

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

August 17, 2020

A Regular Meeting of the Board of School Directors was held at 7:31 p.m. on Monday, August 17, 2020, via a Zoom Web meeting.

Ms. Olbrich called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL:

Present: Mr. Hugh Beal, Mrs. Elaine Cappucci, Dr. Aviva Diamond, Ms. Valerie Fleisher, Dr. Justin Hackett, Mr. Michael Riemer, Dr. Stephen Strotmeyer, Mr. Jacob Wyland, Ms. Sarah Olbrich
Absent: None

ATTENDING:

Dr. Timothy Steinhauer, Superintendent
Mr. Thomas Peterson, Solicitor
Administrative Staff: Ms. Cissy Bowman, Dr. Ronald Davis, Ms. Katie Devine, Dr. Heather Doyle, Mr. Robert Geletko, Dr. Marybeth Irvin, Mr. Richard Marciniak, Mr. Christopher Stengel

MINUTES

It was moved by Strotmeyer and seconded by Wyland that the Board approves the minutes of the Policy Committee Meeting held on June 8, 2020; the Discussion Meeting held on June 8, 2020; the Regular Meeting held on June 15, 2020; the Special Meeting held on June 22, 2020; the Special Meeting held on July 15, 2020; and the Special Meeting held on July 29, 2020.

MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE

BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ms. Olbrich reported that the District spent a long summer imagining what the next school year will look like. She thanked the community for their patience and feedback. Now that the path forward is set, her hope that we community comes together to focus on preparing children for the first day of school. Though it will be a different first day, this pandemic will not prevent teaching and learning to begin again between our children and their teachers.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Steinhauer reported that on August 13, the Board approved the first step of the phased reopening of schools. He publicly thanked the Board for taking so much time to consider the multitude of issues that impact a decision like this.

The first step in a phased reopening of schools is to start fully remote before proceeding to the next phase of in person instruction. The superintendent continues to believe it is the safest, most prudent, and effective manner to move forward with education in the midst of a public health pandemic. The teaching staff is continuing their training to develop high quality on-line instructional courses and practices. The District has the commitment from the Mt. Lebanon faculty and staff that will ensure teacher led learning and educational services provided in

accordance with our high standards, high accountability, and the teaching expertise of our Mt. Lebanon faculty.

Dr. Steinhauer reiterated that the District intends to provide safe and healthy in-person learning experiences for those students with critical needs that can only be met in person. In addition, there may also be other circumstances that will allow the reintegration of students into school facilities in smaller groups. There has been some preliminary ideas to reopen our libraries to small groups, opening our maker spaces to small groups, putting together small music ensembles in controlled circumstances, and several ideas around in-person science labs.

As incidence and percent positivity rates lower and the community reaches benchmarks established by Pennsylvania Department of Health or Allegheny County Health Department health, the District will safely and gradually return students and staff to school buildings. This phased-in educational approach will be safe, stable, and effective. The District and the Board are committed to bringing our best each and every day for our students. The Superintendent looks forward to working with, and supporting our families as we start the new school year.

BOARD REPORTS

Municipal Liaison – Dr. Hackett reported that the Mt. Lebanon Commission looking at forming committees that will explore how Mt. Lebanon can become a more diverse welcoming community. These committees will make recommendations to the Commission, and will not be elected positions. More information will be coming from the Municipality on how residents can be involved.

The Mt. Lebanon Uptown revitalization project has been fully funded and should begin moving forward later this year. This includes work on sidewalks, curbs, parking updates with more handicapped parking, new lighting and public art in the uptown area. There will also be a volunteer tree planting event in the 4th Ward which will be expanded to other neighborhoods.

Environmental Sustainability Board - Mr. Beal reported that the Environmental Sustainability Board met on August 13. Mr. Beal was unable to attend but will get a full report from the chairman and report on the meeting at the next school board meeting.

Pathfinder – Mrs. Fleisher reported that the Pathfinder Board will meet on August 19 where they will hear an update from the principal on the AIU’s health and safety plan, particularly as it applies to the Pathfinder School. They will also discuss building rentals and what they will be doing with educational bodies and outside groups

COMMENTS FROM RESIDENTS CONCERNING ACTION ITEMS

One resident spoke before the Board about the following:

Teacher salaries

NEW BUSINESS

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

- a. Treasurer’s Report dated June 30, 2020, and July 31, 2020,
- b. List of Bills dated July 8, 2020, August 3, 2020, and August 13, 2020, June 30, 2020, List of Bills
- c. List of District Bank Accounts dated August 6, 2020,
- d. List of Tax Refunds dated June 30, 2020, and July 31, 2020, and
- e. List of Unusable Equipment dated August 1, 2020.

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer,
Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Wyland and seconded by Strotmeyer that the Board approves for public display the list of lien property taxes for the 2019 tax year. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer,
Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Wyland and seconded by Riemer that the Board approves authorizing the Tax Collector to remove all delinquent properties with assessments of \$8,000 or less from the properties to be lien for the 2019 tax year and approves the filing of liens on all remaining properties.

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer,
Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Diamond and seconded by Riemer that the Board approves the August 13, 2020, list of personnel changes, as revised August 17, 2020. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer,
Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Diamond and seconded by Strotmeyer that the Board approves the 2020-2021 bus drivers as listed. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer,
Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Beal and seconded by Cappucci that the Board approves the 2020-2021 list of contracted salaries for 10-month clerical employees, aides, and personal care assistants effective September 1, 2020, reflecting an average increase as negotiated of 3.35% over the duration of the contract effective July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2022. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Strotmeyer,
Wyland, Olbrich
Against: None
Abstain: Riemer
MOTION APPROVED

It was moved by Beal and seconded by Cappucci that the Board approves the 2020-2021 list of annual contracts salaries for food service employees to be effective September 1, 2020, reflecting an average increase as negotiated of 2.9% over the duration of the contract effective July 1, 2016 to June 30 2021. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer, Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Beal and seconded by Fleisher that the Board approves the 2020-2021 list of annual contract salaries for teachers to be effective September 1, 2020, reflecting an average increase as negotiated of 3.9% over the duration of the contract effective July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2023. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer, Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
Against: None
Abstain: Cappucci
MOTION APPROVED

It was moved by Cappucci and seconded by Riemer that the Board rates the performance of the Superintendent as satisfactory and approves a salary of \$231,088 effective July 1, 2020.

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer, Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Cappucci and seconded by Strotmeyer that the Board approves the following Federal Grants:

Title I - \$225,862

The funds will be used for:

- Two full-time reading specialists at Lincoln and Washington Elementary; Two 0.6 reading specialists at Lincoln and Washington (90% of salaries & partial benefits totaling \$217,247)
- Non-public contracted services for three students that will be provided by the contracted service provider (\$7,166)
- Professional Development (\$20,000)
- Liaison services (\$1,500)
- Supplies for homeless (\$100)

Title II – \$81,584

The funds will be used for:

- A portion of this is set aside for non-public professional development (\$9,464)
- A portion of the salaries for two first grade teachers in order to reduce class size (\$40,000)
- Purchased professional and technical services to provide staff development (\$25,000)
- Professional development supplies and literature (\$7,120)

Title III - \$32,129

Title III funds (\$27,920) will be used for:

- A variety of professional development options and supplies
- Program support staff from the AIU
- English Learner after-school tutoring program (\$4000)
- Quarterly technical training sessions for the District ESL Liaison

Immigrant Education funds (\$4,229) will be used for:

- Maintaining after-school ELD tutoring programs

- Summer Learning Center or alternate summer program for EL students
- Instructional supplies for EL teachers
- Offsetting costs for District outreach to immigrant parents through school-based initiatives

Title IV - \$20,152 (down from \$23,526)

The funds will be used for:

- Offsetting the reduction of funds in Title I

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer, Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
 Against: None
 MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Fleisher and seconded by Diamond that the Board approves an agreement with Allegheny Children’s Initiative to provide Student Assistance Program services to the District for the 2020-2021 school year at no cost to the District. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer, Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
 Against: None
 MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Fleisher and seconded by Riemer that the Board approves a contract with The University School for the provision of special education services for Mt. Lebanon exceptional students during the 2020-2021 school year at a cost not to exceed \$26,000 per student for no more than two students. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer, Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
 Against: None
 MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Hackett and seconded by Wyland that the Board approves an agreement with Leaders in Learning to provide school psychology services provided by Mary Lou Conroy to the Mt. Lebanon School District at a cost not to exceed \$28,000 for the 2020-2021 school year. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer, Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
 Against: None
 MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Hackett and seconded by Riemer that the Board approves an agreement with Wesley Spectrum Services to provide Mental Health Therapists for students with Individualized Education Plans during the 2020-2021 school year at a cost not to exceed \$119,370. The positions will be reimbursed through ACCESS funds. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer, Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
 Against: None
 MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Riemer and seconded by Fleisher that the Board approves an agreement with the Watson Institute for the placement of special education students for the 2020-2021 school year at a cost not to exceed \$50,498 per student for no more than five students. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer,
Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

It was moved by Riemer and seconded by Fleisher that the Board approves the Educational Services Agreement with the Allegheny Intermediate Unit for special education services for the 2020-2021 school year in the form presented. (Copy in official minutes)

ROLL CALL: For: Beal, Cappucci, Diamond, Fleisher, Hackett, Riemer,
Strotmeyer, Wyland, Olbrich
Against: None
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

COMMENTS FROM RESIDENTS

Five (5) residents spoke before the Board about the following:

- Benchmarks for opening schools
- Will information be posted
- Comparison with other schools
- Questioned who the superintendent spoke to in making decision to go remote learning
- Contact other districts to see how they can open
- Need to make sure teachers are safe
- Questioned what we are doing for teachers who don't feel safe
- Action plan for returning to school
- Questioned what are the phases to return to school
- What specific metric was used
- Questioned how frequently parents will get updates
- Questions about plans to assure adequate staffing when move to hybrid occurs
- Better understanding of what are the phases on when to return
- Questioned when the Board meetings will be in person
- Taking away choice for community
- Community members upset

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, it was moved by Riemer and seconded by Beal to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. The motion was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Cecile D. Bowman, Secretary
Board of School Director

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