



**POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT  
MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING  
Thursday, November 1, 2018**

A Special Meeting was held on Thursday, November 1, 2018 at 7:00 pm in the Conference Room of the Administration Building. The following School Board members were in attendance: President, Mrs. Amy Francis; Vice- President, Ms. Katina Bearden; Mr. John Armato, Mrs. Bonita Barnhill, Mrs. Susan Lawrence, Mr. Raymond Rose and Mrs. Kimberly Stilwell. Absent was Mr. Kurt Heidel. Also present were Superintendent, Mr. Stephen Rodriguez; Board Secretary, Ms. Maureen Jampo; Mrs. Elisabeth Yoder, Federation President; members of the press and interested citizens.

**SCHOOL BOARD DIRECTOR APPOINTMENT**

Mr. Rodriguez reviewed the outline for the meeting. The goal of the Board is to conduct public discussion on their choices of a candidate. At the conclusion of the discussions, the Board may choose to take a vote by naming their candidate of choice. School Code states there must be a majority board vote, meaning 5 votes. If there is not a majority vote of 5, the Board has several options to consider. Options include moving the discussion to the regular board meeting, open up the interview process, or appoint someone who meets the legal requirements.

o **Board Discussion:**

Mr. Armato stated he will cast his vote for Mr. Hylton. Mr. Barnhill's experience and willingness to become familiar with all the mechanics and interactions of all the district buildings was appealing. Mr. Armato stated that he did not feel it is necessary to always be in 100% accord with other Board Members. He noted that Mr. Hylton has acknowledged his discontentment with previous board actions. Mr. Armato welcomes other ideas and healthy discussions to carry the district where it needs to be.

Mrs. Stilwell struggles with a decision. She appreciates both of the candidates and what they have to offer. Mr. Barnhill offers a new perspective. Mr. Hylton has the experience. She recognizes the need to have a majority vote.

Mrs. Lawrence recognizes the advantages both candidates bring to the Board. She does not feel either candidate would be the wrong choice.

Mr. Rose was in agreement with the comments made by Mrs. Stilwell and Mrs. Lawrence. He is interested in new ideas as well as experience.

Ms. Bearden stated the goal of the Board is to make the best decisions for the students and community. She recognizes the expertise that each candidate has to offer. The Board needs to put personal agendas aside. It is a difficult decision.

Mrs. Francis stated that at the last appointment process, she heard clearly the community wanted someone new. Mr. Barnhill offers that new perspective. Mr. Hylton's logical thinking and experience are familiar to the Board. Mrs. Francis recognizes that to have a different outcome you try a different approach. She is leaning towards Mr. Barnhill.

Mrs. Barnhill stated that Mr. Barnhill is diligent about researching and thinking things out and is focused on helping the district. He can offer a different perspective. She disagrees with the comments that referred to nepotism. She noted her strengths are in curriculum. Mr. Barnhill's strengths are in facilities.

### HEARINGS FROM PATRONS

David Miller, resident, supports the appointment of Mr. Hylton. He opposes appointing the spouse of a current Board Member. He stated the appointment of Mr. Hylton is a "practical" decision. He perceives the appointment of a spouse as a conflict of interest, citing nepotism, legal conflict of interest or practical conflict of interest.

Elisabeth Yoder, teacher and president of the FPTA, voiced concerns about seeing conflicts of interest with both candidates. She noted there is a board policy that addresses conflict of interest among the board members. She spoke about articles published by Mr. Hylton criticizing teachers and publicly stating the students were not his priority.

Mrs. Francis stated that is legal for spouses to serve on the same board. Mrs. Barnhill does not need to abstain from voting.

Mr. Rodriguez stated that a conflict of interest exists when there is a financial gain. He noted that that does not exist in this matter.

### BOARD ACTION

It was moved by Mr. Armato and seconded by Mrs. Stilwell that the Board appoint a School Board Director.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was recorded as follows: Mr. Armato: Hylton; Mrs. Barnhill: Barnhill; Ms. Bearden: Hylton; Mrs. Lawrence: Hylton; Mr. Rose: Barnhill; Mrs. Stilwell: Barnhill; Mrs. Francis: Barnhill. Barnhill: Four. Hylton: Three. Motion denied.

### BOARD DISCUSSION: Board Action Options

Board Members continued discussion on options to move forward. Options for consideration were to wait till the November 15<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting, to take a vote, re-open the interview process to seek more candidates, proceed with another vote at this meeting. Discussion focused on the timeline to proceed with re-opening the interview process. It was determined to proceed with a second vote.

BOARD ACTION

It was moved by Mr. Armato and seconded by Mrs. Stilwell that the Board votes to appoint a School Board Director.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was recorded as follows: Mrs. Lawrence: Hylton; Ms. Bearden: Hylton; Mrs. Barnhill: Barnhill; Mr. Armato: Hylton; Mr. Rose: Barnhill; Mrs. Stilwell: Barnhill; Mrs. Francis: Hylton. Barnhill: Three. Hylton: Four. Motion denied.

BOARD DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Stilwell stated she would like to take another vote. She is in favor of changing her vote.

It was moved by Mrs. Stilwell and seconded by Mr. Armato that the Board votes to appoint a School Board Director.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was recorded as follows: Mr. Armato: Hylton; Mrs. Stilwell: Hylton; Mr. Rose: Barnhill; Mrs. Lawrence: Hylton; Mrs. Francis: Hylton; Mrs. Bearden: Hylton; Mrs. Barnhill: Barnhill. Barnhill: Two. Hylton: Five. Motion carried.

Mr. Hylton was the appointed School Board Director to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Mr. Emanuel Wilkerson.

Mrs. Francis thanked Mr. Barnhill for his interest in serving on the board and wished him best of luck in the 2019 elections.

INFORMATION


PSBA Board Travel Accident Insurance due December 3, 2018.

FEDERATION REMARKS

Mrs. Yoder congratulated Mr. Hylton. She thanked Mr. Barnhill for his interest in serving on the board. The Federation appreciates the Board Members time and effort to serve as school board directors.

ADJOURN

It was moved by Ms. Bearden and seconded by Mr. Rose that the meeting adjourns. All in favor. None opposed. The meeting adjourned at 8:33 pm.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Maureen Jampo  
Board Secretary