

# Seneca Valley School District



## SCHOOL BOARD ACTION MEETING

I H S AUDITORIUM - 7:00 P.M.

### MINUTES

**JUNE 14, 2021**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** by Mr. Eric DiTullio, President, called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.
  - A. **Moment of Silence** – In memory of the lives lost due to COVID-19, and in reflection of those who are mourning loved ones, recovering from the illness or have been negatively impacted during this time.
  - B. **Pledge of Allegiance**
  - C. **Roll Call** – Roll call by Ms. Lisa Mislán, Board Secretary, showed the following members in attendance: Ms. Leslie Bredl, Mr. Eric DiTullio, Ms. Susan Harrison, Mr. Timothy Hester, Mr. Mike Jacobs, Mr. Jeff Nickel, Mr. Frederick Peterson, Ms. Kathy Whittle. Mr. Jeff Widdowson was absent.

Others present included Dr. Tracy Vitale, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Matthew McKinley, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary; Dr. Sean McCarty, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary; Ms. Kyra Bobak, Human Resources Director; Ms. Lynn Burtner, Business Manager; Ms. Linda Andreassi, Communications Director; Mr. Randy Miller, Buildings and Grounds Director; Dr. Jeffrey Roberts, Director of Student Services; Dr. Marie Palano, Director of Analytics and Federal Programs; Attorney Matthew Hoffman, Solicitor.

## 2. INFORMATION REPORTS

- A. **Student/Staff Recognition** – Ms. Linda Andreassi announced the following:
  1. Two Seneca Valley Seniors were among hundreds of pupils in seven western Pennsylvania counties who recently studied economic concepts and gained financial literacy skills through Butler County Community College's (BC3) Stock Market Game. Teammates Brianna Buccini and Zachary Garcia also walked away with the first-place trophy in both the region and in Pennsylvania in the 30-week stock market competition. BC3 honored Miss Buccini and Mr. Garcia at the Western Region 2021 Awards Ceremony on May 4 on BC3's main campus.
  2. Two Seneca Valley students in Dan McKosky's video production classes brought home awards from Robert Morris's Digital Media Arts Consortium (DMAC) Student Video Contest earlier this month. Sophomore Evelyn Vogel won in the News Package category for her video detailing the instructional

changes arising from inclement weather, and senior Ethan Bannon's original senior project film "Opus" won in the Digital Cinema category.

B. **Dates to Remember** – Ms. Andreassi announced the following dates to remember:

June 20	Father's Day
June 25	Seneca Valley Picnic Day at Kennywood Park
July 4	Independence Day
August 2	School Board Work Session Meeting 7:00 pm
August 5	SV Foundation's Gift of Hope Golf Classic - Cranberry Highlands Golf Course
August 9	School Board Regular Meeting 7:00 p.m.

C. **Legislative** – Mr. DiTullio reported an update on Public School Employees' Retirement System (PSERS) noting that rate recertification and an investigation by the Department of Justice (DOJ) have been in the news. These two issues are unrelated. The need for a rate recertification is due to an incorrect calculation by a third-party entity. An audit is being conducted and when completed, the information will be provided to the public. There will be changes in procedures and policies to ensure this type of error does not occur again. The DOJ investigation is looking at property procured by the PSERS fund in 2018. Once the investigation is complete, a full report will be made available to the public.

Mr. DiTullio added that six PSERS board members sent a letter to the press and the PSERS board requesting the board uphold its fiduciary responsibility by immediately terminating the Executive Director Glen Grell and Chief Investment Officer James Grossman for poor investment performance and governance failures. The request was withdrawn and not voted on because the information in the letter, while largely factual, was not provided in context. The performance comparisons provided were misleading. The PSERS fund has performed "net of fees" above the benchmarks set. The letter submitted attempted to compare other investment fund results having different strategies, resources, goals and risks, with PSERS.

The group that signed the letter never before spoke to the board requesting discussion of any personnel changes and, instead, released the letter directly to the press, which is not a constructive way to voice concerns or argue a point of view.

Finally, the fiduciary responsibility of the board means putting the fund and current and future beneficiaries first, especially before politics.

D. **Financial Reports**

1. Operations
2. Senior High Activities
3. Intermediate High Activities
4. Middle School Activities
5. Athletics
6. Food Services
7. Tax Collection Reports
8. Capital Project Funds

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT** – Public comment was heard by the following regarding the Raider Mascot: Mr. A. C. Phipps, Mr. Don Rape, Ms. Cathy Rape, Ms. Carlen Blackstone, Mr. Shawn Negley.
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Approved the following minutes.
  - A. **Work Session** – May 3, 2021
  - B. **Action Meeting** – May 10, 2021
5. **TREASURER’S REPORT** – Approved the treasurer’s report.
6. **GENERAL FUND BILLS** – Approved the general fund bills totaling \$3,335,387.61
7. **CONSTRUCTION FUND BILLS** – Approved the construction fund bills totaling \$2,596,241.52

Mr. Nickel motioned, seconded by Ms. Harrison, to approve minutes, treasurer’s report, general fund bills and construction fund bills. Motion carried on a roll call vote with those present voting in the affirmative and Mr. Widdowson absent.

#### 8. ADMINISTRATION ACTION

- A. **Jason G. Wehrle Memorial** – Approved the Silver Linings Project proposed by the Seneca Valley Foundation (SVF) to memorialize the late Mr. Jason G. Wehrle, SVF Trustee and former SV School Board Director. A repeated sentiment of Mr. Wehrle was that he always looked for the good in situations – the silver lining. The project will fund the installation of three silver benches to line the courtyard of the Senior High School so that students, staff and the community can be reminded of the positive outlook Mr. Wehrle so firmly believed. The project will be at no cost to the district.
- B. **Head Start Agreement** – Approved the renewal lease agreements with Butler County Children’s Center, Inc. DBA Early Learning Connections for the operation of a Head Start program at Rowan Elementary for the 2021-22 school year.
- C. **PreK Counts Agreement** – Approved the lease agreement with Butler County Children’s Center, Inc. DBA Early Learning Connections for the operation of a PreK Counts program at Connoquenessing Valley Elementary for the 2021-22 school year.
- D. **PSBA Voting Delegate** – Appointed Mr. Eric DiTullio as voting delegate for PSBA Delegate Assembly meeting on Saturday, October 23, 2021.

Mr. Nickel motioned, seconded by Mr. Hester, to approve the administrative actions as listed above. Motion carried on a roll call vote with those present voting in the affirmative and Mr. Widdowson absent.

- E. **Raider Mascot** – Approved the resolution to retire the use of a Native American mascot in association with the Seneca Valley School District.

Mr. Peterson noted that the only opinion that matters is that of the Indigenous people who no longer wish to be represented by a mascot.

Mr. DiTullio confirmed that the Raider name will be retained and that we are retiring the Native American mascot and related imagery. We are answering the request of those we intended to honor. A rendering of a Native American is not what defines our community.

Mr. DiTullio thanked the SV students, residents and alumni who have reached out to share their input.

Mr. DiTullio motioned, seconded by Mr. Nickel, to approve the Raider mascot change as discussed. Motion carried on a roll call vote with those present voting in the affirmative and Mr. Widdowson absent.

## 9. INSTRUCTION ACTION

- A. **2021 Graduates** – Approved the list of Seneca Valley graduates for 2021.
- B. **Conferences** – Approved conferences.
- C. **Club Status** – Approved club status for the Bass Fishing Club at no cost to the District and under the supervision of Mr. Matt Durst, RGMS teacher.
- D. **Center for Community Resources Agreement** – Approved the Student Assistance Program agreement for the 2021-22 fiscal year with Butler County Human Services Center for Community Resources (CCR).
- E. **Pittsburgh Art Region Agreement** – Approved the affiliate partner agreement with Young Artists & Writers, Inc. for administration of a Scholastic Art & Writing Awards regional program for the term of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.
- F. **DePaul School for Hearing and Speech Agreement** – Approved the DePaul School for Hearing and Speech agreement for professional services for the 2021-22 school year.
- G. **Grants**
  - 1. Granted permission to apply for and disburse, if approved, the Isabelle P. Rucker Fund and NCTM grant in the amount of \$3,000 for enhancing student mathematics learning through the use of tools and technology.
  - 2. Accepted the Highmark Foundation grant in the amount of \$7,500 for Connoquenessing Valley Elementary School (CVE) to be used towards health and wellness initiatives that promote a positive school climate.
- H. **The Children's Institute** – Approved the service agreement with The Children's Institute to provide alternative education placement services for the 2021-22 school year.
- I. **Pittsburgh Ballet House** – Approved the SV Academy of Choice Instructional services agreement with Pittsburgh Ballet House for 2021-22.

- J. **Memorandum of Agreement** – Approved the memorandum of agreement between Duquesne University, a nonprofit corporation, and the Seneca Valley School District to develop and deliver summer programming commencing on June 21, 2021 through June 24, 2021.

Ms. Harrison motioned, seconded by Mr. Peterson, to approve the instruction actions as listed above. Motion carried on a roll call vote with those present voting in the affirmative and Mr. Widdowson absent.

## 10. BUSINESS/FINANCES ACTION

- A. **Budget Transfers** – Approved budget transfers.
- B. **Act 1 Resolution** – Approved the 2021-22 Homestead and Farmstead Exclusion Resolution per Act 1, Taxpayer Relief Act.
- C. **Act 511 Taxes** – Approved re-enactment of the following Act 511 taxes:
1. Flat Rate Occupation Tax – \$10
  2. Earned Income Tax – 1%
  3. Real Estate Transfer Tax – 1%
- D. **Summer Actions** – Authorized the administration to approve the following:
1. Year-end budget transfers
  2. Outreach Partnership of Technology (OPT) agreements
  3. June and July bills
- E. **2021-22 Budget** – Adopted the annual budget for 2021-22 in the amount of \$145,712,582 with a 2.56 mill (2%) millage increase.
- F. **Liability Insurance** – Approved the sanction of the following groups to work on behalf of the Seneca Valley School District and intention to provide that the District's liability insurance covers these groups for the 2021-22 school year: PTA, PTO, SV Boys' Lacrosse, SV Indoor Track and Field, SV Ice Hockey, SV Inline Hockey, SV Slow Pitch Softball, SV Bowling, SV Competitive Cheer, SV Ultimate Frisbee, JROTC, After Prom Committee, Booster Groups, Seneca Valley Foundation, and all Board approved student clubs.
- G. **Booster Group Resolution** – Approved the Booster Group Recognition resolution for the 2021-22 school year.
- H. **Ticket Prices** – Approved athletic ticket prices for the 2021-22 school year as follows: football reserved seating \$8.00/entry; football pre-sale adult general admission \$6.00/entry; football pre-sale student general admission \$4.00/entry; all football tickets at the gate \$6.00/entry; all other sports adult general admission \$5.00/entry; all other sports student general admission \$3.00/entry.
- I. **Facilities Rental Fees** – Approved the facilities rental fees for the 2021-22 Fiscal year.
- J. **Insurance Premiums** – Approved insurance premiums for 2021-22 provided by First National Insurance Agency.

- K. **Equipment Disposal** – Approved disposal or donation of the following:
1. Two obsolete commercial pizza ovens
  2. Swim equipment
  3. Swim timing equipment
- L. **Change Orders** – Approved the construction change orders for Ehrman Crest Elementary/Middle School.
- M. **Bid Awards** – Awarded the following bids for the 2021-22 school year.
1. Paper products and supplies; 2021-22 awarded to Mon-D-Aid Company
  2. Professional lawn care and snow removal services. (Bids were received Monday, June 14, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.) to be awarded to Funyak Landscapes, L.P., pending solicitor review of agreement.
- N. **Feasibility Study** – Approved to seek proposals for an updated district-wide feasibility study.
- O. **Strategic Planning Stakeholder Representatives** – Approved list of Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) Future Ready Comprehensive Plan Stakeholder Representatives. The feedback received from stakeholder representative groups will inform District goal development and strategic planning.

Ms. Burtner discussed the feasibility study stating that a current and updated study is a requirement and the hope is that we will be eligible for any state funds for future projects.

Dr. McCarty added that information provided by a demographer would be valuable as we look at the District as a whole and address future enrollment across the District, especially in light of the construction of Ehrman Crest Elementary/Middle School.

Mr. Miller noted that the last feasibility study was done in 2014-15, which is outdated. The goal is to get the RFP out this summer with the hope of having a completed feasibility study within four to six months.

Regarding the strategic planning stakeholder representatives, Ms. Bobak noted that, this year, the board is required to vote on the list and submit to the state. The district's strategic plan is to be submitted in November 2021. The professional staff on the list were recommended by building administrators. The parent and other members came from parent-teacher organizations.

Mr. Jacobs motioned, seconded by Mr. Hester, to approve the business actions as listed above. Motion carried on a roll call vote with those present voting in the affirmative and Mr. Widdowson absent.

11. **PERSONNEL ACTION** – The following personnel items were discussed in executive session held prior to this meeting.
- A. **Resignations** - *Professional* - Kayla DeLallo; *Classified* - Jacquelyn McElheny, Lynn Wendereusz, Joseph Laukaitis, Michelle Smelscer; *Supplemental* - Susan Dinger
- B. **Appointments** - *Administrator* - Trisha Butschle; *Supervisor* - Jason Young; *Professional Substitute* - Suzanne Duer; *Classified* - Zackary Magill, Sarah Schneider, Katelyn Mustovich, Kathleen Wiedmeyer, Nicole Matson; *Supplementals* - Tim

Sasson, Ryan Lehmeier, Steve Campos, Laura Sauers, Jennifer Erin, Kasey Kraus, Tricia Straw, Hannah Hugo, Jenna Plummer, Scott Postler, Ann Cheman, Val McGee, Ray Peaco, Kayla Keown, Grant McCarthy; Kelly Levere, Deborah Stocklas, Lynne Rodrigues, Mackenzie McGuire, Kenneth Macek, Tiffany Smietana, Andrew Russell.

- C. **Contracted Services** - *Artists in Residence* - Ashley Babick, Timothy Baurle, Clint Bleil, William Brewer, Sarah Frey, Perry Gatch, Brian Stahurski; *Pittsburgh Ballet House* - Brianna Casale, Mallory Diez, Sae-Young Kang, Emily McGoey, Robyn Naugle.
- D. **Leaves** - *Professional* - Nina Grinnell, Michael Flood, Katelynn Zaremski, Chelsea Risch, Hannah Hendershot, Ann Tanda, Leah Kalan, Alicia Scopellite, Emily Thornton, Sharon Kramer, Cara Martin; *Classified* - Stephen Campos, Judy Schall, Ann Raisley, James Voltz.
- E. **Tenure** - Mary Boburczak, Jenny Caputo, Mary Cassetti, Richard Coleman, Daniel Dickey, Lauren Hackett, Kayla Hixon, Hanna Hugo, Caitlyn Kourakos, Dena Marnik, Cara Martin, Lauren Miloser, Maggie Novak, Chelsea Patricca, Rachel Pool, Laura Sauers, Nichole Schauer, Joshua Sektnan, Shelby Stock, Courtney Strieby, Amy Thoman, Megan Witherell.
- F. **Contract Renewal** - Dr. Tracy Vitale, District Superintendent, for a five-year term commencing effective September 30, 2021, and ending September 29, 2026.
- G. **Classified and Administrative Adjustments** - Effective July 1, 2021
- H. **Stipend** - Elizabeth Williams
- I. **Retirement** - *Classified* - Janet Negri
- J. **Memorandum of Understanding**

Mr. Nickel motioned, seconded by Ms. Harrison, to approve the personnel items as listed above. Motion carried on a roll call vote with those present voting in the affirmative and Mr. Widdowson absent.

12. **COMMUNICATION** – School board communication was received from the following:

- A. **Raider Mascot/Name – Preference to Keep**
- Ms. Arlene Miller
  - Mr. Patrick Murray
  - Ms. Barbara Waugaman
  - Ms. Deborah Bailey
  - Mr. Matthew Gryskewicz
  - Mr. J. Victor Conrad
  - Mr. Robert Kissane
  - Ms. Jill Manns
  - Ms. Carol Heckert
  - Ms. Joan Larkin Voegtly
  - Major J. W. Kissane

- Mr. Brian Kutchma
- Mr. Wayne Henchar
- Ms. Jill Schulties

B. **Raider Mascot/Name – Preference to Change**

- Ms. Laura Oliverio
- Ms. Jennifer Aprile
- Ms. Rachel Schuster
- Ms. Virginia Schuetz
- Ms. Carlen Blackstone
- Ms. Jennifer Handke
- Mr. Seth Peasley
- Ms. Lillian Liang Emlet
- Ms. Kalli Ruffennach
- Ms. Megan Neely
- Mr. and Ms. Kari and Matt Zimmer
- Ms. Rebecca Prible
- Ms. Kelly Tunney
- Ms. Elizabeth Short
- Mr. Matthew Northrup

C. **Masking Next School Year**

- Ms. Holly Badger
- Ms. Megan Smith

D. **PSERs Fund** - Ms. Kathleen Celio

E. **COVID-19 Precautions for 2021-22** - Ms. Andrea Tucker

13. **ADJOURNMENT** – With nothing further to come before the board, Mr. Nickel motioned, seconded by Ms. Whittle, to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 p.m. Motion carried on a voice vote with those present voting in the affirmative and Mr. Widdowson absent.

Mr. Eric DiTullio, School Board President



Ms. Lisa Mislan, School Board Secretary