

POTTSVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Directors
Special Board Meeting
Monday, May 1, 2017
7:00 a.m.
Academic Center

Present: Mr. Boran, Mrs. Blankenhorn,
Dr. Cardamone, Dr. Davidson,
Dr. DiCello, Mr. Moran, Atty. Rismiller,
Mr. Thomas, Mr. Wagner, Dr. Zwiebel,
Superintendent; Mrs. Lombel, Assistant
Business Manager/Acting Board
Secretary; Atty. Thornburg, Solicitor;
Ms. Marchiano, Republican Herald

The special meeting of the Board of Directors was called to order at 7:00 a.m. by President John Boran.

After the Pledge of Allegiance, Mr. Boran welcomed everyone. Mr. Boran asked if anyone would like to address the Board. Hearing none, an executive session was called at 7:01 a.m.

Mrs. Lombel reported that in accordance with Act 84 of 1986, the Sunshine Act, an Executive Session with the Board as a whole at this meeting is hereby announced for the purpose of discussing personnel matters.

Atty. Rismiller, Dr. Zwiebel and Mrs. Lombel exited the room prior to discussions following the settlement.

At 7:16 a.m. Mr. Boran continued with the Special Board Meeting.

Under the Solicitor's Report, Atty. Thornburg stated the issue is whether the Board of Directors wants to accept the mediator's recommendation.

Mr. Boran asked for a roll call for the acceptance of the mediator's recommendation.

Motion carried by roll call vote: Mr. Boran, Dr. Davidson, Dr. DiCello, Mr. Moran, Mr. Thomas and Mr. Wagner, Aye. Mrs. Blankenhorn, Dr. Cardamone, Nay. Atty. Rismiller, Abstain.

Mr. Boran asked for comments from the Board of Directors:

- o Dr. Davidson voted yes "extremely reluctantly". He felt that we are not in the position to mortgage our future and this could cost us dearly. He was concerned about the costs of hearings and lawyers' fees. Dr. Davidson also wants to get

busy and get this matter off of the agenda and get the school district back in good shape and go from here.

- Dr. Cardamone voted against accepting the mediator's report but respects those who voted for the acceptance of the mediators report. As a newcomer on the Board, Dr. Cardamone concluded that the Board was making allegations that the former business was nonfeasant in his responsibilities. Dr. Cardamone continued that if those allegations are still out there and if we accept the report, and do not go to a hearing, those allegations will remain forever. The situation is not resolved; it is simply avoided. He noted that in fairness to the Board, taxpayers and Mr. Curran, he felt that the hearings were necessary. If the allegations are affirmed, he should be terminated with no compensation.
- Atty. Rismiller read the prepared statement:

“I abstained from the vote this morning because I have not been involved in any settlement discussions between Mr. Curran and the PASD as I was identified as a potential witness against Mr. Curran regarding the performance of his employment duties and the School Board's lack of knowledge regarding the actual fund balance at the end of the 2015-2016 school year.”
- Dr. DiCello read the prepared statement:

“It is a very real possibility that the legal expense of a public hearing and the likely subsequent appeals process would cost this District a far greater sum of money than the cost to settle this matter. I still believe I made the right decision when I voted to suspend Mr. Curran from his employment at the Pottsville Area School District. However, to risk spending several hundred thousand dollars in legal fees defending this position is unwise and irresponsible. So, it is with a heavy heart that I am voting to approve this settlement agreement.”
- Mr. Wagner noted he did not have a prepared statement. He did not like the cloud hanging over this and if he was dealing solely with his own money, he would take a different position. He said he concurred with Dr. Davidson and Dr. DiCello that because it is the school district's money, it could rise to an enormous sum with legal fees and the whole protracted kind of litigation.
- Mr. Moran said he has to look out for the taxpayers' interest financially. He noted that the only way to get this done and away from the district without further damage is to settle.
- Mr. Boran read the following statement:

“It is my understanding that the posting errors occurred in January 2016. As the head of the finance committee, myself along with Vice-President Rismiller were notified of these errors on October 27, 2016. We then notified the entire Board. There were budget decisions made in June 2016 for the 2016-2017 fiscal year based on the mistaken numbers from January 2016 that we were led to believe were actual. As a result, these errors have


caused the district to seek exceptions from the state beyond the tax rate allowed under Act 1.

We have been months in a settlement process. To continue to dispute this matter through legal channels will get costly and there are no guarantees in the end. I completely understand all of my colleague's position on this matter. Throughout I have always tried to keep the best interests of the taxpayer and the students in mind."

Mrs. Lombel reported that in accordance with Act 84 of 1986, the Sunshine Act, an Executive Session with the Board as a whole immediately following this meeting is hereby announced for the purpose of discussing personnel matters.

President Boran noted that an Executive Session was held on Monday, April 24, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business, on motion of Atty. Rismiller, seconded by Mr. Thomas, the meeting adjourned at 7:26 a.m.; Executive Session from 7:29 a.m. to 7:42 a.m.

 *Patricia A. Lombel* 6/7/17
Patricia A. Lombel (Date)
Acting Board Secretary