POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
March 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, March 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: Mr. Thomas J. Hylton, Mrs. Michele Pargeon, Mr. Dennis Wausnock, Mr. Robert Hartman, Jr., Mrs. Polly M. Weand, Mr. Nat White. Absent was Ms. Valerie Harris and Mrs. Julia Wilson. 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, Dr. Angela Tuck, Mr. Robert Giering, Mr. Jerry Ummarino, Mr. Scott Ware, a member of the press, and interested citizens.

AWARDS

None.

PRESENTATIONS

Mrs. Adams introduced Mr. Eric Dove, President of the Elite Group. Mr. Dove presented a Power Point presentation on a Health Plan Analysis comparing cost of plans in terms of premiums, contributions of participants, the rate of premium change compared to the national average and various plans designs, their benefits offered including deductibles and co-pays. He talked about changes in mandates that affect the cost of the plans for school districts. He reviewed the projections for health care premium up to 2019.

COMMUNICATION

Dr. Lindley talked about a recent letter from a parent complimenting Ms .Kim Valentine, a Life Skills Teacher and Ms. Colleen Blute, a Kindergarten Teacher at Barth Elementary. The parent expressed appreciation of their timely responses, communications and overall good atmosphere at Barth. He presented to the Board brief summaries of Alumni Honor Candidates. Dr. Lindley asked the Board Members for their approval for the Alumni Committee to proceed with the process of contacting the candidates. All Board Members agreed that the committee could proceed with the contacts. Dr Lindley reminded the Board Members to notify his office if interested in attending the Montgomery Legislative Breakfast scheduled for April 29, 2011.

REPORTS

Mrs. Adams presented the minutes of the regular meeting held on February 17, 2011 to be placed on the March 17, 2011 Board Agenda for approval.

HEARINGS FROM PATRONS OF THE SCHOOLS

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee

Mr. Wausnock stated that the Finance Committee will meet on March 10th. He requested that the Forward Borrowing Resolution again be added to the March 17th Board Agenda and the topic be opened for discussion. Mr. Hartman expressed his support for the Forward Borrowing Resolution. He explained the importance of having the opportunity to access funds, if needed, to provide a good education for the students that would carry the district over the next 30 years. Mr. Hartman voiced his concerns about recent remarks made by Mr. Hylton that were misleading on what is necessary to renovate the existing elementary buildings. Mr. Hylton stated that all the mechanicals including moving the Administration offices to the high schools could be done for under $15 million. He stated that he would be voting no to the Forward Borrowing Resolution. Mrs. Pargeon voiced her concerns about the state of the 5 elementary schools and expressed her support for the Forward Borrowing Resolution. Mr. White felt that the taxpayers could not afford more debt. Mrs. Weand suggested that Board Members who attend Task Force Meetings refrain from public comment.

Facilities Committee

Mr. Hartman stated the Facilities Committee's February meeting was moved to Monday, March 14th.

PSBA & MC Legislative Committee Representative

Mrs. Pargeon stated the Senate Bill 1 moved from Committee to Appropriations. She suggested a resolution opposing School Vouchers be prepared and added to the March 17th Board Agenda. Mrs. Pargeon will make sure copies are available to all Board Members prior to the next meeting.

Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Representative

Mr. Hartman reminded that Board that his position as the MCIU Representative is up for re-election. He expressed his interest in continuing as the District Representative. He reviewed the topics discussed at the February meeting:

- Charter Schools/School Vouchers
- E-Rate Restrictions
- Keystone Exams
- A New Secretary of Education
- 2011-2012 Proposed Operating Budget

Community Relations Committee

Mrs. Pargeon reviewed various school district events that took place in February, several events that will take place in March. She presented several articles published in the local newspapers of school district events and activities. Mrs. Pargeon reported that each school building received two nebulizers donated by Asthma/Allergy Specialists. She thanked them for their generous donation.

Co-Curricular Activities Committee

Mr. Hartman stated that the February Co-Curricular Activities meeting was re-scheduled for Monday, March 14th. He noted that the committee will address ways to recognize the outstanding achievements of the wrestling team for having reached the 500 Wins Level. Mrs. Pargeon added that 16 schools participated in the county wide wrestling tournament hosted by our district on February 26th.

Technology/Curriculum Committee

Mrs. Weand reported that the district will purchase approximated 30 books of the social studies series and will realize a significant savings by offering some books to view on line. .Mrs. Weand reported that the committee discussed the use of Ipods in the school buildings. The committee agreed that Ipods are allowed. The committee recognized that cell phones are permissible in designated areas but are not permitted to be used in the classroom. Mr. Huss asked the committee to review or create a policy on cell phone usage.

Policy Committee

Mrs. Pargeon reported that the March Policy Committee meeting was cancelled. A technology policy is currently being looked at to allow for Facebook. Dr. Lindley stated that currently the Career and Technology has a page on Facebook as a one-way communication. He stressed there is no dialogue and it is the responsibility of the Principal to monitor the site.

Personnel Committee

Mrs. Weand reported that the Personnel Committee recommends the Board approve the Act 93 2010-2011 Agreement Extension. She stated that the committee will be revisiting discussion on the percentages for the Total Reward Performance Levels. Mrs. Weand stated that the Personnel Committee recommends the district bridge the salary and benefits for 9 months for a teacher that is being deployed to Afghanistan. She asked the Policy Committee to research a policy that addresses Military Leave of Absence. Mrs. Weand reported that the Personnel Committee is reviewing the Director of Development contract. Mrs. Adams stated the MCIU has a policy on Military leave with bridging for salary and benefits. She state there is no additional cost to the district.

LIST OF BILLS

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

CONSENT ITEMS

Personnel

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

Professional Leaves

Dr.Sparagana reviewed the professional leaves as presented to be placed on the March 17, 2011 Board Agenda for approval.

Contracts

Mrs. Adams reviewed the contracts as presented to be placed on the March 17, 2011 Board Agenda for approval.

Bid Awards

Mrs. Adams explained that the Bid Awards for Custodial Supplies and General Supplies are being prepared in accordance with awarding to the lowest bidders meeting the required specifications and will be placed on the March 17, 2011 Board Agenda for approval.

NON-CONSENT

2011-2012 MCIU Proposed Operating Budget

Mrs. Adams discussed the proposed MCIU budget and indicated it represents a decrease of $238.00 to Pottstown from the current year. A copy of the recommended budget was provided to each Board member.

District Cost Plan Agreement

Dr. Lindley reviewed the 2011-2012 District Cost Plan Agreement as presented to be placed on the March 17, 2011 Board Agenda for approval. He will be meeting with Mrs. Bateson, Director of Pupil Serviced, to determine if there are any changes needed.

Act 93 2010/2011 Agreement Extension

Mr. Kalis explained the changes being made to the Act 93 2010/2011 Agreement Extension. He stated the agreement will include some "language cleanup" to reflect the Core Health Plan. Mr. Kalis stated that a copy will be provided to each Board Member for their review. Mr. Hylton asked if the Act 93 2010/2011 Agreement Extension included:

- Maintaining the minimum 1 ½% salary increase through the school year 2014/2015.
- New Minimum/Maximum Salaries
- Maintaining the same Tuition Reimbursement amount.

He stated that he will be voting against the Act 93 2010/2011 Agreement Extension.

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 Facilities Committee and Co-Curricular Activities Committee will be preparing a draft of Policy 122 and Policy 122.1 to present to the Policy Committee at their March meetings.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

INFORMATION

PSBA Event: Spring Legal Roundup

Mrs. Adams asked Board Members to review the information presented and to notify the Business Office if any member is interested in attending.

Website Report: January/February 2011

PCTV Spotlightng Pottstown School District

Board President's Task Force Proposed Meeting Dates and Sites

Mr. Huss presented a timeline for the Board President's Task Force on Facilities. He stated that the April 11th and April 26th meetings will be centered on community input. He asked the Board Members to attend these April meetings and listen to the community and remarks of the Task Force members. Mr. Hylton asked "Who's Task Force is it? " He expressed his confusion about attending the Task Force meetings and when it is permissible to speak. Mr. Huss explained that Board Members can attend any meetings but are expected to refrain from making public comment. Mr. White asked if the Task Force is considering all opinions from the public. He expressed his concern about what the taxpayers can afford and if the Task Force is looking at the financial aspect as well as structural. Mr. Hartman stated that the job of the Task Force is to take all the facts and make their recommendation on what to do with the elementary schools. Mr. Huss affirmed that the Task Force is considering all opinions as well as the financial and structural viewpoints.

FEDERATION REMARKS

Mrs. Vollmuth encouraged the Board to include the elementary school in a Technology Policy. She was saddened to see the resignation of Mr. Wilcheck. Mrs. Vollmuth complimented Mr. Dove on the Health Plan Analysis presentation. She expressed her thoughts on the comparisons that were presented. She stated that the Federation of Teachers had accepted a lessor plan and increased their contribution with each contract that has been settled. Mrs. Vollmuth mentioned that the Pottstown teachers have not had a strike for over 25 years and they continue to fulfill their responsibiites. She welcomed the Board Members to attend negotiations.

ROUND TABLE

Mr. White – no comment.

Mr. Hylton – no comment.

Mrs. Pargeon – no comment.

Mr. Hartman agreed that Mr. Wilcheck will be missed. He stated that the last teacher strike took place in 1970.

Mrs. Weand had a wonderful time at Edgewood's Dr. Seuss Day. She thanked the custodians for all they do at their building,

Dr. Sparagana reminded the Board Members of the next Parent Literacy Night scheduled for March 8th.

Dr. Lindley reported on the AASA Conference he attended in February paid by the Hope Foundation. He shared with the attendees the accomplishments of the Pottstown School District and brought back ideas to help support Principals and teachers.

Mr. Wausnock – no comment.

Mr. Huss hoped that Board Members would try to attend the Military Ball scheduled for March 26th. He reminded the Board Members of the OAC Dinner that will take place on March 23rd.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mr. Wausncock and agreed by all Board Members that the Board adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:40 pm.

Linda S. Adams
Board Secretary