

WYOMISSING AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT 2010-4200

Minutes October 12, 2010

The Committee of the Whole meeting of the Board of School Directors convened at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Board Room with Mrs. Davis, Board President, presiding.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Following the pledge of allegiance, Mrs. Davis asked if anyone would be recording the meeting. No one from the public indicated the intent to record.

Board Members Present:

Mrs. Bamberger, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Fitzgerald, Mrs. Helm, Mr. Larkin, Mr. Painter, Mr. Portner, Mrs. Sakmann, and Mrs. Seltzer.

Administrative Staff Present:

Mr. Krem, Dr. Pulkowski, Mrs. Mason, Mr. Babb, Mr. Fries, Ms. Garman, Mr. Griscom, Mrs. Morett, Mr. Roberts, and Dr. Speace.

Attendees:

Mr. Boland, Kozloff-Stoudt, Mr. Cox and Mr. Wood from Rhoads & Sinon LLP, Mr. Kramer from RBC Capital Markets, and Shelley Filer, recording secretary. Audience sign-in sheet included as part of these official minutes.

WELCOME

Following the roll call by the Board secretary, Mrs. Davis welcomed everyone and announced that executive sessions were held on September 27, 2010 and prior to the meeting this evening regarding personnel and no action was taken.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mrs. Davis announced the following upcoming meetings.

- School Board Meeting – Monday, October 25, 2010, 7:00 p.m.
- Technology Committee Meeting – November 1, 2010, 3:30 p.m.
- Curriculum Committee Meeting – November 1, 2010, 4:30 p.m.
- Finance/Facilities Committee Meeting – November 2, 2010, 10:30 a.m.
- Policy/Personnel Committee Meeting – November 2, 2010, 5:00 p.m.

All listed meetings are held in the Community Board Room of the Jr./Sr. High School.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Finance – Mrs. Helm reported that the committee met October 5, 2010. The main topic was the upcoming bond issue to finance the West Reading Elementary School project as well the opportunity presented by low interest rates to restructure debt. The budget process and its timing were also discussed.
- B. Facilities – Mr. Larkin reported that the committee met October 5, 2010. Due to the absence of Mr. Fries, nothing substantive was discussed. Bids for the West Reading project are due October 27, 2010. Other discussion centered on district fields. No recommendations were made, just observations.

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C. Curriculum – Mrs. Sakmann reported that the committee meeting was held on October 4, 2010. She asked Dr. Speace to explain the first topic, Virditional Classes, a combination of virtual and traditional classes. This is an on-line classroom, not to be confused with distance learning. The class exists as a line item on a student’s schedule. A teacher is assigned to that classroom and meets every day with the students. We are considering piloting a health course because it follows a prescribed curriculum across the state, is considered a low-stakes course, and can be taught in modules. This opportunity will better prepare our students for success at the college level because most incoming freshmen are expected to have these online learning skills.

Mrs. Davis asked what the cost would be. Dr. Speace said it depended on whether we purchased an existing course or made our own. District representatives will visit Manheim Township later this month to obtain more information.

Mrs. Sakmann asked for clarification if this is being suggested for the 2011-12 school year. Dr. Speace said yes, but it is not in the budget yet. The longer we wait, the longer our students will be at a disadvantage. Mrs. Helm questioned if she would have cost information by the end of the month. Dr. Speace said she should have a closer idea. If we can purchase a course it would be less costly than if we have to start from scratch. Mrs. Davis asked if it would be less costly to have more students in the class than the traditional 20-25. Dr. Speace said that would only work in a virtual setting, not virditional. Dr. Speace invited a Board member to accompany the group to Manheim Township.

Mrs. Sakmann gave a report on Mrs. Kreps’ curriculum review process to date. She has met with each building principal and RtI coordinators to see what is being done and what still needs to happen. She has reviewed the most recent PSSA data and looked at specific students to see what historical data can tell us about curriculum. Questionnaires have been distributed to staff to get their input on curriculum. By the end of her review she will have met with every grade level K-12. She has written findings and recommendations for each building and for the district in general and has recorded her input from all three buildings. She expects to conclude her review in a month and will present her findings to the Board.

D. Technology – Mr. Fitzgerald reported the committee met informally

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on October 4, 2010. No recommendations were being made at this time. Mr. Griscom reviewed a list of projects and accomplishments since his arrival in March 2010 including the following: establishing a Help Desk; spam filtering; network monitoring using an outside consultant; licensing; changing department responsibilities; off-site backup now located at Wyomissing Hills; and other miscellaneous items.

Short-term department goals include implementing a student internship program, standardizing equipment, finalizing whiteboard installations, the WREC project, and proposing changing the student information system.

Pressing technology issues include the fire suppression system and the storage area network and EOL networking gear.

Long-term issues include distance learning, district collaboration in creating a central repository for files, and sustainable professional development.

- E. Personnel – Mr. Painter reported that the major topic of discussion at the October 5, 2010 meeting was the interviews for the Assistant Superintendent. The first round of interviews concluded on October 6. The committee will bring three candidates to the Board for the second round of interviews in the next month or so with the hope of the successful candidate starting in February 2011.

Custodial staffing was also discussed. Information provided by Mr. Fries showed that we are staffed appropriately at this time.

Mr. Painter also mentioned that the original plan of having the WREC nurse split her time between the two churches during the construction project could pose liability issues for the district in the event of an emergency. The committee feels the Board should consider hiring a temporary person to serve as a nurse so both church locations have a nurse on site. Mr. Boland concurred. Mrs. Bamberger asked if the temporary person would have other duties as well to fill up the day. Mr. Babb said the current nurse assists in other capacities already and that the temporary person would be expected to do so as well.

- F. Policy – Mr. Portner reported that the committee met on October 5, 2010 and is initially reviewing ten policies. Six of those policies have recommended changes by PSBA; two policies tabled previously, are still being discussed; the wellness policy is being reviewed as it relates to classroom treats; the electronic device

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policy which Dr. Speace will address at the next committee meeting; and two new policies proposed by PSBA. Administrators whose areas will be impacted by these policies will review proposed PSBA changes and submit their recommendations for revising our existing policies. Mr. Portner also mentioned a new policy on PSBA's web site as well as the sample uniform policy he received.

Further discussion ensued regarding the policy on electronic devices as it relates to using devices for educational purposes in the classroom and how the policy should reflect what is being practiced.

G. Ad Hoc Committees

- Economic Development – Mrs. Bamberger reported that the committee met September 20, 2010 and the focus of the discussion was whether to explore the possibility of hiring a grant writer to increase fund raising efforts. They asked the Personnel Committee to pursue that. The next meeting is November 10, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.
- Community Relations – Mrs. Seltzer reported that various “coffees” were held by residents to introduce Mr. and Mrs. Krem to the community. Three are scheduled for the week of October 18. The committee also held a community meeting to update residents on the WREC project. Only six people attended. Their biggest concern was the parking lot which is being addressed.
- Uniform – Mrs. Helm reported that the invitation to join the committee was not posted by the end of September as originally planned. She hopes to have it posted by mid-October. No other progress has been made. Mrs. Sakmann said she expects the first meeting to be held the first week of November.

H. Berks County Intermediate Unit Board Report – Mrs. Seltzer attended a meeting at the end of September. She feels BCIU offers a lot of great programs that we are not taking advantage of especially in the area of curriculum. She has discussed this with Mr. Krem.

I. Berks Career & Technology Center Board Report – Mr. Painter said the next meeting is October 27, 2010 and had nothing further to report.

J. Berks EIT Report – Mr. Larkin, no report.

K. Wyomissing Area Education Foundation – Mrs. Bamberger attended the meeting that morning and said that the foundation is gearing up to enhance their fundraising efforts.

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L. Legislative Report – Mr. Fitzgerald, no report.

PRESENTATION

Mr. Scott Kramer from RBC Capital Markets Corporation reviewed the Note Purchase Agreement for the proposed \$24,000,000 maximum aggregate principal amount of General Obligation Notes, Series of 2010. This agreement has been advertised to refinance and restructure the 2005 bonds to make room for capital projects and finance the WREC project. The refinancing represents \$9 million and the funds for the building project represent \$11 million. The additional \$4 million allows for flexibility when we go to the market to purchase the bonds. It allows us to file with the Department of Community and Economic Development the maximum parameters. The maximum interest rate outlined in the agreement is 6%. The agreement also allows RBC to enter the market at a moment's notice to get the best rate. Currently municipal rates are at 50-year lows and are not expected to fluctuate much by early December when we enter the market. Mr. Kramer suspects the interest rate will be below 4% when we enter the market.

Mr. John Cox, bond counsel from Rhoads and Sinon stated for the record that the resolution before the Board had been advertised as required by the Local Government Debt Act, made available for inspection and reviewed by our solicitor. He reviewed the contents of the resolution which is included in these official minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Bill Murray asked what the current rate is on the \$9 million that will be refinanced. Mr. Kramer responded that the average rate of the 2005 bonds is 3.6% and the current rate is about 3.2%. Mrs. Helm said that we will not restructure the debt if it doesn't make economic sense.

Mr. Murray also asked what effect incurring this debt will have on the taxpayers considering the increased pension costs facing the district over the next few years. Mrs. Helm felt that if the borrowing is done prudently, it will mitigate the impact on the millage.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. FINANCE/ FACILITIES

Upon a motion by Mr. Portner, second by Mrs. Sakmann the Board approved the Finance/Facilities agenda items:

1. Approved a resolution authorizing Kozloff Stoudt to represent the Wyomissing Area School District in the Berks County Board of Assessment Appeals per Resolution No. 10-12-10-1 (see attachment).
2. Approved Parameters Resolution regarding the issuance of

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General Obligation Bonds for a principal amount not to exceed \$24,000,000(see attachment).

Yeas: Bamberger, Fitzgerald, Helm, Larkin, Painter, Portner, Sakmann, Seltzer, and Davis.

Nays: None. Motion carried

Finance and Facilities items 3 through 7 were open for discussion. Mrs. Mason felt the items were self-explanatory. Mrs. Davis asked if the item on the budget calendar in October, "Review Major Initiatives" will be a Board function or a Finance Committee function. Mrs. Mason responded that in light of moving to a committee structure, it would be done at the Finance Committee.

B. CURRICULUM/ TECHNOLOGY

Curriculum items 1 and 2 were open for discussion. Mrs. Sakmann deferred to Dr. Pulkowski to provide some background on the third grade field trip request. Dr. Pulkowski reported that this is a new field trip that is better aligned with standards. Pennsylvania history is a focus for grade three social studies. With a visit to Valley Forge students will be able to experience what winter encampment would have been like.

C. PERSONNEL/ POLICY

Upon a motion by Mr. Larkin and second by Mrs. Sakmann the Board approved the following Personnel/Policy item:

1. APPOINTMENTS

a. Professional Staff

- 1) April Collins**, LTS Learning Support Teacher at WREC, at B, Step 1, \$40,720 pro-rated, effective October 8, 2010, pending receipt of necessary documentation.

Background Information: Ms. Collins graduated Magna Cum Laude from Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania with a Bachelor's degree and certifications in Elementary Education (K-6) and Special Education (N-12). She was a long-term substitute special education teacher at Wissahickon High School for the 09-10 school year. Prior to this, she was an LTS at Spring-Ford Senior High School, Upper Providence Elementary School and Spring-Ford Intermediate School. April is replacing Jessica Lengle while she is on leave.

- 2) Heather L. Ulrich**, part-time Jr./Sr. High School Clerical Assistant, 32 hours/week, \$11.00/hr.,

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effective October 8, 2010, pending receipt of necessary documentation.

Background Information: Ms. Ulrich is replacing Pamela Kaucher.

Yeas: Bamberger, Fitzgerald, Helm, Larkin, Painter, Portner, Sakmann, Seltzer, and Davis.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

Personnel items 2 through 8 were reviewed and discussed. Mrs. Seltzer asked if names would be provided for the open positions by the next Board meeting. Ms. Garman said that many are already filled.

Old Business

A. AFSCME negotiations – Mrs. Davis announced the next meeting is October 26, 2010.

New Business – None.

Public Comments – None.

Hearing from the WAEA – No items.

Adjournment

Mrs. Davis announced that the Board would meet in a brief executive session following the meeting. A motion was made by Mrs. Sakmann, second by Mr. Larkin to adjourn at 6:55 p.m.

Corinne D. Mason
Board Secretary