

SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA

The Scranton School Board of Directors held a Special Meeting for General Purposes on Monday, June 30, 2014 in the Board Room of the Administration Building at 7:00pm prevailing time.

President McGuigan called the meeting to order at 7:00pm with a Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

President McGuigan now turned the meeting over to Pennsylvania School Board Association representatives.

Britta Barrickman and Wayne LeClair addressed the board regarding the Superintendent's search.

Director Martinelli expressed his opinion that there should be a committee consisting of the President of the Board, the Chair of the Education Committee, one administrator, one union member, President of the Chamber of Commerce, a member of the judiciary, Chair of the Education Department from the University of Scranton and Marywood University and also the PTA President. Mr. Martinelli added that he believes it is very important to involve the community and in his opinion that they should be interviewing the candidates for Superintendent.

President McGuigan noted that we'll have to decide how we're going to do this and if PSBA is to conduct the search it would require a vote adding that was why the Solicitor asked for this evening's meeting to be a voting meeting so if they were ready to act on the search by PSBA they could vote.

VISITING DELEGATIONS:

Kathy Welby White, parent of Scranton School District student, spoke to the board regarding a teacher's behavior toward students including bullying and harassment. Mrs. White pled with the board to please address the issue in which she knows the board is aware of.

At this time, Director Ruane addressed allegations made by President McGuigan at the June 23, 2014 meeting which included attacking Director Ruane's integrity and being a target in Mrs. McGuigan's political antics, accusations that Director Ruane violated the district's nepotism policy in which Director Ruane voted for a cousin of hers and she also read the policy that was given to her at the time she was elected. The policy does not include 'cousin'. Director Ruane also said that Mrs. McGuigan's cousin was recently appointed as a Special Education Aide substitute without a public vote.

A discussion took place regarding the policy and whether it was a correct and recent policy.

President McGuigan said that she is unaware of the cousin Director Ruane is referring to and asked Mr. Gaynord to please get back to her and let her know who it was.

Director Douaihy also commented on President McGuigan's remarks from the June 23, 2014 meeting and the charges she made against him.

The issues Director Douaihy spoke of were questioning his ethics as well as his knowledge and basic understanding of public education and the need to get past this political nonsense.

Mr. Douaihy defended his actions regarding the lack of textbooks at South Intermediate and the current curriculum adding that it has to be used until new curriculum is written. It is not an option for teachers if they don't like the textbooks and/or the prescribed material and any teacher found to be not following curriculum should receive an unsatisfactory observation. Mr. Douaihy added that it was a \$59,000 quote to fill the textbook order not \$200,000 which Mrs. McGuigan indicated.

Director Douaihy also defended the recent appointment of Mr. John Marichak where Mrs. McGuigan said he violated his own newly adopted hiring policy. He said it was not his policy but a collective effort with the entire board. Mr. Douaihy spoke of the interviews for the position in Mr. Marichak was the top scoring candidate. Mr. Douaihy also noted the higher salary for Mr. Marichak was because of extra duties placed on him to include supervising the cyber program and the alternative school program at Lincoln Jackson Academy which were suggested by Mrs. McGuigan.

Mr. Douaihy moved on to another criticism over the appointment of Mr. Terry Whalen as the Director of Lincoln Jackson Academy. Mr. Douaihy pointed out that Mr. Whalen was already here for Camelot as the day to day director and had been successful for the 2013-2014, and since the Scranton School District can operate the program cheaper with the right people, the position was offered to Mr. Whalen. Although Mr. Whalen is not a certified administrator he possesses a very unique set of training skills as a behavioral modification specialist and also a tenured veteran of alternative education with disruptive youth adding that the district should save about \$150,000 by operating LJA ourselves.

Director Douaihy now spoke of the lack of leadership with the non- payment of \$27,000 in health care premiums under the COBRA program by the former solicitor of the Scranton School District and asked where is the call for a full and thorough investigation by the President of the Board. Director Douaihy added that our health care advisors found similar irregularities during an audit where another retiree was found in arrears for \$20,000 in healthcare premiums and he believes that the district needs to conduct a complete audit dating back at least ten years for all the retirees who contracted with the district to purchase their health insurance through the COBRA program.

Mr. Douaihy also addressed Mrs. McGuigan's reading in public a letter from Attorney Frank Tunis who represents our Act 93 union employees and contains threats of legal action from Mr. Tunis regarding the board speaking critically to administration employees where there is no proof of any harassment. Mr. Douaihy expressed his discontent with the letter being shared without the knowledge of the full board when the letter was sent to the entire board and believes this was fanned into a story with her connections at the Times –Tribune.

Mr. Douaihy asked where the leadership was regarding Mr. Tunis' letter where the air could have been cleared in executive session without the fanning of the story in print media and he is sick of the bomb throwing and that's not how we're going to accomplish anything.

Mr. Douaihy also spoke about the correction of a resolution for the contract for a special needs nurse's aide in which it had an incorrect date and the error was directed towards Mrs. Colarossi adding it was a small issue that was being taken care of and the comment made to Mrs. Colarossi made it into the press and he was infuriated by that recalling his own experiences as a parent of a special needs child and sitting through countless stressful and anxiety filled IEP meetings.

Director Douaihy said he has been doing some research with regards to ethics and school directors and there is a Pennsylvania State Ethics Commission ruling regarding the selling of insurance services to employees and their immediate families and vendors of the district of their families and all of those individuals have to be registered with the Board Secretary adding that if this isn't being done going forward, he will personally file a complaint with the Pennsylvania State Ethics Commission.

Mrs. McGuigan responded to Mr. Douaihy regarding what happens in the board room isn't her concern; it's what happens outside the board room citing an teachers in service that Mr. Douaihy attended when no other board member has ever done that.

Mr. Douaihy said he was invited by the principal, Mr. John Coyle to observe and he is not apologizing for anything that he does in the board room.

Director Sheridan now addressed Mrs. McGuigan of his own concerns when she was quoted in the Scranton Times that he should resign his seat on the school board since being elected Democratic City Chairman. Mr. Sheridan said he has no intention to resign and spoke of previous members of the school board and solicitor who served on the board as well as the Democratic Committee. Mr. Sheridan now congratulated Director Kyle Donahue for his election to the Executive Board of the Committee and noted that Mrs. McGuigan hasn't asked for his resignation. Mr. Sheridan again said that he will not step down from the board and his services with the district have nothing to do with his services as Democratic City Chairman.

There being no further business a motion to adjourn was made by Director McAndrew, seconded by Director Casey and the meeting adjourned at 8:35pm.

By: _____
Secretary