POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
February 3, 2011 - 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, February 3, 2011 at 7:30 PM in the second floor LGI room of the Pottstown Middle School with President Richard C. Huss presiding. Upon roll call, the following members were present: Ms. Valerie Harris, Mr. Thomas J. Hylton, Mr. Dennis Wausnock, Mr. Robert Hartman, Jr., Mrs. Polly M. Weand, Mr. Nat White and Mrs. Julia Wilson. Absent was Mrs. Michele Pargeon. Also present were Superintendent, Dr. Reed Lindley; Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Jeffrey Sparagana; Board Secretary, Mrs. Linda S. Adams; Solicitor, Mr. Stephen Kalis; Mr. John Armato, Ms. Terri Lampe, Ms. Pamela Bateson, Mr. Scott Ware, a member of the press, and interested citizens.

AWARDS

None.

PRESENTATIONS

None.

MRS. PARGEON ENTERED THE MEETING AT 7:34 PM.

THE BOARD ADJOURNED FOR AN EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF PERSONNEL AND NEGOTIATIONS AT 7:35 PM.

THE BOARD RECONVENED AT 8:16 P.M.

REPORTS

Mrs. Adams presented the minutes of the regular meeting held on January 20, 2011. The motions to approve the Non-Consent Items listed on the minutes will be adjusted to reflect the correct Board Members who made the motions and seconded the motions. The January 20, 2011 minutes will be placed on the February 17, 2011 Board Agenda for approval.

HEARINGS FROM PATRONS OF THE SCHOOLS

Mr. Reider expressed his concerns about the proposed increase in real estate taxes. He talked about the country's deficit, jobless rate and senior citizens not having had a cost of living raise for two years. Mr. Reider stated that the teachers have good jobs with benefits and a pension at the expense of the taxpayers including the senior citizens. His experience in the workforce has been when an employer is having a bad year there are no raises. Mr. Reider recommended that the teachers have a two year wage freeze.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee

Mr. Wausnock reported that there will be an Executive Session and a joint meeting of the Personnel Committee and the Finance Committee on Thursday, February 10, 2011. Mrs. Adams reported on the two items that were discussed at the Finance Committee meeting held on January 19, 2011 for recommendations to the Board for consideration:

1. Reserving funds in the amount of $919,153.84 for future PSERS payments. Mrs. Adams presented a handout showing the budgeted amounts and actual payments made to PSERS during the 2008-2009 to 2010-2011 school years. If the Board supports the recommendation, the Finance Committee will ask for a motion to reserve the funds on the agenda for a vote at the next Regular Board meeting on Thursday, February 17th.

The consensus of the board was to place the recommendation on the agenda for the next board meeting.

2. Extend the date on two forward borrowing resolutions from 2004. Mr. Kalis explained how the resolutions had lapsed and the Board's capability to readopt the resolutions totaling $23 million. Mr. Kalis reviewed the process of reinstating the resolutions and stressed that these are funds that the Board would be permitted to borrow if deemed necessary. If the Board supports the recommendation, the Finance Committee would ask for the resolution to be placed on the agenda for a vote at the next Regular Board meeting on Thursday, February 17th.

Mr. Hylton stated that the school district has the authority to borrow approximately $27,990,000 without adding the additional proposed $23 million forward borrowing resolutions. He stated that he does not support the proposed forward borrowing resolutions totaling $23 million. Mr. Hartman expressed his support of proceeding with the forward borrowing resolutions. He stated that Board is anticipating the recommendations of the President's Task Force on Facilities, not knowing what the outcome could be and the funds that would be needed. The item should be added to the next board meeting agenda for a vote.

Facilities Committee

Mr. Hartman talked about community interest in the Chestnut Street property as a Community Garden. The committee had previously discussed turning over the property to the Borough for the purpose of a Community Garden under the condition that if the property were to change status the school district would take ownership of the property. Board members discussed the market value of the property and agreed that the committee should proceed with exploring the conditional use of a third party ownership as a Community Garden.

PSBA & MC Legislative Committee Representative

Mrs. Pargeon was unable to attend the February Montgomery County Legislative meeting. She reported on Senate Bill 1 regarding School Vouchers, the use of public money for families who choose to send their children to private schools. She expressed her opposition to this bill. Discussion ensued among the Board Members regarding the use of school vouchers, acceptance by the private schools and the financial accountability of the school district and private schools. Mrs. Pargeon urged all Board Members to contact their senator to voice their opposition to school vouchers. In addition to the school

voucher topic, Mrs. Pargeon commented that Governor Corbett's top priority is to change to a two-year budget cycle. He had stated that a two year cycle would enable the state to better determine what programs are working.

Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Representative

Mr. Hartman reported that due to inclement weather the January Montgomery County Intermediate Unit was cancelled. Mrs. Adams added that due to the cancellation, MCIU was not able to vote on the 2011-2012 MCIU Proposed Operating Budget. Therefore, this item was pulled from the Committee of the Whole's February 3, 2011 agenda. Mrs. Adams reported that it would be added to the March 17, 2011 Regular voting meeting agenda.

Community Relations Committee

Mrs. Pargeon reported the committee elected to attend the Career and Technology Open House this evening. She had the opportunity to visit several presentations and found them very interesting. Mrs. Pargeon gave a brief overview of activities taking place in the district. She encouraged the public to attend the upcoming President's Task Force meeting scheduled for the month of April and the next Superintendent's Forum on February 22nd.

Co-Curricular Activities Committee

Mr. Hartman reported that the committee did not meet in January. The next Co-Curricular Activities Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 28th.

Technology/Curriculum Committee

Mrs. Wilson reported that the committee did not meet in January. The next Technology/Curriculum Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 24th.

Policy Committee

Mrs. Pargeon reported that the February committee meeting was cancelled. The next Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 8th.

Personnel Committee

Mrs. Weand reported that the committee did not meet in January. The next Personnel Committee meeting will be a joint meeting with the Finance Committee meeting on Thursday, February 10th. Mrs. Weand commented on the wonderful reception held at the high school to welcome the Lincoln University teachers. The teachers will be completing a one month field experience extending until March 31st. She thanked Ms. Harris for her role in this process and looks forward to bringing diversity in the district.

LIST OF BILLS

Mrs. Zahora presented the list of bills to be placed on the February 17, 2011 Board Agenda for approval.

CONSENT ITEMS

Personnel

Dr. Sparagana reviewed the personnel items as presented to be placed on the February 17, 2011 Board Agenda for approval.

Field Trips

Dr.Sparagana reviewed the field trips as presented to be placed on the February 17, 2011 Board Agenda for approval.

NON-CONSENT

Mrs. Adams reviewed the Resolution to adopt the 2011-2012 Preliminary Budget for Board approval.

Mr. Hylton stated that he does not support a preliminary budget that would propose a 5.5% tax increase. He explained that it was his understanding that the budget would reflect staying at or below the index. Mrs. Adams explained that at previous meetings the Board had indicated that a preliminary budget be presented above the index in order to apply for exceptions under Act 1. She stated that applying for the exceptions does not obligate the Board to use them and agreed that it is the intention of the Board to stay at or below the index. Mr. Hartman stated that the Board opted to pursue applying for exceptions not knowing the outcome of the teachers' contract. He stated that two years ago the district had applied for exceptions but did not use them. Mrs. Adams confirmed that this process allows for the flexibility to use the exceptions only if the Board elects to use them. She noted that other districts are moving for exceptions and planning on using them. Mr. White confirmed that it is the intention of the Board to stay at or below the index. Mrs. Adams explained that under Act 1 a proposed final budget must be presented in April/May which is the same timeframe that a preliminary budget had previously been presented.

Mr. Kalis reviewed the motion to accept the Fact Finding Report/Recommendations. He reported that the written report from the Fact Finder was delivered to both the Federation of Pottstown Teachers and the Pottstown School District on January 31, 2011. It is a requirement that both parties vote on the recommendations by February 10, 2011. Mr. Kalis will then report the Board's vote to the Secretary of Pennsylvania Public Relations Board. He explained that the motion presented on tonight's agenda is for the purpose of Board action on the Fact Finder's Recommendations. Mr. Kalis explained the process of accepting or rejecting the recommendations.

Hearings from Patrons of the Schools (limited to Non-Consent Items C and D of the agenda)

None.

ADOPTION OF THE 2011-2012 PRELIMINARY BUDGET

The Finance Committee recommends the Board approve the Resolution to adopt the 2011-2012 Preliminary Budget and a copy be filed in the Secretary's office as addendum #2010-2011-051.

It was moved by Mrs. Pargeon and seconded by Mr. Hartman that the Board approve the Resolution to adopt the 2011-2012 Preliminary Budget as presented on January 20, 2011.

Upon roll call, the vote to approve the Resolution to adopt the 2011-2012 Preliminary Budget was recorded as follows: Mr. Hartman: aye, Mr. Huss: aye, Mr. Hylton: nay, Mrs. Pargeon: aye, Mr. Wausnock: aye, Mrs. Weand: aye, Mr. White: nay, Mrs. Wilson: aye, Ms. Harris: nay. Ayes: six. Nays: three. Motion carried.

FEDERATION OF POTTSTOWN TEACHERS/POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT CASE NO. ACT 88-10-50E FACT FINDING REPORT/RECOMMENDATIONS

Motion to accept the written report outlining the recommendations of the Fact Finder, appointed by the Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board, issued under date of January 31, 2011 relating to the negotiations involving the Pottstown School District and the Federation of Pottstown Teachers for a proposed two year contract for the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years. Further, the Board's solicitor is hereby authorized to notify the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board of the Board's decision with respect to the report as required by Act 88.

It was moved by Mr. Wausnock and seconded by Mrs. Weand that the Board approve the Motion to accept the written report outlining the recommendations of the Fact Finder, appointed by the Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board, issued under date of January 31, 2011 relating to the negotiations involving the Pottstown School District and the Federation of Pottstown Teachers for a proposed two year contract for the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years. Further, the Board's solicitor is hereby authorized to notify the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board of the Board's decision with respect to the report as required by Act 88.

Upon roll call, all members present vote aye. Ayes: nine. Nays: none. Motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Policy 122: Interscholastic Athletics and Co-Curricular Activities for Pottstown High School and Pottstown Middle School
2. Policy 122.1: Co-Curricular Awards and Recognition for Co-Curricular Participation

Dr. Lindley reported that the Policy Committee and Co-Curricular Activities Committee are scheduled to do a final review of the policies.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

INFORMATION

1. A+ Communication Activity Report 7/1/2010 through 12/31/2010.
2. Eagles Eye Mobile

FEDERATION REMARKS

Mrs. Vollmouth stated that the teachers are looking forward to getting back to a regular school day schedule after the recent delays and school closures due to the inclement weather conditions.

ROUND TABLE

Mrs. Pargeon was pleased to attend an informal gathering with community members and public officials. She enjoyed the recent basketball game and the Career and Technology Open House.

Mr. Hartman congratulated Dr. Lindley for his conscientious decisions regarding the closing of school due to the inclement weather conditions. Mr. Hartman was pleased to receive the Fact Finder's report and is looking forward to some good news in the upcoming week.

Mrs. Weand enjoyed the Career and Technology Open House. She asked that the Board consider adding a Spanish translation to the global connect.

Mr. White – no comment.

Mr. Hylton – no comment.

Mrs. Wilson enjoyed the Career and Technology Open House. She commented on the amazing performance by the students who participated in a recent Inter-County Band concert.

Ms. Harris – no comment.

Dr. Spargana reminded the Board of the Parent Literacy Night scheduled for Tuesday, February 8th. The Parent Literacy Night that was scheduled in January has been moved to April 5th. He was pleased with the reception welcoming the Lincoln University teachers to our district. The teachers appeared enthusiastic during their first day of field service. Dr. Sparagana thanked Mr. Armato for coordinating the welcoming reception.

Dr. Lindley reported that he along with Dr. Sparagana, Mrs. Adams and staff at the Administration Building are working diligently to improve the work flow. He stated that during the past several years the administration has experienced a significant turn over in staff which sometimes necessitates updating work processes and procedures. Dr. Lindley stated the in preparation for upcoming budget discussions, the Administration is working to determine an educational plan and program that the community can sustain over the next 30 years.

Mr. Wausnock – no comment.

Mr. Huss stated that it is his hope after the Board's acceptance of the Fact Finder's Recommendations that the district and Federation can come together as one to move the district forward.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mr. Wausncock and agreed by all Board Members that the Board adjourns. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:24 pm.

Linda S. Adams
Board Secretary