

## MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

August 3, 2006

The Regular Meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Pottstown School District was held on Thursday, August 3, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. in the Wayne A. Deegan Room of the Pottstown Middle School with President, Barry Robertson presiding. Upon roll call, the following members were present: Mrs. Bonita Barnhill, Mr. Edwin Edwards, Mr. Barry Robertson, Mrs. Cathy Skitko, Dr. James Smock, Mr. Phillip Thees, and Mrs. Judyth Zahora. Absent were: Mrs. Amy Francis and Mr. Robert Hartman. Also present were: Business Administrator, Mrs. Linda Adams; Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Reed Lindley; Director of Education and Human Resources, Mr. Jeffrey Sparagana; Solicitor, Mr. Stephen Kalis, Mr. John Armato, Mrs. Gail Cooper, Mrs. Pamela Bateson, Mr. James R. Bush, Dr. Robin Laysears-Smith, Mrs. Loretta Hoch, Dr. Angela Tuck, Mr. Matthew Moyer, Mr. Robert Geiring, Mr. Bruce Madara, Mr. Ed Ritti, Mr. Ronald Brown, Ms. Linda Thompson, Mayor Sharon Thomas, a member of the press, and interested citizens.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Mrs. Barnhill and seconded by Mrs. Skitko that the minutes of the regular meeting held on July 20, 2006 be approved as amended.

Upon roll call, all members present voted aye. Ayes: seven. Nays: none. Absent: two. Motion carried.

### LIST OF BILLS

It was moved by Mr. Thees and seconded by Mrs. Zahora that the list of bills for the General Fund totaling \$1, 367, 595, and .53 be approved and a copy be filed in the Secretary's office as addendum #2006-2007-010.

Upon roll call, all members present voted aye. Ayes: seven. Nays: none. Absent: two. Motion carried.

### COMMUNICATIONS

None.

### AWARDS

None.

## HEARINGS FROM PATRONS OF THE SCHOOLS

Ms. Kizmet Washington shared her concerns with the district's PSSA scores. The district seems concerned only with young children who are not attending school yet, but our high school students are failing. The district needs to make sure our children are reading at a 12<sup>th</sup> grade level when they graduate. She shared information regarding surrounding school district's PSSA scores. What are these other districts doing that we are not? When are kids going to be the priority? A board member has stated Pottstown spends the least amount per pupil. This is not a reason to be proud. Dr. Lindley responded stating the district does not have its PSSA scores where they want them to be. The administration asked for money at budget time to hire two (2) literacy coaches and a consultant. The plan is to implement balanced literacy at the elementary level. The administration has also purchased reading materials for guided reading instead of textbooks. The secondary teachers will be trained in reading apprenticeship. This board has made a significant commitment to literacy and are now looking toward math. The board has also made a commitment to technology with such programs as Pearson Benchmark. With these programs the staff will have more ability to teach to the individual.

Mr. Bruce Madara discussed the free medical and dental services provided at the High School for students. In speaking with an administrator he was told "we" applied for a grant for kids. What about older people? He was told that "you older people should get a grant." Why doesn't the "we" who applied for the students, apply for the "old" people as well? He is disturbed by some of the things that are said at these meetings. Public officials should make it clear for whom they are speaking. At times it seems they are speaking for the whole town. There were less than 200 persons in attendance at the March 30, 2006 meeting, this hardly reflects the whole community. He commends those who come to these meetings and speak to the facts. The board needs to do something with the elementary schools and soon.

Mayor Sharon Valentine stated she is representing Sharon Thomas the person, parent, taxpayer, and Pottstown graduate. She commended the board on their commitment to balanced literacy. Reading in content area prepares students for the workplace. Regarding the July 20, 2006 dialogue presented by Mrs. Linda Thompson, those were her words, and no copy of the prepared statement will be forthcoming. As a parent and a representative of the community, she wants what is best for all students in the community. She discussed several issues with the board. One issue concerned the parents of a Lincoln student who has been invited to attend the National Young Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C. Her hope is that the district may help fund this trip. A second issue concerned a parent that telephoned the Mayor seeking special needs testing for their child, she directed them to the school district where the parent feels their request is being minimized or ignored. An unidentified board member purportedly stated "there is nothing wrong with your child." She would hate to think this child was steered away because they are not a racial minority. Another issue concerned a parent who was concerned about their 1<sup>st</sup> grader's suspension. With the parents' permission, Mrs. Thompson met with school administration with the parents' permission. Mayor Thomas provided notes from this meeting to the School Board and Superintendent. She feels that besides test scores and numbers, the best way to success is fairness. The Board and district need to confront and address issues.

Ms. Donna Stevenson stated Dr. Lindley did not address Ms. Washington's concerns. Her concern is secondary results. The district report card only reflects the proficient numbers, the ugly numbers are hidden. As a former teacher in the district, she has seen discrepancies at the high school level. The decline starts at the Middle School and escalates at the High School. Math should not be an annual event, offered only one (1) semester per year. Curriculum change is long overdue, new textbooks are not the answer. The district needs to think outside the box. There are also issues of overcrowded classrooms and a lack of qualified teachers.

#### APPROVAL OF CONSENT ITEMS

It was moved by Dr. Smock and seconded by Mrs. Zahora that the following consent items be approved, in accordance with Policy 1120, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools:

#### PROFESSIONAL RESIGNATIONS

Christopher Alston, Middle School Teacher/Mathematics, resignation effective August 22, 2006

Barbara Ray, Reading Specialist, Rupert Elementary School, resignation effective on or about July 24, 2006.

#### REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Rebecca Wyatt, Rupert Elementary Teacher, requests childrearing leave of absence effective August 23, 2006 through and including September 5, 2006.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE ELECTION

Jerry Ummarino, High School Assistant Principal, \$75,000/yr., effective on or about August 21, 2006.

#### PROFESSIONAL ELECTIONS

Judith T. Miller, Learning Support Teacher, Pottstown High School, B, step 3, plus special education stipend, according to the Professional Agreement effective August 23, 2006.

Kimberly D. Budner, Special Education Life Skills Teacher, Barth Elementary School, M+15, step 2, plus special education stipend, according to the Professional Agreement effective August 23, 2006.

#### FOOD SERVICE ELECTION

Betty Jowar, Substitute Food Service Employee, \$9.79/hr. effective the start of the 2006–2007 school year.

EXTRACURRICULAR ELECTIONS

Todd Wallace, Assistant High School Football Coach, according to contract effective the 2006–2007 school year.

DISTRICT PUPIL SERVICES SUMMER STAFFING

Sara Wells, Extended School Year, One-on-One Adult Day Care, \$12.09/hr. for 5 days, \$12.54/hr. for the remaining days, effective June 26 through September 1, 2006.

Theresa Gibson, Extended School Year, One-on-One Adult Day Care, \$12.09/hr. for 5 days, \$12.54/hr. for the remaining days, effective June 26 through September 1, 2006.

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETINGS

(Includes planning and staff development hours to be scheduled by the Assistant Superintendent through the 2006-2007 school year.)

\$28/hr. – not to exceed 500 hours

Jacinda Bartolucci – Rupert Elementary  
 Jayne Burke – Edgewood Elementary  
 Mary Lammey – Barth Elementary  
 Elizabeth Walleigh – Edgewood Elementary  
 Angela Wagner – Pottstown Middle School

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

Creative Health Services, Regular Education Student, Elementary, \$20.00 per hour, for not more than 5 hours per week, effective 5/1/06.

PROFESSIONAL LEAVE

Mst. Sgt. Donald MacNeil to attend Junior Aerospace Instructor Course, July 10-21, 2006, Maxwell AFB, Alabama.

- No substitute needed
- No cost to the district

SOVEREIGN BANK CORPORATE RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING TRANSFER OF FUNDS

The Superintendent recommends the Board adopt a Resolution authorizing the Board Secretary/Business Administrator to transfer funds, as necessary, from Sovereign Bank.

### SETTLEMENT OF 2005 PER CAPITA AND 2005 OCCUPATION TAX DUPLICATE

The Superintendent recommends the Board adopt a Resolution exonerating the Tax Collector from the balance of the 2005 Per Capita and 2005 Occupation Tax Duplicate and a copy be filed in the Secretary's office as addendum #2006-2007-011.

Upon roll call, all members present voted aye. Ayes: seven. Nays: none. Absent: two. Motion carried.

### NON-CONSENT

### TRANSPORTATION CONTRACTS

It was moved by Mrs. Barnhill and seconded by Mrs. Zahora that the board approve contracts with CMD Services, Inc. to provide transportation for pupils during the 2006-2007 school year and a copy be filed in the Secretary's office as addendum #2006-2007-012.

Upon roll call, the vote was recorded as follows: Barnhill: aye; Edwards: aye; Robertson: aye; Skitko: aye; Smock: abstain; Thees: aye; Zahora: aye. Ayes: six. Nays: none. Abstain: one. Absent: two. Motion carried.

MR. HARTMAN ENTERED THE MEETING AT 8:15 P.M.

### PSBA LEGISLATIVE POLICY COUNCIL MEETING

It was moved by Dr. Smock and seconded by Mr. Edwards that Mrs. Barnhill and Mr. Hartman participate in the PSBA Legislative Policy Council Meeting as the Pottstown School District's voting delegates.

Upon roll call, all members present voted aye. Ayes: eight. Nays: none. Absent: one. Motion carried.

### INFORMATION

1. Bureau of Audits Letter on 6/30/05 Single Audit – Mrs. Adams
2. June 2006 Consumer Price Index – Mrs. Adams
3. Proposed Earobics Funding Options – Mr. Sparagana

Mr. Sparagana reviewed the funding options for Earobics. Mrs. Zahora asked if this is a sustainable program. Mr. Sparagana feels this program is sustainable. If we contract for five (5) years the cost would decrease significantly. With additional federal funding, this program could be extended three to five years. Mrs. Zahora feels we spend a lot of money on young children, but we have a problem now in the secondary grades that we are not addressing. Mr. Sparagana

reminded everyone PIPPS money has limited uses for approved programs which all address K-3. Mrs. Zahora feels the money available should be used where there is an immediate need. Dr. Smock reiterated that the district has no choice with PIPPS money. The money must be used for one (1) of the five (5) approved programs.

Mrs. Adams announced the groundbreaking for Shantz Field will be held on Monday, August 14, 2006. A dedication ceremony is in the planning stage.

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Richard Almquist of the Pottstown Redevelopment Group reviewed a draft of an Agreement for Payment of Specific Services for the Mrs. Smith's Redevelopment Keystone Opportunity Expansion Zone. They are proposing that the Agreement be separated into individual agreements for each commercial tax parcel comprising the Property so as to preserve the job creation tax benefits afforded them by the Keystone Opportunity Expansion Zone for the 2006 tax year. Mr. Robertson responded this is not a board problem. The board will not put aside their fiscal responsibility nor do anything the community might view as a risk. He asked Mr. Almquist the status of the residential and commercial property on the south side. Mr. Almquist replied the commercial piece is ahead of schedule. There has been some national interest in the commercial piece. They hope to break ground on the residential piece and have homes sold by early 2007.

Mr. Thees asked if the shirt factory building is back on the tax rolls now that it has been sold. Mr. Kalis advised this property has always been on the tax rolls.

Mr. Robertson asked that this item be placed on the August 17, 2006 board agenda for discussion.

MR. THEES EXITED THE MEETING AT 9:25 P.M.

### NEW BUSINESS

#### 1. Personnel – Mr. Sparagana

Mr. Sparagana reviewed the personnel items to be placed on the August 17, 2006 board agenda for approval.

#### 2. Professional Leave– Dr. Lindley

Dr. Lindley reviewed the professional leaves to be placed on the August 17, 2006 board agenda for approval.

#### 3. Hours of Operation – Dr. Lindley

Dr. Lindley reviewed the Hours of Operation for the 2006-2007 school year to be placed on the August 17, 2006 board agenda for approval.

#### 4. School Attendance Officers – Dr. Lindley

Dr. Lindley reviewed the School Attendance Officers to be placed on the August 17, 2006 board agenda for approval.

5. Administrative/Supervisory Professional Leave – Dr. Lindley

Dr. Lindley reviewed the administrative/supervisory professional leaves to be placed on the August 17, 2006 board agenda for approval.

6. Student Accident Insurance – Mrs. Adams

Mrs. Adams reviewed the student accident insurance to be placed on the August 17, 2006 board agenda for approval.

7. Camphill Special School Contract – Mrs. Adams

Mrs. Adams reviewed a contract with Camphill Special School to be placed on the August 17, 2006 board agenda for approval.

8. Schedule of Insurance – Mrs. Adams

Mrs. Adams reviewed the schedule of insurance to be placed on the August 17, 2006 board agenda for approval.

9. Tax Commission Under Act 1 – Mrs. Adams

Mrs. Adams reviewed the requirements for the tax commission and an agreement for services with PFM.

10. Transportation Contracts 2006-2007 – Mrs. Adams

Mrs. Adams reviewed transportation contracts for the 2006-2007 school year to be placed on the August 17, 2006 board agenda for approval.

11. Lunch and Breakfast Program – Mrs. Adams

Mrs. Adams reviewed the lunch and breakfast priced for the 2006-2007 school year to be placed on the August 17, 2006 board agenda for approval. She advised the board the Mr. Heller has filed the applicable application with the state for the free and reduced lunch program.

12. Bids Awards – Mrs. Adams

Mrs. Adams reviewed the fuel oil and spring sports bid to be placed on the August 17, 2006 board agenda for approvals.

13. State Audit 2002-2003, 2003-2004 – Mrs. Adams

Mrs. Adams advised the board the State auditors will be in the district beginning Monday, August 7, 2006 to perform the state audit.

FEDERATION REMARKS

None.

MR. ROBERTSON ANNOUNCED AN EXECUTIVE SESSION ON A LITIGATION ISSUE.

THE MEETING RESUMED AT 9:56 P.M.

SPECIAL EDUCATION AGREEMENT AND RELEASE

It was moved by Dr. Smock and seconded by Mr. Edwards that the Board approve a special education agreement and release and a copy be filed in the Secretary's office as addendum #2006-2007-013.

Upon roll call, the vote was recorded as follows: Barnhill: aye; Edwards: aye; Hartman: aye; Robertson: aye; Skitko: abstain; Smock: aye; Zahora: abstain. Ayes: five. Nays: none. Abstain: two. Absent: two. Motion carried.

REMARKS BY MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Mr. Hartman apologized for his absence at the July 20, 2006 meeting and his tardiness this evening.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Dr. Smock and seconded by Mrs. Barnhill that the Board adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

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Linda S. Adams

