

**POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
October 16, 2014 - 7:30 P.M.**

The Committee of the Whole meeting of the Board of School Directors of the Pottstown School District was held on Thursday, October 16, 2014 at 7:30 PM in the Cafeteria of the Pottstown High School with President Mrs. Judyth Zahora presiding. Upon roll call, the following members were present: Ms. Katina Bearden, Mr. Andrew Kefer, Mrs. Kimberly Stilwell, Mrs. Polly Weand, Mr. Ron Williams and Ms. Mary-Beth Bacallao (via telecom). Absent were Mrs. Amy Bathurst Francis and Mr. Thomas Hylton. Also present were Board Secretary, Mrs. Linda S. Adams; Director of Human Resources, Mr. Stephen Rodriguez; Solicitor, Mr. Stephen Kalis; Student Representatives, Miss Katrina Belmontes and Mr. Gary Wise; Dr. Jeffrey Hartmann, Mr. Ryan Oxenford, Mr. Robert Decker, Mrs. Lindi Vollmuth, Mr. John Armato, members of the press, and interested citizens.

COMMUNICATIONS

Teacher Appreciation Letter

Mrs. Adams read a letter from a grandparent commending Mr. Christopher Sperat, Kindergarten Teacher at Lincoln Elementary, for teaching the students about patriotism.

PSBA Letter Supporting State Funded Policies for PreK Programs

Mrs. Adams read a letter from the Pennsylvania School Board Association thanking the district for submitting a resolution in favor of expanding state funded policies for PreK programs. PSBA has signed on to this campaign and support the district's efforts to expand investment in pre-kindergarten.

Mr. Hylton entered the meeting at 7:37 pm.

PRESENTATIONS

Steel River Playhouse

Mr. Kurt Holloway spoke about programs that the Steel River Playhouse offers to senior citizens including workshops and the senior follies production. He introduced Mr. Gene Terruso, Artistic Director, who spoke about the collaborative effort between the Steel River Playhouse and the school district to provide opportunities for students Pre-K thru High School. Students participate in music, chorus and acting. Mr. Terruso spoke briefly about the productions that are scheduled from now to May 2015.

MINUTES

Mrs. Adams presented the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on September 18, 2014 and the minutes from the Regular meeting held on September 22, 2014 to be placed on the October 20, 2014 Board Agenda for approval.

LIST OF BILLS

Mrs. Adams presented the list of bills from the various funds for the period of September 1, 2014 to September 30, 2014 to be placed on the October 20, 2014 Board Agenda for approval.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mrs. Adams presented the Treasurer's Report for August and September 2014 to be placed on the October 20, 2014 Board Agenda for approval.

HEARINGS FROM PATRONS OF THE SCHOOLS

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

POLICY COMMITTEE

Mr. Williams reviewed the policies presented on tonight's agenda for Board approval on October 20, 2014.

CURRICULUM/TECHNOLOGY/CO-CURRICULAR COMMITTEE

Ms. Bacallao reviewed highlights from the October 2, 2014 Curriculum/Technology Committee meeting. The Technology update included a report on the progress of hardware and software projects in the district. Global Connect data was lost and had to be recreated. The committee discussed what steps could be taken to prevent future loss of data. Dr. Sparagana gave the committee an outline of the School Performance Profile (SPP). The administration will present an overview of SPP at the November 20th Board meeting. The Comprehensive Plan is now available for public review and comments. Hard copies are available at each building, on the district website and in the public library.

FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Mr. Kefer gave a report on the October 9th Facilities Committee meeting. Change orders for the elementary schools renovation project were reviewed and the committee recommends these change orders for Board approval as presented on tonight's agenda. Preparations to move Rupert Elementary to South Street was discussed. The move will begin Saturday, October 18; the students will return to the newly renovated building on Monday, November 10th, the first day of the second grading period.

JOINT FINANCE/PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Mr. Kefer reported on topics discussed at the October 9th Joint Finance/Personnel Committee meeting. Mrs. Adams provided the committee with the Act 1 Budget timeline and indicated the index published in for 2015-2016 was 1.9% with an adjusted index for Pottstown of 2.7%. The committee reviewed the resolution to stay at or below the index and recommends the resolution for Board approval. It is the administration's objective not to have a tax increase for the 2015-2016 school year.

The Personnel Committee reviewed Policy 317, 319 and 325 as presented by Mr. Rodriguez. The committee supports Policy 325 for Board approval. It does not support Policy 317 and 319 as presented. The committee reviewed the rate schedule for substitute support staff positions and recommends the rate schedule for Board approval.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Mrs. Stilwell gave a report on the September 22 Community Relation Committee meeting. The committee recommends Katrina Belmontes as the 2014-2015 Senior Student Board Representative. The committee also is recommending Kera Chestnut and Emanuel Wilkerson as the Junior Student Board Representatives. The induction ceremony will take place at the October 20 Regular Board meeting.

Mrs. Weand gave an update on the "Save the Lights" fundraiser. She was pleased to announce the

district received another donation of \$10,000 from an anonymous donor, bringing the balance for the fundraiser donations to approximately \$48,500. Yard Sale sign donations are continuing to grow. Signs and t-shirts will be sold at the October 18th Homecoming Football game.

STUDENT BOARD REPRESENTATIVE

Ms. Belmontes welcomed the Junior Student Board Representatives. She thanked the Foundation for the opportunity to learn about the alumni of Pottstown High School. She looks forward to attending and participating in events at the PSBA Student Leadership Conference on October 23rd and 24th. The National Honor Society is sponsoring a coat drive in collaboration with the Pottstown Cluster of Religious Communities.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE AND PSBA REPRESENTATIVE

Mr. Williams provided an update on a few legislative bills currently in the House and Senate. He expressed concern about school districts expenses to meet mandates for conducting extensive background checks for employment in a school district. The Senate extended the closing of the property tax exemption bill to continue discussion. Mr. Williams attended the Basic Education Funding hearing held today in Perkiomenville. The commission will be preparing their report within the next few months.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY INTERMEDIATE UNIT

Mr. Williams provided a hard copy of the minutes from the September 17th MCIU Board meeting and a rough draft of the 2015-2016 MCIU Operating Budget. Electronic copies will be sent out to all Board Members. The Pottstown School District's contribution is currently at slight decrease from last year's budget. Highlights from the meeting included the appointment of Dr. John J. George as Executive Director.

BOROUGH LIAISON REPRESENTATIVE

Mr. Williams looks forward to a positive turnaround in the community and many positive things happening.

CONSENT ITEMS

PERSONNEL

Mr. Rodriguez reviewed the personnel items as presented to be placed on the October 20, 2014 Board Agenda for approval.

Mr. Hylton requested the Personnel item to hire 8 to 12 Temporary Part-time Classroom Assistants specify "Kindergarten and not to exceed \$37,000" as discussed at the October 9th Personnel Committee meeting.

PROFESSIONAL LEAVES

Mr. Rodriguez reviewed the professional leaves as presented to be placed on the October 20, 2014 Board Agenda for approval.

POLICIES

Mr. Rodriguez reviewed the policies as presented to be placed on the October 20, 2014 Board Agenda for approval.

Mr. Hylton presumed the solicitor had reviewed Policy 251: Homeless Students and requested statistics on the number of homeless students from last year. Mr. Kalis confirmed he reviewed the policy. Mrs. Adams explained that there is a system in place to determine which district is responsible for the homeless student(s). She will follow up on the providing statistics and guidelines.

CONTRACTS

Mrs. Adams reviewed the contracts as presented to be placed on the October 20, 2014 Board Agenda for approval.

FRANKLIN, LINCOLN AND RUPERT ELEMENTARY PROJECT CHANGE ORDERS

Mrs. Adams reviewed the Franklin, Lincoln and Rupert Elementary Project change orders as presented to be placed on the October 20, 2014 Board Agenda for approval.

RESOLUTION TO LIMIT SCHOOL DISTRICT PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

Mrs. Adams reviewed the Resolution to Limit School District Property Tax Increase as presented to be placed on the October 20, 2104 Board Agenda for approval.

NON-CONSENT

RUPERT SEWER LINE REPLACEMENT CHANGE ORDER

Mrs. Adams reviewed the Rupert sewer line replacement change order as presented to be placed on the October 20, 2014 Board Agenda for approval.

NEW BUSINESS

Board Seating Chart

Mrs. Zahora reviewed the new Board meeting seating chart to be implemented beginning with the October 20, 2014 Board meeting.

INFORMATION

PEAK Update: October

Mrs. Adams reviewed the PEAK report.

Mrs. Zahora was pleased to hear that the new district website will include translation services to help reach the Spanish speaking residents

FEDERATION REMARKS

Mrs. Vollmuth thanked the Board for sharing the teacher appreciation letter. She was pleased to see a good turnout for the high school parent-teacher conferences being held tonight at the high school. Mrs. Vollmuth reminded the Board to check the district October calendar of events, inviting the Board to attend the events of their choice.

ROUND TABLE

Mr. Rodriguez – no comment.

Mrs. Stilwell – no comment.

Mrs. Weand – no comment.

Mr. Williams looks forward to attending the PSBA School Leadership Conference next week along with the Student Board Representatives.

Mr. Kefer was happy to hear that the Rupert students will be moving back to their South Street building.

Mr. Hylton – no comment.

Ms. Bearden thanked Mr. Holloway and Mr. Terruso for their presentation. She looks forward to supporting the students coat drive initiative.

Ms. Belmontes looks forward to attending the Student Delegate Conference. She hopes that everyone will support the coat drive.

Mr. Wise – no comment.

Ms. Bacallao thanked Ms. Belmontes and Mr. Wise for participating in the Student Delegate Conference. She thanked Mr. & Mrs. Weand for their efforts to support the “Save the Lights” fundraiser. Ms. Bacallao reminded the Board of the Pottstown Cares event on October 24th.

Mrs. Adams reminded the Board of the Alumni Induction Ceremony taking place tomorrow at 9:45 am in the high school auditorium followed by a luncheon at Brookside Country Club.

Mrs. Zahora asked that a new photo of the Board Members take place after the October 20th Regular Board meeting. She announced there will be an Executive Session at the close of tonight’s meeting for the purpose of potential litigation.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mrs. Zahora that the Board adjourns. All members present were in favor. None opposed. The meeting adjourned at 8:43pm.

EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF POTENTIAL THREATENED LITIGATION.


Linda S. Adams
Board Secretary