

Mr. Rasmus called the Millville Area School District Policy Committee Meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Those present in the library were Joseph Rasmus, Whitney Holloway, Susan Myers, Brynn Clark, Greg Hemsarth, Dee Davis, Edward Sanders, Bonnie Gregory, Noah Adams, Chelsea Rosenberger. Present via Zoom was Jessica Whitmoyer.

POLICY 707 CONSIDERATION

- Mr. Rasmus opened the Committee meeting with a discussion on Policy 707, Use of School Facilities. He explained that the district seems to have three versions of this policy in circulation with the fee schedule being last updated in 2015 that is currently being used when outside organizations use the facilities of the district. He shared all three versions with the Committee for their consideration.
- Mrs. Myers opened the discussion by sharing her concerns. She stated that there does not seem to be any consistency in who the contact is for the school usage forms. On one version, it states that it goes to Buildings and Grounds, another it says to the Business Manager. Then, she shared her thought that the forms should first go to the Principal for approval, then the Superintendent. Finally, she mentioned that the Business Manager would only need to know about the form or usage of the facilities if there was a fee applied to the usage.
- Mr. Rasmus then opened up the discussion about whether or not the district should allow usage of the facilities on Sundays, allowing use by outside organizations that are not school-based, and for outside community members submitting usage requests to have coverage by maintenance on the weekends. He asked the Committee what their thoughts were on these topics. He shared his belief that the district should be reasonably available and open to usage by the public, within reason. He explained that it is reasonable to allow usage when there is custodial staff during the week. However, he does feel the district should be concerned when the usage is on the weekend and custodians would need to be paid time and a half to work.
- Mrs. Holloway added to this that at times, the cost can be even more than that because the staff coming in on the weekends are compensated at a higher rate on the pay scale. Mr. Rasmus added his concern about the cost on the tax payer dollar for usage by outside organizations. He said that it was concerning when board members have mentioned the way it has been used in the past. At this point in time, the district cannot allow people in the building unsupervised.
- Mr. Rasmus then shared the concern that previously the bathrooms at the stadium were always left open. However, he felt that was concerning and directed Mr. Matt McWilliams, the Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds, to lock the bathrooms in the evening. The custodial staff in the evening shift were asked to go to the stadium bathrooms, do a check, possibly a spot clean, then lock the doors for the next day. From a pragmatic standpoint, he was concerned that was leaving the district open up to liabilities. He shared that if the district were to unlock these in the future for usage, a custodian would then have to lock the doors after the use. In addition, Mr. Rasmus mentioned that the administrative team did look into putting proximity access points on the doors that do not already have them. If that were to happen, the doors could be opened and locked remotely on the weekends, so that when Monday came, there would not be any surprises and thus, eliminating the need for the extra check by custodial staff. This would be coordinated with the building check happening on Sunday as well. Mr. Rasmus shared, in collaboration with Mr. Noah Adams, that the cost for that would be \$2,000.
- To this, Mrs. Myers asked about putting proximity access on the gates of the stadium. The bathrooms are contained within the gates, so that would also have to be unlocked. In order to use a proximity access point, the outside gates would have to be unlocked.

- Mr. Rasmus went on to mention that during the Co-Curricular Committee meeting, there was a discussion on portable restrooms being made available, mentioning there used to be up to 2 of these on site for spectators at one point. There were some supervision concerns for the coaches with practice. Also, when the spectators are coming into the bathrooms while attending games at the stadium or the nearby fields, it is hard to manage this. Ms. Verstraeten mentioned that it would not be reasonable with the district's limited security staff to ask them to police the bathroom usage during practices and games.
- Mr. Rasmus then added that we could suggest or ask that outside groups using the facilities could rent a portable restroom in lieu of the usage fee for the district. He shared with the Committee that last year, the Legion had used the fields and had some members using water bottles to relieve themselves because the bathrooms were too far away. At the time, Mr. Crispell shared his belief that this was unacceptable and unsanitary, which was dealt with by administration. He asked the Committee what were their thoughts on this.
- Mrs. Myers shared that she was open to this. Mrs. Holloway shared that the fee to rent the portable restrooms was reasonable and the company would maintain them as needed.
- Mr. Hemsarth then asked about the Jr. High Boys and Girls soccer use of the EIEIO field in the spring. He asked if the teams would be able to use the stadium. Mr. Rasmus said that this issue has been discussed before among administration. Mrs. Myers shared that the use of the stadium has not been allowed as it was seen to be a "right of passage" and not allowing them until they are varsity players. Previous Buildings and Grounds supervisors did not want to allow them use of the stadium in the spring because it gave the time for the field to recuperate and the grass to grow for the fall sports season. However, Mr. Rasmus mentioned that Mr. McWilliams does not share the same concern. To this, Mr. Hemsarth mentioned that Mr. McWilliams' background was not in turf and outdoor experience. He shared the concern about the health of the field.
- Mrs. Clark mentioned that the amount of games did not seem to warrant keeping the junior high players from using the stadium for the entirety of the spring season. Mrs. Davis echoed this concern, sharing about comments from other schools about not using the stadium. Mr. Hemsarth shared that if the field was wet enough, that could do damage to the field that would not recover over the summer. Mrs. Clark mentioned that if that was the case, then the game could be easily moved to the EIEIO field when necessary. Mrs. Davis said that at the very least, it would be appreciated to have the teams use the stadium field for one or two special games.
- Bringing the discussion back to the use of the portable restrooms, Mrs. Clark asked if the district is going to rent portable restrooms for the use by spring sports, then would the stadium restrooms have to be unlocked. In addition, Mr. Hemsarth asked if an outside group wanted to come into use the facilities and there was already a portable restroom provided by the district, would there still be a fee involved to use the facility. Mrs. Davis then asked if the outside group rented a portable restroom, would the junior high players be able to use it. Mr. Hemsarth added that if he were a member of the outside group, he would put a lock on the restroom because the group would be liable for that restroom's use.
- Mrs. Myers agreed that perhaps if the outside organization used a district-provided portable restroom, then do we only charge a field for the use of the field. Mrs. Clark shared that she believes we should only be concerned about a fee when the usage is not in time with custodial staff availability, mentioning that the Little League uses the facilities for a good portion of the spring during the school week and are not charged. She questioned if the discrepancy was based on whether or not the usage is on the weekend or something else. Mrs. Davis added that the Little League is not all comprised of Millville students and are able to use the inside of the buildings sometimes five nights a week. To this, Mrs. Whitmoyer explained that Millville Little League is set up to be only students in the school district. In addition, she added that the League switched to use of wiffle balls instead of traditional balls when inside so as not to cause as much damage when using the school building.

- In summary of the discussion, Mr. Rasmus questioned if our policy should be to charge a fee, regardless of whether the outside group is comprised of Millville students or not, if the usage of the facilities is on a Sunday or a time when there is not already custodial coverage. Mr. Hemsarth agreed that his objective would be keep the cost neutral, only charging when it would be responsible for the tax payer.
- Then, Mr. Rasmus added that there needed to be a discussion about the use of inside facilities, such as the Auditorium. When using the Auditorium, there is cost involved for technology and light systems as well as additional staff. Mrs. Clark added that in one policy version, there is language stating that the fee schedule may be subject to review. She believed that the district should lean on that and add language explaining why or examples as to the reasoning for additional cost. Her concern was how that would be laid out in fees to consider every type of situation. Mr. Rasmus mentioned that it could say, "additional fees may be applied."
- Mrs. Myers added that the district, regardless of whether the outside group was non-profit or for profit, should have some language in this policy stating about some additional fees for services needed with the usage of certain spaces and venues within the district. She shared her concern with the types of groups listed who can use the facilities.
- Mr. Hemsarth then shared his priorities for updates in this policy, beginning with the distinction of public versus private requestors. He mentioned that he did not agree with the denial, as noted in the policy, of all private group use of the facilities. To this, Mrs. Myers asked what Mr. Hemsarth considered to be private use of the facilities, citing private parties such as wedding receptions as opposed to the 250th anniversary of the town being open to the public. He went on to say that the language saying "not to be used on Sundays or holidays" should be changed to fees for use on those days (potentially at time and a half).
- Mrs. Myers countered this with the concern that it should not be only applied to Sundays and holidays because other days may occur additional cost based on the availability of the custodial staff. To this, Mr. Rasmus added his concern with this change was that historically athletic groups and school-sponsored activities such as the Drama department have had to ask permission to have practice and use the facilities on Sundays. He was concerned that changing that use to a fee schedule may open up the school-sponsored activity use considerably and therefore, cause financial concern with custodial coverage. Mrs. Myers added to this that the district had maintained the belief historically that there was not a need to have practices and events on Sundays, with the exception of events few and far between. For the most part, in the past, the district did not allow athletic coaches to require practices on Sundays.
- In response, Mr. Rasmus mentioned that the language of the policy could be written to say that all Sunday use would need to be approved by the board, regardless of being an outside group or a school-sponsored activity. Mr. Hemsarth questioned if the district has a policy for use in place, would all requests for outside use need to continue coming to the board. He added that if this policy can be cleaned up, that may not be necessary. In response to this, Mr. Rasmus said that these items were brought to the board's attention because that was the consensus he heard from the board when he came into the district. Mrs. Myers then added that perhaps the language should be that school facilities should not "be regularly available on Sundays and holidays but could be used with approval by the board."

- Mr. Rasmus then brought up the concern of the timing and how far in advance the requests are made for usage of the facilities. Due to some of the last-minute requests, we have added requests to special board meeting agendas which was not viewed favorably. Mrs. Myers stated that the requests had to be submitted previously 10 days before the first use, however, due to the board schedule it may need to be 2 weeks before the first use. Mr. Rasmus echoed that sometimes it is hard, due to the timing of certain requests and the board meeting calendar, to get them approved within 10 days by the board. He believed that 14 days would be more reasonable to maintain expectations with the community for approval.
- Mrs. Clark then reiterated Mr. Hemsarth's assertion that if this Committee and the board can update the policy to an acceptable standpoint, then potentially not every request will need to come in front of the board. Mr. Rasmus said the 14 days change in language would be helpful, but yes, if the policy is clear, not all requests would necessarily need to come to the board. If there was something questionable, he said that he could always forward the usage requests to the board for consideration, but not necessarily for a vote.
- Mrs. Myers then added her concern with the language about the fee being paid 10 days prior to the usage of the facilities. She believes that the approval could happen first, then the fee would need to be paid before the first use. Her concern was that if the outside group paid the fee before the usage was approved, the Business Office would have to be writing refund checks unnecessarily.
- Mrs. Myers wanted to consider the listing of groups in the policy. Mr. Rasmus stated that we should consider the types of groups and classifications wanted as renters. Mr. Hemsarth also asked that the Committee be presented with some potential costs of custodial coverage and technology use for creation of the fee schedule.
- Mr. McWilliams explained that schedule for custodial staff on the weekends. He mentioned that there is a 7.5 hour shift of time available for a custodian on Saturday, usually positioned to cover the events scheduled in the weekend. As to the particular staff member working on a weekend, Mr. McWilliams explained that it is on a rotating schedule, so the cost would depend on the staff member working a particular weekend. Mr. Hemsarth then asked would we be able to work with an outside group to lessen the fee if they work in tandem with the district events already scheduled for the weekend. Mr. Rasmus believed that this could be possible, but the district-sponsored events would need to take precedence over outside group usage. Ms. Rosenberger then added would the requestor and/or the district know if there was availability up to two weeks in advance with rescheduling of athletic events and district events.
- Mr. Rasmus closed the discussion by saying that he and Ms. Rosenberger would collaborate and reconvene another meeting to discuss the changes as noted.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Rasmus adjourned the meeting at 6:58 pm.

Chelsea Rosenberger
Assistant Board Secretary