have more students potentially having to quarantine. We are increasing the attendance amount at the middle and the high school but not everyone five days a week yet.

Ronald Robsock – When do you think they will be able to attend five days a week?

Wendy Kupsky – If we could, by the end of the year. We can entertain it. That's the plan to increase everyone to five days a week.

Ronald Robsock – I want to see our kids going five days a week.

Wendy Kupsky – Definitely.

- Last week, our level of transmission in Columbia County was moderate. This week we went back up to substantial. We have newly reported cases which makes it difficult to bring kids in five days a week. We are in that substantial range. The rules change when you go from moderate to substantial.

- I will be communicating with the community if there are any schedule changes. I will be doing robo calls, posting it on the websites and making sure we get the information out with any type of schedule changes.
- Athletics – At the end of the season, we are planning on doing our presentations. We still have teams that are still playing. At the April meeting, we are planning to do some type of recognition at the Varsity gym.
- We would like to move, like other school districts are doing, to doing all of the meetings on Zoom. We did purchase the Zoom license for the capacity. This will give us a number of how many people would potentially be showing up to a meeting. We want to move to doing things in person. It is so much better doing it in person with the dialog. My request is to move away from the Facebook and going back to Zoom. People can log onto Zoom. There are some districts that have already moved to all in person meetings. Others are utilizing this process to help determine who will come to in person meetings and have public comment.
- Acknowledging graduation on May 28, 2021. Prom will be May 15<sup>th</sup>. They will be outside.
- The musical will also be in May.

On motion of Ronald Robsock, seconded by Carol Bodwalk we add the addendum. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

**Public Comment on Agenda Items:** None

## **Agenda**

### **General:**

**G-1 Approval of the exoneration in the amount of \$41,533.55 for Parcels: 06 01 015 00,168; 06 01 015 00,196 and 06 01 015 00,181. (enc.)**

On motion of Jon Morell, seconded by Sandra Slavick we table G-1. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions. G-1 TABLED.

### **Approve Items G-2 through G-7 With One Motion**

**G-2 Approval to accept the donation of \$1,000 from an anonymous donor for the literacy programs at the Berwick Area School District.**

**G-3 Approval to accept the donation of \$100 from B.P.O.E. No. 1138 Small Games of Chance for the Kamp for Kids program.**

**G-4 Approval of the Track and Field Booster Club Bylaws. (enc.)**

**G-5 Approval of the second and final reading of Policy 220 Student Expression / Distribution and Posting of Materials. (enc.)**

**G-6 Approval of the second and final reading of Policy 913 Nonschool Organizations / Groups / Individuals. (enc.)**

**G-7 Approval of the second and final reading of Policy 915 School-Related Organization. (enc.)**

On motion of Maryann Kovalewski, seconded by Brenda Post we approve Items G-2 through G-7 With One Motion. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

#### **Academic Affairs:**

**AA-1 Acknowledgement of holding the graduation ceremonies on May 28, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. at Crispin Field with a rain date being May 29, 2021.**

Acknowledgement was given of holding the graduation ceremonies on May 28, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. at Crispin Field with a rain date being May 29, 2021.

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

**AA-2 Approval of the adoption of the below listed textbooks:**

- |                                      |                                      |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • Glencoe Algebra I<br>225 editions  | McGraw Hill Education<br>\$18,535.50 |
| • Glencoe Algebra II<br>170 editions | McGraw Hill Education<br>\$14,004.60 |
| • Glencoe Geometry<br>200 editions   | McGraw Hill Education<br>\$16,476.00 |

**AA-3 Approval of the High School Enrollment Booklet for the 2021-2022 school year. (enc.)**

**AA-4 Approval of the 2021-2022 school calendar. (enc.)**

On motion of Maryann Kovalewski, seconded by Ronald Robsock we approve Items AA-2 through AA-4 With One Motion. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye except Keith Hess”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions. Mr. Hess stated at the April 12, 2021 meeting that his microphone was not working and he did not vote.

#### **Budget & Finance:**

**BF-1 Approval of the Columbia-Montour Area Vocational-Technical School Budget for the 2021-2022 school term. Berwick’s share is \$1,920,554. This is an increase of \$101,172.88. (enc.) (ROLL CALL VOTE)**

On motion of Jon Morell, seconded by Maryann Kovalewski and Keith Hess, we approve the Columbia-Montour Area Vocational-Technical School Budget for the 2021-2022 school term. Berwick's share is \$1,920,554. This is an increase of \$101,172.88.

Ronald Robsock – Are we going to absorb Benton's share of the budget all the time now?  
 Keith Hess – We increased enrollment due to their slots. Their slots were divided up equally amongst the remaining sending schools. Unless something happens that they come back or become tuition students, we are going to have a few extra students there every year. Yes.

ROLL CALL VOTE: "Ayes" – Ronald Robsock, Brenda Post, Keith Hess, Jon Morell,  
 Carol Bodwalk, Sandra Slavick, Maryann Kovalewski,  
 Susy Wiegand

"Nays" – None

"Abstaining" – None

Motion carried.

**BF-2 Acknowledgment of the Single Audit Report for fiscal year ending June 30, 2020.  
 (enc.)**

Acknowledgement was given of the Single Audit Report for fiscal year ending June 30, 2020.

**Transportation:**

**T-1 Approval of Joseph Deitzler as bus driver for Gallagher Student Transportation for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school term.**

On motion of Jon Morell, seconded by Keith Hess we approve Joseph Deitzler as bus driver for Gallagher Student Transportation for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school term. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - None and no abstentions.

**Personnel:**

**Approve Items P-1 through P-5 With One Motion**

**P-1 Approval of Ashley Robbins as assistant track and field coach. Compensation will be at a stipend of \$2,000.**

**P-2 Approval of Pavan Gadam as volunteer assistant boys' tennis coach.**

**P-3 Approval to hire Rebecca Zeveney as a part-time paraeducator, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork. Compensation will be at the rate of \$13.36 per hour.**

**P-4 Approval of the resignation of Matthew Shrader as head golf coach, effective immediately. (enc.)**

**P-5 Approval to accept with regret the retirement of Cecilia Fox, effective February 27, 2021. (enc.)**

On motion of Brenda Post, seconded by Jon Morell we approve Items P-1 through P-5 With One Motion. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

**Addendum**

**General:**

**G-8 Approval to accept the donation of \$1,500 from Blue Cross and Blue Shield for the Wellness program at the Berwick Area School District.**

On motion of Brenda Post, seconded by Jon Morell we accept the donation of \$1,500 from Blue Cross and Blue Shield for the Wellness program at the Berwick Area School District. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

**Transportation:**

**Approve Items T-2 through T-3 With One Motion**

**T-2 Approval of Debbie Wilson as van driver for FishingCreek Transportation for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school term.**

**T-3 Approval of John Lupashinski as van driver for Gallagher Student Transportation for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school term.**

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Carol Bodwalk we approve Items T-2 through T-3 With One Motion. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

**Personnel:**

**Approve Items P-6 through P-9 With One Motion**

**P-6 Approval to accept with regret the retirement of Phyllis Dietterick, effective March 3, 2021. (enc.)**

**P-7 Approval of the medical sabbatical leave for employee #1167, effective March 1, 2021 through to the end of the 2020-2021 school term. (enc.)**

**P-8 Approval of Nicholas Dawson as assistant track and field coach. Compensation will be at a stipend of \$2,000.**

**P-9 Approval for employee #2886 to take unpaid days on March 2-3, 2021. (enc.)**

On motion of Ronald Robsock, seconded by Keith Hess we approve Items P-6 through P-9 With One Motion. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

**Old Business:**

Maryann Kovalewski – Air quality studies. When were the last ones done in all of those buildings? Were they done in a timely manner and, if not, when are they going to be done? I would like to see the latest results for all buildings of the last studies that were done.

Jon Morell – You presented that to the Board right before the school year started or right after the school started. Didn’t you?

Benton Culver – That was water testing. What I was able to find was 2016. We did some tests in the Salem building and then Thompson Run. I haven’t found anything for the high school or middle school. We actually have Element Environmental coming in this summer to do our yearly water testing, our AHERA plan and air testing. They are doing all of those over the summer as soon as we can get them in the building.

Maryann Kovalewski – These tests will be done this summer? Prior to that, when were they done?

Benton Culver – The last testing that I have that I came across was 2016.

Maryann Kovalewski – Could I have a copy of the results? I want to compare the old and the new. See where we were and see where we will be when the new studies come.

Wendy Kupsky – We can have Mr. Culver do a presentation for the entire Board.

Maryann Kovalewski – I would like that.

Maryann Kovalewski – COVID vaccines. With the first shots, were they taking personal time or were they being given COVID time?

Wendy Kupsky – If they did it on their own, they did it on their own time. They scheduled it on their own. I don’t know the impact. I am requesting that they schedule it after school, Saturday or Sunday.

Maryann Kovalewski – That will help with staffing.

Wendy Kupsky – Correct. The others did go and we arranged for coverage.

**New Business:** None

**Public Comment:**

Wendy Schmeer /grew up in Nescopeck and Berwick – What is going on with the Nescopeck school? Are you closing it?

Wendy Kupsky – I didn’t bring that up. It wasn’t anything that I presented at this time.

Keith Hess – I am not in any part of a discussion in closing the building.

Susan Swartz – Asked about the Columbia-Montour Area Vocational-Technical School Budget vote results and Johnson and Johnson vaccine and the number allotted to Berwick Area School District.

Crystal Mickalowski – What about the possibility of eliminating the principal at Nescopeck that was brought up during a recent budget meeting?

Keith Hess – It was brought up to eliminate it. I guarantee that. It is routine staffing conversations that happen at this time. Some may come to fruition and some may not. This year’s budget with COVID money coming in, anything that is going to happen will definitely be happening in the near future. We aren’t going to be eliminating a principal any time soon.

Jon Morell – This is something that I brought up at the budget committee meeting about having someone coming from the IU to take a look at the budget or be available to look at the budget. That was no reflection on Mrs. Jilinski’s capabilities. It was just to have a fresh look. Maybe offer some suggestions. It was in no means against Mrs. Jilinski or against her capabilities in this manner or expertise. She has done a wonderful job. It was just another set of eyes to take a look at it.

**Summarization of Executive Session:** Susy Wiegand  
Two personnel items and one legal item.

Next Meetings:

Committee of the Whole – April 6, 2021 5:30 p.m.

Board Meeting – April 12, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

Janet K. Kovach, Secretary to the Board