

August 9, 2021

The board meeting of the Berwick Area School Board was held on Monday, August 9, 2021, in the Line Street Administrative Office. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 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:** Mrs. Wendy Kupsy, Attorney Bull, Mrs. Renee Jilinski, Mrs. Janet Kovach, Mr. Steven Christian, Mr. Robert Croop, Mrs. Pamela Hegland, Mrs. Jennifer McHale, Ms. Amy Melchiorre, Mr. Gregory Michael, Mr. Joseph Bo Orlando, Mr. Randy Peters, Mr. Patrick Sharkey, Ms. Jill Shipman, Susan Swartz, tax payers

Moment of Silence

Flag Salute

Reading of the Minutes:

On motion of Maryann Kovalewski, seconded by Brenda Post, we dispense with the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting on July 12, 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 Keith Hess, seconded by Jon Morell and Carol Bodwalk, 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 Sandra Slavick, seconded by Keith Hess, we approve the budgetary transfers on pages 18-19. Motion carried. All members voting "Aye". "Nay" - None and no abstentions.

Presentation of the Bills:

On motion of Maryann Kovalewski, seconded by Brenda Post, we pay the bills as listed.

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

"Nays" – None

"Abstaining" – None

Motion carried.

Business – Renee Jilinski

- The auditors have selected to audit the Berwick Champions Club, PINE, and SESAME.
- HRA – Had a meeting with Benefit Wallet (working towards a resolution) – Letters went out to the retirees with a contact phone number. If they have any other questions, they can schedule a meeting with Mrs. Jilinski.
- Preparing for the audit.

Superintendent’s Report: Wendy Kupsky

- Kindergarten, 5th grade and cyber orientation will all be on August 18, 2021.
- Meet the teacher night with all the other grade levels will be on August 19, 2021.
- Teacher in-service: August 18th and 19th.
- Informational letters were sent to parents. A copy of the letter will be posted on each building’s website.
- Our Safety Plan for the district – We have to have an assessment where a team of police come in and evaluate all of the buildings. It had been delayed previously because of the pandemic. They will be coming the last week of August to do the assessment. Once they gather all the information, then they will put it in a report. Mrs. Hegland will present on the findings either September or October.
- Policy 115 – Students attending any career technical program. This policy is for students that don’t have to attend the entire day. If they are in a program for one class, the policy states we will transport for one class and then they will be transported back to our district for the rest of the classes. It will help with cost savings. We are able to provide the education in all of the other classes that are not the CTE classes. The other thing is that the application process for them has changed. Previously, the students have been contacting the other schools. The school then calls us and sends us the bill. We then have to pay it. We will be notifying the schools where the students are attending. We will be asking them to make sure that the students go through us first and then it will have to come to our Board. There is a limit. Once they hit three classes, it’s not feasible for the transportation of the students to be transported back and forth. Once they get into some their sophomore year and others their junior year; it’s just full time for wherever they are attending.
- Addendum – Item G-6 Emergency Instructional Resolution Section 520.1 We had to approve this last year. It has to do with the school days and hours. It has been recommended by PDE that we pass this again this year. This is a cautionary piece just in the event that we might need it.
- The Health and Safety Plan was passed and then shortly after that, the CDC changed their guidelines. Significant changes are #1. Anyone who was not vaccinated should wear a mask. #2. That change was everyone should wear a mask. The Governor came out and said he was not making any mandates for schools. The recommendations are specific to that area. The recommendations are based off the substantial or high levels. Last Thursday, Columbia and Luzerne reached the substantial range.
- We had a superintendent meeting with Danville and Wilkes Barre medical representations; they said the hospitalizations were at a 6% increase and Evangelical was at a 2% increase.

- The quarantine information that is out there is students masked within 3-6 feet would not have to quarantine. That is different from last year. One says cumulative and the other one says consecutive with the 15 minute time frame.
- It's up to the Board on how we move forward.
- Kids on buses are required to wear masks.
Carol Bodwalk – We can revisit it if the numbers go up specific to our area.
We have not had any information back from DOH for the testing.
- ESSERS funding is based on following the submitted plan.

My primary goal is to get the kids in school safely. So, no change.

On motion of Ronald Robsock, seconded by Sandra Slavick and Keith Hess we add the addendum to the agenda. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

Public Comment on Agenda Items:

None

Agenda

General:

Approve Items G-1 through G-5 With One Motion

- G-1 Approval of the second and final reading of Policy # 115 Career and Technical Education. (enc.)**
- G-2 Approval of the review to Policy #249 Bullying/Cyberbullying. (enc.)**
- G-3 Approval of the review to Policy #352 Bullying. (enc.)**
- G-4 Approval of the review to Policy #452 Bullying. (enc.)**
- G-5 Approval of the review to Policy #552 Bullying. (enc.)**

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

Academic Affairs:

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

- AA-1 Approval of the Elementary School Handbook for the 2021-2022 school term. (enc.)**
- AA-2 Approval of the Middle School Handbook for the 2021-2022 school term. (enc.)**
- AA-3 Approval of the Senior High School Handbook for the 2021-2022 school term. (enc.)**

AA-4 Approval to accept two non-resident students from the Benton Area School District on a tuition basis for the 2021-2022 school year. (enc.)

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Brenda Post and Sandra Slavick we approve Items AA-1 through AA-4 With One Motion. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

Extra Curricular:

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

EC-1 Approval to recognize Girls Soccer as a Booster Club for the 2021-2022 school term. (enc.)

EC-2 Approval to recognize B.A.M.S.A. as a Booster Club for the 2021-2022 school term. (enc.)

On motion of Jon Morell, seconded by Keith Hess we approve Items EC-1 through EC-2 With One Motion.

Carol Bodwalk – Question on EC-2. Why so many fund raisers?

Keith Hess – It gives them options.

Renee Jilinski – The middle school has the most amount of students. They submitted them all at one time, not throughout the school year.

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 the listed bus stops for the 2021-2022 school term. (enc.)

T-2 Approval of the listed bus and van drivers for the 2021-2022 school term, pending receipt of clearances and appropriate paperwork. (enc.)

On motion of Brenda Post, seconded by Maryann Kovalewski 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-11 With One Motion

P-1 Approval of the resignation of Jessica Gordner as Special Education Teacher, effective immediately. (enc.)

P-2 Approval of Amanda Ziegler as Band, Jazz & Wind Coordinator at the middle school for the 2020-2021 school year. Compensation will be at a stipend of \$1,292.00.

- P-3 Approval of the list of High School Class Advisors, Coordinators and Club Advisors for the 2021-2022 school term. (enc.)**
- P-4 Approval of the list of Middle School Level Leaders and Advisors for the 2021-2022 school term. (enc.)**
- P-5 Approval of the following mentor teachers for the 2021-2022 school year. Compensation will be at a stipend of \$800.00.**

**Tiffany Zucal for Shayla DiPasquale
Jennifer Marks for Corinne Hock
Laura Chapin for Kylie Brockway
Melissa Driscole for Anthony McDonnell-Johnson
Ashton Duke for Rachel Lauer**

- P-6 Approval of the list of substitute teachers for the 2021-2022 school term, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork. Compensation will be at the rate of \$15.71 per hour. (enc.)**
- P-7 Approval of the list of exclusive district substitute teachers for the 2021-2022 school term, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork. Compensation will be at the rate of \$20.00 per hour. (enc.)**
- P-8 Approval to accept the resignation of Elizabeth Stout as exclusive district substitute teacher, effectively immediately. (enc.)**
- P-9 Approval of the resignation of Danielle Kirshbaum as part-time paraeducator, effectively immediately. (enc.)**
- P-10 Approval to accept with regret the resignation for the purpose of retirement of Elizabeth Stoker as part-time cafeteria worker, effective at the start of the 2021-2022 school year. (enc.)**
- P-11 Approval of the following Berwick Area Senior High School Marching Band staff positions for the school year 2021-2022, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork.**

Nathan Dovman – Front Ensemble Instructor	\$1,500
David West – Percussion Instructor	\$1,500

**Volunteers:
Brenna Goulstone and Reed Lehman**

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Jon Morell we approve Items P-1 through P-11 With One Motion. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

- P-12 Approval to hire Rachel Lauer as Temporary Professional Employee, effective at the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, pending receipt of appropriate**

paperwork. Ms. Lauer will be employed as a Special Education Teacher at the Bachelors Step 1, \$42,837.00. (ROLL CALL VOTE)

On motion of Jon Morell, seconded by Sandra Slavick we approve to hire Rachel Lauer as Temporary Professional Employee, effective at the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork. Ms. Lauer will be employed as a Special Education Teacher at the Bachelors Step 1, \$42,837.00.

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

Motion carried.

ADDENDUM

General:

G-6 Approval of the resolution for reopening Section 520.1 of the Pennsylvania School Code. (enc.)

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Jon Morell and Carol Bodwalk we approve the resolution for reopening Section 520.1 of the Pennsylvania School Code. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

Transportation:

T-3 Approval of Cheryl Vanderhoff as van driver for FishingCreek Transportation for the 2021-2022 school term.

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Brenda Post we approve Cheryl Vanderhoff as van driver for FishingCreek Transportation for the 2021-2022 school term. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

Personnel:

Approve Items P-13 through P-15 With One Motion

P-13 Approval of the following as Homebound Instructors for the 2021-2022 school year. Compensation for this position will be at the instructional rate of \$27.00 per hour.

**Valarie Anderson
Bridget Lynn**

**Maria Kingery
Domenique Verrastro**

P-14 Approval to hire Stacy Miller as part-time Criminal Justice and Police Science CTE Instructor, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork. Compensation will be at the rate of \$30.00 per hour.

P-15 Approval to accept the resignation of Stephen Toczylousky as Social Studies Teacher, effective August 9, 2021. (enc.)

On motion of Ronald Robsock, seconded by Keith Hess we approve Items P-13 through P-15 With One Motion. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

***P-16 Approval to accept the resignation of Steven Strzyzynski as Special Education and Science Teacher, effective August 9, 2021. (enc.)**

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Jon Morell we accept the resignation of Steven Strzyzynski as Special Education and Science Teacher, effective August 9, 2021. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

***P-17 Approval to hire Matthew Navin as Temporary Professional Employee, effective at the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork. Mr. Navin will be employed as a Middle School Social Studies Teacher at the Bachelors Step 1, \$42,837.00. (ROLL CALL VOTE)**

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Sandra Slavick we approve to hire Matthew Navin as Temporary Professional Employee, effective at the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, pending receipt of appropriate paperwork. Mr. Navin will be employed as a Middle School Social Studies Teacher at the Bachelors Step 1, \$42,837.00.

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

Motion carried.

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Jon Morell we add P-18 to the addendum. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

~P-18 Approval of medical sabbatical leave for employee #63 for six (6) months (92.5 School days) beginning August 18, 2021 ending January 18, 2022 based upon the present school calendar in effect as of August 9, 2021.

On motion of Keith Hess, seconded by Carol Bodwalk we approve the medical sabbatical leave for employee #63 for six (6) months (92.5 school days) beginning August 18, 2021 ending January 18, 2022 based upon the present school calendar in effect as of August 9, 2021. Motion carried. All members voting “Aye”. “Nay” - None and no abstentions.

Old Business:

Joseph DeMelfi – Unemployment fraud update.

Renee Jilinski – The State adopted ID.me to prevent any future problems. We have had one since. We had a total of 36 in two weeks.

Maryann Kovalewski – Environmental Study. Questioning air quality.

Benton Culver – HVAC system and air purifiers.

Maryann Kovalewski – Questioning if the contract was signed for the Meadows.

Wendy Kupsky – It needs to be finalized with our attorney and then it will come to the Board.

Joseph DeMelfi – Cleaning needs.

Brenda Post – CTE courses. Will the parents be notified?

Wendy Kupsky – They will be after tonight.

Carol Bodwalk – Fireworks and the meeting with the Borough.

Wendy Kupsky – No study was done. The borough doesn't have an issue with the presentation fireworks. The conversations they are having are with the personal ones that people have been setting off.

Carol Bodwalk – Clean up and safety issues.

Maryann Kovalewski – Questioning safety.

Renee Jilinski – The Use of Facility process was discussed.

Sandra Slavick – If we have a concern, let's put it to a vote.

Susy Wiegand – I think the town has a say in it.

Wendy Kupsky – Will discuss with the board president and will come up with the wording and bring it to the work session.

New Business:

None

Public Comment: None**Summarization of Executive Session:** Susy Wiegand

Two personnel items and a procedure.

Next Meetings:

Committee of the Whole – Tuesday, September 7, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

Board Meeting – Monday, September 13, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Janet K. Kovach, Secretary to the Board