

Port Allegany School District
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS

Regular Meeting
October 12, 2020

MINUTES

Call to Order

President Carlson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the high school library with a moment of silence and the flag salute. Mr. Moate called the roll.

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

Board Absent: Mr. Sean Lathrop.

Others Present: High School Principal Marc Budd, Elementary Principal Tracy Kio, Assistant Principal Erika Emerick, Larry Myers and Kirby Slear of Schneider Electric, Rachel Vargeson of The Nutrition Group, Kim Ball, Barbara Delacour, Nancy Osani, Anna Stewart, Olivia Wolf, Alicia Davis, Sheila Miller, Kari Johnson, Jennifer Funk, Toncha Barber, Brad Stewart, Sally Smock, Daniel Finn, Trisha Kallenborn, and Ink Young.

Public Comment

There were no comments relating to federal programs. Mrs. Alicia Davis, Secondary Life Skills teacher addressed the Board with concerns for her students due to the changes happening this year. There are 13 students in this classroom and only a few part-time paraprofessionals which in her opinion is not adequate to meet their needs considering multiple instruction, loss of a full-time aide, and lack of substitutes. Mrs. Davis is suggesting an increase in hours for the aides rather than hiring full-time or additional staff. Mrs. Olivia Wolf, Elementary Life Skills teacher also commented with safety concerns for her class of 18 students - 5 are very needy kindergarteners. She expressed her concern for safety as the room is very small for so many students with severe behaviors such as throwing, climbing, hitting, biting, etc. which is causing loss of instruction for the other students. She also has a wheelchair student and due to various factors the room is not accessible. Mrs. Wolf is requesting the Board consider hiring an additional teacher and splitting the classroom so the younger ones can learn proper behavior, social skills and basic functional skills and the older ones will receive more instruction time.

Mrs. Kim Ball, Elementary Teacher thanked the Board for reaching out to her after last week's meeting. She distributed a handout with some suggested options for a solution relating to the issues discussed last week which include hiring additional part-time aides, making the night janitor a full-time position for cleaning/disinfecting, possible virtual teacher, and maybe early dismissal times.

Mrs. Delacour, Elementary Teacher addressed the Board expressing her concern for the children noting there is a large gap in her class this year and the kids are falling behind. She feels she cannot get to every student who needs help. Due to the coronavirus issues they deal with, no volunteers, and the added strain Mrs. Delacour believes the staff and students need help and we must find a way to provide it.

Treasurer's Report

Approved the Treasurer's Report for the period ended September 30, 2020 as presented by Mr. Donald Tanner, District Treasurer. Motion: J. Fillhart; Second: B. Johns. The motion was unanimously carried.

General Fund account balances on September 30, 2020 were as follows: Juniata Valley Bank (JVB) Investment Savings - \$6,755,349.25 and JVB Now Account - \$106,652.36. Receipts since September 1 were \$542,682.20 and expenditures were \$319,601.57 bringing the balance in the general fund to \$7,085,642.24.

September 30, 2020 balances for various accounts were reported as follows: Capital Reserve Investment Fund - \$2,745,494.84; Student Activities Account - \$88,811.73; Student Athletics Account - \$76,975.18; and Cafeteria Account - \$2,017.94.

Bill Listings and Payrolls

Approved the General Fund Bill List of October 12, 2020 - \$1,141,335.50 and payrolls of September 10, 2020 - \$221,564.30; September 24, 2020 - \$240,853.52; and October 8, 2020 - \$239,427.73. Motion: K. Hawver; Second: E. Petruzzi. Clarification was provided for various bill list items. The motion was carried unanimously.

Communications

Letters for retirement purposes received from Mrs. Linda Benson, Guidance Secretary and Mrs. Cindy Lasher, Superintendent's Secretary were reviewed.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Buchsen provided a handout for updating the Port Allegany Athletics Health and Safety Plan and reviewed the recommendations, changes, and updates on public attendance at indoor and outdoor sporting events based on the new thresholds by the state which are based on seating capacity. Lengthy discussion was held relating to entry passes. Mr. Stake moved to approve the plan and Mr. Fillhart seconded the motion. Aye: Carlson, Fillhart, Hawver, Stake, and Stehle. Nay: Petruzzi and Johns. Mr. Tanner abstained. The motion carried 5-2-1.

Mr. Budd asked what the Board's position is on play-offs which could be outside the bubble. Mr. Buchsen stated that when the regular season ends, the bubble ends. The Board is in support of allowing participation in play-offs outside of the bubble.

The Facilities Committee provided a handout with recommendations for proposed improvements to the elementary school and high school buildings relating to the GESA Project. Mr. Buchsen reviewed the email document received from Larry Myers of Schneider Electric. Doctor Carlson reminded the Board this is just phase 1 to get quotes and hard numbers to see where we stand. Mr. Fillhart indicated that he believes the roof costs would be significantly less than estimated. He further stated that we should look at performance specs rather than name specs in seeking quotes. Mr. Slear responded to Mr. Fillhart's comments.

Mr. Myers reported that the district has submitted an application for the Department of Environmental Protection grant (PITA grant) in the amount of \$250,000 on October 2 and should hear mid-November if we get it. This is a matching grant. He said they did a mock-up of some lighting to give a sense of the door kits versus the lighting tubes and recommended the Board check it out. Energy readings show the usage is a 60-65% reduction and the foot candle levels went up 10% across the board. Some discussion was held related to lighting options. He reported they are working on options for roofing and HVAC options. Discussion was held with the Board providing feedback on specific items for Mr. Myers. Mr. Myers reviewed a potential timeline noting that financing will be discussed later this week with the administration. He also said they are working with First Energy for rebates within Phase 3 which ends May 31, 2021.

Mr. Buchsen reviewed the regional comparison of substitute teacher pay Mr. Moate did previously and the Board motion from last fall. Mr. Buchsen recommended to leave it as is because the Board has the flexibility to make a change if needed. Mr. Hawver stated he supports keeping it as is, at least until a situation comes up again because of his concern for getting quality people. Mr. Buchsen noted that all districts are struggling, statewide the number of teaching certificates issued by the Department of Education are down by 70%. Brief discussion was held. The consensus of the Board was to leave it as is.

Mr. Buchsen gave an overview of the opening of the 2020-2021 school year highlighting the following items: 61 students are supported remotely (6.7%), 26 students are enrolled in the Warren County Cyber School (2.8%). The PCCD grant funds have been spent and has provided most of the health and safety items (touchless water stations, masks, face shields, sanitation items, etc.), Chromebooks, electrostatic sprayers, technology equipment for distance learning, furniture, and licensing; fall sports have completed competitions; students have adapted well with the mitigation measures and have very few student issues; and staff have adapted admirably as well.

Lengthy discussion was held relating to having volunteers in the buildings. This would provide some help for the primary teachers. Mr. Fillhart moved to allow volunteers back in the schools to assist in educating our students providing they follow the screening in the District's Health and Safety Plan. Mrs. Johns seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board's Academic Planning Committee will schedule a meeting, including administration and staff to review and discuss staff concerns.

Personnel

Accepted the resignation of Mrs. Erica Babcock as a cafeteria employee effective September 30, 2020. Motion: K. Hawver; Second: J. Stake. The motion was unanimously carried.

Hired Mrs. Corrine Bosworth as a 4.5-hour cafeteria cook/server/attendant at an hourly rate of \$17.75 and fringe benefits set in accordance with the Support Staff Agreement and district policy. Motion: K. Hawver; Second: D. Tanner. The motion passed unanimously.

Accepted the letter of resignation for retirement purposes of Mrs. Linda Benson, High School Guidance Secretary effective January 8, 2021. Motion: D. Tanner; Second: J. Stake. The motion passed unanimously.

Accepted the letter of resignation for retirement purposes of Mrs. Cindy Lasher, Superintendent's Secretary effective January 22, 2021 (33.5 years of service). Motion: J. Stake; Second: E. Petruzzi. The motion was unanimously carried.

Board

Approved Phase I Energy Project recommendation made by the Board's Facilities Committee for further design and pricing to Schneider Electric. Motion: K. Hawver; Second: D. Tanner. The motion carried unanimously.

Approved the updated District's Athletic Health and Safety Plan. Motion: J. Stake; Second: J. Fillhart. The motion unanimously carried.

Approved the Facilities Use request by the Port Allegany Youth Football League providing the league follows all applicable provisions in the Athletic Health and Safety Plan. Motion: J. Stake; Second: K. Hawver. The motion passed unanimously.

Adopted revised policies as follows: Policy 113.1 - Discipline of Students with Disabilities; Policy 113.2 - Behavior Support; Policy 113.4 - Confidentiality of Special Education Student Information; Policy 122 - Extracurricular Activities; Policy 123 - Interscholastic Athletics; and Policy 123.2 - Sudden Cardiac Arrest. Motion: E. Petruzzi; Second: J. Stake. The motion was unanimously carried.

Board members were reminded to turn in their completed Financial Interest Statements which were distributed in February.

Mr. Hawver wondered if the universal equipment was ordered for the weight room; he believes it was going to be funded with Burgart Foundation money.

Adjournment

Motion: B. Johns; Second: J. Stake. The motion was unanimously carried. Doctor Carlson adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ADAM C. MOATE
Secretary to the Board of School Directors