

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
OF THE
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
MT. LEBANON SCHOOL DISTRICT

March 16, 2015

A Regular Meeting of the Board of School Directors was held at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, March 16, 2015, in the Jefferson Middle School Library.

Mr. Lebowitz called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Lincoln Elementary students Lilly Sheely, Maya Perilman, Luca Saab, Zacharay Shannon-Spector, Michael Ferreira, Janet Montgomery, Elizabeth Luke, and Emma Onder. The students presented a report on all the interesting and exciting events that occur at Lincoln Elementary throughout the school year.

ROLL CALL Present: Mrs. Mary Birks, Mrs. Elaine Cappucci, Mr. William Cooper, Mr. Edward Kubit, Mr. William Moorhead, Mr. Daniel Remely, Mr. Michael Riemer, Mr. Larry Lebowitz
Absent: None

ATTENDING: Dr. Timothy Steinhauer, Superintendent
Mr. Thomas Peterson, Solicitor
Administrative Staff: Ms. Cissy Bowman, Dr. Ronald Davis, Ms. Katie Devine, Dr. Marybeth Irvin, Ms. Janice Klein, Mr. Richard Marciniak, Mr. Christopher Stengel, Mr. Ronald Kitsko

MINUTES

It was moved by Moorhead and seconded by Cooper that the Board approves the minutes of the Discussion Meeting held on February 9, 2015, and the Regular Meeting held on February 23, 2015.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE

STUDENT COUNCIL REPORTS

David O'Matz, a member of the Jefferson Middle School Student Council, reported on the various endeavors of the Council during the second half of the school year.

The newest fundraiser for the year was the "Hunger Games to End Hunger" food drive. Homerooms were split into two "Districts" and competed to bring in as much non-perishable food as possible to donate to the South Hills Interfaith Ministries Food Bank. The students collected 4,074 lbs of goods to be donated. The annual Pop Tabs Wars, where homerooms battle to bring in the most pop tabs while sabotaging the competition with quarters. The proceeds, totaling \$1,110, were donated to the Pasquale Scholarship Fund in memory of Mrs. Colleen Pasquale. Student Council looks forward to pursuing many other fundraisers and events such as "Wish Week" in which many students' greatest wishes (within reason, of course) are granted.

Two teams of presenters and 39 delegates will be attending the Pennsylvania Association of Student Councils (PASC) Spring District Conference at South Fayette High School to deepen their leadership skills.

Joel Kirshner, Co Treasurer of the High School Student Council, presented a report on the activities at the High School.

In anticipation of the completion of the cafeteria and the majority of new classrooms and offices, the Student Council is organizing “LEBO DAY”, a celebration of the school on March 23rd. There will be balloons, banners, and musical performances to welcome students to school that morning, and starting with the beginning of lunch periods, the grand opening of the new cafeteria.

Later this month, 20 freshman, sophomore and junior class Student Council members will attend the District 3 Pennsylvania Association of Student Councils conference at South Fayette High School. The conference will be a great opportunity for students to learn about teamwork, developing listening skills, how to motivate friends to become involved in school activities, and improving communication within their class council.

Fourteen members of the junior class have entered the race for a Senior Class Student Council office. The general election will take place April 24th. In the spirit of March Madness, the juniors are coordinating the first annual Faculty Arm Wrestling Tournament on March 27th. Twenty-six female teachers and 22 male teachers are competing for the title. After the arm wrestling tournament, two teachers, Mr. Allemang and Mr. Cremonese, will have an actual wrestling match with Mr. Roddy emceeing the event.

The seniors are looking forward watching the NCAA basketball tournament during study hall or lunch period, organizing next month’s Spirit Assembly, writing speeches to be chosen for the Commencement ceremony in June, and working hard in their classes and extracurricular activities during the last semester of their high school career. The juniors have created a public service announcement that points out ways to avoid creating congestion in the hallways and that pushing and being impatient is not okay. The sophomore class conducted a extremely successful fundraiser at Chipotle’s and plan to use some of the proceeds to conduct a “no-sew” blanket project for local cancer patients. The freshmen class volunteer activities include providing a meal at Ronald McDonald House, and a cleanup of the community parks with the Mt. Lebanon Nature Conservancy.

Joel encouraged everyone to consider nominating Mt. Lebanon High School alumni for the 2015 Great Alumni award. This honor recognizes alumni who have demonstrated outstanding accomplishments either personally or professionally. The deadline to submit a nomination is April 15th, and the form can be downloaded from the District’s website.

On a final note, since the beginning of school, Mr. Stengel has met with all of the Senior Class Officers each month. He has generously loaned each of us an iPad 2 or a Chromebook for the entire school year. He teaches us the best way to use the technology in our classes. We will meet with Mr. Stengel again this Friday to continue discussing the role of technology in the classroom.

COMMENT FROM RESIDENTS

One resident spoke before the Board about the following:

Apologized for saying that Mr. Ostergaard did not file a Statement of Interest

APPOINTMENT OF BOARD DIRECTOR

It was moved by Remely and seconded by Cooper that the vacancy on the Board of School Directors of the Mt. Lebanon School District occurring by reason of the resignation of Scott D. Goldman shall be filled by Dale F. Ostergaard for the remainder of the unexpired term, which expires the first Monday of December, 2015.

ROLL CALL: For: Birks, Cappucci, Cooper, Kubit, Moorhead, Remely,
Riemer, Lebowitz
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

Judge Terrence F. McVerry administered the Oath of Office to Dale F. Ostergaard. (Copy in the official minutes) Mr. Ostergaard took a seat at the Board table.

BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Lebowitz reported that the Board discussed the 2015-2016 budget with a presentation by Dr. Steinhauer and Ms. Klein. They indicated that this year, as in every year, the District is faced with increased costs due to required or contracted increases in pension obligations, salaries and health care costs. In addressing the issues the Board will consider utilization of the District Fund balance, decrease in expenditures, and increase in taxes. The Board will work through these issues in earnest over the next two months and will work very hard to find the appropriate combination with the least tax impact possible while still maintaining the excellence in our schools and programs.

The board president announced that Jan Klein, Director of Business, was awarded the Gary E. Reeser Memorial Award by the Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials (PASBO). Each year at their annual conference, PASBO presents this award to an outstanding member who has exemplified professionalism, leadership and innovation in the field of school business management. Ms. Klein is an extremely deserving recipient of this award and is recognized throughout the Commonwealth as a leader among school business officials. On behalf the Board and Administration, Mr. Lebowitz congratulated Ms. Klein for the wonderful achievement.

Mr. Lebowitz reported that the high school renovation project is moving along very well. New spaces have been open in the building and are absolutely beautiful. Tonight's agenda includes an action item where the board will vote on transferring up to \$538,000 from the FF&E Soft Cost Budget to the Contingency Budget for the project. This is not an increase in the cost of the project, instead this is simply a transfer of unused funds from the FF&E Budget to Contingency Budget all within the overall budget for the project of \$109.65 million.

The Mt. Lebanon High School String Orchestra, Symphony Orchestra, Wind Ensemble and Choir will perform at Carnegie Hall in New York City on April 13, 2015. This once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for these students is something they achieved by virtue of their hard work and outstanding skill. Good luck to all at Carnegie Hall.

The board president reported that he continues his visits to our schools with a tour of Foster Elementary with Principal Jason Ramsey and Assistant Superintendent Marybeth Irvin. Although he saw a lot of great things at Foster, he did want to specifically mention Matt's Media Room which was created in memory of Matt Conover who lost his battle with non-Hodgkins lymphoma in 2002 at the age of 12. Matt was a student who loved technology, video games and all other types of media. Foster School dedicated a classroom in his name complete with a bright red neon

“Matt’s Media Room” sign. It is a wonderful space for all students to use and a wonderful way to remember a member of the Foster community.

Mr. Lebowitz reported that, at Mr. Remely’s suggestion, he attended an open house at Parkway West Career & Technology Center. This was the first time he had every visited Parkway West and saw firsthand the programs offered to Mt. Lebanon students. The board president thanked Dr. Darby Copeland, Parkway West Executive Director, and Principal Fred McGivern for their hospitality and to the Culinary Arts students for the delicious box of homemade cookies. It was an informative visit and is yet another example of how at Mt. Lebanon we provide “the best educational possible to each and every student.”

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Dr. Steinhauer reported that high school senior Kellan Stout won the PIAA state wrestling championship in the 182-pound category, winning his State match in a 1-0 decision. With the win, Kellan became the high school’s first state wrestling champion since Kurt Angle in 1987. The superintendent presented Certificates of Achievement to Kellan and his coach, Bill Lewis, for this outstanding achievement.

Last week the 54th annual induction ceremony of the Mt. Lebanon High School Chapter of the Cum Laude Society was held. Seventy-nine (79) members of our senior class (439) met the stringent academic requirements to be invited into membership. The Cum Laude Society is a highly-regarded national organization that acknowledges superior academic scholarship and achievement at the high school level. Chapters are expected to exemplify the highest ideals of the Cum Laude Society including excellence, justice, honor and truth. The superintendent congratulated our students for this exceptional academic achievement and thanked their teachers and parents for supporting their advanced achievement.

Mt. Lebanon School District was recognized as a “District of Distinction” by *District Administration*, a leading national education publication. Districts of Distinction is a national recognition program created by District Administration magazine to honor school districts that are leading the way with new and innovative ideas. The District received this honor for creating and implementing a leadership development initiative called “Building G.R.E.A.T. Schools: The Role of Leadership.” The program was created and implemented to build leadership capacity for our building principals and district-level administrators. Dr. Steinhauer highlighted the leadership of Dr. Ron Davis in helping to develop the program and he also was the one who submitted the program for consideration.

Dr. Steinhauer reported that since mid-November, the State Auditors have been conducting a review of the District’s operations and procedures to determine its compliance with certain relevant state laws, regulations, contracts, grant requirements and administrative procedures. An exit conference was held today with the State Auditors and the superintendent was pleased to report that the School District received no findings or observations. A written report from the State Auditor General’s Office will be forthcoming. The results from the audit confirm that the District has established and maintains proper and efficient practices in accordance with all regulatory requirements and validates the competent and careful work of our administration and staff. The audit report also highlights the School Board’s careful oversight and supervision of this important community asset.

BOARD REPORTS

High School Renovation – Mr. Remely reported that the following recently completed spaces in the high school: the library; cafeteria, which will have a soft opening on Friday, March 20; the

elevators have been inspected and are operational; the main concourse stairs are open, the activities office is expected to open next week, and the LGI classrooms have been cleaned and are ready for use. Hopefully, future board meetings will be held in a LGI classroom beginning next month.

Parkway West CTC – Mr. Remely thanked Mr. Lebowitz for attending the open house at Parkway. Mr. Remely indicated that he has the Parkway West CTC audit with him this evening if any board member would like to review it. The budget presented for approval this evening is the lowest in years. The business manager retired and was replaced with a position from the AIU. The auditor made several recommendations which have been put in place. Parkway has begun an adult learning program offering courses in electrical home improvements, mechanic and auto repair, carpentry home improvements, and welding. The cost is \$110-\$130 per course. The annual graduate placement report showed that 67% of graduates have gone on to continued education, employment or military service.

NSBA/PSBA – Mrs. Birks reported that she has spoken to both Representative Miller and Senator Smith and will have meetings with both this month to go over education issues.

The biggest news this month has been Governor Tom Wolf's budget proposal. The Governor's budget includes a \$400 million increase to the Basic Education Subsidy, restoring major cuts to the Accountability Block Grants and Education Assistance Funds. We are encouraged to continue discussing the budget with our representatives and senators.

Gov. Tom Wolf addressed the state's pension problem during his 2015-2016 budget before the entire Pennsylvania General Assembly. The Governor said in his speech that he was going to stop the excessive fees that are going to Wall Street managers. According to Wolf, reforming the pension system's management fee structure could save the state \$1.3 billion over the next five years. Wolf has said he also plans to refinance \$3 billion of the state's pension debt at lower rates.

Mrs. Birks reported that she has been asked to serve as a member of the 2015 Future of Membership Taskforce by task force chair and Bethlehem School Board president, Mike Faccinnetto. This taskforce is being convened for the following purposes:

- Conduct a review of current data related to membership demographics and make recommendations on additional methods and information that could be collected
- Review the 2014 "Future of Boards" report
- Analyze trends in school board service at the local, state and national level and provide recommendations to enhance recruitment efforts for local board service by PSBA
- Identify generational differences that may impact local board service, participation by individual members in PSBA work and local board membership renewal
- Discuss and provide recommendations for enhancing the membership participation by boards and individuals with PSBA

Mrs. Birks reported that she spoke briefly with Congressman Tim Murphy, and they plan on meeting soon to discuss the reauthorization of ESEA, which the US House of Representatives debated to reauthorize the week of February 23.

The U.S. Senate education committee leaders expect to take up next month the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn., and Ranking Member Patty Murray, D-Wash., said in a joint statement released Monday that they plan to consider such legislation the week of April 13. Lawmakers have spent the last several weeks "working together to build the base for legislation to fix the problems with No Child Left Behind," according to that statement. "We are making significant progress in our negotiations."

Mrs. Birks monthly Legislative reports can be found on the District website at www.mtlsd.org under the School Board section.

SHASDA – Dr. Davis attended the annual student forum at the last SHASDA meeting. A senior from the SHASDA participating districts are invited to attend and answer four to five questions regarding education. Senior Mira Shamuda represented Mt. Lebanon High School and did an outstanding job.

Revenue Generation – Mr. Lebowitz the Capital Campaign Cabinet met on March 11. The group spent time discussing committee activities and dates for upcoming awareness events as well as high school tours for various groups. The Faculty/Staff co-chairs completed their first round of school presentations at each of our 10 buildings. The Parents Committee co-chairs made a presentation about their role in the campaign at the March 4 PTA Council meeting. They continue to recruit parent representatives from each of the schools and will be scheduling meetings for those individuals beginning in the next month. The Pacesetter, Awareness, and Alumni Committees are looking at dates for meetings and High School tours beginning later this month. A calendar will be developed as plans progress.

MLFE – Thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve in this position again. Mr. Ostergaard reported that the MLFE will be hosting a fundraiser on April 18 called “Taste of Lebo: Battle of the Appetizers” in uptown Mt. Lebanon. Tickets can be purchased on the MLFE website. The Board is recruiting students to become a part of the MLFE board next year. Students should contact Mrs. DeLuca in the Capital Campaign office. The spring MLFE grant program is in progress. Teacher can submit and solicit for grants which will be awarded in May.

Economic Development – Mr. Moorhead will be replacing Mr. Goldman on the Economic Development Board.

COMMENTS FROM RESIDENTS

One resident spoke before the Board about the following:

Supports the changes to Policy JICG, but he is concerned that asthma inhalers could be confused as e-cigarettes

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Ostergaard indicated that he would vote on action items he was comfortable with and abstain on those he was not.

It was moved by Birks and seconded by Kubit that the Board approves, ratifies, and accepts the following financial reports: (Copy in official minutes)

- a. Treasurer’s Report dated February 28, 2015,
- b. List of Bills dated February 27, 2015, and March 10, 2015,
- c. List of Tax Refunds dated February 28, 2015,
- d. Budgetary Transfers dated March 4, 2015, and
- e. List of Unusable Equipment dated March 1, 2015.

ROLL CALL: For: Birks, Cappucci, Cooper, Kubit, Moorhead, Ostergaard, Remely, Riemer, Lebowitz (abstained on item b)

Against: None

MOTION APPROVED

It was moved by Riemer and seconded by Remely that the Board approves the March 12, 2015, list of personnel changes, as revised March 16, 2015. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Birks, Cappucci, Cooper, Kubit, Moorhead, Ostergaard,
Remely, Riemer, Lebowitz
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Riemer and seconded by Kubit that the Board approves the revisions to the 2014-2015 School Calendar as presented. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Birks, Cappucci, Cooper, Kubit, Moorhead, Remely,
Riemer, Lebowitz
Abstained: Ostergaard
Against: None
MOTION APPROVED

It was moved by Riemer and seconded by Kubit that the Board approves revisions to Policy JICG, Student Smoking, in the form presented. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Birks, Cappucci, Cooper, Kubit, Moorhead, Ostergaard,
Remely, Riemer, Lebowitz
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Kubit and seconded by Riemer that the Board approves revisions to Policy JIC, Student Code of Conduct, in the form presented. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Birks, Cappucci, Cooper, Kubit, Moorhead, Ostergaard,
Remely, Riemer, Lebowitz
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Kubit and seconded by Cooper that the Board approves the Parkway West Career and Technology Center General Budget for 2015-2016 in the amount of \$5,748,017 with an estimated cost to the District of \$196,464.70, and the Jointure Budget in the amount of \$465,366 with an estimated cost to the District of \$78,921. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Birks, Cappucci, Cooper, Kubit, Moorhead, Remely,
Riemer, Lebowitz
Abstained: Ostergaard
Against: None
MOTION APPROVED

It was moved by Kubit and seconded by Cappucci that the Board awards the Transportation for Exceptional Children Bid to First Student in the amount of \$5,310.55 per day for the 2015-2016 school year, \$5,446.11 per day for the 2016-2017 school year, and \$5,585.80 per day for the 2017-2018 school year as the lowest responsible bidder meeting specifications. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Birks, Cappucci, Cooper, Kubit, Moorhead, Remely,
Riemer, Lebowitz
Abstained: Ostergaard
Against: None
MOTION APPROVED

It was moved by Cooper and seconded by Remely that the Board approves an amendment to the ComDoc Contract in the form presented. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Birks, Cappucci, Cooper, Kubit, Moorhead, Remely,
Riemer, Lebowitz
Abstained: Ostergaard
Against: None
MOTION APPROVED

It was moved by Cooper and seconded by Remely that the Board approves the Forensics Team trip to Susquehanna, PA from March 19 to March 21, 2015. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Birks, Cappucci, Cooper, Kubit, Moorhead, Remely,
Riemer, Lebowitz
Abstained: Ostergaard
Against: None
MOTION APPROVED

It was moved by Moorhead and seconded by Birks that the Board approves the High School Winterguard trip to Cincinnati, OH from March 13 to March 15, 2015. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Birks, Cappucci, Cooper, Kubit, Moorhead, Remely,
Riemer, Lebowitz
Abstained: Ostergaard
Against: None
MOTION APPROVED

It was moved by Cappucci and seconded by Remely that the Board approves the following list of change orders for the High School Renovation Project:

- a. GC-111-270 to Nello for \$31,361 for doors, hardware and partitions,
- b. EL-77-271 to Farfield for \$23,846 for conduits, door openers, power changes and light fixtures,
- c. EL-78-272 to Farfield for \$4,396 for power and data lines in new library,
- d. GC-112-273 to Nello for \$1,173 for glass and door work,
- e. IN-11-13 to Nello for \$41,951 for repairs to damaged wood floor,
- f. IN-12-14 to Farfield for \$15,758 for repairs for water damage, and
- g. ME-33-274 to McKamish for \$2,660 for fume hood.

Additionally, the Board is asked to permit the transfer of up to \$538,000 from the FF&E Soft Cost Budget to the Contingency Budget.

ROLL CALL: For: Birks, Cappucci, Cooper, Kubit, Moorhead, Remely,
Riemer, Lebowitz
Abstained: Ostergaard
Against: None
MOTION APPROVED

COMMENTS FROM RESIDENTS

Three residents spoke before the Board about the following:

- Questioned if the Board approved possession of a weapon within 1000 ft of a school
- Questioned if the District would facilitate the moving of the crew equipment and to find a permanent space for storage
- Supports the crew program; sports add to the well being of students
- Questioned the process for background checks

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Cecile D. Bowman, Secretary
Board of School Directors