

Port Allegany School District
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
Committee-of-the-Whole Meeting
January 6, 2020

MINUTES

Call to Order

President Carlson brought the meeting to order at 7 o'clock p.m. in the high school library with a moment of silence and the flag salute. Mr. Moate called the roll.

Roll Call

Board Present: Dr. Mark Carlson, Mr. Justin Fillhart, Mr. Kerry Hawver, Mrs. Erica Petruzzi, Mr. Jason Stake, Mr. Jonathan Stehle, Mr. Donald Tanner, Mr. Adam Moate, and Mr. Gary Buchsen.

Board Absent: Mrs. Bonna Johns and Mr. Sean Lathrop.

Others Present: High School Principal Marc Budd, Elementary Principal Tracy Kio, Assistant Principal Erika Emerick, Joyce Stehle, Mary Lashway, Trisha Kallenborn, and student Hannah Hartman.

Public Comment

There were no comments relating to agenda items, federal programs, or in general.

Committee Reports

The Board reviewed the December 10, 2019 draft minutes of the Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit Nine Board of Directors meeting. Doctor Carlson said Mrs. Johns sent a note indicating the IU9 Board will not meet in January.

Mr. Tanner and Mr. Fillhart had nothing new to report.

Communications

None.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Buchsen introduced Mr. Larry Myers of Schneider Electric who he asked to make a presentation to the Board relating to Guaranteed Energy Savings (G.E.S.A.) projects for the district. Mr. Buchsen provided some history relating to energy savings in the district.

Mr. Myers distributed a handout which he reviewed in detail and explained specifically what the Pennsylvania Guaranteed Energy Savings Act (GESA) is, the value it brings and what it can do for Port Allegany School District. The company would come into the district and evaluate the facilities and operations and look for long term solutions for energy savings – a life cycle focus. The savings can be reinvested in the school district. Per GESA, savings have a guarantee and if the savings is not realized, Schneider would reimburse the difference. Usually, a district would need to take on a debt obligation to get the work done right away. The program is structured so the guarantee is sufficient enough to satisfy that debt payment. Financing options include tax exempt lease purchase – paying for equipment over a period of up to 20 years. This option works well with intensive projects such as roofs, window replacement, etc. Schneider works with the financial institutions to ensure the guaranteed savings cover any debt obligations. Mr. Myers noted some quick observations from a brief inspection of our buildings: 1) HVAC systems are running 24 hours a day due to limited controls. 2) Enhance student learning environment – STEM opportunities for students, and curriculum. 3) Windows and doors need to be sealed.

The legislation allows a district to infuse capital into a GESA program to add other items to the project. The complexity and risk of the program and project would be the responsibility of Schneider and the district would hold only one contract and one payment. Lengthy discussion was held with Mr. Myers answering various questions and providing a review of the process and timeline noting it would take 6-9 months to get to the actual project. The Board thanked Mr. Myers.

Mr. Buchsen provided a brief update relating to the Mazzaresse concern about the property dispute. In discussion with Mr. Mazzaresse, he indicated that he would like to buy the property. The Board expressed no interest in selling. Mr. Buchsen does not recommend selling at this time, but attempting to resolve the concerns by reaching out and working with the neighbors.

Mr. Buchsen announced he received an e-mail today stating the district's Pre-K Counts Program has been awarded four additional seats for the remainder of the school year bringing the total to 19 seats. Mr. Kio said by Monday morning the four additional children will begin.

Personnel

Hired Elizabeth Valentine as a 4.5 hour student specific life skills aide effective January 7, 2020 at an hourly rate of \$16.75 and fringe benefits in accordance with the Support Staff Agreement and district policy. Motion: J. Stake; Second: E. Petruzzi. The motion carried unanimously.

Appointed Mrs. Cassandra Howard as Mentor for Mrs. Kiley Wojewoda, newly hired elementary teacher in accordance with the district's Induction Plan and federal/state regulations at a supplemental salary of \$1,588 per Schedule B of the Professional Agreement payable in January 2021. Motion: K. Hawver; Second: E. Petruzzi. The motion was unanimously carried.

Approved the addition of Major Thomas Kerek, IU Guest Teacher and Ms. Morgan Causer, support staff to the Substitute List effective December 11, 2019. Motion: D. Tanner; Second: J. Stake. The motion passed unanimously.

Approved the continuation of Mr. Anthony Edgell as a volunteer junior high girls' basketball coach for the 2019-2020 season. Motion: E. Petruzzi; Second: J. Stehle. The motion carried unanimously.

Approved Mr. Karl Lightner as a volunteer wrestling coach for the 2019-2020 season. Motion: D. Tanner; Second: K. Hawver. The motion passed unanimously.

Finance

The Tax Claim Bureau has received a bid for property within the district being held in the county repository. Ms. Cynthia Cisneros submitted a bid of \$351.99 for Liberty Township property 26-017-002 (.37 acres) at 12 Wilson Avenue. Mr. Moate explained that property held in the repository are removed from the tax rolls. The Tax Claim Bureau is recommending approval which will put this property back on the tax rolls.

Mr. Buchsen indicated that Otis Elevator has provided a quote of \$7,200 to fix the wheelchair lift in the high school lobby which has not worked well over the past five years. Mr. Moate provided background. During discussion administration recommended approval since replacement would cost around \$40,000.

Mr. Buchsen reported there were five bids received for the elementary school security camera project. He indicated the project will be covered with the \$30,000 safe schools funding awarded for the current school year. Discussion was held and consensus of the Board was to recommend accepting In-Shore Technologies' bid.

Mr. Buchsen indicated that the Port Allegany School District is the largest sending school to the Seneca Highlands Career and Technical Center. Each sending school receives a seat quota for which they pay – ours is 75. This can only be changed every four years when the Articles of Agreement are reviewed, and this is a review year. Over the past several years, Port Allegany has been paying for many seats we haven't used which is a substantial cost. The district has a couple of options to consider. One being to reduce our quota, but a backlash would be that other school districts' cost would increase. Administration is requesting Board direction as to reducing the quota and what it should be. The second option is a model where district's would pay only for the seats they use. Lengthy discussion was held with the Board directing Mr. Buchsen to indicate the district would like to decrease the seat quota to 60.

Curriculum and Instruction

2020-2021 School Calendar discussion was held with a review of the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Flexible Instructional Day (FID) options for school districts. This option can eliminate school cancellations with no make-up days. Districts make application to the Pennsylvania Department of Education for up to five school days per year. In Port Allegany we have had discussion, send a survey to teachers asking for interest and ideas, and discussed during in-service day. A typical FID would be whatever assignments were given that day, students would have 10 days to make them up and it would count as a day present for the student. Mr. Buchsen played a demonstration of a screen cast by Mrs. Ball, a sixth grade elementary teacher. He indicated that if the Board is at all interested, administration would like to send a mailing out to parents. He reported that a previous student survey shows 93% of our students have internet access at home. The Board indicated interest in looking into this further and requested additional information.

Board

Mr. Buchsen announced that January is School Board Recognition Month. It is recommended that schools adopt the PSBA board principles that each member signs and then displays publicly in the district. The item will be placed on next week's agenda.

The Board held a first reading of revised Policy 233 - Compulsory School Attendance. Adoption will update the policy to comply with recent age requirement changes in the law.

The Board was notified that Ms. Bethany Mealy and Mr. Chad Saltsman, elementary teachers have been employed by the Port Allegany School District for three years and have been rated satisfactory during the last four months of the third year; therefore, this sixth rating made to comply with Section 1108 of the Pennsylvania School Code results in professional employee status (tenure).

Doctor Carlson convened the Board to executive session at 8:46 p.m. to discuss negotiations noting the regular meeting will reconvene for adjournment.

The regular meeting reconvened at 9:17 p.m.

Adjournment

Motion: J. Stake; Second: E. Petruzzi. The motion carried unanimously. Doctor Carlson adjourned the meeting at 9:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ADAM C. MOATE
Secretary to the Board of School Directors