

MINUTES: BOARD OF EDUCATION—December 7, 2009

The meeting of the Board of Education of the Southern Tioga School District was called to order by Board President Barbara Shull with the following members also present: Ivan Erway, Roxanne Landis, Stuart Crossen, Dan Berguson, Frank Kollar, Terry Osborne, Susan Jaquish, and Gloria Schwab.

The following administrators were in attendance: Messrs. Kalata, Rakoski, Jaquish, Lindner, Mrs. Drabick, Mrs. Crowell, Mrs. Perry, Mrs. Sick and interested teachers and citizens.

The **Minutes** of the meeting held on November 9, 2009, were reviewed by the Board. On motion of Mrs. Landis and second of Mr. Crossen the Board voted 9 to 0 to approve the minutes as presented.

The **Treasurer's Report** was presented, including statements regarding the General Fund, Student Activities Funds, Student Athletic Funds, and Scholarship Funds. On motion of Mr. Kollar and second of Mrs. Schwab the Board voted 9 to 0 to approve the treasurer's report as presented (**EXHIBIT**).

The Board studied the **Bill List for the General Fund**. On motion of Mr. Berguson and second of Mrs. Schwab the Board voted 9 to 0 to approve the bill list as presented (**EXHIBIT**).

Mrs. Perry presented the **Food Service Report**. On motion of Mrs. Schwab and second of Mrs. Landis the Board voted 9 to 0 to approve the food service report as presented (**EXHIBIT**).

On motion of Mr. Osborne and second of Mrs. Schwab the Board voted 9 to 0 to approve the **Building Use Permits** as presented (**EXHIBIT**).

On motion of Mr. Berguson and second of Mr. Kollar the Board voted 9 to 0 to approve the **Field Trip and Conference Requests** as presented (**EXHIBIT**).

Mr. Kalata, Superintendent, emphasized the importance of District staff attending the Pete & C Technology Conference.

Administrative Report

Mr. Kalata reported for the Administration. He expressed appreciation to the Board and officers for another year of service to the District and presented an update on the North Penn building project. The Administration has been researching staff, courses and what would the various scenarios look like. Mr. Kalata reported attending gas meetings to learn about the impact on Tioga County, and will continue to do so. The Administration has met with Quad 3 Group Architect Sam Scarantino. The Board did hire Q3G to do a feasibility study within the scope of review. The study is pending further direction by the Board. Mr. Kalata requested that the Board schedule a special board meeting on January 18, 2010, at 6:30 PM in North Penn High School's auditorium to discuss this matter, to include information from the financial consultant and architect and an administration report. A two hour or longer board discussion could be followed by visitors comments at the end of the meeting. Mr. Kalata stated that since the Board is receiving all the information in a public forum, members do not always have the public's answers immediately.

Ms. Perry reported on the **2010/11 budget timeline**, stating that a proposed preliminary budget will be reviewed at the January 4, 2010, Board Work Session. The District's adjusted index is 4.1.

Mr. Kalata thanked Mr. Rakoski for his service to the District as Director of Business Affairs and Board Secretary and recognized the years of experience that will be a loss to the District.

Committee Reports

Negotiations Committee

Mr. Osborne reported for the Negotiations Committee, reviewing the summary of the three year contract, which includes health insurance changes with a choice of PPO plans and a range of premium shares. The annual impact to the District will be 2.98%, 2.02% and 3.71%, a compounded rate of 9.09%. A retirement severance was added along with a retirees' \$100/month health insurance premium share.

Citizen Recognition for the North Penn Building Project:

- Kate Chabala, Blossburg Elementary School Teacher, requested that the Board carefully consider at-risk students when making any changes and read a letter from a parent regarding the success of her child at the school.
- Carla Dunbar, 4th grade student, expressed concern about being on the bus longer.
- Charles Dunbar, Blossburg resident, expressed concern about the impact on students' achievement, safety, time on the bus and participation in sports. He also asked if anyone has looked into grants to help cover renovation costs.
- Corey Walsh, 7th grade student, stated that school is used for a lot of extra curricular activities and kids will get lower grades if split from their friends.
- Pam Kelly, Blossburg community member, parent and teacher at W.L. Miller Elementary School, stated the importance of children being a part of a community.
- Shane Guillaume, 5th grade student, stated that if school is far away, after school tutoring will not happen.
- Lauren Smith, 5th grade student, commented on smaller schools having fewer discipline problems.
- Students Jillianne Berguson, Tyler Manikowski, Emily Strange, Cathy Tressler, Kayla Onks, Brionna Davis, Channelle Brostrom, Nathan Heck, Kaylee Andrews, Cheyenna Wolcott, Miranda Kline, Konner Manikowski, Trenton Mattison, Jachob Yungwirth, and several other students expressed concern about the efforts students make to actively build the community, difficulty making new friends in a new high school, participation in sports, families will be less involved, traveling Route 15, participation in band when it is already difficult for Mansfield and Liberty students to come to Blossburg, individual instruction, less opportunities with fewer officers and valedictorians that may affect college entrance requirements, not wanting to lose North Penn Panthers, Liberty and Mansfield are too far away to participate in after school activities.
- Meredith Kline, 8th grade student, presented a poster to the board from her class regarding the pros and cons of closing North Penn High School. The class feels the price to repair the school is not comparable to the education that is being received.
- Andrew "Sonny" Benson, Blossburg resident, stated his desire to keep the school open for his grandchildren. He also stated the efforts to get Blossburg back on the map and if the school closes Blossburg will become a ghost town.
- Rhonda Meyers, Blossburg resident and parent of four children, stated that her family chose to live in Blossburg for the school and work in Blossburg to be close to the school. She also commented on liking the individualization her students get and the teachers know her students.

- John Martin requested more logistics of this process.
- Stash Wojcik stated that he does not like this consolidation idea. I-95 has a lot of truck traffic and is not safe. Old Route 15 is not in good shape either. Mansfield and Liberty were fixed, now Blossburg should be fixed.
- Paul Hosszu stated his concern that this will be a destruction of a generation of children and splitting of families.
- Dr. Albert Lindner, Blossburg and Liberty Elementary Schools Principal, expressed comments that the decision should be based on what is good for kids. He referenced global research of 40 years in which community and rural schools provide lower drop-out rate, higher academic achievement, are safer, and have fewer discipline problems. This is a business, but a business of kids.

Board President Shull announced that there will be a **special board meeting on January 18, 2010**, at 6:30 PM in the North Penn High School Auditorium to discuss the North Penn Building Project. Many of the questions asked at this meeting will be addressed at that meeting

Citizen Recognition

A representative from the STAR Program inquired about extra money to bring back the STAR program. Mr. Kalata responded that the District has not received extra money, but the Administration will take a look at all of the programs that were cut last year.

The Administration recommended approval of the following:

- Employment of **Sam Rotella** as Principal at Warren L. Miller Elementary School effective December 8, 2009. Mr. Rotella will be employed at an annual salary of \$73,000 plus benefits as per the Act 93 Compensation Plan.
- Entering into a Professional Employee contract and granting tenure to **Marcia Bartlett**, English Teacher, Mansfield High School.
- Adding the following persons to the 2009/2010 Substitute Employees List:
 - **Cheryl Hein Walters**, Emergency Certified Teacher, retroactively to November 10, 2009
 - **Loren Carpenter**, Emergency Certified Teacher, retroactively to November 13, 2009
 - **Tina Wesneski**, School Nurse, retroactively to November 13, 2009
 - **Cindy Shearer**, Art Teacher, retroactively to November 19, 2009
- Entering into a supplemental contract with **Sam Rotella** as Pre-K Counts Coordinator for the 2009/2010 school year in the amount of \$15,000, retroactively to July 1, 2009, to be paid through the Pre-K Partnership Grant.

On motion of Mr. Erway and second of Mr. Berguson the Board voted 9 to 0 to approve the recommendations.

The Administration recommended approval of the following student activities items for the 2009/2010 school year:

Entering into student activities supplemental contracts with the following persons:

- Greig Spuhler, Assistant Wrestling Coach, Liberty High School, \$3,030
- Jonathan Ruth, Football Pep Band Advisor, North Penn High School, \$2,820

Simon Morgan as volunteer for the Girls' Basketball program at Mansfield High School.

On motion of Mrs. Landis and second of Mr. Kollar the Board voted 9 to 0 to approve the recommendations.

The Negotiations Committee and the Administration recommended approval of the following:

- Entering into an **Agreement with the Southern Tioga Education Association** retroactively to July 1, 2009, through June 30, 2012.
- **A Section 125 Plan** titled the Southern Tioga School District Premium Only Plan, Plan # 502, effective January 1, 2010, for STEA employees (**EXHIBIT**).
- An Agreement with PSEA Health and Welfare Fund/Tri-Star Systems for a **Flexible Benefits Plan** for STEA employees, effective January 1, 2010 (**EXHIBIT**).

On motion of Mr. Osborne and second of Mrs. Jaquish the Board voted 9 to 0 to approve the recommendations.

Mr Kalata thanked the Negotiations Committee and the STEA Association for a good process and stated that he is proud of this Agreement. Mr. Osborne agreed and stated that the insights of Mr. Katz, the District's Negotiator, were extremely valuable. He recommended that we continue this process in the future. Mr. Kollar thanked the Administration for all of their work and requested that the minutes reflect a unanimous, positive vote on this agreement.

The Administration recommended approval of the third reading of the following Board Policies
204 – Attendance
209 – Health Examinations/Screenings.

On motion of Mrs. Schwab and second of Mr. Crossen the Board voted 9 to 0 to approve the recommendation.

The Administration recommended approval to authorize execution of the **adjudication regarding expulsion** from all district schools of a certain student from North Penn High School beginning October 6, 2009, for one year, through October 6, 2010.

On motion of Mr. Erway and second of Mr. Kollar, the Board voted 9 to 0 to approve the recommendation.

The Administration recommended approval of the following personnel items:

- Transferring **Dana Delker**, Elementary Literacy Coach, to Library Science Teacher, North Penn and Liberty High Schools, effective January 18, 2010.
- Employing **Adam Funck** as District Technology Technician effective January 4, 2010. Mr. Funck will be employed at an annual salary of \$20,000 plus benefits as per the Classified Employees Conditions of Employment.
- Approving **Tyler June** as a volunteer for the Liberty High School wrestling program for the 2009/2010 school year.

On motion of Mrs. Landis and second of Mrs. Jaquish the Board voted 9 to 0 to approve the recommendations.

The Administration recommended entering into a **gas lease agreement** with Fortuna Energy, Inc., for the Liberty property owned by the District subject to appropriate legal review.

On motion of Mr. Osborne and second of Mr. Kollar the Board voted 9 to 0 to approve the recommendation.

Board President Barbara Shull made the following announcements:

Board Work Sessions(s)

Monday, January 4, 2010, at 6:30 PM, North Penn High School Auditorium

Next Board Meeting(s)

Monday, January 11, 2010, 6:30 P.M., North Penn High School Auditorium

Executive Sessions(s)

Monday, December 7, 2009, at 6:00 PM, Mansfield High School Library

RE: Confidentiality, Employee, Labor, Real Estate

On motion of Mrs. Jaquish and second of Mrs. Schwab the Board voted 9 to 0 to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted



Penny L. Crowell
Board Secretary