

Conneaut School District

PUBLIC WORK SESSION

Minutes

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

7:00 PM

The Conneaut School Board of Directors met Wednesday, April 5, 2017 at the Alice Schafer Annex cafeteria.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Board President Mrs. Jody Sperry.

The following members answered to roll call:

Mr. Burnham	Mr. Ellis	Mr. Hornstein
Mrs. Klink	Mrs. Krachkowski	Mrs. Luckock
Mr. McQuiston	Mr. Schaef	Mrs. Sperry

Administrators Present-

Superintendent: Jarrin Sperry

Director of Special Education- Susy Walters

Business Manager- Greg Mayle

Curriculum Director- Brenda Kantz

Director of Buildings and Grounds- Frank Kimmel

Technology Coordinator – Rick Kelly

Alternate Solicitor- Colleen Stumpf

Principals: David Maskrey, Doug Parks, Kevin Burns, Joel Wentling and Adam Jardina.

Visitor Recognition

Mrs. Sperry offered visitor recognition on Agenda Items noting as per Policy 903 – Public Participation in Board Meetings. All visitors who are recognized during the Visitor Recognition are allotted a maximum of five (5) minutes to address matters of their concern, unless otherwise determined by the Board President. Visitor recognition is to be limited to thirty (30) minutes unless otherwise decided by the Board.

It is noted there were no visitors.

Discussion Items-

1. *Trauma Informed School/Busy Bars and Movement Makers-* Mr. Jardina and Mrs. Varner, along with the CVE staff have been working behind the scenes on a new way at looking at students involved in trauma. Instead of looking at students and saying “what’s wrong with you?” we can look at them and say “what happened to you”. There is a study called the A Study that shows increased awareness of how to handle children with softness and kindness and a new understanding.

By allowing movement, it directly links to helping a student process the traumatic event. They can measure your brain which shows how movement helps let go of what is bubbling up inside from the trauma and aids in dealing with it. It works by allowing the body to burn off the chemicals created by the trauma. It has been found our brain is not capable of learning when there is an overt trauma.

Mrs. Varner came upon a news broadcast showing a new way to keep students attention. A school put that research to work and developed their version of a busy bar. This helped students stay active yet focus on learning. We put our own team to action on a busy bar. Knowing the original bar had to be drilled into a desk, we ordered materials for the busy bar, ball seats, pedal rights and bed risers. The bed risers are used to lift desks up so a student had to stand.

We ended up partnering up with the Crawford County Human Services Grant, who wanted to research it and conduct trainings but we did not feel the training was necessary. Therefore, we put a wish list together and in using an in house survey, we discovered our own staff was completely up for the idea.

Our goal was to build 11 busy bars in each classroom, with the thanks to Channellock, who donated tools, and recruiting many volunteers, Mr. Kimmels research we glued the PVC together. This was proving to be a very long process, probably a month and a half to implement. Thanks to Mr. Fannin at the middle school and his class he pushed them out in a week. The Career and Technical Center may also partner up with a better design.

Research does show production and grades go up and teachers with disruptive students have seen improvement. Especially with students who normally bug others. Instead they are getting rid of their energy with the busy bars, ball seats, pedal bikes and standing desks. Students are permitted to alternate and if they get antsy can go to the back of the classroom where the standing desks are located. Mrs. Varner explained the classroom setup is non-traditional and are more spread out, more open and conducive for collaboration. From the principal's perspective, discipline in the classroom is down dramatically.

Mrs. Sperry felt this would be a great student showcase item for the Fall PSBA Leadership Conference. She would also like TV stations to come and see our district doing this.

2. *FFA Property*- Mr. Sperry updated the Board on the FFA property, noting that a forester walked the 48 acres and felt the timber is of minimal value, mostly pine. This was no surprise considering it was a Christmas tree farm. But the Vo -Ag Advisory Committee wants the property assessed by a Realtor to see the value before selling it. The Board would then need to authorize having it assessed and from there at the September 17, 2017 Vo-Ag meeting discuss what direction to take; sell or hold on to it.

The history of this property includes a newspaper showing young boys, who would now b in their 70's selling fruit to buy the property at a tax sale. FFA students bought it in the 1950's for approximately \$400.00. The District took it over as FFA could not technically own it so the District is the deed owner. The question then is if the property is sold do the proceeds go to the District or the FFA. General consensus says the monies would go to the FFA. Mr. Mayle stated the money would have to go to the District first and then some options such as the District could hold the monies as a grant or savings account/trust of some sort and the FFA could come to the District to state how they want to spend it.

All these questions need to be answered before moving forward with a Realtor. Mr. Schaefer suggested directing the legal team to provide an agreement and then make a decision for an assessment prior to the September Vo Ag Meeting.

Mr. Burnham did not feel the agreement would need to be approved before having the property assessed. The timber value is probably \$10,000 or less and if one tried to timber it would decrease the value.

It was also felt that any assessment fees the District incurs would be deducted from the sale monies before given to the FFA. It is also believed the District would not need an rfp but could be handled much like the Harmonsburg/Summit building.

Mrs. Stumpf will discuss with Mr. Joseph and make the Board aware.

3. *Henretta Trust*- Mrs. Stumpf, representing the Quinn Law Firm and George Joseph at tonight's meeting, reported that she has been in communication with Attorney Rhodes to assist in the transitioning the library at the Summit building. The Summit Township would like to utilize up to \$120,000 of the Henretta Trust towards a long term lease. The Library Board would then like to use another \$20,000 to use for furniture. There are specific parameters in the trust to be used for construction of a new building and does not contemplate the lease of space or provide monies to another entity to provide for building. It must be a unanimous vote to the building and a 2/3 rd of the Conneaut School District to use the monies for the building.

Mrs. Stumpf recommended that it be expenditure to be approved by the Crawford County Courts. While the library board intends on it being a new building, we need to practice due diligence and protect the District with going for court approval, as well as attorney general approval and to provide notice of change. The other interested party is the Allegheny College whereby they hold the remainder beneficiary under the trust if the monies are gone or the library ceases it then goes back to the college.

The monies would almost be exhausted if \$120,000 is used for the building and \$20,000 for furniture with a current balance of \$141,462.54. We as a district would need to decide what to do with the remainder, with just a little bit left should we hold for benefit of the library or is it not enough to account for by the treasurer and allow it to flow back to the Board. The District still holds title to the books unless it is decided to eliminate the responsibility.

The Board discussed the proposed lease term; Mr. Schaefer reported the Township originally was looking at 29 years and were going back and forth on shorter and longer terms. The proposed lease would be a payment of \$120,000 on top of the estimated of \$20,000 to outfit the space. Mrs. Stumpf felt the monies would not be dispersed though until it went through Orphans Court.

This Board suggested approving a resolution pending Orphans Court and the Attorney Generals approval. Mrs. Stumpf will reach out to Attorney Rhodes to see how long of a term they are looking at. It was felt the term comes into play that may determine the rent as well as other issues. The 29 years may be as far as an entity can go out, beyond 29 years may develop other guidelines.

It was reported that the Summit Township is looking at the same 895 square footage they currently have and most likely handicapped accommodations, rest rooms and a meeting room to enhance opportunities, wifi accessibility too. They currently are not a full library, as reported by Mrs. Luckock, a former long term Public Library Association board member. She feels this would be a fabulous opportunity for the residents in Harmonsburg.

Mrs. Stumpf feels there is a workable option and to protect both the District and the Trust she recommends taking additional steps to ensure everything is done correctly. Mr. Schaefer did not want to

delay the process for Summit as they have been advertising for bids; therefore our approval is critical to allow Summit Township to move along. They would like to start construction a little later this year. d

4. *Buildings and Grounds*- Mr. Kimmel reported he has been negotiating with Ron Pitts, our current lawn care contractor. Mr. Pitts has offered a first year no increase and a onetime increase for pruning, trimming and the like. There is significant increase if we were to tackle this in-house. He feels the proposal is a pretty good deal; Pitts does a really good job, they provide direct contact with coaches to prep for games, the crew does not blast the vehicles with grass clippings, nor leave grass in the driveways. They are already repairing the damage from winter plowing. There is already a motion on the voting agenda to approve their proposal.

5. *Technology*-

- a. *Website*- recapping from previous discussions with the Board, it is time to put the website contract on the agenda. A small committee has been reviewing options since our current website provider Edline/Black Board is looking to push from Edline to their new product coupled with a price that is a little high. Now would be the time to consider a new website provider. The team interviewed four vendors and ended with SchoolPointe as the recommendation. They are an Ohio based company with a base savings of \$4,500 the first year and a \$2,500 savings after that. If history holds we probably would stay with them for several contracts as making these changes is something that we would not want to go through frequently.
- b. *Intra-District WAN*- Mr. Kelly explained this is the connections between buildings and here at Alice Schafer the contract is up. The current vendor, Windstream, did not bid. So this year we are able to get velocity from Erie for our internet contract. Prices came back favorably but will increase as we are doubling our internet speed. As normal, it is done through the NW Tri-County IU#5 for a 3 year contract.

6. *Policies for 1st Reading* – Mrs. Kantz reviewed the policies up for 1st Reading, to include;

- Policy 222 – Pupils and Tobacco Use
- Policy 226 – Search and Seizure
- Policy 611 – Purchases Budgeted
- Policy 808 – Food Services

7. *Curriculum*-

- a. *Weighting of iOS App Development*- Mrs. Kantz explained that in Mr. Messerall 2nd year of teaching the iOS App Development he is finding it is covering the same topics, just language differences as the AP Computer Science. As a difficult course that matches the AP class she is asking if it can be a weighted course. We are the only school district in Crawford County offering it; Mr. Sperry corrected her and stated we are only one of six in the nation that offers it.
- b. *Childcare Class Prerequisites* – in the past, Mrs. Smay the Family and Consumer Science teacher has taken her high school Child Development Class to the Pre-K Classroom. Due to state regulations now it is now a pre-requisite that the students who are 18 and older to have their clearances and Tb test. It is felt this may deter students from signing up for the class due to the cost in obtaining clearances. Currently this course is an elective for 10th thru 12th grade students and she has 40-50 take it each semester. The Board suggested researching a little more.

Potentially looking into working with a local physician who would provide a reduced price for the TB shot, some thought a nurse could read the results just not give the shot?

- c. *World Cultures*- Mrs. Kantz presented the World Cultures for social studies and history curriculum. She is looking at updating the high school curriculum and we need a world cultures class. Mr. Huber, in looking at the text books decided on this written version. There is a 9th grade course on the agenda for approval. Mr. Huber commented that in taking on this project it ended up bigger than he realized. He is very proud of it, the text series he selected is beyond robust and is on the course selection for 17/18 school year. This is a high school elective and is completely tied into the Common Core Standards and Pennsylvania standards. It is a 6 year bundle with a digital product and has updated guarantees for six (6) years.

If the budget allows she would like to add Chrome Books for the middle school.

8. *Legislative Platform(s)/Priorities*-

The Board discussed the platform proposal that was submitted last year and felt it should be resubmitted again. Mrs. Sperry suggested presenting it at PSBA. She overheard at the NSBA Conference a sponsor talking to Warren County about the boundary changes and the sponsor charges \$2/student to consult...in essence to do what we did on our own. More and more districts are looking at alternatives to save money. The process we went through saved us and worked well. She would also like to send to both PSBA and NSBA our BUSS Committees and procedures. The deadline is May 1st for NSBA.

Mrs. Luckock reviewed the proposal, the board would like to entertain reviewing and tweaking it some before submitting to the PSBA legislative committee.

9. *Community Discussion Night*-

The Board discussed the topics for the Open Discussion Community Night, scheduled for Thursday, April 20, 2017 at the CASH auditorium.

Mr. Mayle will discuss the present budget and then Mrs. Sperry would like to veer more of the information for the public to be of topics they would be more interested in. Last year we discussed special education and cyber/charter schools. So looking for ideas of what the Board feel is happening presently and to keep the public informed.

Mrs. Krachkowski feels the use of technology and how far students travel should be shared. It was also suggested the Strategic Plan updates which is now called the Comprehensive Plan. She feels it is time we dust it off, write a comprehensive plan that is more in line with our goals. It is one that should be in front of us when budgeting. She is unsure if it has been opened up since consolidation but would like to ask for volunteers to help develop it. There is no term requirement so it is our comprehensive plan and what our District wants. She suggested a community, staff and board combination for the committee and divided up into different areas of topics.

But back to the Community Discussion agenda- the Board suggested 4 topics; technology, budget, val/sal and comprehensive plan for the scheduled 2 hour long meeting. The Board also suggested discussing/mentioning the newly revised homework policy, social media and the dangers/legal issues and consequences which can be discussed by Officer Sitler. He can provide the examples of what he has dealt with in our own student population on a weekly basis.

10. *Superintendent's Report-*

- Superintendent's SAC Meeting at IU5 on March 8th. Topics were: WIN Learning, Northwest Superintendent's Summit, Legislative Update, State Budget, Common In-service, Access Billing, and the Acute Partial program at Bethesda
- CCCTC Superintendent Meeting. Discussion centered on hiring for next year, including the new welding instructor, budget, and negotiations.
- CCCTC JOC Meeting with dinner before meeting. Advisory Committee members had dinner and meetings with their respective teachers of the various programs
- Attended a very informational workshop on Tornadoes at "Pampered Palate Catering" in Saegertown put on by FEMA. **Many** areas were covered including: Average Lead Time in the USA and here in NW PA, most fatalities caused by weather, and what to do to protect yourself and those in your care. Folder on CANVAS contains the documents shared at the training
- Susy, Kurt and I attended the bus driver training at CLMS on March 21st. A guest speaker from the TSA (Vince Hackett) presented to the bus drivers "Awareness of your surroundings" in regards to what they see every day on their runs and being aware in general as we go about our lives as Americans.
- On March 24th, Brenda Kantz and I attended the job fair at Cochranon HS to observe how they conduct their interviews. Their job fair is quite large and every senior interviews six times in the course of an hour and a half. Numerous businesses and entities across NW PA were represented.
- Vo Ag Advisory Committee meeting took place on March 28th. Dave Maskrey, Brenda Kantz and I were in attendance as were the Vo Ag advisory council, Ellen Aurand and a number of students. Discussion about the old tree farm came up. The council would like an Appraisal of the property to see if the FFA might want to sell the land as is.
- We loaned 15 desk/chairs to the Crawford County Correctional Institution for classes for inmates. These desk/chairs were slated to be auctioned off this summer. I would request that the district donate these desk/chairs to the Correctional Institution instead of having them returned for the auction.
- On April 1st, I attended the Robo Bots Competition at Meadville HS. There were a number of great battles and one Bot was even thrown so hard that it hit the top of the plexi-glass ring. Cochranon teams took 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 6th place in the competition.

11. *PSBA/NSBA Update-*

Mr. Ellis provided an update of meetings/conferences/webinars provided by PSBA. He noted specifically representatives will be in our District; the Advocacy Forum on April 24 is available online.

Mrs. Sperry updated on NSBA- she reviewed the sessions she sat in on- some included autistic students; Council of Urban Districts; Interest Based Bargaining; Budgeting One; Look at National Law Docket; Title 9 Presentation; School Districts are the largest employers in the nation, including larger than Wal-Mart. Therefore the Courts take what NSBA's opinion is based on that criteria. She also sat in on the Broad Scope of Title 9; Lockheed Martin Tour.

She highly encouraged other Board members to attend the conference next year in San Antonio, Texas.

12. *Ethics Reminder-*

Mrs. Sperry reminded everyone to turn in your Ethics Form if not done so. May 1, 2017 is the deadline.

13. *Agenda Review-*

The Board reviewed the draft agenda.

Mr. McQuiston noted this school board is honest; this became apparent when we discussed the budget crisis from the state and our District was not in trouble. WE are in the forefront of cyber learning, the welding prospect and much more: his hat off to all his predecessors and the Board. He feels they have done a fantastic job of doing what is in the best interest of the school district.

Executive Session

Mrs. Sperry noted the Board would be going into an **Executive Session** after the meeting is adjourned to discuss agency business, which, if conducted in public would violate a lawful privilege, specifically to discuss involving contract, grievance and personnel matters.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:04 p.m.


Mrs. Jody Sperry, Board President


Mr. Greg Mayle, Board Secretary